SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

Mobility and settlement decision-making among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the United Kingdom

Ching-Yu Chang

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Abstract

This thesis investigates experiences of highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK and identifies the determinants of their re-migration decision-making. As a micro-level analysis, this study takes a qualitative approach by using semi-structured in-depth interviews and questionnaires for personal demographic information to collect primary data. Forty samples, 24 women and 16 men, were recruited from 25 industries, and from London and other cities.

The research framework is based on the existing migration literature and takes its cue from Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) three forms of capital: economic, social and cultural capital, in understanding migration experiences and outcomes. The thesis finds that economic considerations and family members dominate re-migration directions among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants, revealing the importance of economic and non-economic factors on migration decision-making. Although cultural gaps tend to influence migrant participants' adaptation into the host society, cultural diversity increases their preferences over British work and non-work life.

The research findings further reveal several key non-economic factors attracting highly skilled migrants in the UK context, highlighting that an environment with a social culture of openness, tolerance and ethnic diversity is appealing to knowledge workers. This thesis thus makes an original contribution to a better understanding of the increasing trend of migration from Taiwan to Britain in the 21st century. The interview narratives present nuanced gender differences and diverse place-based post-migration experiences, making it possible to compare other case studies within or beyond the UK context.

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work for the PhD degree of University of York, and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, University. All sources are acknowledged as References.

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Abbreviations

APS	Annual Population Survey
CEE	Central Eastern Europe
CEEs	Central Eastern Europeans
EEA	European Economic Area
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross domestic product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information technology
KMT	Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party)
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer
NELM	New economics of labour migration
NMW	National Minimum Wage
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PBS	Points-Based Immigration System
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
US	United States
WW II	World War II

Chapter 1: Introduction

The phrase 'the global war for talent' has appeared in the migration literature over the past few decades, indicating the rising significance of the international movements of the highly skilled in today's economies and societies (Beechler and Woodward, 2009; Faulconbridge et al., 2009; Michaels et al., 2001; Chambers et al., 1998). Many developed countries have experienced, and still face, a decline in their populations, an aging population and a skill shortage in certain industries. To address these problems, an inflow of immigrants of working age has been considered as one solution. Well-educated and highly skilled migrants are thus especially favoured by both developed and developing countries because they are a high-quality group, and their human capital can provide competitive advantages for their host nation within knowledge-based economies worldwide.

In fact, the phenomenon of highly skilled international migration has received attention from academia and policymakers since the mid-1960s. At that time, to pursue nation building and to supplement the labour force in the domestic market, English-speaking countries, such as Canada and Australia, started to design specific schemes for recruiting or retaining certain foreign nationals they wanted to attract from abroad (Koslowski, 2018; Bertoil et al., 2012). Under these circumstances, international movement is selective. Information and resources are necessary to enable the move, and only those with the appropriate qualifications can legally enter the destination country. Over time and space, the study of skilled migration has evolved and widened into what we know as migration theories.

However, highly skilled individuals have the right to decide whether they wish to move abroad or not. What concerns do they have when considering moving to another country to work, and what factors make them move? In unpacking the causes of international migration, people and place are two fundamental elements. It has been generally recognised that the process of migration decision-making, and destination choice cannot be explained solely in economic terms, which has dominated conventional migration knowledge. Instead, migration is found to be a cost and benefit calculation, combining the key drivers and facilitating factors from both economic and non-economic aspects.

Moreover, young people are more likely to move abroad than older people, while the empirical evidence has shown that there are variations in migration decision-making due to individual social characteristics, such as age, gender, skill levels and occupation. On the other hand, regional differences and country-specific contexts, including immigration policies, expected wages levels, employment opportunities and living environments, attract different types of migrants and lead to different migration flows. However, the determinants of international skilled migration in different geographic locations have yet to be fully explored in detail due to ongoing changes in national policies, economic situations and sociocultural contexts, all of which contribute to the complex nature of international migration. The elements associated with migration control and selection continue to challenge the conceptualisation and understanding of international migration of the highly skilled.

Traditional migration theorists tend to focus more on low-skilled migrants and emphasise economic factors to predict human migration behaviours; this theoretical weakness has been largely amended by researchers from different fields. For example, the growing body of literature around female and LGBTQ migration has demonstrated how migration patterns and experiences often vary by gender and sexuality differences. At the individual level, previous migration studies of the highly skilled concerning migration drivers and motivations for working abroad have focused on their transnational practices on return to their home country, paying particular attention to migrant entrepreneurs and information technology (IT) workers. In recent years, an increasing number of studies of migrant professionals have investigated their labour market experience, social integration and well-being issues in the host country. Many empirical studies have been conducted in global cities, such as London and New York – where international workers cluster – and produced a range of findings across different geographical areas.

One of the knowledge gaps in the existing literature concerns the interactions between highly skilled migrants and the places where they live and work after their arrival, which is crucial for understanding future re-migration intentions. When considering whether to stay or to leave, highly skilled migrants tend to be much more mobile than others, and in many cases, returning to their place of origin is not their only choice (d'Aiglepierre et al., 2020; Grigoleit-Richter, 2017; Borjas, 2001). This thesis argues that personal capacities and post-migration experiences are closely linked to individual life satisfaction in a new destination, which in turn, influences their future migration direction.

With the number of articles regarding the international mobility of the highly skilled burgeoning in the past decade, scholars have suggested the need for more concern about the experiences and local connections of highly skilled migrants residing in the host society, and to look at not only global cities but also lesser-studied, non-iconic places. In addition, the limited number of female voices in the study of skilled mobility and the overrepresentation of the majority migrant groups are very likely to generate certain amount of bias when conceptualising the migrant image. Despite interdisciplinary research efforts in understanding human mobility across borders, a holistic theoretical and methodological framework for studying migration issues is still missing. Therefore, more empirical studies are necessary from different angles and locations to rethink international migration theories and to make case study comparison across regions possible. At the macro level, researchers taking a broader view also suggest paying more attention to the uneven impact of highly skilled migration on many areas of both the source and destination countries.

This thesis seeks to provide a better understanding of highly skilled migration from Taiwan to the United Kingdom (UK), exploring how individual migration decisions are made and how the personal post-migration experiences embedded in different places shape their future intentions, whether to stay or leave. To begin with, this chapter lays out the introduction of this thesis: (i) the significance of international skilled mobility in contemporary migration research; (ii) the scope and approach of this thesis; (iii) the contribution of this thesis; (iv) the limitations of this thesis, and finally it (v) outlines the structures of this thesis to give an overview of the main points of each chapter.

1.1: The significance of international skilled mobility in contemporary migration research

1.1.1: Highly skilled people are highly mobile

The issue of international skilled migration has received great research attention across several disciplines and regions in recent decades (Harvey et al., 2018; Czaika, 2018; Van Riemsdijk, 2014; Nathan, 2013; Harvey, 2011a). However, the perspectives of skilled workers across borders vary in terms of space and time. In 1963, the phrase 'brain drain' was first used by *the London Evening Standard* to describe the alarming phenomenon of

the growing emigration of British scientists and engineers to North America (Godwin et al., 2009). In the late 1990s, the transnational movement of highly skilled workers from developing to developed countries appeared to be an inevitable result of globalization, and in some cases, it is considered as positive because the negative effects of a 'brain drain' can be reversed by a 'brain gain' and 'brain circulation', through which migrants' skills and knowledge can be exchanged between the sending and receiving countries (Lee and Kim, 2010; Rizvi, 2005; Meyer et al., 1997; Stark et al., 1997).

To date, almost half of the United Nation's (UN) member states have managed to attract the highly skilled from abroad to increase their competitive advantages in knowledge-based economies (Czaika, 2018); two-thirds of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations have implemented or are developing specific policies to target highly skilled migrants across the world (Czaika and Parsons, 2017). The research on '*competing for global talent*' (Kuptsch and Pang, Eds., 2006), '*a battle for the "best and brightest"*' (Skeldon, 2020; Ganguli and Gaulé, 2020; Cerna and Chou, 2014; Kapur and McHale, 2005) or '*global competition for the highly skilled*' (Brücker et al., 2012) gradually emerged in the early 2000s and is still exploring various issues surrounding highly skilled mobility.

In fact, the scale of international skilled mobility has been asymmetrical in terms of professional occupation, geographical location and national benefits for both the country of origin and receiving country. A series of country case studies in 2001 showed that the increasing international movement of scientists, engineers, computer programmers and other professionals to North America, Australia, Germany and the UK is mainly from Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and suggested that many foreign professionals would eventually return to their country of origin (OECD, 2001). Ten years later (2011), the main destination area was unchanged, while tertiary-educated migrants entering OECD countries had increased by 70% (estimated at 35 million) compared with 38% overall growth of immigrants in the OECD (Arslan et al., 2015). The emigration rates of the highly educated are always higher than those of the resident population and the immigrants living in OECD countries. The number of global talents on the move has been steadily growing along with the development of higher education (d'Aiglepierre et al., 2020).

1.1.2: Looking beyond an oversimplified economic model

It cannot be denied that the existing migration theory and migrant population data are neither able to satisfactorily explain or predict migration behaviour due to the complex and changing nature of international movement. In fact, the time and spatial scales of international migration are becoming increasingly 'transient and fluid' rather than simply one-off movements. King (2002) thus argues that 'mobility' instead of 'migration' is a better way to describe this global phenomenon (Van Riemsdijk and Wang, Eds., 2016). In addition, the fact that both temporary and permanent skilled migration programs are set up by different political regimes to fit country-specific contexts further complicates human mobility patterns, posing a direct challenge to migration theory and policy. Scholars like Sheller and Urry (2006, 2016) challenge the sedentary way of life being classified as normality in social science studies and propose '*the new mobilities paradigm'*, which attempts to conceptualise the complexity of human mobility on a global level. They emphasise the complex interconnections and interdependence that vary from place to place, suggesting that migration research needs to include local concerns in order to examine the phenomenon in more detail.

While many early economists predicted the rate of human mobility would reduce with economic growth in their place of origin, according to an absolute equilibrium model, it has been observed that global economic development in the past has boosted more migration flows across different regions, and the migration direction is not restricted to from developing to developed countries. Traditional migration theories stress economic perspectives and assert that people migrate for money; however, researchers such as Florida (2002, 2005) observed that non-economic factors, such as diversity and tolerance within a social system, are of equal importance for attracting knowledge workers and 'the creative class' to move, live and work in certain cities. At the macro level, the push pull model believes that the environment in the place of origin and destination impact on human migration behaviours. A better understanding of the determinants of migration decision-making requires further examination of the relationship between individuals and specific places.

Traditional migration theories also tend to predict human mobility in a general way, and have been criticised for failing to delimit personal migration decision-making in relation to different skill levels and socioeconomic status. Indeed, education background and skill levels also influence personal consumption behaviour and social habitus so that

conventional migration knowledge cannot explain the migration journeys and experiences of the highly skilled. In terms of gender difference and demographic characteristics, female migrant workers 'appear to predominate among short-journey migrants' in the early migration era (Lee, 1966, p.48), and were largely conceptualised as domestic labour force moving from developing to developed states in the global economy. The international migration of highly skilled women has received less research (Isaakyan and Triandafyllidou, 2016; Raghuram, 2008; Oishi, 2002; Boyle and Halfacree, Eds., 1999), and very little is known about their experiences at different destinations (Khattab et al., 2020). Overall, in spite of the importance of highly skilled workers in the far-reaching global knowledge economy, there has been little discussion of the processes and outcomes of skilled migration in the existing literature (Steiner, 2019; Van den Broek et al., 2016).

In light of these knowledge gaps in the existing migration literature on the highly skilled, and the differences between different geographical locations, scholars have recently called for more research into the relationship between highly skilled migrants and their neighbourhoods, communities and cities, in addition to transnational spaces to achieve a more holistic understanding (Bauder, 2017; Meier, 2015). While highly skilled migrants are recognised as valuable human resources, their presence is often invisible in migration issues as they are often assumed to be less problematic and accepted in the host society. These suggestions highlight the need for a better understanding of the experiences of highly skilled migrants in the places where they live, to identify specific issues and focus on their connections and networks within the local society. Van Riemsdijk and Wang (2016) also suggest that a place-based approach to case study research is more revealing than national level research to reconceptualise and progress highly skilled migration theory.

In terms of research methodology, the rapid globalization of the labour market in different regions means the study of international skilled migration has been conducted within a limited conceptual framework, characterised by sedentary bias, demographic determinant explanations, and incomplete understanding of migration structure and agency (De Haas, 2010). Due to the multiple processes and the complex nature of international skilled migration, it is widely agreed that existing migration theories cannot explain all aspects of human mobility, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach for various research interests. Researchers are still looking for a more coherent theoretical framework for the study of

highly skilled migration. Therefore, it is suggested that applying a set of key migration theories associated with the research topic is more likely to provide a closer look at certain groups and issues, and has the potential to advance the existing theories (Kumpikaite and Zickute, 2012, p.387).

This thesis uses a micro-level approach to study individual migration decision-making which is not new and has been widely applied in the early literature, such as *The laws of migration* (Ravenstein, 1885) and *A theory of migration* (Lee, 1966). Clearly, it is crucial to answer the 5W questions in the migratory process: the who, what, when, where and how. Based on an individual-level narrative analysis, it is possible to further integrate the influences of meso- and macro-level factors, such as ethnic discrimination, national immigration policy and global economic structures, into migration behaviours. These political, economic and social factors directly and indirectly affect migrants' everyday lives and shape the ongoing process of migration decision-making. For example, a case study shows that employment opportunities of migrants from non-OECD countries in Norway are more likely to be affected by local economic fluctuations than those from OECD areas (Barth et al., 2004). Attitudes toward highly skilled immigration is also important when (potential) migrants consider their destination. For instance, the discourses of discrimination targeting migrants in the German social media once discouraged Indian IT professionals from joining a German recruitment programme (Iredale, 2001). In this way, international migration can often be shaped by human interaction and the living and work environments, including actual and imagined forces within and beyond national borders.

Generally, international skilled migration is categorised as a type of economic migration; well-educated people seek better returns on their previous training and education, especially higher earnings. However, human capital theory indicates that the returns on earlier investment include both economic and non-economic desires. Therefore, understanding the migration decision-making processes of the highly skilled needs to look beyond oversimplified traditional migration theories and integrate economic and non-economic factors into micro-level analyses. Contemporary migration research and empirical evidence offer a clear direction and some shared findings for incomplete work. It is argued that migration decision-making can change at different life stages, and the reasons for return tend to be different from out-migration, depending on the occurrence of significant life events post-migration (Stockdale, 2014; Haug, 2008). Since migrants'

environments changed after they left their place of origin, this thesis argues that the post-migration experiences of highly skilled migrants in a new place shape their decisions to stay, return or re-migrate to another destination, and will explore the issues involved, in both the work and non-work spheres.

1.2: The scope and approach of the thesis

1.2.1: Research questions

Britain is in the world's top five destination country for international migrants (UN, 2019). According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS, UK, 2018), the number of people moving from the EU countries to the UK reached at a record low in the past four years. Arguably, this phenomenon might be related to anti-immigrant sentiment promoted by the public debate surrounding Brexit, as well as the foreseeable impacts of immigration reforms on migrant status and welfare. In fact, immigration was seen as the most pressing issue facing the UK and became a particularly salient topic during the 2016 Brexit referendum (Dennison and Geddes, 2018; Goodwin and Milazzo, 2017; Ipsos MORI, 2016). However, even so, there was still a rise in the immigrant population from outside the EU entering Britain. For migrants settled in the UK for years, whether the nuanced changes caused by the political discourse and local attitudes towards immigration have influenced them or will influence their work, life or re-migration intentions from the host society remain unknown. As noted above, the increasing global competition for skilled personnel and any further related research to be developed underline the significance of the present study, which focuses on the presence of highly skilled migrants in the UK from non-European Economic Area (EEA) countries.

To fill the research gap, this thesis not only considers why and how highly skilled people choose their destination country, but is particularly interested in exploring their experiences of working and living in the host society, which presumably have a direct impact on their future migration decision-making. In other words, it investigates the reasons behind the decision to stay or leave after arrival. Apart from migration for financial benefit asserted by economists, what are the non-economic factors that encourage foreign highly skilled workers to move to a particular place? What factors cause them to perceive they have better life chance after migrating to a new destination?

To what extent is the decision to remain or to leave reshaped by the experiences encountered after arrival? Thus, the overarching question of this thesis is:

Why do highly skilled immigrants consider moving to the UK and in what way do their work and non-work experiences after arrival influence their future re-migration intentions?

Sub-questions have been developed to investigate the decision-making process of highly skilled workers at the two stages of the migration trajectory. They address the drivers and individual motivations associated with destination selection before arrival, and the experiences of working and living in the destination country after migration (see Appendix 1).

1.2.2: Choice of case study

Regarding the choice of research samples, this thesis will present a case study of highly skilled Taiwanese-origin immigrants who moved to the UK after 2000, and were residing in Britain at the time this research was carried out. The phenomenon of highly skilled international migration from Taiwan to major English-speaking immigration countries has received attention in the literature since the 1990s, while less explored is the Taiwan-UK immigration context. This is perhaps not surprising, given that the Taiwanese-born population recorded by the UK national census made up a relatively small population (59,000, ONS, 2018). Compared to the United States (US), Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the UK's points-based immigration system for non-EU citizens started relatively late (Chapter 2.2.2).

However, data from the Office for National Statistics shows that the number of Taiwanese-origin immigrants in Britain increased from 6,588 to 11,000 between 2000 and 2010, and had reached nearly 60,000 by 2021. It is noted that these figures exclude some residents in communal establishments and students, and approximately 16,000 of this group now have British nationality (ONS, 2018). Under the UK points-based immigration policy, Taiwanese people immigrating to the UK only emerged as a significant trend after 2010. There was a remarkable increase from about 15,000 to 39,000 between 2011 and 2012. However, a closer look at these immigration population figures recorded in the years that follow reveal, it has not been a steadily increasing trend but has

fluctuated between 39,000 (2013) and 59,000 (2018-2021), since estimates for 2014 and 2016 were both smaller than that in 2013 and 2015.

Taking a historical-structural lens, British immigration history recorded the presence of a small number of Chinese sailors in Liverpool in the late 18th century, driven by the labour force demand for national trading routes to China. In the early 20th century, the number of Chinese people in the United Kingdom was estimated to be only 480, according to the UK 1911 census (Walvin, 1984, p.69; Spencer, 1997). Taiwan was under Japanese rule 1895-1945 and established its new political regime in the island after 1949[1]. Taiwan itself has no historical tradition of labour migration to the UK, nor had any particular political, economic or social relationships with Britain, no colonial ties with the UK and Commonwealth.

In recent research associated with highly skilled Chinese in the UK, a University of Manchester PhD thesis entitled '*Highly skilled new Chinese migrants in the UK and the globalisation of China since 1990*' (Yao, 2012) examined migrants from mainland China under the Chinese government regime. Similarly, Unterreiner's (2015) study of Chinese and Indian migrants in the UK, and Kohnert's (2016) discussion of Chinese and African migrant entrepreneurs, defines Chinese migrants as people originating from mainland China. In addition, the study conducted by Benton and Gomez (2008, p.xiii, p.2) on Chinese migration to the UK focused on people from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other Asian areas; they argue that the Chinese community is not one bonded by the same ethnic background, but made up of heterogeneous groups with different identities, lacking any aspiration for congruence. As a result, their social networks and diasporic associations are present in different ways.

Research into migrant groups needs to consider their diverse origins and different historical, geographical and cultural contexts, together with individual socio-economic classes, in order to identify different issues. In institutionally different settings, political regimes often have different border controls and thus there are different degrees of

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[1] In 1894, the Qing Dynasty was forced to cede Taiwan to Japan after a defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War. As a result, Taiwan became a Japanese colony until the end of the Second War in 1945. The Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) was defeated by the Communists Party in the ensuing Chinese civil war, and retreated to Taiwan in 1949 to establish a new political regime – Taiwan, Republic of China (ROC). Meanwhile, the Communists founded the People's Republic of China (PRC) on the mainland China, and continued to fight their rival across the Taiwan Strait (Chang, 2017, p.8; Li, 2016; Van Dyke and Andrade, 2008; Brown, 2004; Roy, 2003).

freedom of international movement, as well as migrant well-being. For example, Chinese from mainland China (the People's Republic of China, PRC) have not been allowed to hold dual citizenship since 1955, while the Taiwanese government (Republic of China, ROC) permits dual nationality in general, which potentially influences emigrants' identity and integration into the host country. In addition, people from Hong Kong may perceive the UK in a different way and enjoy different rights due to the previously established colonial tie. In the past, UK immigration policies and British Home Office reports on the Chinese migrant community generally focus on people from Hong Kong, a British Crown Colony from 1841 to 1997 (Brown, 2019).

The *highly skilled* often refers to individuals with tertiary education or equivalent skills and expertise (Bertoil et al., 2009; Iredale, 2000; Salt, 1997). Although Taiwanese-origin immigrants make up a small share of the total UK migrant population, the 2012 OECD report (p.24) shows that the migrant community with 'the highest share of university graduates' in the OECD area comes from Taiwan (70%). This makes this thesis an interesting case to look at how highly skilled people from non-EEA countries without historical colonial linkages came to make the decision to enter and stay in the UK. In addition, this case study has policy implications for points-based systems, given that highly skilled migration is a mutual-selection result of immigrants and destination countries. It also makes case study comparison possible, linking research into out-migration from Taiwan to other English-speaking countries to create a more complete picture for further discussion.

1.2.3: Research approach

This thesis used a mixed methods approach to collect data and applies inductive reasoning in its qualitative data analysis. It combines the study of primary data with secondary research sources, such as the existing literature, official documents and social media, as part of the analysis. The primary data was collected through questionnaires for personal demographic information, as well as semi-structured interviews, transcribed and translated for coding and thematic analysis. The research findings aim to identify possible differences and similarities between the participants to develop empirical generalisations in a country-specific context. This approach and procedure follow the grounded theory

process advocated by Glaser and Strauss (1967; 2017) as a way of conducting a qualitative study (Thomas, 2003; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1994).

To generate in-depth and rich primary data, the interviews are semi-structured conversations; individual narratives were collected from 40 Taiwanese highly skilled immigrants residing and working in the UK. The interview questions are designed to discover the immigrants' destination choices, and then investigate their experiences in the UK, both work and non-work. Narrative analysis focuses on participants' pre- and post-migration experiences associated with their migration decision-making. A questionnaire survey together with the individual interviews gathered the social demographic characteristics of the participants: their age, gender, marital status, family reunion, job position and education background. The process of data collection was carried out from March 2019 to March 2020, including three sets of the pilot interviews.

The unit of data analysis in this thesis is an individual migrant originating from Taiwan with Taiwanese nationality. At the time of writing, 2020-2021, some of the interviewees had gained British citizenship or are would-be British citizens. Data concerning the researched population comes from the Annual Population Survey (APS, ONS, 2018) of British National Statistics. The online database on the British government website of migration statistics (by country of birth and nationality, by region or country of origin), is publicly available and free to use. In this thesis, the immigrant population of Taiwanese-origin is drawn from the dataset recorded between 2000 and 2020. Notably, after 2004, the ONS official statistics were no longer recorded on a yearly basis from March to February of the following year; instead, the figures were calculated from January to December of the same year. In addition, the entire dataset of Taiwanese-origin immigrants for 2006 is missing from the records and thus unavailable to study.

To understand the determinants of migration decision-making, this thesis sets the study in the destination context, focusing on the interactions between individual migrants and the places [s]he is working and living in. How do their work and non-work experiences embedded in their daily lives further encourage them to stay or to leave? The data analysis is based on interdisciplinary knowledge of migration theories. In general, a deeper understanding of human mobility and migrant lives requires geographical, economic, social and anthropological knowledge. At the micro-level analysis, Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) '*the forms of capital*' is a useful thinking tool to connect interdisciplinary knowledge in understanding important determinants of a person's social position and life

chances. In rethinking international skilled migration, Bauder (2017) suggests that international mobility is a result of the accumulation of individual capacities in which various capital – human, social and cultural capital – can be mobilised, and affects decision-making.

This thesis considers these forms of capital to be significant forces and resources which enable international movement and subsequently result in different migration experiences. It takes its cue from Bourdieu's ideas of economic, social and cultural capital as the conceptual research framework for the overarching migration theories that inform thematic analysis of the findings. However, both Bourdieu's approach and traditional migration theories have been criticised by some scholars for lacking explanations of how gender and ethnical bias – embedded in a patriarchal, white-dominated structure – influence individual capital, social norms and migration outcomes (Golash-Boza et al., 2019; Boyd and Grieco, 2014; Erel, 2010; Thorpe, 2009; McLeod, 2005; Moi, 1991). To address this drawback, insights from feminist perspectives on migration and related studies are added to the analytical chapters to elucidate gender-specific migration experiences.

1.2.4: Research aim

The aim of this thesis is to identify the determinants of re-migration decision-making of highly skilled Taiwanese workers in the UK, especially looking at the non-economic factors that influence destination choice, and the decision to stay or to leave in the post-migration stage. The economic reasons in a cost-benefit calculation which generally underpin migration logics, are included (Borjas, 1989). The thesis aims to:

- Explore how highly skilled migration from Taiwan to the UK is driven in a country-specific context and by a place-based approach.
- Characterise/contextualise highly skilled Taiwanese immigrants within contemporary British immigration history.
- Understand how highly skilled Taiwanese migrants integrated into the UK labour market and social life, with particular attention given to individual experiences.
- Identify the key determinants that influence re-migration intentions after arrival in the UK.

- Distinguish between the importance of age, gender, marital status, and length of stay as influencing migration decision-making.

1.3: The contribution of the thesis

This thesis seeks to explain the decision-making of highly skilled migrants and contributes to the existing literature in three ways. Theoretically, traditional migratory knowledge tends to assume human mobility as a unidirectional flow rather than a return, circular or temporary journey, and sees a sedentary lifestyle as the norm. The assumption has been that migration decision-making can explain why people move to a new destination from their place of origin. However, the data shows that the highly skilled are highly mobile, and the process of skilled international migration has become increasingly complex. This thesis reflects the need for more consideration of settlement and re-migration intentions in the future, associated with the interactions between individuals and the places where they live and work (Çağlar and Glick Schiller, 2018; Van Riemsdijk and Wang, Eds., 2016). It studies personal migratory experiences after their move, to discover what informed their decision-making at both the pre- and post-migration stages. The methodology, as a micro-level analysis, takes a qualitative approach that provides a 'human face' (Favell Ed., 2017; Favell et al., 2007) in migration studies with detailed narratives concerning the various determinants that are embedded in a specific city or location, such as the workplace, and examines how these factors affect individual onward or re-migration directions.

Second, some researchers have observed gender differences in the response to push factors from countries of origin and in the use of remittances (Naghsh Nejad, 2013; Dumont et al., 2007). For example, gender discrimination as a non-economic factor has a significant impact on skilled female emigration. However, there has been limited investigation into highly skilled women in the existing migration literature (Khattab et al., 2020; Isaakyan and Triandafyllidou, 2016). In addition, Bauder (2017, p.296) argues that the costs and benefits of international skilled migration are unevenly distributed between men and women, which affect migration outcomes. Given that the ratio of the Taiwanese-origin population in the UK (ONS, 2018; 2019), of which male to female is 1 (23,000): 1.52 (35,000), this thesis recruited 40 highly skilled participants, 24 women and 16 men.

As a result, it is possible to add more female voices to the study of highly skilled migrants and to identify gender differences from the research findings.

Third, case studies of migration, whether skilled or unskilled, often focus on the majority group in the host country as being the most representative, which can lead to a racialised image of immigrants as a whole (Bauder, 2017), or neglect the invisible minority who may or may not have much in common with majority. Unlike other countries that have had a points-based system (PBS) for longer, such as Canada and Australia, Britain only introduced the PBS in 2008, so skilled Taiwanese people migrating to the UK, a relatively smaller group, have not been systematically explored. Therefore, their migration motivations, patterns and experiences remain largely unknown. This thesis seeks to provide original research into their detailed accounts of their migratory experiences to enrich the discussions of skilled migration in the migration literature. The research also makes it possible to compare other case studies within or beyond the UK context to increase the understanding of highly skilled migration at a global level.

1.4: The limitations of the thesis

This research is limited by several important factors that need to be considered, relating to the challenges faced in both the sampling of interviewees and the recruitment of migrant entrepreneurs, as well as the changes in the UK immigration policies and social contexts. First, the method of sampling was restricted to the scope of the PhD research into the different types of highly skilled migrants with different backgrounds, and the sampling inevitably generated certain participants in favour of this research project. Thus, this case study offers limited diversity in the UK-specific context, so every variable identified in the process of migrant decision-making in the current literature may not be present. However, the 40 interviews with individuals from different cities and industries across the UK have provided rich data to identify and strengthen the arguments made in this research in spite of any limitations.

Second, the interviews were conducted from March 2019 to March 2020, although only one individual case study was conducted shortly after the ongoing pandemic of coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) that reached the UK in late January 2020, over this period of time, migrants' existing situations possibly changed in terms of their economic

opportunities and perceived well-being in the UK, the host society. The abnormal uncertainty caused by 2019 COVID-19 pandemic is very likely to have influenced migrant groups in a similar way to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, when the deteriorating economic conditions affected all migrant groups, and their unemployment rates were higher than the overall UK average (Vargas-Silva, 2016a). Another significant influence on the UK's political, social and economic situations is Brexit – the withdrawal of the UK from the EU and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC or Euratom) on 31 January 2020. In this regard, several self-employed migrants expressed concern about the uncertainty of their business development in the global market during their interviews; however, following-up research is necessary to further understand the real impact of Brexit.

Moreover, national migration laws not only serve as the main mechanism to control and manage the number of immigrants but are also closely link to migrant rights and welfare. Over recent decades, UK governments have undergone significant changes in attitude and reaction to the international mobility of highly skilled labour. The introduction of the PBS by the Labour government in 2008 is one of the changing points. Against the background of global competition and labour shortage, many reforms were made to introduce different routes for highly skilled workers to enter the UK by different British governments. On 1 January 2021, the UK introduced a new PBS which applies to both non-EU, EU and Swiss citizens entering the UK. This recent policy change is in response to Brexit and aims to continue to attract highly skilled workers by expanding the 'Tier 5' visa route to facilitate their entry to the UK (Gibney, 2018). As freedom of movement between the UK and EU ended on 31 December 2020, under the new UK points-based immigration system, 'the Global Talent route' has opened up to non-EU citizens on the same basis as EU citizens. Policy changes aiming to attract potential highly skilled migrants also offer the Graduate Route, a new UK post-study work visa which allows international students graduating in summer 2021 or later to remain to live and work in the UK for up to two or three years (Home Office, UK, 2020a).

Consequently, skilled workers, whether from EU or Non-EU countries, will continue to negotiate immigration policies and reconstruct migrant identity and social relationships within the changing attitudes towards 'outsiders' from the government, the media and local residents. Thus, potential policy changes and their consequent impacts on migrants' identity and life chances are recognised as a limitation and were a challenge for the

researcher to keep up with during the process of collecting data and writing up the thesis. Consequently, the narratives and perspectives that the participants offered for this research reflected the Brexit issue, which is considered a response to a specific temporal-spatial context.

1.5: The structure of the thesis

This thesis is comprised of ten chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 provides the economic and social contexts of Taiwan and the UK that significantly influence highly skilled migrants' attitudes and experiences as the research background. It displays the migration trend from Taiwan to major English-speaking immigration countries with PBS after 1960s, and highlights the key characteristics of the UK' s neoclassic free market and immigration history relating to this case study. Chapter 3 reviews and discusses traditional migration theories and recent empirical studies relating to skilled migrants. The definition of highly skilled migrants in the existing literature is firstly clarified before addressing the research questions. It then outlines the key arguments and identifies the research gaps this thesis aims to fill. Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) '*forms of capital*' is especially used as the baseline thinking tool that connects the interdisciplinary fields of migration knowledge. Chapter 4 explains the methodological framework of the study. It describes the rationale for a mixed methods approach to gather data by conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews, individual data surveys and desk-based research. It also describes the data management and analysis, the researcher's positionality and ethical considerations.

Chapters 5-9 are the main analytical chapters. Chapter 5 first explores the drivers of international migration to the UK, identifying the key factors and patterns that triggered international mobility from Taiwan to the UK after 2000. The subsequent chapters concern the impacts of post-migration experiences on future migration decision-making. Chapters 6-8 include the work and non-work experiences of the researched group residing in the UK. By applying Bourdieu's ideas of capital, the findings of these chapters refer to migrant human capital (embodied as economic power), social networks and cultural adaptation. Chapter 6 addresses the approach and catalysts for entering the local labour market and how migrant participants perceived their work experiences in the workplaces. Chapter 7 illustrates the migrants' non-work life in the UK, looking at migrant

dispositions, habitus and cultural adaption in everyday practices. Chapter 8 discusses social networks and local connections after settling in the UK, analysing the way migrants developed and balanced in-group and out-group friendships.

Chapter 9 identifies the most influential capital and the different demographic characteristics among the researched group that determine migration directions. While the research reveals that some findings are consistent with current migration studies, for instance, cultural fascination in specific countries attract skilled migration, it is evident that economic reasons are not enough to explain the decision-making of highly skilled migrants. On the other hand, some findings offer insights into the role of the city on migrant career development and perceived well-being, producing a range of migration experiences.

Finally, Chapter 10 summarises the overall finding of the previous analytical chapters to reveal how economic and non-economic factors determine the decision to stay or to leave post-migration. Despite several limitations within Bourdieu's framework, this chapter argues that the idea of forms of capital as the research framework is helpful for the study of international migration of highly skilled workers as a way of distinguishing them from low skilled or other types of migrants. It points out the significance of these findings in relation to the existing studies and suggests future directions for research in this field. In practical terms, this research also has potential implications for public policy.

Chapter 2: Research background

Highly skilled international mobility cannot be separated from the development of labour market segmentation in the post-globalisation era, which means that the inflow of highly skilled workers is concentrated in specific industries and geographical areas. This chapter provides economic and social contexts of Taiwan and the UK that significantly influence highly skilled migrants' attitudes and experiences as the research contexts. To understand this post-globalisation immigration, it starts with the historical background of international migration from Taiwan to English-speaking countries that adopted PBS after 1960. Second, to set the research scene in the UK, it follows the key characteristics of the UK's neoclassic free market and immigration history relating to this case study. More significantly, the PBS that regulates international migration and shapes current immigration inflows and immigrant components will be explained and discussed.

2.1: Out-migration from Taiwan to PBS countries in the Twentieth Century

2.1.1: Taiwan: the place of origin

It is true that highly skilled migration direction is not limited from developing to developed countries. Taiwan is currently the 7th largest economy in Asia, and its GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity (PPP) ranks 19th in the world, and is listed in the advanced economies group (IMF, 2019; IOM, 2019a). There are approximately 23.57 million people living in the total land area of about 36,000 square kilometres. The living area is somewhere between the size of Belgium and the Netherlands, making it the world's 17th by population density. However, as with many developed societies, Taiwan's total fertility rate (TFR) has been below replacement level since the late 20th century and dropped to a historic low of 0.9 in 2010 as a result of depopulation and an ageing society. Nowadays, Taiwan's net migration rate was approximately 0.17% due to temporary labour workers immigrating from South Asia, as well as transnational marriage, normally women from mainland China and other areas. However, Taiwan's steady out-migration rate (2%) to foreign countries in the past decades presents a loss of human capital because this population outflow tends to be elite mobility and is mainly the working age population (those aged 15 to 64) (OCAC, 2021a; Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan, 2018; Tseng, 1995, 2000).

International migration is selective, and human mobility tends to be fostered by the economic growth difference between two regions. Out-migration from Taiwan to English-speaking countries that adopted PBS took place in the late 1960s and continued into the late 20th Century after Taiwan underwent a rapid economic transformation in the1960s-1980s. At that time, the rapid development of Taiwan's economy and its success meant it became known as one of 'the four Asian Tigers', along with Hong Kong, South Korea and Singapore (Chiu et al. Eds., 2014; Singh et al., 2011; Chiang, 2008; Camilleri, 1997). According to recent Taiwanese government data, there are about 2.05 million Taiwanese emigrants living abroad, approximately 8.7% of its total population[2] (see Figure 2.1.1). Regarding the global distribution of Taiwanese emigrants, most Taiwanese emigrants reside in North and South America (62.5%), of which the US is the most popular destination, followed by Canada. Australia and New Zealand are the two most popular destinations in Oceania (3.5% of total emigrants). Europe is the 4th biggest immigration destination area for Taiwanese people (2.3% of total emigrants), of which France has the highest share (12,000, 2018-2020), followed by the UK (10, 000-11,000, 2018-2020) (OCAC, Taiwan, 2021a).

Figure 2.1.1: The global distribution of overseas Taiwanese emigrants
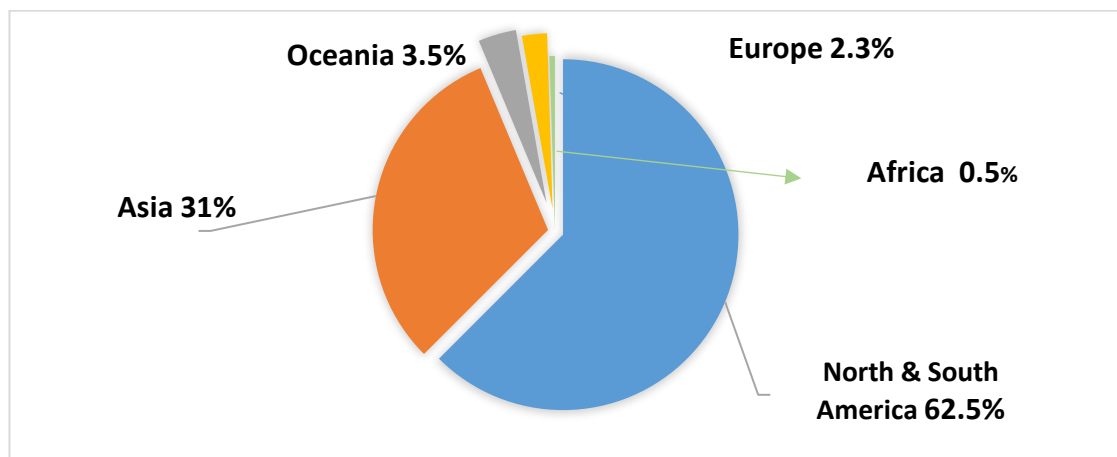
Note: Overseas Taiwanese emigrant population:
1. North and South America: 1,282,000: US (81%); Canada (15%), Brazil (3%)
2. Asia: 639, 000: Indonesia (31%); Thailand (23.4%); Vietnam (12.5%)
3. Oceania: 72, 000: Australia (79%); New Zealand (21%)
4. Europe: 47, 000: France (25%); UK (23%)
5. Africa: 10,000: South Africa (90%)
(Source: OCAC, Taiwan, 2021a)

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[2] The estimate of Taiwanese people outside Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu, excluding international students (OCAC, Taiwan, 2021a).

Notably, the number of Taiwanese emigrants recorded by the Taiwanese government is far less than the actual population of overseas Taiwanese because of how the Taiwanese authorities define 'emigrant' status. A Taiwanese citizen is officially an 'emigrant' if [s]he 'has become permanent resident of the country of residence, has stay abroad for 4 years accumulatively, and has continued to live in the country of residence consecutively for 6 months or has lived in the country of residence for 8 months accumulatively each year during the last 2 years.' (OCAC, 2021b, p.1). Apart from the period of staying abroad, to qualify as an emigrant, an individual needs to apply to the Taiwanese government to register an official emigrant identity (ibid). In fact, emigrants living abroad have different migration patterns and reasons for leaving Taiwan. However, historically, the international mobility from Taiwan to major English-speaking countries happened after WWII and continued along with Taiwan's economic growth.

2.1.2: Taiwan's out-migration trend before and after WWII

Between 1895 and 1945[3], Taiwanese people had Japanese colonial citizenship facilitating Taiwan-Japan transnational mobility, so that large numbers of students migrated to Japan to study; Japan's early industrial development also attracted skilled Taiwanese labourers to move for work purposes (Clammer, 2008). After WWII, Taiwan was no longer a Japanese colony but experienced a mass migration inflow of Chinese political refugees from mainland China between 1945 and 1949, due to the Chinese Civil War[4]. At that time, Western countries, including the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, developed policies for nation building through immigration, mainly targeting and privileging people with British-ties and white-origins, restricting those with non-white origins (Akbari and MacDonald, 2014).

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[3] Migration flows to Taiwan became prominent in the 17th century when the Dutch came to this island and drove out Spain's colonial regime. The Dutch faced hostility from native aborigines (Austronesians) which attracted Han Chinese to help trade goods with the Ming Empire and Japan from 1623. A Ming General later defeated the Dutch in 1662, and Taiwan was under Chinese rule (Chang, 2017, p.8; Brown, 2004, p.134; Edmonds & Goldstein, 2001, p.61). In 1894, the China's defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-95) forced the Qing Dynasty to cede Taiwan to Japan, which ended with the Second War in September 1945 (Paine, 2005; Tun-Jen, 2001).

[4] The Chinese civil war resulted in a huge influx of Chinese diasporas (the Mainlanders) estimated to be 'a million and including much of China's elite business, military and intellectual class' to Taiwan, accounting for 14% of the island's population (Li, 2016, p.1).

In the 1960s, US initiated immigration reforms eliminated past discriminatory policies, resulting in mass immigration from Asia and Latin America (Massey and Pren, 2012). It can be seen as the start of the widening of Western countries' immigration policies to non-white people. Meanwhile, to supply foreign workers for the domestic labour market and to increase economic development, the PBS was introduced in Canada in 1967 as a mechanism for selecting appropriately qualified migrants. Similarly, due to the notorious image of racial discrimination – the so-called white Australia policy, Australia and New Zealand consecutively abolished immigration policies that favoured people from North-western Europe and North America, and adopted the PBS in the late 1970s, to offer new opportunities for people originating from Asia and with other backgrounds.

In fact, while the selective migration policies designed and implemented in these Western countries had different models, they all required applicants to fulfil certain conditions, either economic- or skill-based; for instance, business investors or skilled workers were generally in the selection category (Tolley and Young, 2011; Bedford et al., 2002). As a result, the introduction of the PBS by developed countries, nowadays not limited to English-speaking countries, inevitably has attracted people from Taiwan and other countries, to move across national borders since 1960s. The PBS and its different models will be explained in more detail in the next section, together with the key characteristics of UK immigration policy (see Chapter 2.2.3).

From 1990 to 1998, the number of Taiwanese-born citizens immigrating to the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia was about 79,000, 61,000, 23,000 and 16,000 respectively (Ministry of the Interior, Taiwan, 1998, cited in Chiang and Kuo, 2000, p.462). With the shift towards more open and less strict immigration policies launched by the US and Canada between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, large-scale out-migration from Taiwan to Western developed countries coincided with Taiwan's domestic economic growth, and political and social changes. As the data shows, Canada's business migration programmes attracted the top three groups from the Asian-Pacific region: Hong Kong, Taiwan and South Korea were among the top seven countries of immigration origin (Ley, 2013; Tolley and Young, 2011; Wong, 2003; Tseng, 2000). Similarly, after New Zealand initiated several business immigration schemes from 1986 (Bedford et al., 2002), Hong Kong and Taiwan were the two main sources of business migrants to New Zealand by the early 1990's (Ho et al., 1998).

2.1.3: Triggers for international migration after globalisation

Regarding Taiwan's domestic political and economic situation, after decolonisation from Japan after WWII, Taiwan was under the Kuomintang (KMT) totalitarian regime, with martial law in effect between 1949 and 1987 (Croissant et al., 2013; Chao and Myers, 1994, 2000). Even higher education was under the control of the KMT government in order to shape ideological and national identity. After martial law was revoked in 1987, a very important step for decentralizing and deregulating public services and the domestic changes in socio-economic structure were intricately linked to globalization through highly connected supply-demand chains. As a result, Taiwan became one of the highly industrialized countries in East Asian in the 1990s and underwent democratic transition from 2000 through the exchange of elected political power (Jin, 2004; Hsiao and Park, 2002; Chao and Myers, 1994; Wang, 1994; Gee, 1993; Fransman, 1986).

Higher education reform is one of the most significant social transformations in response to globalisation. Since the late 1980s, control of educational has changed from a government monitoring model to autonomous and market-oriented development in response to the global economy. To strengthen its competitive advantage in the global market, the Taiwanese government has been reforming the higher education system since the late 1980s, a process of decentralization and marketization to allow everyone more educational opportunities (Mok, 2000). With steadily increasing levels of education, this policy successfully fuelled the number of students studying abroad, especially Engineering and Sciences in the US higher education system (Chen and Zimitat, 2006).

With the increasing trend of out-migration to Western PBS countries, Taiwan suffered the loss of its elite citizens, though some highly skilled emigrants returned to the homeland through government projects when the domestic high-tech economy took off (De Haas et al., 2020, pp.195-196; Newland, 2007). Taiwan saw significant 'brain circulation' in the 1980s and 1990s as overseas Taiwanese students and workers returned to Taiwan to engage in national development (Saxenian, 2002, 2006). The benefit of return migration has been described as a brain drain that can turn into a 'brain bank', 'brain gain' (Agrawal et al., 2011; O'Neil, 2003; Khadria, 2001; Meyer et al., 1997) or 'brain trust' (Newland and Patrick, 2004, p.13) and the like. In particular, immigrants returning from the US brought the Silicon Valley model in cooperation with the Taiwanese government to establish and invest in the early advanced IT industry in Taiwan (Nakahara, 2017; Newland, 2007).

Since then, returning scientists and engineers have played an important role in contributing to Taiwan's major economic development and technology advance and often enjoyed higher social status and salary levels in the domestic labour market. Consequently, the impact and networks of the US-educated Taiwanese returnees had a direct influence on how Taiwanese people perceived 'value for money' and 'returns on education', which has inevitably shaped 'the culture of migration' (Massey et al.,1993; Brettell and Hollifield, 2014) in Taiwan. As Massey et al (1993; pp.452-453) observed:

> As migration grows in prevalence within a community, it changes values and cultural perceptions in ways that increase the probability of future migration. […] migration becomes deeply ingrained into the repertoire of people's behavio[u]rs, and values associated with migration become part of the community's values.

Although some authors such as Iredale (2001) argue that Taiwan continues to attract skilled workers as do other advanced countries, the appealing 'immigration market' (Borjas, 1989) in different areas worldwide simultaneously pulls students, skilled workers, and local investors out of Taiwan, where people live in a relatively small domestic market and a less international society. The popularity of English and Western education was not only because it was regarded as an important qualification for promoting career opportunities but also as an opportunity for those who wanted to live abroad. On the other hand, Taiwan's disadvantaged political status in international space is arguably one of the drivers pushing elite out-migration (Wong, 2004, p.115; Cohen, 2008, p. 91; Chiang, 2008, p.505). As Tseng (1997, p.276) explains:

> The bourgeois emigration from Taiwan is partly pushed by the political uncertainty created by Chinese claims of sovereignty and partly pulled by the global economy. On the one hand, business elites are especially nervous about the implications of submitting to socialist China, and immigration is like buying an 'insurance policy' against the uncertain political future. On the other hand, their pursuit of globalizing family-owned businesses has also prompted them to acquire immigrant status in certain countries.

Fan (2003, p.266) argues that this migration pattern is mainly motived by economic and geopolitical factors; a similar phenomenon to the case of out-migration from Hong Kong to Western countries before the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997. Apart from that, scholars such as Chiang (2008), Ley and Waters (2004) and Chee (2003) indicate that upper-class families tend to emigrate from a desire to prepare a better future for their children through education systems using English. Elite migrants are also in search of a better quality of life, including a slower-paced lifestyle, a

better living environment and welfare system in the receiving country. Therefore, migration to Western countries became a strategic family choice after WWII.

With the increase of migration from Taiwan to Western countries adopting the PBS, previous migration studies have explored several issues in relation to highly skilled international migration. The major spotlight has been on the return of scientists and highly skilled technicians from the US, with the largest number of Taiwanese emigrants (62.5%, OCAC, 2021a). As mentioned above, in the migration and development nexus, Taiwan offers a good example of how 'brain drain can be brain gain', which emphasises the positive side of transnational political and economic ties between Taiwan and the US through the diaspora (Newland, 2013; Clemens, 2013; Newland and Patrick, 2004; O'Neil, 2003; Vertovec, 2002; Saxenian, 2000, 2002).

Another popular region for the study of out-migration from Taiwan to PBS states is Canada. According to Canadian government statistics (record of immigrants by source country or country of citizenship), there are at least four immigration patterns for entry of people of Taiwanese origin after 2000, i.e., permanent residents, workers who entered through International Mobility Programs or Temporary Foreign Worker Programs, and international students. Early research paid attention to 'capital-linked' immigration through the Business Immigration Programme for migrants with business skills and investment funds (Wong, 2003; Tseng, 2000; Skeldon, 1995). In addition, the 'astronaut family'[5] lifestyle of migrant entrepreneurs has been widely cited in migration articles (Chiang, 2008; Wong, 2004; Waters, 2002). Similar empirical observations were also found in Taiwanese businessmen immigrants in Los Angeles (Cohen, 2008, p.91), Australia and New Zealand (Chiang, 2004, 2008; Chiang and Hsu, 2006; Chee, 2003; Bedford et al., 2002; Friesen, 2001; Ho et al., 1998). They maintain second homes abroad and travel across transnational spaces. Chee's (2003) study shows that the father/husband is typically the breadwinner and sends money from Taiwan to the destination country to support their family members, usually an unemployed wife at home and their children attending Western schools.

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[5] The 'astronaut family' refers to a type of transnational lives of middle-class migrants in the context of Taiwanese and Hong Kong Chinese immigration to Canada, Australia and New Zealand during the 1980s and 1990s, which is characterised by the head of the household lives and works in the homeland, or another part of the world, while his wife and children live in the destination country (Aye and Guerin, 2001; Skeldon, 1995).

By comparison, research into migration from Taiwan to the UK is relatively limited to a few relevant studies in recent years conducted by Taiwanese research students in UK higher education institutions. For example, the study of Taiwan's foreign direct investment in UK high technology enterprises (Lin, 2004), and Taiwanese migrants' identity in the UK (Su, 2017; Hung, 2014). These studies were in the fields of finance, art and education partly due to UK's smaller migrant cohort compared to other English-speaking PBS countries, and partly because the increase in immigration flow from Taiwan to the UK only happened in the last ten years. As the journal, 'Taiwanese sojourners' listening experiences in London' (Chen, 2006) reports, there were only 1,634 Taiwanese in the UK in 1991, for short-term sojourns rather than long-term settlement (UK Home Office 2004, cited in Chen, 2006, p.37). In fact, the rise in the Taiwan-UK immigration trend is driven by the UK immigration policy change in 2008. As the UK immigration regulations significantly impact on its border controls and international migrants, it is necessary to briefly review UK immigration as the receiving country.

2.2: Setting the scene in the UK

2.2.1: UK: country of destination

The latest *Global Talent Survey* vote of more than 200,000 workers from nearly 200 countries shows that London has been the most desirable global city for foreign workers since 2014 (Murray-Nevill, 2018; *The Guardian*, 2018). As a Western country with political democracy and economic freedom, Britain has been a member of the major developed economies since 1975, the Group of Seven (G7) – the world's highest income countries (IMF, 2019). 'The empire on which the sun never sets' was used to describe British extensive colonial territories in the late 1700s/early 1800s when Australasia was added, but UK started to establish overseas colonies in the 16th century. Since then, British emigrants spread widely overseas, and during the 19th and early 20th centuries, the UK became the first industrial nation and had its golden era in history (Gale, 2018; Mathias, 2013; Darwin, 2009).

Its imperial legacy has enriched Britain in many ways – political, economic, scientific, technological and culturally, and many industries are still world leaders. London is the global centre of finance and tourism. Moreover, UK higher education enjoys a world-

class reputation that attracts many international students and is the fifth largest service industry in the UK. Research and development prosper, and the Human Development Index (HDI) ranks 13th in the world. Within Europe, the UK is located between north and west of the mainland and was a member of the EU until January 2020; EU was the UK's largest trading partner from 1973 to 2020 (House of Commons, 2020; UN, 2020). These inherent and peripheral elements all contribute to pull factors for international migration.

Today's UK is one of the top five countries with the highest immigrant population (IOM, 2020, p.26; 2019b; 2019c, 2017). The growing complexity of migration typologies after World War II has contributed to a multiracial British society, partly drawn by the freedom of movement of persons in the enlarged EU and partly due to the decolonisation of former UK colonies. According to ONS 2018 data[6], there were around 280,000 more people coming to the UK than leaving in 2017; about 9.4 million people living in the UK were born abroad, who make up 14.3% of the total population of the UK (66.4 million). Since the UK is the second most popular global destination for overseas students after the USA (House of Commons, 2021), student migrants have contributed positively to the UK's net migration and population growth (ONS, 2018).

It is necessary to briefly review British immigration history to understand where and when Taiwanese immigrants started to be part of contemporary British society. Britain's overseas emigrants and immigration inflows dating from the era of the British Empire, with many colonies across the world and a huge expansion in overseas trade. By the 1960s, except for multi-ethnic dockland areas of seaports, many cities remained almost entirely white due to immigration restrictions on 'coloured' people. 1945-1955 British immigration policy operated 'the hostile approach' to control the inflow of Asian and Black immigrants (Spencer, 1997, p.21). Racially discrimination was also the immigration policy of other English-speaking countries: the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, after WWII. Not until the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act by the British Conservative government did the number of non-white communities – ex-colonial British subjects of non-European origin – significantly grow in number in many major cities, most of them being Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and West Indian. In the 1960s-1980s, there was still a 'tough' approach taken to restrict large-scale immigration of

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[6] By June 2020, there were fewer passenger arrivals than the previous year due to the COVID-19 pandemic (ONS, UK, 2021), first reported by the World Health Organization (WHO) on December 31, 2019.

people of non-white origin entering the UK, while ethnic communities, including smaller-scale Chinese communities, showed steady growth (ibid., p.189).

However, from the mid-1990s, British immigration control moved towards an open policy to increase economic growth and national competitiveness in response to globalisation (Donmez and Sutton, 2020). In fact, the idea of globalisation originated from the Washington Consensus, supported by Thatcher's UK and Reagan's US administrations to reduce government intervention in the labour and capital markets (Castle et al., 2014). Under this neoliberal approach, the shift in British immigration policy was driven by market demand factors and economic considerations, and its resulting impact on immigration inflow is referred to as 'the post-1997 surge', when the British government issued more than 100,000 work permits each year in the early 2000s for both skilled and unskilled migrants to support the labour market. Asylum seekers were another immigrant source, contributing to the increasing number of foreign-born people in the UK. The freedom of movement within EU countries also attracted many people to live and work in Britain, making up today's international society. London hosts most immigrants, including highly skilled and low-skilled foreign workers. To manage and control diverse immigration inflows to the UK, in 2008, the government reformed its policy to a points-based system (Hansen, 2014).

2.2.2: The points-based immigration system

The points-based immigration policy is significant for understanding skilled international migration as it influences the migrants accepted by receiving countries. The points-based immigration system functions as a filter to sort out, accept and block certain foreigners from other countries' entry into national borders. This process is called 'picking winners' (Shachar, 2011; 2016; Hawthorne, 2005), especially designed to lure 'desirable' and 'wanted' migrants: 'those with brains, skills, and talent' (Shachar, 2016, p.177) based on applicants' professional skills and educational achievements, language proficiency, and so on.

The 'point' is the applicant's 'credit' as Shachar's (2016) title: '*Selecting by merit*' suggests. The applicant only gains entry admission when his or her overall points fit the entry criteria. The receiving country's government assesses an applicant based on a set of

valued attributes to which points are attached, such as financial condition, skill, occupation and education level, or according to age and language ability. In some cases, the issue of a visa is not simply on a pure points-based system; there may be additional conditions so selection can be more hybrid. However, given the heightened importance of national security after the 9/11 terrorist attack in the US, immigration control in many Western countries tends to be more stringent than before.

'The race for global talent' has been associated with the points-based system (PBS) since the mid-1960s. The US was first to amend its Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965, Canada's PBS to attract and select highly skilled foreigners followed in 1967, and then Australia and New Zealand introduced similar immigration policies. These four countries are thus generally referred to as 'traditional immigration countries' (Shachar, 2006, p.159). In the 1950s, Western countries' immigration policies were highly restricted, and people of non-white origin and undesirable skills were excluded. Consequently, the 1960's immigration policy reforms helped to reduce the notorious discriminatory nature of earlier immigration laws whereby ethnic, racial and country of origin were set as the criteria and limits of admission to the destination country (Docquier and Machado, 2016; Boeri et al., 2012).

While US immigration policy in 1965 stressed the rights of families to be together, Canada was first to change its attitude to accommodating immigrants, saying that immigration policy needs to be updated in response to both domestic and international political, economic and social circumstances. In 1962, Canada opened the gate to admit newcomers from other countries regardless of race, colour or nationality if applicants had the requisite education levels and skills. In 1967, the Canadian government officially introduced the PBS, making immigration policy more consistent with economic needs (Tolley and Young, 2011). Likewise, in 1970s, Australia and New Zealand also adopted similar skill-selective immigration approaches to allow certain foreign citizens entrance. The US Immigration Act of 1990 further revised the 1965 Act to increase the overall number of immigrant visas available to highly skilled and educated workers.

However, the PBS in these four countries was designed for different purposes and approaches. Koslowski (2018) divides them into three models: the Canadian 'human capital' model with the emphasis on education, language ability, flexibility, adaptability and experience; the Australian 'neo-corporatist' model based on state selection focusing on business and labour participation; and the US market-oriented and demand-driven

model that gives employers more rights in the selection of migrants. However, adjustments have been made to these approaches over the years to meet different domestic economic and social needs, mainly shifting towards the US market-driven model.

This points-based selection approach that attracts and welcomes foreign educated professionals has been a major factor in shaping the composition of immigrant communities and creating a multicultural society in the destination country. Given that the knowledge-based economy is crucial for keeping up with global competition, countries increasingly trend to adopt the PBS to lure talents from all over the world to maintain market momentum. Shachar (2016) describes this trend as 'copied and pasted' from the earlier models initiated by Canada and Australia. For example, countries like Switzerland, Denmark and the UK in Europe or Singapore in Asia are PBS policy followers. Consequently, English-speaking destinations, especially those with skill-selective immigration policies have attracted many more highly skilled workers from all over the world than other OECD countries (Brücker et al., 2012, p.17).

2.2.3: The evolving UK immigration policy

Unlike the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand with a long tradition of selecting highly skilled immigrants, Britain is not a 'traditional immigration country' aiming to build up the nation-state through receiving foreign citizens (Cerna, 2018; Spencer,1997). Historically, the UK's evolving process of immigration policy seemed to reveal that Britain did not welcome non-white immigrants and saw them as a problem in social integration. Many harsh control regulations were put into practice after WWII to prevent a mass influx of undesirable immigrants from pre-colonial territories – the requirement of work vouchers, virginity tests and essential identity proof for claims to have British origins (Spencer, 1997, pp.135-150). The parties in power took different stances on race relations and immigration issues, so immigration policies have undergone many changes. In fact, the UK's PBS for immigration was introduced by the Labour Government (in power from 1997 till 2010) and phased in between 2008 and 2010. It adopted an 'Australian style' with a couple of points-based visa categories in the first stage, then developed into an overarching system for non-EEA national work and study visas in 2008 (House of Commons Libraty, UK, 2009).

According to the House of Commons (UK, 2009;2018), there are five 'tiers' to the UK's points-based immigration system for highly skilled/high value migrants; sponsored skilled workers; low-skilled workers; students; and temporary workers. Each visa category has different conditions and mandatory eligibility requirements. However, the UK official report states that 'The tier for low-skilled workers has never been used' on the grounds that European Economic Area (EEA) members enjoy more privileges in the UK labour market (House of Commons, UK, 2018, p.3). This policy aims to 'attract the brightest and best to a United Kingdom that is open for business' claimed by the prime minister Theresa May in the 2018 skills-based immigration system policy paper. It inevitably favours high skill/high value migrants from outside the EU. In addition, the data shows that international students generally account for the majority of the migrant population.

However, UK immigration policy continues to change since the UK left the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020, and the new policy claims that EU and non-EU applicants will be treated equally under the immigration laws (Home Office, UK, 2020b). It can be seen as a reiteration of the PBS and the continued importance of economic migrants. As the policy introduction explains (ibid):

> We are ending free movement and will introduce an Immigration Bill to bring in a firm and fair points-based system that will attract the high-skilled workers we need to contribute to our economy, our communities and our public services. We intend to create a high wage, high-skill, high productivity economy. We will deliver a system that works in the interests of the whole of the UK and prioritises the skills a person has to offer, not where they come from.

Although public concerns about immigration in the receiving society are often linked to political or social issues, such as identity, citizenship and social integration, immigration policies are more likely changed for financial and economic reasons. The UK government considers recruiting low-skilled workers to meet labour market shortages, as well as the highly skilled in response to global competition, including attracting international students who pay high fees, as a source of income and to promote education and research output. This is the nature of UK immigration policy, for national interest and market profit, not for the benefit of immigrants or mutually beneficial international relationships. In addition, the UK and many developed states face an aging population, so migrants of working age can ameliorate this problem. In this sense, the PBS can make immigration not only 'economically advantageous, but also politically acceptable' (Boeri et al., 2012,

p.1). It thus functions as a mechanism to meet skills shortages in the labour market on the one hand, and to select desirable immigrants in response to public opinion on the other.

Under the PBS, individual migrants' rights and eligibility to live and work in UK are thus based on their immigration status. For example, the Tier 2 (General) work visa (replaced by the 'Skilled Worker visa' after 2021) allows a non-EEA qualified migrant to come to the UK to do an eligible job with an approved employer. After five years of continuous work in the UK, migrants generally have the right to apply to settle permanently in the UK, also known as 'indefinite leave to remain' (ILR). To be clear, a migrant with the requisite skills can enjoy the right to live, work and study for as long as s [he] wants, as well as apply for benefits, if eligible. With this 'settled status', migrants can further consider staying for 12 months and apply for British citizenship (GOV, UK, 2021). This policy can be an incentive package in economic and political terms. Economically, it encourages migrants to continue to work in the UK, a high-wage developed country. Politically, Taiwan's controversial political status due to not being recognised by the UN has made diplomatic recognition of Taiwan struggling and frustrating since 1971 [7]; therefore, the UK citizenship could offer Taiwanese migrants an 'insurance policy' (FitzGerald, 2014, p.135; Tseng, 1997, p.276) as with Taiwanese businessmen immigrating to Canada, to feel secure, protected and have more opportunities to integrate into the global market.

2.3: The presence of Taiwanese migrants

Due to the unfavourable policy for Asian and Black immigration, in the 16th to 19th centuries, the inflow of immigrants into Britain was mainly from European countries – French Protestants, Irish families and Jews (Walvin, 1984; Spencer, 1997). To meet the labour shortage after WWII, the UK increased its recruitment of foreign workers from Europe and there were also large numbers of migrants from former colonies, including Hong Kong Chinese (Rutter, 2015, p.38). However, in British immigration history, ethnic Chinese from mainland China, Hong Kong, South Asia or Taiwan and their racial relationships and community boundaries with the locals have been seldom explored,

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[7] In 1971, the UN refused to recognise the Republic of China (ROC), i.e., the Taipei regime, and repudiated its assertion of statehood. Instead, the PRC, i.e., the Beijing regime, was admitted into the UN in 1971 to represent China (Kent and Center, 2007; Van Fossen, 2007).

unlike the large communities of Asian and black subjects from Africa, the Caribbean and the Indian sub-continent. As James Watson comments, 'The Chinese are undoubtedly the least understood of all Britain's immigrant minorities.' (Watson, 1977, p.181, cited in Parker, 1998, p.67), let alone immigrants of Taiwanese origin.

According to the official British records, earlier Chinese seamen from mainland China arrived in the UK harbours in large numbers for shipping work during the peak period of Britain's maritime trade with Asia. Later, the visible influx of Chinese migrants came mainly from Hong Kong, a British colonial territory until 1997. Britain also received large numbers of ethnic Chinese from former British colonies in Southeast Asia, including refugees from Vietnam in the late 1970s and early 1980s and political asylum seekers from Mainland China since 1989 (Benton et al., 1997, pp.3-5, pp.76-77). When Taiwan was under Japanese rule between 1895 and 1945, given Britain's strict immigration policies on employment and the settlement for foreigners, there are no record of mass immigration from Taiwan to the UK before and after World War II.

Although official statistics both from the UK and Taiwan are imperfect, previous academic research has made efforts to draw a rough picture of Taiwanese-origin migrants in the UK. In the 1950s and 1960s, although Taiwanese students and other professionals increased in Britain, most of Taiwanese emigrants chose to study or stay and work in North America (Yee and Au, 1997, p.8; Benton et al., 1997, p.2). In the early 2000s, the UK Home Office data shows that people from Taiwan entered the UK mainly for tourism, business and study, so tended to be short-term 'sojourners' rather than long-term permanent settlers (Chen, 2006). In 2001, the UK population census showed the Taiwan-born population was about 6,588, with the number increasing after 2008, with a remarkable rise in 2012. The annual official estimates of Taiwanese-origin immigrants from 2000 to 2018 is shown below (see Figure 2.3). It is argued that the increased migration from Taiwan to the UK has a strong relationship with the UK points-based immigration system phased in between 2008 and 2010.

Figure 2.3: The number of Taiwanese-origin immigrants in Britain, 2000-2018
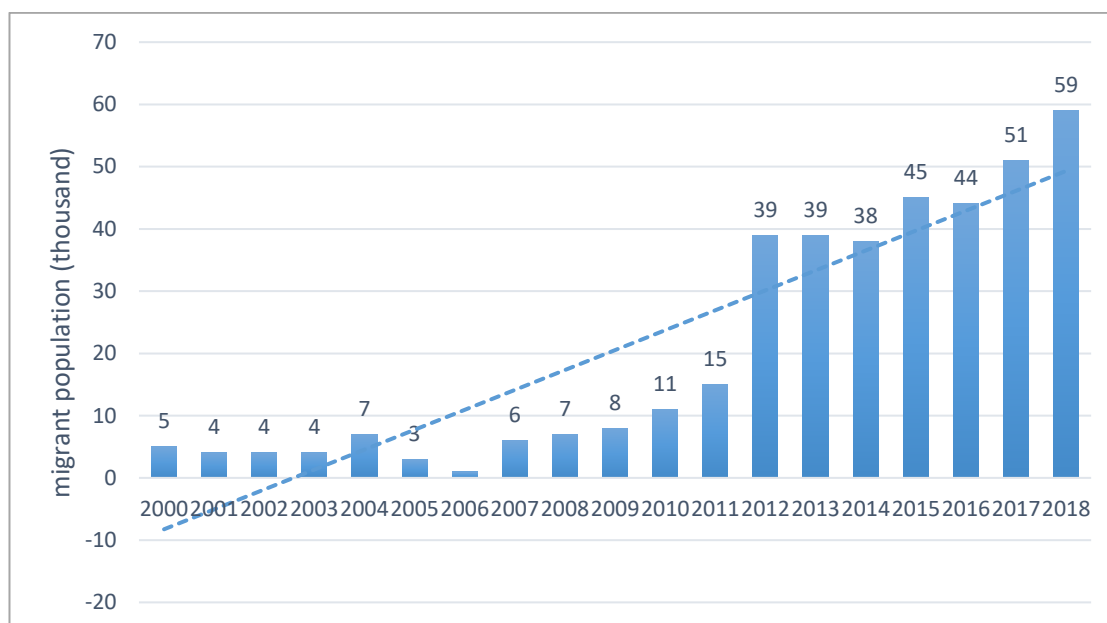
Note: The estimated number is based on country of birth, excluding residents in communal establishments and students
(Source: Annual Population Survey (APS), ONS, UK, 2018)

2.4: Taiwanese migrating to the UK after the 2000s

By 2000, a new Taiwanese settler arriving in the UK would experience difficulty finding any Taiwanese home associations established in the UK, no Taiwanese online networks sharing migration experiences and feelings of nostalgia together. From 2010 onwards, the number of Taiwanese immigrants in Britain has grown, and co-ethnic home associations with diverse interests have gradually built up. Although it is unclear that how many Taiwanese migrants are short-term sojourners in the UK, the official data shows that the size of the Taiwanese-origin people in metropolitan cities, such as London and Manchester, has increased. Currently, there are about ten UK-based Taiwanese home associations with different interests, including religion, cuisine, business, sports, politics, women, culture and academic research in different cities.

For example, the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce in the UK (UKTCC) was established in 2000 and then its second branch organisation – the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce in England - Junior Chapter (UKTCC-JC) – was founded in 2010 to help young Taiwanese migrants integrate into the British business market (UKTCC, 2019). In addition, the Facebook group 'Taiwanese Professionals in London' was set up in 2009

and some UK-based Taiwanese fashion designers share job-seeking experiences through a common social media platform. Apart from skilled employees, several entrepreneurs have successfully found a business niche in the UK global market; for instance, Bosse Computers in Manchester, founded by a Taiwanese businesswoman, was awarded 'the Best Practice Representative' in the technology sector in the 2018 Parliamentary Review (The Parliamentary Review, 2019). Taiwan's hugely famous dumpling chain restaurant, Din Tai Fung, which has branches worldwide, chose London as its first European restaurant in 2019 (*BBC News*, 2019a). The presence of Taiwanese professional migrants and entrepreneurs seeking to develop their careers in the UK global market has become more and more visible. However, little is known about their migration trajectories and work experiences within British society.

To some extent, Taiwanese skilled personnel's movement to the UK has been promoted by government policies on both sides and growing bilateral economic and trade cooperation in recent years. For example, Taiwan joined the UK's youth mobility scheme in 2012. Every year this program enables 1,000 Taiwanese young people who meet British visa criteria to live, work and study in the UK for up to two years. In addition, successive Taiwanese governments have offered scholarships for overseas study for many years, and especially encourage applications to the world's top 100 universities. At the same time, they offer specific recruitment schemes to attract citizens abroad to return home to work. All this has the potential to shape the migration culture, suggesting that overseas study and work experience give an extra edge to personal Curriculum Vitae. For some from middle class background, studying abroad is an option to 'polish education degree' if they fail to entry top universities in Taiwan. The governments and some private companies also encourage their employees to take a career break to go abroad as part of professional trainings. The phrase 'hai kuì pai'[8] (i.e., the sea turtle group) is thus used to call to the returnees return from abroad.

2.5: Summary

This chapter provides the research background of international migration from Taiwan to Western countries in the past few decades to identify the key migration drivers and

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[8] The meaning of 'hai kuì pai' describes a group of sea turtles swimming back from another ocean, the pronunciation of 'turtle' [kuì] is same to 'return' [kuì] in Mandarin.

patterns relating to the researched group. It argues that the research project is a missing piece in the existing literature on highly skilled migration from Taiwan to English-speaking PBS countries. To understand why people move 'from here to there', the first section familiarised the reader with the political, economic and social transformations in Taiwan and that accompany the trend of international migration, and how Taiwan's domestic migration cultures and outflows have been shaped in its society since 1980. In addition, the turning point in the immigration policies of receiving countries that resulted in skilled international migration from Taiwan is explained.

To set the study scene in the UK, the second part of this chapter outlines the key characteristics of the UK's economic and social contexts that have attracted highly skilled workers from abroad. It is important to trace back British immigration history and the EU free movement to understand the composition of British multiracial societies. To define the Taiwanese people in the UK as the researched group, this thesis drew on the available data from 2000 to 2019 from the Office for National Statistics website (ONS, UK) to show the increase in the Taiwanese migrant population, especially after 2008. It is evident that the UK's PBS has a significant pull effect in the worldwide immigration market, attracting certain people from Taiwan to Britain. In order to further discuss how it impacts on the migration process and the component of immigrants, it is followed by an explanation of the PBS in the UK context. Finally, this chapter provided the trajectory of Taiwanese immigration to Britain and the links to contemporary Taiwan-UK immigration.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

This chapter critically reviews key migration theories, concepts and the literature relating to highly skilled international migration, all of which inform the analytical framework, and focus on individual migration decision-making and related arguments to analyse micro-level research. It first clarifies the definition of migrant and highly skilled migrant for this research since different criteria and qualifications are recognised in different countries. Despite the inability of conventional migration knowledge to explain all types and processes of human mobility, empirical studies in recent years have emerged, reflecting the rising significance of highly skilled international migration.

As discussed, economic models have been criticised for failing to explain all the complex migration patterns, and interdisciplinary knowledge has gradually added non-economic perspectives to illustrate the relationship between people and places, for instance, urban studies. This section gives an overview of the evolving conceptualization of migration behaviours. At the micro level, it focuses on individual migration decision-making and summarises the key arguments and weaknesses within each approach. The factors influencing individual migration decision are analysed across disciplines and involve many aspects of personal and lives. To develop a systematic investigation based on theoretical migration knowledge, the final part proposes the application of Bourdieu's (1986) idea of forms of capital as an overarching thinking tool to explore migrants' experiences in three dimensions for further analysis.

3.1: Defining highly skilled migrants

3.1.1: Definition of a migrant

In migration studies, a migrant may refer to an 'immigrant, emigrant, incomer, newcomer, asylum seeker, refugee, settler, diaspora, expatriate, expat or exile.' Broadly, the Oxford English dictionary defines a migrant is 'a person who moves from one place to another, especially in order to find work or better living conditions.' The 1998 UN report explained an international migrant is 'any person who changes his or her country of usual residence' (UN, 1998). The 2019 International Migration report further defined international migrants as 'persons who are either living in a country other than their country of birth or

in a country other than their country of citizenship' and they are equated with foreign-born when estimating the migrant stock (UN, 2019, p.3).

Due to the complex nature of migration, the umbrella term 'migrant' was found to be unable to fit all circumstances and every research purpose. Therefore, the UN sought a clear definition to describe migrants and refugees in terms of their crucial distinctions in legal status and rights. In general, the meaning of international migrant as defined by the UN, is accepted by scholars, as it offers a descriptive interpretation (DESA, UN, 2021):

> While there is no formal legal definition of an international migrant, most experts agree that an international migrant is someone who changes his or her country of usual residence, irrespective of the reason for migration or legal status. Generally, a distinction is made between short-term or temporary migration, covering movements with a duration between three and 12 months, and long-term or permanent migration, referring to a change of country of residence for a duration of one year or more.

Regarding the estimates for long-term international migrants, both the UK and OECD have adopted the UN recommended definition, which will be used throughout this thesis, and which draws on the immigrant population dataset from the Office for National Statistics (ONS, UK) to investigate highly skilled Taiwanese migrants who have lived in the UK for more than 12 months. The definition of international migrant in this thesis is (DESA, UN, 2021):

> A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence.

However, it should be noted that data on international migrant stocks and inflows can be very different if different meanings are used or which do not necessarily accord with those adopted by other institutions.

3.1.2: Definition of highly skilled migrants

The meaning of highly skilled migrants again encounters problems of definition (Morita, 2017; Meier, 2014; Chaloff and Lemaitre, OECD, 2009; Koser and Salt, 1997). To differentiate from blue-collar foreign workers who deal with the 3Ds (dirty, dangerous and difficult) jobs in the migration literature, 'highly skilled' is a more empirical definition used to specify skill and education levels. The emerging research into this

group is also strongly linked to the skills-selective immigration programmes implemented by Western countries after the 1960s. Although there is no official definition, it is generally agreed in migration studies that individuals are highly skilled 'if they have attained a tertiary education level' (Bertoil et al., 2012, p.47) or 'having a university degree or extensive/equivalent experience in a given field' (Iredale, 2001, p.8). Meier (2014) suggests that 'migrant professionals' is a more appropriate term in relation to the specific talent and capacity of this group.

Today's recruiting the highly skilled has been greatly boosted as a result of the global knowledge economy and global talent competition, especially in most developed countries, like OECD members, but is not limited to countries with advanced economies (Czaika, Ed., 2018, p.2). In the early OECD reports, highly skilled workers were referred to as corporate transferees, businessmen, the independently wealthy, specialists, executives, senior managers, investors and foreign students (seen as a potential highly skilled labour force), or scientific and technical (S&T) personnel, such as scientists, engineers and IT experts.' (Salt, OECD, 1997; OECD, 2001). The OECD policy discourse encourages member countries to design and implement migration systems that facilitate the mobility of overseas skilled workers in a way that benefits both sending and receiving countries (OECD, 2008).

This thesis draws on the requirements of British immigration policies to draw a clear profile to identify the target group of the research. The definition of highly skilled migrants throughout this thesis refers to those who have tertiary education levels and hold a British Tier 1, Tier 2 or have a UK Spouse/Partner visa and are currently working and living in the UK, but excluding international students (Tier 4 visa) and working holiday groups (Tier 5 visa). In more detail, Tier 1 visa is for foreigners who are outstanding in science, the humanities, engineering, medicine, digital technology or the arts, such as recognised leaders (referred to as having 'exceptional talent') or emerging leaders (referred to as holding 'exceptional promise'). According to these standards, organization directors and managers, professional scholars, engineers, scientists, doctors, lawyers, award-winning sportsmen, filmmakers, or artists could fall into this category. Tier 2 (General) Work visa allows a non-EEA foreign skilled worker to stay to do eligible work for an approved employer. The UK Spouse visa, known as the Marriage visa, allows a foreign-born citizen to join their partner, either a British citizen or a UK settled person in the UK and to work in the UK without restrictions (GOV.UK, 2019).

3.2: Migration decision-making: An interdisciplinary field

Population movements in human history have been seen as phenomena that people passively respond to in a changing environment driven by internal and external forces, such as warfare, economic development, social transformation and natural disasters. For decades, research topics across disciplines have contributed to the understanding of human migration behaviours. From rural-urban migration to international mobility, there are various analytical levels and scholarship is not limited to the social sciences. For example, scientists have engaged in cooperative studies with scholars and governments to collect data related to climate change migration in recent years (De Haas et al., 2020). At the micro level, research can explain why individuals decide to move; meso-level studies focus on migrant communities, social networks and transnational immigration types, between the country of origin and receiving country; the macro level approach discusses the institutional forces within the worldwide system that shape migration flows and patterns, such as colonial power and global economic crisis. The spatial and temporal scope of migration studies remains wide, depending on individual research projects and scholars' interests.

There are different theoretical concerns regarding the various stages in the migration process. Some research reviews geographical, demographic, historical, political and economic factors to explain why people move from one location to another; for instance, neoclassical economic theory, human capital theory and the historical-structural model. Some look into the migration process itself, offering insights into the role of agency and its effects on migration direction, like migration network theory. Others examine migrant concerns after relocation, adding sociocultural and anthropological perspectives to study migrants' identity, integration and transnational linkages, for instance, diaspora theory and transnationalism. The results inevitably lead to perceiving the drawback of the lack of a common migration theory as a bridge between the different disciplines (Van Riemsdijk and Wang, 2016; Brettell and Hollifield, 2014; King, 2013). Due to the complex nature and various scale of international migration, it is generally agreed by scholars that an interdisciplinary approach is useful to unpack the diverse issues within migration processes.

Even though traditional theoretical knowledge of international migration is inadequate to explain the unprecedented human movement across national borders, empirical research in the past ten years has added evidence to improve our understanding of the international

mobility of the highly skilled, providing new insights into migrants' decision-making and work/non-work experiences. All the theoretical assumptions and empirical observations will guide the analysis of this thesis. Before discussing the research outcome, it is crucial to review the existing literature to identify the key debates and issues related to this study.

3.3: Economic explanations for international migration

3.3.1: Neoclassical economic theory

In the 19th century, the geographer Ernst Ravenstein (1885) analysed demographic data from more than twenty countries and published his influential article: '*The laws of migration'*, reporting that economic reasons for migration flows are no less important than geographical or other factors. This was later echoed by many economists, arguing that labour migration between two areas happens as an essential part of economic development. At the micro level, neoclassical migration theory assumes that human mobility is mainly caused by geographical differentials, such as population size and wage levels, and people decide to move to a new place to seek higher earnings. That is, migration is mainly for economic reasons. As a result, migration should eventually achieve supply-demand equilibrium between two places and subsequent migration behaviour will decline. From this perspective, people tend to move from labour-surplus and low-wage places to labour-shortage and high-wage areas to maximise their earning potential (De Haas et al., 2020; De Haas, 2010; Todaro and Maruszko, 1987; Harris and Todaro, 1970; Ranis and Fei, 1961).

It cannot be denied that the early economists made a direct contribution to migration models that predict human behaviour, and their assumption above is still valid for the analysis of contemporary migration patterns. From the economic perspective, individuals move to another destination mainly because of the desire to earn more money. The decision-making process for migration thus involves the comparison of working conditions in what Borjas (1989) called the 'immigration market' in different regions, and destination selection is based on a cost-benefit calculation. However, one of the criticisms of traditional migration theories is an overemphasis on economic factors in explaining the reasons for human mobility. Since technology innovations, transportation convenience and globalisation have facilitated human movement, international migration for economic

reasons can be criticized as an oversimplification, ignoring its complex nature. The second contested premise is that the decision maker is assumed to be a rational actor with access to income information and understands regional differences that can inform [s]he whether and where to move (De Haas et al., 2020). It explains migration from low-wage to high-wage areas without taking return migration into consideration. In fact, Gmelch (1980, p.143) argues that 'many migrants are ill-prepared for their return' due to the unknown changes that happened in their home societies while they are away.

In fact, the balance between income levels and economic development in various regions is harder to achieve than early neoclassical migration theorists believed. Today's international migrant population continues to increase, and migration patterns are more complex than ever. Over the past two decades, not only have people from the poorer South continued to move to the affluent North, but highly skilled workers from developing or developed countries cross national borders to work worldwide as a result of the development of knowledge-based economies (Bailey and Mulder, 2017; Iredale, 2001; Mahroum, 2000). To see sedentary behaviour as the norm in human society is debatable as people migrate for different needs; however, voluntary international migration needs certain motivations and resources to be in place. The UN data shows that international migrants worldwide were nearly 272 million in 2019, and in the past two decades, the total number grew steadily by an average of 2.4% per annum, only making up about 2.8%-3.6% of the world's population (UN 2019, p.3; UN, 2021).

3.3.2: Human capital theory

Neoclassical theory fails to explain various migration phenomena in the labour market other than geographical wage differentials. To complement this narrow view and to reconsider how migration can effectively remove income differentials, the economist Larry Sjaastad (1962, p.80) proposed that migration is an activity that enables people to efficiently improve their personal resource allocation. Because the process of migration itself incurs costs, the rates of return on resources allocated to migration are an important incentive. In this context, migration is treated as an investment and an individual seeks to increase their expected future earnings and to receive benefits in their destination. Sjaastad (1962, p.87) applied human capital concept and used education as an analogy to show that migration, training and experience can be viewed as individual investments in

human resources, and occupational upgrading in the host country could increase the overall return on migration.

At the micro level, this model is extended to include more possible variables, such as migrant character and the available information for facilitating movement when considering the process and outcomes of migration (Wood, 1981; Rothenberg, 1977). For example, Chiswick (1999, pp.181-183) argues that those who migrate for their own economic opportunities, i.e., 'economic migrants', tend to be 'more able, ambitious, aggressive, entrepreneurial, or otherwise more favo[u]rably selected' than their counterparts who stay in their place of origin. Moreover, these migrant characteristics per se create favourable opportunities for them to enter a new labour market, and 'the high-ability workers' are likely to benefit more if the destination country offers greater wage differentials in relations to skill levels. De Haas et al. (2020; Castle et al., 2014) agree that the nature of migration is selective and human capital theory helps to understand the inflow of specialised workers to certain industries and areas, the higher rate of migration of young people and highly skilled workers being a good example of this.

Human capital theory sees knowledge and skills as valuable assets to help an individual make a rational decision to move and to expect optimal returns on their personal education and training (De Haas et al., 2020; Creese et al., 2012; 2008; De Haas, 2010; Blundell et al., 1999; Becker, 1964, 2009; Sjaastad, 1962). Given that the highly segmented labour market system in today's global knowledge-based economies, the international migration of highly skilled people is closely linked to the development of higher education. International students are often regarded as potential skilled workers by their host country to fill a possible labour shortage in the domestic market. This theoretical approach has been considered crucial for understanding international students, the highly skilled and youth migration (De Haas et al., 2020; Bauer and Zimmermann, 1998).

3.3.3: New economics of labour migration (NELM)

Some economists revised neoclassical migration model by rethinking migration as a household decision to minimise the economic risks in different geographical locations. They argue that job seeking is not about personal earnings alone, but is associated with a household's comparative income position and the total sum of a family's utility (Taylor

et al., 1996; Stark and Taylor, 1991; Stark, 1978). This amendment took an idea from empirical studies, that people tend to migrate in response to ongoing structural transformations in economic and social development, which often led to unequal and uncertain living conditions for certain groups. Consequently, migration can be a household strategy to deal with these changes, seeking a better economic opportunity to ameliorate the disadvantages caused by structural factors (McDowell and De Haan, 1997; Wood, 1981).

NELM theorists stress that migration decision-making is often made by the household as a group, rather than an individual. They argue that a feeling of relative deprivation stimulates people to migrate, and family members need to work in different places to obtain a higher income or be in a better investment environment (De Haas et al., 2020; McDowell and De Haan, 1997; Stark and Taylor, 1991). Their suggestions were mainly derived from many case studies of rural-to-urban internal movement and developing-to-developed international migration. For example, some concerned the remittances sent by international labour migrants back to their family members left behind in the country of origin. The focus was more on those living in 'an initially non-optimal location' (Graves and Linneman, 1979), in less-developed countries (Stark and Taylor, 1991), uncertain circumstances or economic hardship (De Haas et al., 2020, p.55; McDowell and De Haan, 1997), where any improvement in their livelihoods and mobility within their social systems was very difficult. Migration offers different economic opportunities in a different place and the potential to advance their social status in their country of origin by increasing the family's overall purchasing power.

NELM points out that feeling relatively deprived within their original communities could stimulate people to move out (De Haas et al., 2020; Castle et al., 2014; McDowell and De Haan, 1997; Stark and Taylor, 1991). In fact, this happens in both developing and developed societies where economic inequality and class stratification exist, so shaping the migration culture. However, this model often places discussions of migration within the migration and development nexus concerned with the international movement of low-skilled labour from developing to developed countries. Another questionable issue with this theory is that, while family members have a significant influence on migration decision-making, this approach assumes that the household thinks and acts in co-operation as a unit as striving to sustain, share and improve their livelihoods, ignoring the intra-family conflicts and inequality between family members, especially gender roles

and generation gaps involved in individual decision-making (De Haas et al., 2020; De Haas and Fokkema, 2010). Migration is thus often a difficult, negotiated decision to come to due to the different values and interests of family members.

3.4: Non-economic factors for explaining international migration

3.4.1: Economic and non-economic influences can operate in parallel

In the process of developing migration theories, the economy-centred model dominated early migration studies but also received a lot of criticism for losing sight of the non-economic factors that influence individual migration decisions, as well as real-world barriers to movement. It is not the case that the economic migration theories are likely to be wrong, but that they are incomplete. From an economist's point of view, the assumption is that migration behaviour is mainly revealed through numerical data and deductive logics (Martin, 2015). By taking a quantitative approach, they focus on the relationship between population migration and economic development. Some mentioned the existence of non-economic factors affecting migration decision-making, without addressing them through empirical investigation. This oversimplified model has thus been subsequently extended by political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists and scholars from different fields to add to the knowledge base of migration studies.

This section outlines how early economists and current researchers from different fields commented on the important role of non-economic factors influencing individual migration decisions. This part of the literature review highlights how economic and non-economic factors are equally important – from the past to the present – and intersect in the process and outcomes of migration. In addition, unlike the numeral calculation of economic value generated by migration benefits, non-economic factors present more complex variables involving visible and invisible differentials within individuals, such as age, gender, personality, preference and social background (Carling, 2002). Russell King challenged 'the immobility paradox' in the global migration era (Malmerg, 1997, p.21), arguing that migration is, 'for some, but not for others' (King, 2013, p.5); likewise, international migration for economic reasons is for some, but not for others.

3.4.2: Beyond and within economic models

When Ravenstein (1885) conducted population census research and inquired into the motives led migrants to leave their family homes, he had already predicted there would be various answers in his paper. However, the result was that most migrants were 'in search of work of a more remunerative or attractive kind than that afforded by the places of their birth' (ibid., p.181). This immediately raises the question of, what do migrants perceive as 'attractive kind' of work? In a similar vein, when considering migration as based on a rational cost-benefit calculation, Sjaastad's (1962, pp.83-86) *'The Costs and Returns of Human Migration'* recognised that movement can incur 'non-financial costs' but he chose to exclude the 'psychic' costs – migrants' reluctance to leave familiar surroundings, family and friends. He regraded these costs as invisible because they involve no material loss and are difficult to quantify. Nevertheless, he points out that personal preferences for particular occupations and surroundings are closely associated with non-money returns, and thus positively or negatively influence location choice and resource allocation. In addition, Borjas (1989, p.457) notes that individuals migrate to benefit 'either in terms of psych satisfaction or income'.

On the other hand, Sjaastad (1962) emphasises the importance of individual characteristics, such as age and gender, as variables in how potential migrants view the returns on migration. This idea is in line with the early sociologist and demographer, Everett Lee (1966), whose article *'A theory of migration'* provided early insights into the interplay between migrant characteristics and the sets of plus and minus factors at the places of origin and at destination, known as the push-pull model (De Haas et al., 2020; Carling, 2002). As Lee (1966, p.57) states, 'Persons with different characteristics react differently to the balance of plus and minus factors at origin and destination'. This suggests there is plenty room for researchers to demonstrate the influence of non-economic factors on migration behaviour at the individual-level analysis. In addition, Philip Martin's (2015) '*Economic Aspects of Migration*' indicates that people migrate to earn money in order to 'buy the goods and services that maximise their utility or satisfaction'. As he states (ibid, p.90):

> Economists assume that individuals survey the options available to them and choose where to live and work, and they choose the combination of money from work and leisure time that maximizes their well-being.

This immediately raises the second question: how do migrants perceive and define satisfaction and well-being in a new destination?

3.4.3: Migration network theory

A meso-level theory worthy of attention is migration network theory, which focuses on who influences migrants or would-be migrants and in what ways. At first, it was mainly built on early observations of group migration, the so-called 'chain migration' (Price, 1963; Kenny, 1962) especially from developing to developed countries. However, whether it is an individual or group international movement, the important role of migrant social networks in shaping migration patterns and in developing a 'self-perpetuating' route in a 'path-dependent' process, is highlighted in the existing literature (De Haas et al., 2020; p.65). Both economists and social scientists have paid attention to the impact of potential migrant networks on decisions to migrate, migration resources, social integration and return migration.

Migration network theory emphasises how interpersonal relationships, especially co-ethnic ties, such as family members and friends, can be crucial in leading a migrant to a specific destination and reducing the costs of international migration (De Haas et al., 2020; Dekker and Engbersen, 2014; Poros, 2011; Haug, 2008). Within migrant networks, an individual is assumed to be a 'node' tied to ethnic kinship, community, as well as other related members, groups and institutions involved in the migration process (Poros; 2011, p.2). As such, migrant networks connect people and institutions at the places of origin and destination, increasing the chances of moving to a specific area (Castle et al., 2014; Curran, 2002; Massey, 1990). In practice, such connections function as an instrumental agency, providing information and resources to help reduce potential risks and anticipated costs, to facilitate the passage of the migration.

After the migrant's arrival, migration networks continue to influence the migrant's resettlement, transnational activities and even everyday life (De Haas et al., 2020; Poros, 2011; Sanders and Nee, 1996; Massey and España, 1987). For example, empirical studies show that Latina and Latino students in the Los Angeles area tend to rely heavily on family and friends when considering their choice of college (Perez and McDonough, 2008). In another case study, Jewish and Japanese immigrants had more chances of

upward social mobility in the receiving country with financial support from their families (Sanders and Nee, 1996).

Nevertheless, co-ethnic social networks can have positive and negative influences on migrant integration in the host country. On the one hand, the shared ethnic ties offer physical and mental support for migrants in the new environment. On the other hand, it may have the negative impact on social integration into the host country. Scholars argue that ethnic migrants' social networks provide a sense of self-recognition for migrants who share a common language, identity, cultural or group interests, which can produce ethnic homogeneity and at the same time, can segregate from the mainstream society (D'Angelo, 2015; Poros, 2011; Sivanandan, 1990). The existence of co-ethnic social networks certainly can influence migration decision-making, and has been observed to have different impacts in terms of age, gender, and other demographic variables. Empirical evidence has shown that social networks, whether co-ethnic group ties or relationships with others, affects migrants' daily lives. The feeling alienation or lack of social network support in the host society tends to contribute to return migration decisions (Noble, 2013; Poros, 2011; Reynolds, 2010; Haug, 2008; Cassarino, 2004).

3.4.4: Social network and social capital

Notably, the difference between 'social networks' and 'social capital' can be very confusing in migration studies, and many have been criticised being used these terms loosely (D'Angelo, 2015). This thesis distinguishes between these two phrases for clarity and explains their origins. The concept of social capital was first introduced by the economist, Glenn Loury (1977), to describe the intangible resources offered by family or community members to help younger generations succeed in the process of socialisation (Coleman, 1990, p.300; Putnam, 2000). In migration studies and for this research, the meaning of social capital can be drawn from Bourdieu's (1986, pp.248-249) work:

> Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively -owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.

Pierre Bourdieu's (1986, p.249) understanding of 'social capital' emphasises the resources embedded in a network that can benefit an individual's opportunities and interests. As he asserts, 'the profits which accrue from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity which makes them possible' (ibid). The social relationship itself and the amount and quality of these resources constitute two main elements of his instrumental argument.

This concept was later extended by Robert Putnam (1993) in his study of the relevance between social capital, civic engagement and political participation, while he focuses on the impact of networks on social cohesion. He argues that social capital is positively associated with individuals' community and political participation as bringing about the potential benefit of social well-being (Kindler et al., 2015; Carpiano, 2006; DeFilippis, 2001; Durkheim, 1951). The idea of social capital is expanded by Putnam (1995, pp.664-665):

> By 'social capital,' I mean features of social life—networks, norms, and trust— that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives. […] the social capital is of a 'bridging' sort—then the enhanced cooperation is likely to serve broader interests and to be widely welcomed. Social capital, in short, refers to social connections and the attendant norms and trust.

Putnam treated social capital as a public good that contributes to developing and maintaining democracy. His notion of social capital lies in three key elements: networks (especially voluntary associations), moral norms and social value (trust) within a region's community, that 'facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit' (1995, p.67). He suggests that successful accumulation of social capital within a region creates a well-functioning economic system and promotes political integration.

Putnam (1995, 1993) further developed the idea of social capital into two sub-types: bonding capital and bridging capital, widely used by the bulk of migration scholars. Bonding capital is more homogeneous, referring to a relationship that connects individuals to others who share some background similarities, such as the link between members of an ethnic migrant association or a local sports cub. Bridging capital refers to the link between an individual and people from broader backgrounds or societies; for example, the relationship between members of a national trade union who live in different geographical areas. Bridging capital in the migration context is considered to be the linkage between co-ethnic migrants and others, especially local residents of the mainstream society. The stronger bridging social capital is, the more likely migrants are

to have higher degree of social integration into the host society. However, Putnam and Unum (2007) later provide contradictory evidence conducted in the US to argue that ethnic diversity driven by increasing immigration tends to be detrimental to social solidarity and social capital.

Clearly, Bourdieu and Putnam use the notion of social capital in a different way. Bourdieu considers that a network can enable a person to access resources, and is embodied as individual capital in relation to social power, while Putnam discusses the effect of social cohesion within a community-based network to serve public interests. In this context, the concept of a social network used in this research generally refers to the relationships and connections between individuals and others (including organisations), which does not especially imply a closed boundary. Rather, it is an open and wider configuration that encircles communities and groups, and this type of relationship can be strong or weak. For example, friendship in the workplace can be seen as this kind of social network that members may have only a nodding acquaintance.

On the other hand, social capital can be recognised only when resources from individual social networks can be acquired and distributed in a beneficial way, which requires a deeper degree of interaction with others than social networks and has a closed boundary (Bourdieu, 1986; Poros, 2011). As Massey et al. (1993) observed, individuals who have closer ties to someone familiar with international experience or living abroad are more likely to migrate, and the migration probability is higher when the effect of social capital on an individual migrant can be mobilised.

3.4.5: Aspiration-ability theory

Castles and Miller's '*The Age of Migration*' was first published in 1993 and reflects the acceleration of international migration in the late 20th century. Many questions have been raised by researchers in different fields about the applicability of traditional migration theories to understand why people choose to move. As many Western countries have legal barriers to regulate immigration, a national border across regions is neither fluid nor permeable; people may wish to migrate but be unable to do so. In fact, highly skilled people may wish to work abroad and take the initiative to prepare for outmigration, even when they are still constrained and subject to institutional regulations in their destination

country. For example, the 2008 UK's PBS sets an annual entry cap and minimum salary thresholds for people who can take the skilled worker route. In terms of expertise, individuals with certain skills in specific fields are more sought-after than others, such as outstanding scientists, sportsmen and artists, as previously mentioned (see Chapter 3.1.2).

Given that these external forces have an impact on individual migration decision-making, Carling (2002) suggests 'the aspiration/ability model' to further address how emigration environments shape individual decision-making (Bonifazi and Paparusso, 2019; De Haas et al., 2020; Carling, 2014; De Haas, 2003). According to the aspiration-ability theory, to convert a migration desire into an actual action requires a person to perceive and judge the real circumstances in both the country of origin and the destination country, in terms of their personal abilities and structural opportunities. Regardless of the meso- and macro-level factors, moving abroad cannot be put into action solely by personal aspirations without including individual characteristics such as the resources, personality, and skills that enable her/him to make it happen. This self-perception and self-judgement at the pre-migration stage is crucial for calculating the overall costs and benefits of international migration. Decision-making tends to be more predictable when 'intentions and plans reflect both the desire and the realism of migration' (Carling, 2014, p.5).

This theory can be seen as an extension of Lee's (1966) earlier ideas, suggesting that people interact with a set of push-pull factors within a structural system in a different way, according to their social demographic characteristics (Carling, 2014). At the micro level, the aspiration-ability theory distinguishes between those who have both the desire for and are capable of international movement and those who are immobile. Therefore, it is helpful to explain highly skilled migration against the backdrop of the selective immigration system, and to further predict future migration intentions for a more comprehensive understanding of the entire migration path.

3.4.6: Migrant identity and place belongingness

Migrant identity and place belongingness refer to the way an individual interacts with others and integrate into the host country, which has implications for future migration decision-making. An individual's personal and social identity – age, gender, class, position and occupational status – inevitably undergo a reformatting process after

encountering many differences throughout the migratory trajectory (Giddens, 1991). It is necessary to understand migrant identity beyond the racial and ethnic axes and to add more points of concern about the places where they work and live. As Berry and Henderson (2002, p.3, cited in Hudson and Mehrotra, 2015, p.652) indicate, 'the places and spaces in which individuals and groups operate influence how race and ethnicity have come to be understood, expressed, and experienced.' Previous empirical work has revealed the changing nature of migrant identity after moving to a new destination. Some people gradually change their social identities, either naturally or deliberately, to adapt to the new places; others choose not to or fail to integrate with 'the others'; some find it hard to develop a sense of belonging, while others may see the receiving country as their second home. Therefore, the better understanding of migrant identity and the sense of belonging at the new place can help to estimate whether they decide to stay permanently or only temporarily.

Socialist Jenkins (2014, p.43) believes that 'individual identity formation has its roots in our earliest process of socialisation.' International migration brings about changes in personal social status, hence earlier individual identity needs to adapt to fit the new surroundings within a new social context. In this sense, identity and belongingness are developed and embedded in social structures and closely linked to place. 'The mutually constitutive relationship' between geography and identity has increasingly been stressed in geography and cultural studies (Hudson and Mehrotra, 2015, p.652). Scholars like Schiller and Çağlar (2013) argue that the study of migration traditionally focuses on nation-state and ethnic boundaries, neglecting the role of locality shaping migrant pathways, and the dynamic relationship between migrants and their places of resettlement. In this way, Massey (2005, p.59) conceptualises 'space as open, multiple and relational, unfinished and always becoming', which helps to explain how place/space continues to constitute the self, identity and difference. As Massey (ibid., p.9) states:

> Space as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny. […] Multiplicity and space as co-constitutive. [...] space as always under construction. [...] is a product of relations-between, relations which are necessarily embedded material practices which have to be carried out, it is always in the process of being made. It is never finished; never closed.

Most migration studies argue that migrant identity is fluid because moving away from the familiar homeland makes a person go through an uprooting experience and identity then presents a multiple or hybrid nature after relocation. This is especially the case for first-

generation migrants. In addition, transnational and diaspora theorists have observed that migrant identity and attachment to their original countries can reshape their collective identity, and migrants reproduce their ethnic culture in the host society by participating in co-ethnic group activities or sharing common experiences (Ralph and Staeheli, 2011; Brinkerhoff, 2008; Sackmann et al., 2003).

Although identity per se has been used to describe different dimensions in social science, such as political or religious identity, migrant identity is often discussed along the axis of ethnic boundaries or national citizenship and, to some extent, implies the notion of belonging (Castle et al., 2014; Antonsich, 2010a; 2010b). In addition, 'belonging' is criticised for being an expression of self-perception, lacking clear meaning (Antonsich, 2010a; Malone, 2007; Nagel and Staeheli, 2005). Hence, scholars have suggested that identity and belonging can be examined together through the emotional connotation of 'feeling at home' and 'feeling safe' in a place (Yuval-Davis; 2006, p.197), 'place-belongingness' (Antonsich, 2010a, p.646) or 'an attachment to place' (Cohen, Ed., 1982, p.11), to find out whether migrants perceive themselves as part of the local community/society. As Antonsich (2010a, p.646) illustrates, '"home" here stands for a symbolic space of familiarity, comfort, security, and emotional attachment', and this intimate attachment has been found to be linked to different locations, including one's own house, social actors such as kin, friends, neighbours and community members or to one's homeland (Back et al., 2007; Savage et al., 2004).

In this context, a sense of belonging becomes apparent within a boundary within which members share common symbols, behaviours or rituals, what Jenkins (2008, p.138; 2014, p.141) describes as 'a public doing'. In addition, Burrell (2006, p.141) argues that community has become 'a powerful label' used to group people with similar backgrounds and is established by social networks and social capital among members. For example, a migrant community generally refers to members who share a common identity based on co-ethnic ties and place of origin, who retain transnational links with their homelands (Cohen, 2008). However, traditional migration theories have been criticised for neglecting migrants' local connections in the host country. As highly skilled migrants are likely to be qualified to work and live abroad for a longer period together with their family members, recent work has shifted the focus of migrant identity from transnational spaces to their embeddedness at the local level (Meier, 2014, p.7). This thesis takes a place-based approach to explore migrants' local ties to the host country: that is, the local community

or place they feel some sense of belonging to, the level of comfort of staying in a new destination, and how they perceive this local connection.

3.4.7: Transnationalism and integration on 'the myth of return'

The 'myth of return' refers to international migrants' hesitation about return migration decision-making (Carling, 2015; Bolognani, 2007). The two concepts of transnationalism and integration, associated with migrant identity and belonging, are often used to examine return migration intentions. In fact, transnational connections have been part of capitalist economics in human history, especially economic transactions across borders, and today's transportation convenience and technology advances intensify transnational connections in both scope and scale (Brettell and Hollifield, 2014; Jackson et al., 2004). Empirical studies have shown that transnational activities, such as traveling back to the homeland to visit may satisfy the desire to return, but can also facilitate return migration by increasing the information and support required to prepare the process of re-migration (Walton-Roberts, 2004). In some cases, those with a legal immigration status tend to have more engagement with transnational traveling. However, a higher degree of migrant transnationalism does not directly lead to return migration; rather, migrants may enjoy and take advantages of such cross-border activities to reconnect with their networks, including investing and channelling capital and goods (Brettell and Hollifield, 2014; Crang et al., Eds., 2004).

On the other hand, integration issues are often discussed around economic, social, cultural, and political aspects, while related policies vary in different liberal regimes within the EU (Joppke and Morawska, 2003). Basically, obtaining citizenship is often seen as an important right, allowing migrants to integrate into the host country and highly skilled professionals are best positioned to enjoy multiple citizenship. In fact, dual citizenship or dual nationality is allowed and recognised in the UK, Canada and many European countries. The flexibility of dual citizenship can function as an 'insurance policy' to reduce any risk from the country of origin, including political and economic disadvantages. Professionals and entrepreneurs above all, are the immigrants most likely to take advantage of this policy in their migration cost-benefit calculations (FitzGerald, 2014, p.135; Tseng, 1997, p.276).

In terms of social and cultural aspects, a loose principle of assimilation laws, referred to as multiculturalism, is arguably only political rhetoric without any real function in practice and, to some extent, has become a mechanism of ethnic segregation, delineating separate migrant enclaves (Johnston et al., 2007). In the UK, the multicultural policy towards the ideal of mutual respect and tolerance in the host country was adopted to manage various migrant cohorts (Joppke and Morawska, Eds., 2003). Although highly skilled migrants are more likely to economically integrate into the local labour market, many studies have shown that first-generation migrants who bring their previous culture with them into a new destination are unlikely to fully integrate in the socio-cultural spheres. FitzGerald (2014, p.126) argues that assimilation is not the natural condition of immigrants. Under multiculturalism policies, migrants who have made the UK their home for a considerable number of years may still regard themselves as foreigners in the host society rather than live a double life under this policy.

Transnationalism and integration are two broad concepts with political, economic, social or cultural dimensions that have generated contradictory and implicit conclusions for explaining return migration. The assumption that stronger transnational ties or weaker integration may contribute to return neglects the essence of duality or the multiplicity of migrants' identity. For example, Walton-Roberts (2004) argues that the intention of return may be just a nostalgic sentiment and eventually not come true. He concludes that to understand the reason why return migration does not happen requires examining migrants' original backgrounds and situations, as well as their resettlement contexts in their new destinations. In fact, the transnational nature of highly skilled migrants and their higher chances of gaining citizenship from the receiving country add more variables for explaining their intention to return.

3.5: Global cities, amenities and highly skilled migrants

3.5.1: Destination choices of the highly skilled

With the more open and selective immigration policies of traditional immigration countries such as the US and Canada, and the recognition that importing human capital has a significant and positive impact on the knowledge economy, in the early 2000s, some Western European countries, such as Germany and the UK, sought to adopt similar

policies to attract the highly skilled to work there (Koslowski, 2018). The increasing globalisation of labour markets and new immigration opportunities further complicate the mobility patterns of the highly skilled, posing challenges to the assumptions about migration decision-making based on conventional wisdom. Iredale (2001) argues that the internationalisation of higher education by many Western developed countries was to trade educational services to earn export revenue, and to offer skills and the language ability for international students who wish to entry the global labour market where Western education certification is generally recognised.

Knowledge-based economics has stirred up the 'global competition for the highly skilled' and 'the upcoming battle for brains' (Boeri et al., 2012; Brücker et al., 2012). In the worldwide 'immigration market' (Borjas, 1989), those who are qualified for entry to more than one destination country will be able to choose their best option. Therefore, the interplay between high-skilled demand and individual preference creates a process of mutual selection between receiving states and highly skilled migrant candidates (Czaika, Ed. 2018, P.2; Czaika and Parsons, 2018, p.27; Chiswick, 2011). Their destination choice depends upon their personal characteristics, preferences, work status, and the purpose of their immigration, as discussed above.

Beyond economic incentives, as Zaletel (2006) points out, each receiving country has its own intrinsic advantages and disadvantages. For example, in terms of international language, English-speaking countries are more attractive so that Germany has become less popular in the competition for highly skilled migrants. However, if sunshine and good weather are important, England could be the less favoured of the two options. Zaletel (2006, p.628) also identifies two 'soft' indicators as national advantages for pulling highly skilled workers: the quality of the education system and the supply-demand chain for research and development. In some cases, skilled migration to specific destinations is for more than merely economic considerations. Bauder (2017) argues that the relationship between highly skilled migrants and their receiving counties can be mutually beneficial. The former can be highly mobile in search of not only economic benefits, but social or political benefits for both themselves and the state, institution or sponsor facilitating international migration.

3.5.2: The city's amenities and perceived well-being

It is generally accepted that most empirical cases support the argument that international skilled migration happens following economic incentives, while Massey et al. (1993, p.435) found that international migration may occur when prospective migrants think the living conditions in the destination are 'psychologically attractive' even if the expected earnings are not higher. This finding implies that place matters, as the expected well-being and welfare system offered by the destination country varies in different locations. In terms of skilled labour shortage and urban development, policy makers are urged to design strategies for attracting highly skilled people to their cities that engage in knowledge economies. Consequently, defining an attractive environment for certain migrant groups to work and live in means the study site focus can shift from a country to a city.

Since skilled professionals are generally more qualified and privileged than others in immigration potential, they tend to be more internationally mobile than others and their migratory patterns and experiences have been widely observed since the late 1990s. The emerging empirical work on transnational elites, scientists, skilled expatriates, executives and entrepreneurs is often based on world cities, such as London, New York, Boston, Hong Kong or Singapore, revealing the significant relationship between a global city and highly skilled migrants (Maslova and King, 2020; Farrer, 2019; Yeoh and Lam, 2016; Mulholland and Ryan, 2014; Harvey, 2012; 2011a; 2011b; 2009; 2008; Beaverstock, 2011, 2005; Csedő, 2008; Beaverstock and Boardwell, 2000; Findlay et al., 1996). De Jong and Fawcett (2013, p.57, p.97; 1981) argue that if migration is an investment for a better life, the increase in income will go together with amenity-related factors as expected future benefits. To establish relevant non-economic factors or the so-called 'amenities' index for the individual-level analysis, they applied a value-expectancy model to explore migration motivations, suggesting that benefits include economic factors and non-economic amenities, which can be categorised into 'wealth, status, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, affiliation, and morality' (also see Kumpikaite and Zickute, 2012; Haug, 2008).

On the other hand, urban studies researchers regard the combination of global city and highly skilled workers as important components for the development of knowledge economies (Ewers, 2007). As Florida and Gates (2002, p.35) argue, high-tech growth in certain cities occurs because 'companies increasingly will go where talented people are.'

In general, an industry tends to set up a company near accessible resources, a place which has a high-quality scientific infrastructure, such as top universities and public research organisations, and a cluster of highly skilled workers, all of which is more likely to attract knowledge-based companies to set up business (De Backer and Hatem, OECD, 2011, p.9).

Moreover, the value of amenities is important for attracting highly skilled to work in a city. When highly skilled migrants follow job opportunities to resettle in a new city, they except a wide range of amenities will provide them with recreational facilities and they will enjoy living and working there (Florida, 2012, 2000; Atkinson and Gottlieb, 2001). In this regard, Florida (2000) points out that highly skilled people may face more work challenges and work for longer hours so that recreational facilities fit their needs after work. Other scholars also add that consumption behaviour – including of the artistic, sport and cultural kind – so the availability of such pursuits makes an attractive incentive and example of the quality of life to expect (Albouy et al., 2013; Mulligan and Carruthers, 2011; Rappaport, 2009; Nzaku and Bukenya, 2005). Apart from tangible facilities, Florida's (2002) '*The rise of the creative class'* suggested 'the 3T's of economic growth: Technology, Talent, and Tolerance', highlighting the culture of tolerance and ethnic diversity in a city's 'social environment' is crucial for attracting creative people.

3.6: Answering the research questions

3.6.1: The research gaps

By far, the most common criticism of traditional migration theories is their oversimplification of migration decision-making, presenting it as an individual rational choice based on merely economic reasons. Even though economists assume migration behaviours using a single variable, they have different perspectives on return migration. The neoclassical model argues that return is due to the failure when an individual migrant does not achieve the expected goals; by contrast, the household approach considers return as a natural outcome of successful experiences in the migrant destination (Cassarino, 2004). Although the NELM model considers family as the unit of analysis, it neglects the inequality and conflicts of interest among family members. Apart from the different version of return migration, it should be borne in mind that the re-migration for the highly skilled is not limited to a unidirectional way.

Second, previous migration studies of the impacts of transnationalism and integration on the myth of return have not provided strong and consistent evidence. These two matrixes are not necessarily incompatible; in many cases, migrants may maintain strong transnational ties with their country of origin while integrating into the local society in many ways and extend these links to their descendants. Transnational marriage is an example of this case. The interplay of transnationalism and integration on migration decision-making varies in different settings and racial relationships (Carling and Pettersen, 2014; Tamaki, 2011; Snel et al, 2006; Levitt, 2001). For example, multiculturalism in the UK is 'a state-sponsored celebration of ethnic difference', allowing permanent migrants and their descendants to maintain their own cultural boundaries (FitzGerald, 2014, p.127). In this context, the possibility and the degree of social integration depend on individual migrants' attitudes, willingness, opportunities and their capacity to self-adapt but also on the environment around them. The decision to stay or to go needs further examination of the individual migrant's present situation in country-specific contexts.

Moreover, traditional migration theories focus more on low-skilled and make a priori assumptions that most migrants are short-term 'guest workers' and will return home when they have achieved their goals. This assumption is difficult to apply to highly skilled workers who are favoured by the receiving country and are thus more likely to gain long-term residency rights or citizenship in their destination. The weakness of this arguments comes partly because most migration studies are guided by the white-centred view from the developed North discussing migrants from the developing South, and partly because the highly skilled are considered less problematic and acceptable to stay from both economic and political perspectives. When host country migrant issues in research and the public sphere tend to be about eroding domestic welfare, 'homegrown terrorism' (Crone and Harrow, 2011) or racial segregation; migrant professionals seem to be far from that kind of migrants, hence, their stories are either invisible or missing, so the profiles of highly skilled profile in migration theories are not convincing.

In response to this research gap, scholarly work into highly skilled migration has gradually widened in the past decade, ranging from national immigration policy, labour market experiences, local embeddedness to post-migration well-being. Several findings drawn from empirical evidence reveal the challenges and difficulties facing migrant professionals in their new destination in both work and non-work dimensions. These findings can be summarised as follows:

Working issues:

- Facing labour market exclusion in search of work in the local society.
- Doing work they are overqualified for, previous qualifications/skill certificates obtained in the countries of origin are not recognised by employers.
- Finding difficult to integrate into the workplace or fewer job promotion possibilities compared to local workers.
- Gender and ethnic discrimination in certain industries.

Non-work issues:

- Finding it hard to make friends with the locals.
- Female professionals face conflicts between family obligations and self-interest in their career path.
- The gap between migration expectation and reality.

For example, Harvey (2012, p.661) argues that most of the previous migration research into the biases and discrimination outsider ethnic minorities face are mainly based on 'language, skin colour, gender and class' and suggests researchers examine these problems of those with a linguistically and visibly similar backgrounds in various migrant geographical locations to fill the gap in the theoretical literature. However, his empirical studies of highly skilled migrants living in different global cities show that the challenges were also experienced by white British migrants in Singapore, Vancouver and Boston. Moreover, Nagel (2005) argues that research into skilled migration pays too much attention to business migrants, so the exploration of different migration types, gendered differences and possible socio-economic disparities facing the highly skilled is very limited. Concerning the study site, Van Riemsdijk and Wang (2016) suggest that much work is still needed to be done in less iconic cities and places to compare with those living in global-scale cities to provide a more overall picture of highly skilled mobility.

These new interests have been proposed by scholars to improve current migration theories. Given the complex nature of international migration, personal social characteristics and differentials within geographical locations, the location where highly skilled migrants work and live in could lead to very different results. This thesis thus focuses on UK-based highly skilled migrants from various industries and in different cities to investigate their post-migration experiences in general, and identify issues related to individual

demographic characteristics and specific places. In addition, unlike economic factors that can be quantitatively measured, the understanding of non-economic factors affecting migration decision-making needs to be interpreted through migrants' own expressions of their feelings, where rich narratives can enable the researcher to uncover their social meanings.

3.6.2: The use of Bourdieu's concept of capital

The individual capital on migration experiences

The thesis aims to explain the impact of migrant experiences after arrival on decisions to re-migrate. Having identified the research gaps and the limitations of exploring all the multiple and diverse non-economic factors, this thesis takes its cue from the late French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu's (1986) '*the forms of capital*' to develop the research framework. Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital has been widely employed in social science to evaluate an individual's opportunity structures, resources and choices within the social system s[he] is situated. He argues that people differ from one another in terms of their economic, social and cultural capital, which determine personal social position. A person with more capital is more likely to achieve a higher status. The application of Bourdieu's capital theory has several merits. The focus of this thesis is not on an exhaustive examination of Bourdieu's model; rather, consideration of his three forms of capital is helpful in laying out the discussion of migrant experiences with regard to human, social and cultural capital.

First, within Bourdieu's (1986, p.241) interpretation, capital comes in 'objectified or embodied forms, takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form'. For Bourdieu, economic capital represents a material asset that is 'immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights' (ibid., p.243). He reiterates the importance of education investment and its economic value in producing profits, which is in line with economic and human capital theories, and which also provides a means to obtain cultural capital. In his view, an individual's human capital does not move beyond economism, which can be seen as non-monetary assets convertible into economic value (ibid., p.244). Human capital is usually understood as knowledge or skills obtained

through education and training, and can be accumulated over time. In this sense, highly skilled migrants' human capital plays a central role in today's knowledge economy, endowing them with economic opportunities, and is embodied in their workforce and occupational status, yielding economic capital.

Second, as discussed in Chapter 3.4.4 (Social network and social capital), Bourdieu's social capital is defined as actual or potential resources derived from personal, established networks and available for individuals to acquire within a group. In contrast, Putnam (1993; 2000) considers social capital to be a collective feature of society, with key elements of networks, norms and trust, and links it to discussion of social cohesion. This thesis distinguishes between these two approaches and uses both, according to the context of discussion.

Third, according to Bourdieu (1986, p.243), cultural capital can exist in three forms: the embodied state (dispositions), the institutionalised state (educational qualifications), and the objectified state (cultural goods). Family and education are two main sites for people to cultivate cultural capital. The embodied cultural capital is associated with a person's everyday practices, so-called 'habitus', which differs between social classes. Some indicators, such as cultural participation or consumption behaviours, have been employed to study the impact of cultural capital on personal choice, taste and well-being. For example, Grenfell (2012, p.52) applies the term *habitus* to the way a person thinks, feels, acts and chooses to express her/himself in a social field. Savage (2015) applies Bourdieu's ideas to conduct research into social class in 21st century Britain, arguing that cultural capital enables well-educated people to feel confident in dealing with issues or accessing services within a social system. To understand how migrants adapt themselves into the host society and perceive the level of comfort and quality of life after arrival, this thesis focuses on migrant habitus as embodied cultural capital, exploring how their tastes and preferences differ from those of the locals.

As Bourdieu (1986. p.241) explains:

> Capital is accumulated labour (in its materialized form or its 'incorporated,' embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour.

Economic, social and cultural capital often interweave. For example, language ability or education can contribute to both a person's human capital and cultural capital, with each

develop into different networks and yielding different levels of resource. Several empirical studies have revealed that migrants experience 'a corporeal and social awkwardness' through the process of self-adaptation in a new setting (Noble, 2013, p.341). Given that language is as a form of culture, the difference in language is believed to be the key factor that often discourages migrants from interacting with and engaging in a better relationship with the natives and local communities. Language is thus considered a different form of power within a system of communication and practice (Bourdieu, 1991; Noble, 2013). Therefore, immigration for Western education is often seen as a way to accumulate cultural capital and what Bourdieu called 'legitimate' education, by which the benefits of English scholastic investment give a person a better chance to access higher earnings in the global labour market.

Bourdieu (1986, p.247; 2011, p.86) believes that each capital is as an integral part of a person which provides 'a "credential" that entitles her/him to credit its various connotations. The combination of each capital is as 'human capability' defined by the economist Amartya Sen, 'the "capabilities" of persons to lead the kind of lives they value—and have reason to value', and enjoy the substantive choices (or 'freedoms') they have (Sen, 1999, p.18; also see De Haas et al., 2020, p.62; Carling and Schewel, 2018). In fact, different types of migrants bring different forms of capital with them. Compared to a low-skilled worker, a highly skilled migrant enjoys higher social status in the labour market, from which different forms of capital can largely be derived and extended. Regets (2007) argues that well-educated people tend to enjoy a wider circle of social relationships in terms of their backgrounds. Some scholars such as Deeb and Bauder (2015) used human capital, linguistic capital, cultural capital and social capital to examine migrants' integration into the workplace.

Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of capital is closely related to a person's ability to access opportunities and deal with problems in everyday practices in both economic and non-economic dimensions. Under this conceptual umbrella, this micro-level research will organise a discussion around three major analytical dimensions: (i) human capital – obtained from higher education, skills and language ability – that functions as the entry qualification and can convert into personal economic capital; (ii)cultural capital associated with migrants' dispositions, tastes and habitus in their adaptation to the UK-specific context; (iii) social capital as migrants' network resources established in the UK which maintain strong or weak ties. This thesis seeks to answer how they employ, develop

and accumulate each capital as personal capacities to 'survive', 'live' or 'enjoy' their lives in the host society. How does their multiple capital accumulation influence their decision to stay or to go, and which aspect plays the determining role in their decision?

Problems in Bourdieu's framework

Under the UK PBS, the destination regime selects applicants with certain qualifications; for example, financial condition, skill and educational level are primary 'credentials' for the right of entry. The particular make-up of a migrant's capital leads to the opportunity she or he seeks to succeed and fit into the host country – a given field. Bourdieu's study of individuals' class struggles within a social system is helpful in developing three key themes for this research, – migrant human capital, social networks and cultural adaptation – that influence these individuals' post-migration experiences.

However, Bourdieu's approach is restricted in several ways. While his concept of capital for analysing people's everyday practices covers economic and non-economic aspects, his work has been criticised for being 'francocentric', not built on migration observations, and unable to fully explain English or other societies (Hockx, 2012; Vauchez, 2011; Rahkonen, 2008; Gunn, 2005). For example, Gunn (2005) comments that the accumulation and transmission of cultural capital in British society often goes beyond family and education. In fact, the complexity of our entire social life cannot be reduced to simply a form of capital that can easily be embodied as a tangible/material resource. Lacking a systematic method to measure 'forms of capital', many scholars from different fields tend to apply Bourdieu's model, but use it in different ways.

Moreover, the way Bourdieu values 'good' or 'bad' tastes and preferences in cultural capital is based on social hierarchies, largely neglecting gender and ethnic differences. Erel's (2010) empirical evidence has shown that migrant cultural capital is not simply divided by homogeneous background, but can present differently within a single migrant group. Migration researchers have found that gender, ethnicity, age, and geographical origin are important variables in migration decision-making. To address this theoretical drawback in Bourdieu's theory, insights from emerging feminist perspectives about gender and migration are incorporated into the following analytical chapters.

Figure 3.6.2: Migration decision process at individual level
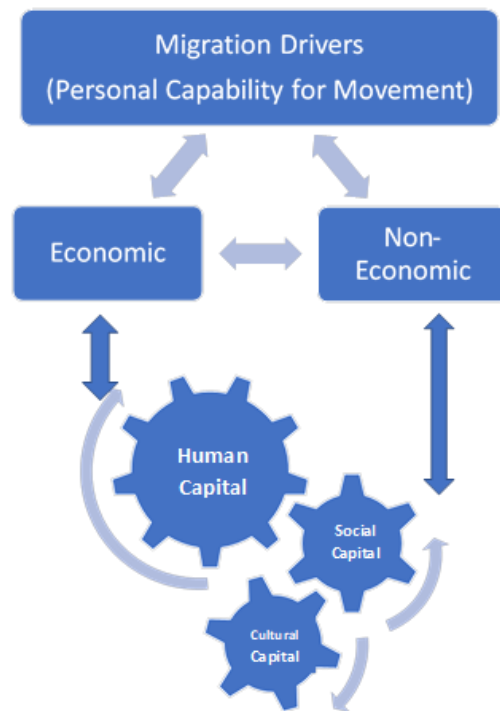
(Source: the researcher)

3.7: Summary

This chapter reviews the key migration literature related to this research, focusing on migration decision-making at the individual level. It first specifies the concept of the highly skilled migrant used in this thesis. Traditional migration theories stress economic forces to explain individual migration behaviour. This oversimplified view of conventional migration wisdom has been amended by researchers from different fields to highlight the equal importance of non-economic factors. The literature review thus has a two-way focus structure, i.e., economic and non-economic aspects, to illustrate the interdisciplinary framework for explaining migration decision-making. The strengths and weaknesses of different migration theories for explaining highly skilled international movement are discussed and international migration is found to be a mixture of economic and non-economic factors.

Moreover, knowledge-based economies deepen the mutual interdependency between highly skilled migrants and global cities. Urban studies offer insights into the important relationship between migrants and the cities where they live, highlighting a city's

amenities and social environments are key to attract highly skilled workers and to understand quality of life. With the emerging empirical work on migrant professionals based on world cities, migration scholars have gradually shifted the focus of their research into the highly skilled from transitional practices to local connections. Various research topics have been explored, including professionals' social networks, place belongingness, social integration and well-being, which directly or indirectly influence their future re-migration considerations.

Having identified several research gaps in current migration studies, this thesis takes a place-based approach and selected samples from different industries in London and less iconic cities. Given that individuals' capacities affect decision-making and enable international migration (Bauder, 2017). When seeking to explain why a highly skilled migrant may consider stay or leave the host country, Bourdieu's model of economic, social and cultural capital provides a useful thinking tool for examining re-migration decision-making determinants with regard to these three dimensions. In recognising several limitations within Bourdieu's framework, this study of international migration makes use of traditional economic theories but also adds social and cultural literature to reach a clearer understanding of contemporary international movement of the highly skilled; it includes, for example, insights from feminist perspectives on gendered migration in order to understand gender differences and the multiplicity of migrant identities and lifestyles. The research findings are expected to identify the most determinants when deciding whether to stay or to go.

Chapter 4: Research methodology and methods

As discussed in Chapter 3, migration decision-making is affected by both economic and non-economic factors, and return or re-migration intentions are continuously shaped by personal experiences post-migration in the new settings. This research seeks to go beyond an economic view, the key non-economic factors that determine migrants' decision to stay or to go will be discovered. This chapter explains the fundamental logic of knowledge based upon the philosophical concepts of ontology, epistemology and methodology, and the applied methods underpinning the present study. It begins with a brief overview of ontology and epistemology, focusing on the key debate between positivism and constructionism in producing knowledge in the real world. Accordingly, the quantitative and qualitative approaches differ in terms of the nature and quality of knowledge. This chapter assesses the strengths and weaknesses within each approach and explains why a qualitative approach, as an analytical framework, fits the present study.

The main part of this chapter presents the set of methods used to collect the data and the analysis, including the research design, sampling strategy, data transcription and interpretation. The rationales and benefits of using these methods for this research are presented. The semi-structured interviews together with the questionnaires used for data collection had ethical issues, which are discussed. Researcher bias that could potentially influence the sample selections and the research analysis throughout the process, and the ways used to avoid or minimize this are provided. In addition, this chapter presents the fieldwork challenges of conducting interviews with the highly skilled and the nuanced differences of the responses from the participants. In the final section, the social demographic characteristics of the interviewees are given to provide a participant portrait as a baseline for the following analytical chapters. Since the existing literature focuses more on vulnerable groups rather than elite group interviews when discussing the methodology, this chapter contributes in a different way, by addressing the challenges elite interviewees present and suggesting strategies to successfully encourage them to participate in the investigation, and how to make them feel comfortable about answering all the questions honestly and clearly.

4.1: The methodological framework: Ontology and epistemology

4.1.1: Ontology

Ontology and epistemology are two foundational ways to define and present an empirical phenomenon and its related attributes in the real world. They involve the 'concepts and measurement' of knowledge generated (Goertz and Mahoney, 2012). Philosophically, both ontology and epistemology are derived from Greek words conceptualising what we know about the existing world and how we know it. First, ontology means 'the study of our existence and the fundamental nature of reality or being', and concerns 'what is real and true' (Killam, 2013, p.7). In research, ontology deals with 'what constitutes reality and how can we understand existence?' (Raddon, 2010, p.3). Ontologically, how to conceptualise the nature and structure of reality can be done from two opposing positions: objective and subjective. Objectivism asserts that there exists a knowable reality and truth outside individual consciousness, and the relevant entities and relationships can be observed by human beings, and the evidence of factual claims and causal relationships can be measured. In contrast, subjectivism believes that the reality is not objective and independent of human minds and experiences but is socially constructed and interpreted to exist from within (Crother and Murray, 2011; Guarino et al., 2009; Cordella and Shaikh, 2006; Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2004).

To address this intractable philosophical dilemma, Anthony Giddens's (1976; 1993; 2002) '*new rules of sociological methods*' provided important insights into the study of human society, and his ideas have been echoed and adopted by many social science researchers (Cruickshank, 2002, 2007; Gynnild, 2002; Tucker, 1998; Urry, 1997; Cohen, 1989, 1998; Karp, 1986; Callinicos, 1985). Gidden's argument focuses more on social realism rather than philosophical disputes (Cohen, 1989), suggesting that knowledge and social practices are understood and carried out by social agents. In this sense, social reality is 'socially constructed' and 'activities only have the meaning that agents ascribe to them' (Cruickshank, 2007, p.70). Some scholars have further used 'social ontology' to discuss the nature of social reality and the creation of knowledge, research topics concerning social facts and objects, social processes and events, collective intentions and group agents (Tuomela, 2013; Thomasson, 2003; Searle, 1995, 2006).

From Gidden's point of view, the logic of subjective ontology underlines the importance of the interaction between individuals and their social contexts. This is important because

it can capture the concepts of individual identity and migration behaviour influenced by the environment where individuals are situated. In fact, international migration refers to a movement, a departure and an arrival, in which an individual's identity itself is reshaped as well as maintained throughout the transition processes; personal social relations change due to relocation and are produced by the interactions with others in a new setting (Chambers, 2008; Ahmed, 1999). International movement gives a migrant a new status and social role in a new destination after arrival, which influence how [s]he perceives the existence of 'self' and 'others' and reconstructs the notion of 'being' and 'the sense of belonging' at home and away. This micro-level research is underpinned by a social-ontology methodology to explore migrants' experiences against the backdrop of the destination society.

4.1.2: Epistemology

Epistemology refers to 'what constitutes valid knowledge and how can we obtain it?' (Raddon, 2010, p.3). In research practice, it deals with the source and measurement of knowledge, the methods used to acquire knowledge, and the validity and limitation of it (Castles, 2012). In other words, ontology concerns what is the meaning and concepts of knowledge, while epistemology looks at how that knowledge can be generated (Goertz and Mahoney, 2012). Moreover, epistemology pays attention to the relationship between knowledge and the researcher in the process of finding and verifying social facts (Killam, 2013). The methods of using epistemological concepts, namely, how to perceive the truth, as with the ontology debate, has developed two different approaches: positivism and constructivism, each with its own methods and practices when conducting research.

For positivists, knowledge is objective, and reality can be observed and is independent of human beings – the knowers (Mackenzie, 2011; Steinmetz, 2005). They believe that scientific knowledge is based on rational causality, with the logic of 'if A occurs, then B will follow' (Riley, 2007, p.115). Therefore, the researcher observes and measures the objects found in the natural sciences and explains the phenomenon in an independent manner (Henderson, 2011; Nakkeeran, 2010). For example, a test/experiment focusing on cause and effect often employs quantitative data collection and the findings tend to be generalizations. This approach aims to discover universal truths and explain the results without any bias. However, positivism is challenged in trying to understand social life,

since it theoretically claims, 'facts could be rigidly separated from values and that analysis could be value-free' (Meier, 2005, p.650; also see Ali and Chowdhury, 2015; Riley, 2007). In addition, the complex nature of international migration in terms of its social demographic characteristics, personal backgrounds and aspirations, as well as different geographical locations, could make human behaviours difficult to measure and model by taking a positivist approach.

On the other hand, constructivists hold that the world cannot be objective and outside human influence, and social reality cannot exist without the knowers' experiences. The conceptualisation of knowledge is inevitably value-laden, when the researcher produces the findings from data collected according to their personal values (Remenyi, 2012). In this sense, the meanings and contexts of knowledge are constructed and interpreted through human perceptions and activities, and these continue to be reconstructed by people (Castles, 2012; Williamson, 2006; Kim, 2001). This view is in line with Giddens's (1976; 1993; 2002) idea that society is produced and reproduced by human beings' behaviour within social structures (Cruickshank, 2002). Through everyday practices and social interactions, human beings conceptualise empirical phenomena and endow them with social meanings (Burr, 2003, 2018; Berger and Luckmann, 1967). Although positivism greatly dominated the social sciences throughout the 20th century, its claims of absolute objectivity and certainty about the world have been modified in post-positivism, experiential realism and pragmatism to concede that human perception itself has power over what we define and create reality (Loughlin, 2012; Miller, 2000; Stanfield, 1995).

International migration leads a person to travel away from her/his place of origin and settle in a new setting, 'these distances are physical, emotional, and psychological' (Valdés, 1998, p.4). In the process of moving, migrants inevitably experience a transition of personal identity and social values, and continually negotiate with themselves and their environment. These situations are hard to measure and interpret from a positivist perception. Therefore, this thesis adopts a constructivist standpoint, arguing that the complexity of social facts and human minds are not neutral entities. The study of migration must go beyond objectivism. In particular, this thesis seeks in-depth contextual understanding of social phenomena, a constructivist framework is more useful for exploring migrants' perceptions and behaviours within a changing sociocultural context.

4.2: Research methodology: a qualitative study

Methodology is defined as 'a system of methods used in a particular area of study or activity' (the Oxford English dictionary). It means 'theory of the way in which knowledge is acquired' (Delanty and Strydom, 2003, p.4). Hahn et al. (1929) point out that the process of seeking knowledge based on empiricism and positivism using any method, aims to 'reach the goal, unified science, by applying logical analysis to the empirical material'. They argue that the concept of *science* also means knowing 'something is "real" through being incorporated into the total structure of experience', of which problems and assertions need to be clarified step by step by an inference from given states of affair (ibid., pp.308-309).

As discussed above, there is a sharp distinction between positivism and constructivism. In social investigations, a constructive approach often uses qualitative techniques, such as participant observation, documentary analysis or interviews, through which the researcher collects qualitative data and conducts an interpretive analysis to produce inductive inference. In general, qualitative methods are often used for exploratory research and quantitative research methods are used for explanatory research. However, Webley (2010, p.2) points out that this division could be a misconception and argues that a qualitative approach can be used for exploratory, explanatory and descriptive research by drawing causal inferences from the data. Most importantly, the researcher starts to assess the appropriateness of the methods at the beginning of the research design to make sure the data collection methods are feasible so that the necessary data is acquired for analysis. Therefore, the selection of a qualitative or quantitative approach depends on whether the chosen methods will provide data that can answer the research questions.

This thesis adopts a qualitative approach, as this is believed to be best for the exploration of migrants' decision-making processes and experiences. The characteristics of this approach are pointed out by Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p.3):

> Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. […] They turn the world into a series of representations, including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

As Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p.16) note, the natural settings herein refer to 'places where everyday experience takes place.' In this research, 'the field' to be explored is the relationships between migrants and their social spaces. The researcher set out to observe and investigate empirical facts, and to interact with migrant participants 'in their own language, on their own terms' (Kirk and Miller, 1986, p.9). In terms of constructivism, reality is socially constructed and non-static so that knowledge keeps changing and developing in their societies, and migrants conceptualise knowledge are presented as knowledge carriers (Weber, 2001). Their viewpoints, feelings and emotions are mainly grounded in personal experiences in a social system and are often interpreted in a value-laden context (Punch, 2013). Qualitative methods were useful and effective for obtaining rich data from the migrant participants of this research.

Qualitative and quantitative approaches can sometimes work together in the research process to produce data. For example, quantitative data relies on the researcher's interpretive account of the evidence. Likewise, qualitative methods sometimes initially rely on quantitative data to make sampling choices and to compare any differences in the research findings. It is argued that positivism and interpretivism should be complementary but not exclusive, given that each approach has its own strengths and weaknesses (Mok and Clarke, 2015; Quatman and Chelladurai, 2008; Roth and Mehta, 2002). However, those who oppose interpretivist and constructivist approaches often refer to the subjectivity of the researcher in the process of data collection and analysis, which can potentially undermine the research findings. Since total objectivity and value-free choices are hard (if not possible) to achieve at every stage, from research design to data analysis, this thesis provides an explanation of the researcher's position and reflections on the study to overcome any disadvantage in the methods used. This research analysis attempted to quantify part of the qualitative research data to identify the key findings from all the answers and used text analysis software (Nvivo) to enhance the 'scientific' objectiveness.

4.3: A mixed method approach: semi-structured interview and questionnaire

Over the few past decades, migration scholars from different disciplines have produced abundant evidence-based studies by employing quantitative, qualitative or mixed method approaches. Migration decision-making involves economic, cultural and emotional

factors; therefore, many geographers, economists and demographers, such as Clark and Lisowski (2019), Bauer and Zimmermann (1995) and De Jong and Fawcett (1981) have designed quantitative models or conducted surveys by looking at fixed variables to generate findings associated with specific issues. They have dealt with numeral datasets, such as remittances or demographical data, to explain migration behaviour. In some cases, objective parameters such as education, occupation and salary together with subjective perceptions, such as identity perception relating to research topics, have been incorporated into a survey to generate results for a quantitative analysis (Amit, 2010; Chi and Voss, 2005).

On the other hand, sociologists, anthropologists and ethnographers tend to adopt a qualitative approach, and data collection methods range from using historical archives, in-depth interviews, observation, storytelling, collecting life histories to fieldwork participation. They mainly observe and interpret the research issues and causality through analysing narrative and synthesising the collected data. Due to the advances in computer systems in recent decades, some migration scholars have adopted a mixed-method approach to offer more rounded research analysis. For instance, Edwards (2010) argues that qualitatively driven research into social networks is traditional, while adding quantitative methods like surveys, maps and measures are helpful for reflecting the structural properties of networks.

Qualitative and quantitative methods have been used systematically in different disciplines. However, given the complex nature of international mobility, and as the concepts and knowledge concerning migration often involve different disciplines, many scholars, such as Fauser (2018), Barbeiro and Spini (2017), Freeman et al (2012) and Gamlen (2012), to name a few, suggest a mixed methods approach works well, i.e., more than one type of method, is appropriate to broadly and flexibly collect evidence relating to migration issues. Such an approach has the advantage that different methods with different primary purposes contribute to different kinds of 'better understanding' through 'different inquiry questions, different combinations of methods, and different approaches to mixed methods analysis' (Greene, 2007, pp.20-21). For example, individual interviews for specific issues, together with a quantitative database for collecting additional general information make for a more rounded research project. This kind of 'concurrent mixed design' (ibid., p.116) can identify different issues and assess phenomena from different angles.

Having considered the budget and time available, two main methods of data collection and analysis were used in this research. First, the main focus of this thesis is to identify migrants' work and life issues in the UK, and the impact of their experiences on future re-migration intentions. To do this, semi-structured interviews were used to collect in-depth data relating to individuals' motives, predispositions, attitudes and experiences in the UK. Second, socio-demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status and education degree are considered important variables in affecting an individual decision-making and social behaviour; therefore, a structured questionnaire survey was used as a second research method to gather personal information. In addition, secondary data was identified from desk-based research, including relevant government documents and online social media, such as Facebook, e-newspapers, immigrant association websites, official data for immigrants' demographic numbers and distributions, and so on.

In contrast to quantitative methods, the 'in-depth interviewing approaches a problem in its natural setting, explores related and contradictory themes and concepts, and points out the missing and the subtle as well as the explicit and the obvious' instead of simply 'reducing people's experiences to numbers' (Rubin and Rubin, 2012, p.xv). However, free-flowing dialogue could offer very long answers outside the research topic without proper guidance from the researcher (Bernard et al., 2016; Bernard and Ryan, 2010). Given the aim of the research is to produce meaningful information about the issues of concern rather than an exhaustive account, this thesis employs semi-structured interviews in the form of conversational, two-way communication within an open framework, but sets within pre-designed and focused themes. By asking a set of key questions linked to one another, semi-structured interviews enable the researcher to gain enough and useful information from the participants for subsequent data analysis.

As for the research question design, there are three phases in the semi-structured interviews: (1) reasons for migrating to the UK, (2) post-migration experiences of working and living, and (3) future re-migration intentions. The research questions for exploring migrants' experiences in the field – the UK context – are developed along three main dimensions: human, social and cultural capital, inspired by Bourdieu's forms of capital (see Chapter 3.6.2). This design offered the migrant participants a chance to recall their migration journey before and after their arrival in the UK, and to consider their future migration direction. They were led by the researcher to briefly express the migration experiences they encountered in both the workplace and social spheres; in the final part,

they explained why they had chosen to stay or would leave for another destination in the future.

Based on the research's theoretical framework, the link between migrants' experiences and re-migration decisions was analysed within the broad concept of a push-pull model, and migration issues were investigated from both work and non-work aspects at the individual level. In addition, a short questionnaire was completed by each participant to collect personal data about their backgrounds, including their age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, and period of stay in the UK. Social demographic data was used to further identify its impacts on individual migration behaviour and any group similarities and differences in the findings.

As English is not the native language of the researched immigrants, the research information sheet and all the questions were written in both English and Mandarin (the official language used in Taiwan) and provided to the interviewees in advance. During the interviews, the participants had the right to choose which language (English, Mandarin or local Taiwanese dialects) [s]he wished, which they felt more comfortable with was best able to express their ideas. When non-English languages are used and cited in this thesis, they were translated into English by the researcher herself in order to present their meanings in the discussions.

Most of the interviews were planned as face-to-face meetings; however, for some immigrants, a non-face-to-face conversation was a better way of creating a more comfortable setting and unpack emotions. In addition, online communication through technological tools was considered a general contact channel for connecting migrants with family members and friends outside the host country; therefore, different types of interviews were used, including face-to-face, telephone and online telecommunications. The interview is also seen as social interaction so that the researcher tried to maintain this mutual social relationship after the fieldwork, but this also depended on the interviewees' attitude.

4.4: Case study and strategic sampling

This thesis is a qualitative case study, which is based on the rationale below, as Kumar (2018, p.196) explains:

> The case being studied is typical of cases of a certain type and therefore a single case can provide insight into the events and situations prevalent in a group from where the case has been drawn.

In the case study method, the selected samples are treated as one entity in order to explore and explain the research issues, and holistic and in-depth information from the research findings is for understanding the case in its totality. It intensively analyses the research data and aims to provide an overview of a certain group rather than make generalisations of the whole population beyond the selected case (ibid., 2018; Gilbert, 2008).

The phenomenon of Taiwanese highly skilled migration to traditional PBS immigration countries, such as Canada and Australia, has been examined by scholars in the past two decades but little is known about the Taiwan-UK migration context. The complex nature of international migration is due to different political, economic and social conditions from country to country, as well as migrants' various ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, so a case study approach to migration studies is useful for understanding different phenomena within certain contexts, making case study comparisons possible (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Kumar (2018, p.196) points out that case study research usually uses 'purposive, judgemental or information-oriented' sampling methods in order to focus on the research unit and its related characteristics and instances.

As PhD research, this thesis aimed to carry out 40 interviews, with samples from London and other cities across the UK. According to the 2019 Annual Population Survey (APS) (ONS, 2018), of the overseas-born population in the UK, the Taiwan-born population was estimated to be about 59,000, in the 41st place, smaller than the New Zealand-born population (63,000), while more than Singapore-born (46,000) or Japan-born residents (44,000). The ratio of male to female is 1 (23,000): 1.52 (35,000). Regarding population distribution, the majority of Taiwanese immigrants live clusters around London (approximately 55%) which is home to British immigrants from many different countries, while the remainder is dispersed around the UK.

Figure 4.4: The distribution of Taiwanese-origin immigrants in Britain, 2018

(population unit: thousands)
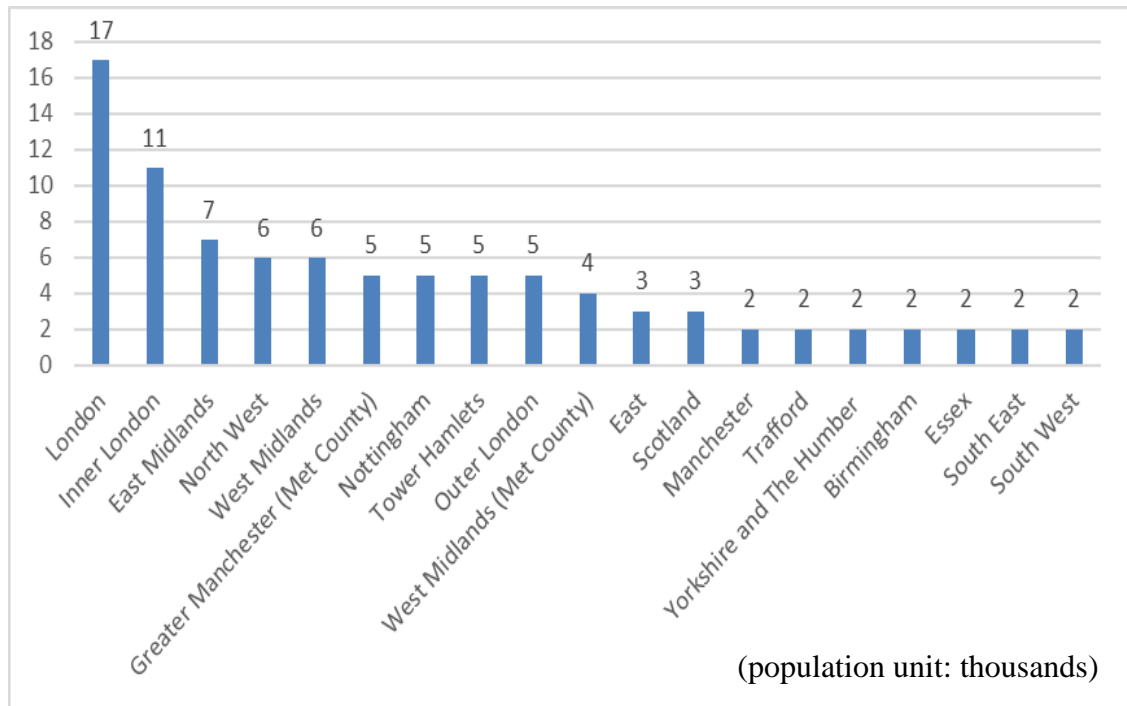
Note: Approximately 55% of Taiwanese immigrants live in London, the other 45% are dispersed around several UK regions.
(Source: ONS, 2018; organised by the researcher)

Based on the qualifications of the highly skilled defined in this thesis, nonprobability sampling was used to recruit 40 relevant samples of Taiwanese immigrants in the UK (aged 18+, with tertiary level educational or above, born in Taiwan with Taiwanese citizenship/nationality, with legal immigration status, including those with British citizenship) to represent the researched group. The sample selection from different cities not only takes the Taiwanese population distribution into consideration, but also reflects variations in age, gender, occupation, marital status and length of stay in UK. The sampling covers three types of highly skilled immigrants: those with Tier 1, Tier 2 and Spouse/Partner visas, excluding international students (Tier 4 visa) and working holiday groups (Tier 5 visa).

4.5: Participant recruitment

Various channels were used at first to recruit participants – online social media, personal and business websites, and migrant home associations. In the UK, Facebook is a popular online platform for the Taiwanese-origin immigrant community to share information and conduct co-ethnic business. Various groups have been established related to their graduation universities, interests, professional skills, location, gender, and so on. For instance, *Taiwanese UI/UX Designers in UK*, *Taiwanese in Mid UK* and *Let's cook Taiwanese*. Therefore, in the early stage of the research design, I posted a short questionnaire on one of the Facebook pages with more members than others, to find out what might interest the potential participants most. Next, I used established Facebook pages to recruit participants working in specific industries. In the process of inviting participants through Facebook, I made my own profile 'as transparent as possible' (Harvey, 2011c, p.433) and accessible to everyone in order to gain their trust. However, in some cases, the invitations were not accepted either because of a mismatch of participation suitability or simply due to a lack of interest and as a result, there was no response at all. For example, in Northern Ireland, Taiwanese migrants did not show much interest in participating in the research project and the local Taiwanese home association failed to offer any help. As a result, 12 participants were invited through Facebook. Two of these participants had re-migrated from the US to the UK (one male and one female) and took the initiatives to offer their help.

At the preparatory stage, I actively joined some conferences and gatherings in the UK held by the Taiwanese government or private organisations, such as the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce in the UK, Formosa Salon and Manchester Taiwanese Association, to seek out potential participants. Through these occasional meetings, 22 participants were identified and invited. We had the opportunity of a face-to-face introduction to know each other before the formal interview and to understand how the project was to proceed. Due to the difficulty of recruiting professionals in specific industries, two interviewees were invited through snowball sampling. In addition, four participants were introduced to me by their Taiwanese friends who knew about this project but did not have the interview requirements. However, even when participants with the appropriate profile were successfully recruited, there were problems of access to them, especially the self-employed businesspeople. During the fieldwork, I lived in London for a month in order to conduct potential interviews, I visited some London-based

Taiwanese-owned restaurants to invite the business owners to participate in this research; however, this was unsuccessful either due to their busy schedule or because they were not present on site. This also happened when I tried to use emails and telephones to invite the business owners of bed and breakfast (B&B) hotels in London and Edinburgh. Some promised to do, but in the end did not respond.

In the end, 40 participants were recruited from 25 different industries, and each type of occupation has no more than 3 samples. 21 participants (13 women and 8 men) live in the city of London and Greater London and 19 participants (11women and 8 men) live in other cities in England and Scotland. None of the participants knew or had had a relationship with the researcher before the interview. The origins of the Taiwanese population recruited, included two from Taiwanese ethnic minorities, namely, one indigenous Taiwanese and one Hakka Han Chinese who had emigrated from Taiwan. The researched group ages range from 20 to 60+ years old. The interview types were 28 face-to-face interviews in public places like cafes, restaurants, pubs, the participants' offices or places chosen by the interviewees for their convenience.

Most interviews were conducted after work, in the evening. I was invited by three female participants living in Great London and Great Manchester respectively to their homes to do the interviews. The remaining 12 interviews were conducted through online telecommunications. Overall, each interview took from 20 to more than 60 minutes. The format of the interviews had no great impact on the length of the interview; rather, the difference in conversation time was more related to the individual characteristics of the interviewees, as well as their available time and arrangements. For example, one of the online interviews was relatively short, about 26 minutes, while another online interview lasted almost two-hours. On average, the male participants tended to give shorter answers and more concise wording than the female informants.

4.6: Fieldwork challenges

In March 2019, three migrant participants residing in London and England were interviewed as the pilot study of this research. Afterwards their interview contents were coded, transcribed and further analysed to make some adjustments to the formal interview questions. The feedback from the pilot interviews was used to assess the preliminary

questions and identify possible issues to consider in the following fieldwork, such as time management or any inappropriate sub-questions that might arise. Consequently, it helped to find that the term 'community' is used as a general and non-academic term as well, so might be confusing for the respondents. From their responses, 'community' has many references and can refer to a group of neighbours (common area location), work colleagues or other Taiwanese in the UK, and they wondered which one I expected them to talk about. In response, they are encouraged to talk about different types of communities in their daily lives but reminded to say which groups they felt most at home in, what they considered as their own community. Apart from checking the interview guide and content was mutually understandable, one important lesson learnt from the pilot study was the risk of being late for appointments, due to the researcher's unfamiliarity with the area of the locations near those the participants specified.

Of the 37 interviews conducted from June 2019 to March 2020, several locations were visited across the UK, mainly in City of London, Greater London, Greater Manchester, Yorkshire and Scotland. A lesson drawn from the pilot study meant I always arrived one or two hours earlier the interview to explore the environment around the meeting point. After meeting up with the interviewee, describing what I had just experienced in his[her] city became a good beginning or ending to our conversation. The migrant participants normally gladly shared their own ideas with me, reflecting on how [s]he perceived their locality. The opinions they offered often surprised me, revealing that how the 'tourist' (me) sees things was somewhat different to how the 'local resident' (participants) saw them. Their explanations revealed why they had chosen a particular place to work and live in. For example, I was told how Brixton in London had been transformed from a previously undeveloped area into a new and diverse cultural hotspot, which attracts many young artists to cluster, and that the pubs have the best live music in London. In some cases, the researcher needed more knowledge or imagination to catch up with what the participants described in a different setting.

Harvey (2011c, p.434) thinks that researchers need to be flexible to adjust to other voices and behaviours in order to fit into the atmosphere of interviewing elite members. He stresses the importance of shifting position to create a favourable setting in order to encourage more high-quality responses from informants (also see McDowell, 1998). Moreover, Aberbach and Rockman (2002, p.674) posit that 'Elites especially – but other highly educated people as well – do not like being put in the straightjackets of closed

questions. They prefer to articulate their views, explaining why they think what they think'. Although the researcher had previous experience of interviewing five leaders of Taiwanese migrant associations in the UK for her Master's dissertation at the University of Sussex in 2017, this fieldwork process was not without its challenges.

First, some cases challenged the traditional power relationship between the researcher and the research participants. That is, the researcher is generally assumed to be inherently in control during the process of data collection (Agozino, 2000). Rather, when interviewing highly skilled workers, the 'top-down' model of the researcher and the interviewees could be reversed to become a 'bottom-top' way. For example, the participants working in academic fields directly offered 'direct advice' from a professional perspective on methodological issues, proposing 'why don't you change…?' regardless of the specific format of a particular school. Their advice were about how many lines and words should be put in an invitation letter, and the right word order for an invitation in a letter; another case concerned a better way of dealing with data protection.

Second, 'gaining trust and gauging the tone of the interview' (Harvey, 2011c, p.431) is usually considered to be one of the challenges in interviews, especially when interviewing elite members. As Rubin and Rubin (2012, p.175) point out, elites, such as those with a higher ladder in a company's employment hierarchy, generally are more cautious about talking to investigators and have a better understanding of the principles within the interview. The self-introduction of the researcher thus included more information, such as previous research and academic purposes, and stressed the data would be kept private as a matter of policy to build up trust and acceptance. In addition, during the interview, the researcher avoided any critical comment but displayed more curiosity to encourage the knowledgeable informants to respond the questions in more detail and share their knowledge.

During the interview process, the researcher was asked by the participants several questions before starting the interview; in particular, some participants in high-level position tended to inquire about where the research funding came from, my research motivation, and who I was working with – the British government or a third party? After a few seconds pause for their further reflection, they would then agree to start the interview process. These scenarios were similar to a job interview which involves passing a test in front of the recruiter or employer to obtain a job opportunity. Compared to the interview of a leader of a migrant association, this situation was quite different so that the

previous interview experience did not help very much. Unlike the leader who represents their own organisation and is obliged to provide related information, an individual migrant has no responsibility to answer any questions about their migration lives. The way the researcher needed to present herself to different respondents from various professional industries was challenging, and sometimes difficult task.

In addition, to break the ice before the interview, the researcher often began with 'I am actually more nervous than you' to create a more comfortable and less stressful ambience. Moreover, the power relations between the researcher and the interviewee were also constructed on a 'member of school' and a 'member of society' asymmetry, with the researcher as the 'outsider' in terms of the UK labour market. The researcher acted as if totally 'green', with no preconceptions, in the hope that the participants would be more likely to share their experiences and knowledge during the process. Overall, the fieldwork experience was quite positive as the participants were very cooperative. In particular, the informants in the London area tended to be efficient and active in arranging a meeting schedule consistent with the fast-paced cosmopolitan city where they live and work. However, the researcher had an advantage when it came to interpreting and analysing the interview narratives that played an important role in producing the research results (Oliver et al., 2005). Because it is the researcher select the participants' narratives to be evidence that support or against the arguments of this thesis.

4.7: Ethical considerations

The study of human migration taking a qualitative approach creates ethical concerns because it may involve the participants describing their personal stories to the researcher or because it may subject the participants to stressful experiences. Scholars have seen these issues within the researcher's 'moral conduct, duty and judgement' when conducting social research (Mitchell and Draper, 1982, p.3; Kearns, 1998, p.298). When probing into sensitive areas, which include various personal, private aspects, such as sexual orientation and family relationships, it is necessary for the researcher show respect to the participants, and avoid possible conflicts between the research purpose, the data publication and the vulnerability of the respondent due to the information collected.

The protection of personal data is part of individuals' fundamental rights; academic freedom in European countries is based on the higher education institutional protocol, that while social researchers enjoy academic freedom, they are required to respect their research subjects (Bergan et al., 2020; European Commission, 2018). The existing ethical considerations have given rise to a set of guidelines to ensure people who engage in research work do so appropriately. These central principles include providing correct information, obtaining consent, avoiding harm, and protecting respondents' privacy (Hay, 1998). This research project was governed by the University Ethics Committee and the researcher followed the relevant codes of practice and ethical guidelines. As this research was conducted in the UK, when the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) became enforceable, from 25 May 2018, this research hence applied the GDPR to protect the personal information of the participants.

Strategically, to protect their personal privacy and make the participants feel free to talk, I first introduced myself by name, education background and the place where I study and live, and then restated the information associated with the research topics before the interview. Given that the interviewees are anonymous in this study; I did not make a point of asking for their real names, and explained this was to create a more comfortable environment in which to talk about personal privacy and possibly sensitive topics. This strategy also means that, in some situations, complaining about annoying issues or revealing negative experiences to a stranger may make the participants feel less burdened because they don't need to worry about any embarrassment from gossips spreading their experience on their social networks. Many informants began talking with 'how long have you been here' to explore migratory experiences rather than introducing themselves by giving their names. After a set of semi-structured questions, I then asked the participants to fill in their personal information at the end of the interview. At that moment, we had become more familiar with each other so that collecting personal data was not embarrassing.

On the other hand, the increasing trend of using data from the internet and social media in research has raised ethical concerns (European Commission, 2018). Although online social media – Facebook – was used to effectively recruit participants, this research kept any pictures or comments posted by interviewees out of the data analysis to respect their personal privacy. The main reason for excluding these data is because they were not originally posted for this research, and online messages could be misleading without the

participants' permission and clarification. For example, even if a person's sexual orientation identity showing on Facebook was LGBTQ category, it was only included when [s]he told me so during the interview.

In addition, given that Taiwanese immigrants in the UK are a minority community, individuals are likely to be identified if they were referred to in specific locations or company names were cited in this research. In some cases, the participants built up a friendship with the researcher after the interview, and kept contact via Facebook or WhatsApp Messenger, but any further information they shared relating to the research questions were not used as part of the data analysis as they communicated with the researcher from the position of a friend (Taylor, 2011). Apart from personal privacy, a copy of the data will be stored on my personal external hard Drive, not of the university's Google Drive. Digital copies of confidential information will be encrypted, protected by password and stored in a secure place.

4.8: Data management and analysis

After collecting the primary data, the next step was to proceed to translation, transcription and coding, and then use thematic analysis to create categories. Generally, qualitative research takes an inductive approach to analyse raw data so that concepts and themes emerge (Corbin and Strauss, 2014; Thomas, 2003; Bryman and Burgess, 2002). The 'thematising' process began before the interview because the data was generated 'through carefully planned questioning techniques, participants construct the meanings of what the researcher is trying to explore' (Saldaña, 2021, p.260; Brinkmann and Kvale, 2015). Following the design framework, the interview conversation was developed to cover the migration experiences in work and non-work spheres, and in some cases, these two dimensions were closely interlinked in the participants' responses. For instance, 'work-life balance' was the most mentioned when probing work and life satisfaction. After collecting the data, thematic analysis allows the identification, conceptualisation and the examination of patterns in the data in a systematic way (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

First, data transcription can be seen as the important groundwork. All the interviews were recorded, and notes taken, and 35 interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' approval for subsequent academic analysis. Five cases were not fully audio-recorded

partly due to the researcher's manual operational mistakes and partly because of the background noises in one site. These audio-recordings were promptly checked after each interview had ended, and they were quickly transcribed based on the researcher's memory and the interview notes, on the same day to deal with the problem. The transcription method refers to 'the process of reproducing spoken words, such as those from an audiotaped interview, into written text' (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006, p.38). As an important methodological step, a verbatim record of the interview dialogue is thought to be a better way to increase the accuracy of the representation of the participant's statement and to improve interview data validity (Oliver et al., 2005). In addition, this thesis adopts a constructive inductive approach to the thematic content analysis, so the word-for-word record reduces the risk of missing important data in the analysis by making judgements about what is 'off topic' or 'dross' material (Clark et al., 2017, p.1754; Burnard et al., 2008, p.430) in the transcription process.

To do the transcription effectively, the Google voice-to-text technology was employed to create a word-for-word written draft first. The researcher then checked the accuracy of the verbal content, corrected any mistakes and edited the unified written form, followed by its translation into English. The participants' nonverbal cues and body language, such as silences or hand gestures, were not incorporated into the transcripts for analysis, while utterances or vocalisations, such as 'um' or sighing and laughing, were recorded to express the emotional responses of the interviewees. In some cases, when participants mentioned particular words or idioms not in English, but Mandarin or a local Taiwanese dialect, the researcher always discussed its meaning and usage of English with them as the follow-up question to confirm the ideas they were expressing. In addition, the translation of these specific idioms was later checked with English native speakers – mainly professional tutors working in the writing centre at the University – to seek the words that best corresponded with the connotations to express the meanings intended.

For example, the idiom '*guǎi wān mò jiǎo*' literally means 'go roundabouts', implying a person is aware of something, when [s]he talks about it in an implicit or indirect way. Different to telling a white lie, this idiom can be seen as slightly negative in many cases, like when used to state someone intends to cover up or avoid mentioning the truth for certain reasons, with either good or bad intentions. In this thesis, as several participants mentioned it in their narratives in a compliant manner, it was translated into 'people speak about this indirectly' or 'you have to read between the lines' in the transcriptions. In

addition, 11 participants chose to use English to proceed the interviews, their narratives were directly transcribed by the researcher herself, and the transcripts left any grammatical errors in the sentences to keep the original meaning of the expressions.

After finishing the transcription, the early stage of the analysis focused on identifying and organising the key concepts, themes and examples in a systematic way after reading through the narratives (Bernard et al., 2016; Coffey and Atkinson, 1996). A one-hour interview took four or six hours to transcribe; however, the immersion in the research setting helped me to engage in the narratives as an insider rather than simply perform the analysis as an observer (Moser and Korstjens, 2018). Subsequently, separate codes were linked to certain topics and their relationships, commonalities and contrasts within themes were marked in order to prepare further discussion. The thematic analysis is structured alongside the main research questions designed at the beginning. The qualitative interviews produced rich data, similar narratives were found to overlap and link across work and non-work aspects. This shows that the study of migration experiences or life satisfaction cannot be explained by a single lens, namely, work or lived experience, alone.

In the process of data analysis, NVivo software was used to manage the codes from the collected data and to categorise them into different topics. Notably, NVivo software functions as a technological tool to help the data management rather than data analysis; it works well only when the original data is accurate, and it is the researcher's task to identify the codes and to develop the topics (Burnard et al., 2008). However, NVivo is able to create visual images by coding with the word frequency of the interview narratives to demonstrate key conceptual maps of the findings (Bazeley and Jackson, Eds, 2013).

4.9: Researcher reflexivity

In terms of social constructivism, a researcher's prior knowledge and understandings of the researched group, and their relationship with the participants inevitably impacts on the knowledge produced and reproduced through data interpretation (Greene, 2014). To increase the rigour of the research process, reflexivity is crucial in qualitative and ethnographic social science research to understand how empirical data is embodied, interpreted and reproduced as conceptualised knowledge by the researcher (Elliott et al., 2012). Research reflexivity refers to the influence of the position of the researcher might

have on the research process. In general, 'insider' implies a person is a member of the same group, shares common characteristics with a cultural, biological or occupational background (Spradley, 1980, 2016; Greene, 2014). In this sense, the researcher shares a lot with the respondents – ethnicity, language and migration – as an insider, while she is different from the researched group in some respects, such as occupation and migrant status. Nevertheless, the insider-outsider dichotomy has been challenged when constructing social knowledge within an epistemological framework (Ryan, 2015a; Chavez, 2008; Naples, 2003; Banks, 1998; Merton, 1972).

Rather than consider the researcher's role from a dichotomous perspective, Merton (1972, p.11) argues that it is problematic and extreme to claim that only the insider – the member of their ethnic or cultural group – has 'monopolistic' or 'privileged' access to knowledge within the groups, and the ability to accurately describe their own culture. Moreover, this does not imply that the outsider is able to conceptualise the insider's world in a neutral and objective perspective (Ryan, 2015a). This viewpoint was echoed by Banks (1998, p.7), reiterating that 'individuals have not one but multiple social statuses and group affiliations that interact to influence their behaviour and perspectives'. From this point of view, both researchers and participants have the multi-layered identities shaped by race, ethnicity, gender, age, class, region, occupation and migratory experiences, which are part of their social knowledge exchanges. Therefore, it is suggested that both insider and outsider perspectives are necessary for the researcher seeking 'social truth' (Merton, 1972, p.36), and the researcher is best positioned as a continuum rather than as a binary opposite in the study process (McDermid et al., 2014; Trowler, 2011; Breen, 2007).

In addition, although social scientists often define the insider-outsider division according to ethnicity or nationality (Ryan, 2015a; Clifford and Marcus, 1986), the recent study of migration has been urged to go beyond the ethnic lens to examine migrants' issues at the local and global level (Ryan, 2015a; Schiller et al., 2006). As discussed above, the nature of individual identity can be hybrid and multiple depending on a person's social status and other backgrounds; therefore, it is not fixed and stable, especially for migrants whose roles and positionalities are reconstructed in their 'settlement and transnational connections' (Schiller et al., 2006, p.612; Lotf et al., 2013). The ethnic lens potentially obscures the diversity and multiplicity of a migrant's identity that is reshaped by the relationships with the changes in the local and global contexts.

As a British PhD student from Taiwan studying Taiwanese highly skilled migrants in the UK, the researcher has both insider and outsider status in this research that enables her to negotiate the insider-outsider dichotomy and be 'in the middle' (Breen, 2007) shift the two positionalities to 'in between' (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009). The 'insider' position of the researcher in this thesis is mainly associated with her co-ethnicity and Taiwan-born background, as well as understanding of the migrants' mother tongue, which facilitated offering the research invitation to potential participants and helped access them with more intimacy and mutual trust. Moreover, during the interviews, the positive side of being an insider is that the researcher – also the translator of the interviews – more or less, shared things in common with the interviewees, including the migration experience of studying and living in the UK and the basic knowledge of the Taiwanese contexts. These attributes enabled her to be more empathetic and understandable in communicating with the participants and created meaningful dialogue interactions, through which she can offer insights into the analysis of the data based on her intercultural background. For example, when one interviewee said Taiwan is a 'Ghost Island'[9] in a self-deprecating way, followed by 'you know what I mean'; the researcher was able to quickly grasp the point and developed the conversation.

However, this ethnocentric position of the researcher also has its dilemmas (Chavez, 2008). First, there is no guarantee the researcher will be accepted as an 'insider' by the interviewees to share 'we-ness' (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993, p.1328). When it comes to the UK labour market experience, the researched group were identified highly skilled professionals, which is different from the inexperienced student – the researcher. In terms of nationality, some participants had already gained British citizenship or had previously experienced diverse migratory trajectories, so their national identity and life stories were beyond the researcher's prior knowledge or experience. In addition, before the interview, several participants asked whether the research project was in cooperation with the UK government or the researcher's academic work. The anticipated impact of the social position of the researcher on the data to be collected thus generated a nuanced difference because the interviewees may judge the purpose of the research and provide different answers depending on the interviewer's position – should I say directly what I want to

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[9] The phrase 'Ghost Island' was reportedly first used by the Japanese who wanted to modernise Taiwan during the colonial era. It was also used by the YouTuber—Taiwan Bar Studio, to satirize the 'empty' history between 1890 and 1975. This term later became a very popular term as self-deprecating humour in Taiwan. Today, it implies the Taiwan's dilemma due to its controversial political status (*ETtoday*, 2014; *Liberty Times*, 2014).

say from my viewpoint or talk about the issues I wanted to be heard? The responses collected could be somewhat different if this researcher was an 'outsider' without a co-ethnic background or from an 'authority' background.

On the other hand, studying in an academic institution – a relatively safe and closed social environment compared to the highly skilled labour market – the researcher conducted the research as the outsider in this sense. In fact, she knows little about migrants' working circumstances in various industries in the UK. In this context, a PhD student is in a more neutral position to collect data, avoiding any pre-judgment in the interviewing process. In addition, the boundary between the participants and the researcher and the way they define themselves is, to some extent, influenced by location. The residential area is one of the key indicators that positions the migrant participants themselves, especially obvious in the interviews collected from London. Several participants consider themselves to be 'Londoners', and almost every migrant developed location identity strongly linked to the place where they live, rather than situated in a broader concept of UK society members (i.e., Britishness or from the north, etc.).

4.10: Demographic characteristics of participants

Table 4.10: Participant demographics

No	Gen-der	Age	Marital Status	Living Household	Children Number	Occupation (Job position)	Education Level	Stay Years
1	M	30s	Married	foreign wife		Bioengineering - Postdoctoral Researcher	UK PhD	5
2	F	30s	Single	British partner		Higher Education -Research Fellow (part-time)	UK MA + PhD	9
3	F	20s	Single	(alone)		Career Consultation -Career Coach/Team Leader	UK MA	5
4	M	50s	Single	(alone)		Art and Painting -Artist (self-employed)	Expert	10+
5	M	30s	Married	British spouse		Higher Education -Intermediate Manager	UK MA	2.2
6	F	30s	Single	foreign partner		Entertainment -Film/Animation Director (elf-employed)	UK MA	7
7	F	30s	Married	British spouse + kid	1	Finance -Staff (part-time)	UK MA	9
8	F	30s	Single	Irish partner		Interior Design -Supervisor	UK MA	5
9	M	50s	Married	Taiwanese wife		Medical Service -Physician (self-employed)	UK BMedSci	20+
10	F	20s	Single	(alone)		IT software -Intermediate Manager	Taiwan BA	4
11	F	30s	Single	(alone)		Food industry -Business Development Executive	Taiwan BA	5
12	M	40s	Married	foreign wife	2	Finance -Professional Financial Engineer	UK PhD	10+
13	F	30s	Married	Spanish husband		Education - High School Teacher	UK MA	9
14	F	30s	Single	British partner		Finance -Professional Financial Consultant	US MA	5
15	M	30s	Married	German spouse		International Trade -Intermediate Manager	Taiwan MA	9
16	F	20s	Single	(alone)		Business Consulting -Business Consultant (self-employed)	UK MA	3
17	F	60+	Widow	(alone)	1	Church Service -Clerical	UK + France MA	0.2
18	F	20s	Single	Chinese partner		Logistics -Intermediate Manager	UK MA	3
19	M	30s	Married	Taiwanese wife		IT -Intermediate Manager	UK PhD	14
20	F	60+	Separated	Children	1	Chinese language Teaching -School Founder/Teacher (self-employed)	Japan BA	20+

21	M	20s	Single	(alone)		Construction -Professional Architect	UK MA	2
22	M	40s	Married	Taiwanese wife		Construction -Professional Architect	UK MA	2
23	F	30s	Married	British husband		Biomedical Science -Postdoctoral Researcher	Taiwan PhD	1.5
24	M	40s	Married	Taiwanese wife		Finance -Financial Consultant (self-employed)	UK MA	15
25	F	40s	Married	Taiwanese husband		Fashion Design -Professional Designer	Taiwan MA	15
26	F	30s	Married	foreign husband		Higher Education -Project Manager	UK MA	10+
27	M	30s	Single	Partner		Aeronautical Engineering -Supervisor	UK MA + PhD	10+
28	M	50s	Married	Taiwanese wife +children	2	Biotechnology -Higher manager	US PhD	10+
29	F	30s	Married	Taiwanese husband		Social Media Design -Business owner (self-employed)	Taiwan PhD	2
30	F	50s	Married	Scottish husband	2	Adult Education -Teacher (part-time)	UK MA	16
31	M	40s	Married	British husband		Biomedical Science -Research Technician	UK Phil	10
32	M	50s	Single	(alone)		Freelance writer (self-employed)	Switzerland MA	5
33	F	30s	Married	Taiwanese couple		Wedding Services -Business owner (self-employed)	UK MA	4
34	M	40s	Married	Taiwanese wife + child	1	Financial service -Professional Administrator	Japan + Netherlands MA	4
35	F	20s	Single	(alone)		Energy Engineering -Marketing Junior Manager	UK MA	3
36	F	30s	Married	British husband		Renewable Energy -Higher Manager	UK MA	7
37	F	30s	Single	(alone)		IT -Intermediate Manager	Taiwan MA	3
38	M	20s	Single	(alone)		IT -Engineer	US BA	2
39	F	40s	Divorced	Children	1	Government -Administrative Staff	Taiwan BA	5
40	F	40s	Single	Children	2	IT Trade -Business owner (self-employed)	UK MA	20+

Note: 'foreign spouse/partner' refers to if the interviewee's spouse/partner is neither British or Taiwanese-origin, and his/her specific nationality was not offered.
(Source: the researcher)

4.11: Summary

This thesis aims to understand migration decision-making post-migration and adopts the inductive qualitative approach to investigate the experiences of highly skilled Taiwanese immigrants in the UK as a case study. This chapter provides the rational for the chosen methodology with clear premises to develop the research design and explained the use of the appropriate methods of data collection and analysis. Given migration issues often involve different disciplines, and scholars have employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to research their topics of interest. In order to flexibly and broadly collect the primary data, this thesis pursues a mixed-method approach, mainly using semi-structured interviews to collect rich narrative data and a questionnaire survey to measure the social characteristics of the participants. Data analysis is supported by the use of Nvivo software to manage the coding and to make visual the key concepts emerging from the interview conversation.

Moving on to the fieldwork, the research questions did not involve any sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting issues, and participation in the interview is voluntary. Although highly skilled workers are usually not deemed to be vulnerable participants, the fieldwork experience showed that personal overseas experiences may cause a person's emotional discomfort or negative memories, such as homesickness, separation from left-behind family members and friends or they may suffer discrimination in the host society, mentioned during the interview. This research offered them a chance to have a say and revisit the migration journey. Although their expressions and emotional changes tend not to be serious enough to cause mental illness or hurt feelings, the researcher's understanding and listening provide very important mental support. A few of them continued to maintain social relationships with the researcher as a friend to share their viewpoints and experiences via Facebook after their interview.

On the other hand, the researcher as an 'insider' Taiwanese migrant was able to 'immerse' herself in part of the common settings sharing with the researched group (Watts, 2008). This role was also present in the process of translating the primary data and explaining intercultural meanings within the narratives. However, this chapter also presented a potential disadvantage that migrant participants may offer different views to 'outsiders' or 'locals' from different origins. Moreover, as the research subjects are highly skilled migrants, their social status is different to that of the researcher – a PhD migrant university

student. Therefore, the power relations between the researcher and the researched group were often negotiable and fluid, and in some cases, brought fieldwork challenges.

Chapter 5: Migration motivation and migration patterns

Chapters 5-8 discuss the key findings regarding the experiences of highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK. As explored in the migration literature review, international migration is selective, and individuals' aspirations and capabilities are significant to their success in migration and in dealing with related challenges before and after arrival. Applying Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital, this exploration of the participants' local experiences looks at aspects of the migrants' human, social and cultural capital. Chapter 5 provides an overview of migration patterns, and at the motivation for highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK. Chapter 6 focuses on their education and skills as portable assets bringing about economic opportunities in the labour market (human capital); Chapter 7 discusses individual preferences, habitus and adaptation to city life (cultural capital); Chapter 8 examines their social networks/capital. This thesis argues that migration decision-making involves these three types of capital, embodied in migrants' experiences together with individual demographic characteristics, resulting in different outcomes. It seeks to answer which aspect plays the most important role in influencing re-migration intentions, and to examine the association between individual demographic characteristics and decision outcomes.

Migration theories have found that migration experiences vary according to different geographical, economic and social settings in the receiving societies, and to individual demographic characteristics. At the micro level, traditional knowledge of migration with regard to individual decision-making focuses mainly on low-skilled workers at the pre-migration stage, and assumes migration direction to be either leaving or returning to the homeland. The following discussions contribute to unpacking key factors influencing migrants' decision to stay or to leave the host country post-migration, and explore economic and non-economic attractiveness in a country-specific context. By analysing narratives from in-depth interviews, this qualitative research contributes to an investigation of individuals' feelings and perceptions, rather than clicking on a set of assumed indicators. Chapter 5 begins with an outline of the migration patterns among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK. It looks at their destination choices and migration motivations. How did they consider where to move, and why did they choose the UK as the destination country? What factors encouraged them to work and live in the

UK? Secondly, it discusses how personal human capital helped them gain access to the UK labour market.

5.1: Global higher education facilitates international mobility for the highly skilled

In this case study, the majority of the participants (34) completed higher education outside Taiwan, with 30 holding Western university degrees, 23 of whom graduated in the UK. Previous migration research has shown that the development of international higher education goes hand-in-hand with the global mobility of the highly skilled. In today's OECD area, international students enrolled in tertiary-level education come mainly from Asia – China (789,000), India (262,000) and Korea (100,000); the UK, Germany and France are the three main providers of Western education in this region (IOM, 2021; Rana, 2019; UNESCO, 2018; Verbik and Lasanowski, 2007). Foreign students normally pay higher tuition fees than home students, bringing a positive economic benefit to the destination states. On the other hand, many developed countries with larger global markets may offer work opportunities for qualified foreign graduates from different cultural backgrounds to join the domestic labour force. Therefore, international student mobility is often regarded as economic migration.

The synergistic effect between receiving international students and recruiting foreign skilled labour has raised concern about foreign student entry policies within immigration rules designed to meet the national interest. To attract overseas students, some developed countries embed employment and residency rights during their stay or after graduation within limited entry permits; one example is the UK post-study work visa (Verbik and Lasanowski, 2007; Suter and Jandl, 2006). The UK Migration Advisory Committee (MAC, 2018) and the OECD (2014) report that opportunities to stay to work after completing education in the receiving country is an influential factor for those considering an overseas university. That is to say, pursuing overseas higher education is, to some extent, regarded as a prelude to a passage of highly skilled international migration; the choice of overseas university is thus considered crucial in shaping the direction of international migration.

Although international student mobility is related directly to highly skilled migration, few countries are able to provide actual statistics for the retention rate of their foreign

graduates, and the existing data may vary due to country-specific measurement methods (She and Wotherspoon, 2013). Research conducted by Suter and Jandl (2006) indicates that about 15-35% of international students enrolled worldwide eventually choose to settle and work in their host countries, and the higher a foreign student's education level, the more likely [s]he is to stay in the receiving country to work. In the UK context, studies conducted from 2008 to 2010 report that the proportion of international students from non-EEA countries changing their visa status to stay to work was very limited (Salt, 2010). In April 2012, the UK government tightened up the criteria for people wanting to enter for study and scrapped the 'post study work route', which allowed foreign students two years to search for employment in the UK after graduation. According to the UK Home Office (2011), this shift was to avoid 'abuse of the system' and 'protect the brightest and best students' in order to maintain quality at the colleges.

Since the 2000s, the main destinations of international students have been largely centred in OECD countries (75%), with the US, the UK, Australia, Canada, France and Germany together receiving more than 50% of foreign students. The UK is the second most popular destination for international students in the world, behind only the US (MAC, 2018, p.2, 31; UNESCO, UN, 2018). The popular destination list almost corresponds to that from Taiwan, in which Britain was the fourth most popular destination country over the last decade, attracting an annually stable number of up to 4,000 Taiwanese people to enrol in UK educational institutions (see Table 5.1).

Apart from the English-speaking countries, Japan has been the chosen overseas study destination for many Taiwanese students. From 1998 to 2019, the top five most popular locations for Taiwanese people remained the same. However, there was a decline in the number of students studying in the UK after 2015, while the number of Taiwanese studying in Australia increased. Geographical proximity may partly explain the reasons for destination choice. The total flight duration from Taiwan to the US, Canada or the UK is about double (13-15 hours) that to Australia (seven hours). However, further examination is needed of the policies, costs and conditions – and student characteristics – related to overseas study in different countries.

Table 5.1: Numbers of Taiwanese students studying abroad by destination: 2012-2019

Country	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
US (1)	24,818	23,250	21,867	21,266	21,127	21,516	22,454	23,369
Australia (2)	12,424	7,211	8,201	10,220	13,582	16,573	18,227	18,791
Japan (3)	6,591	6,402	6,531	7,491	8,444	9,642	10,347	9,524
UK (4)	4,625	4,380	4,135	3,965	3,815	3,920	3,775	3,850
Canada (5)	3,349	2,883	2,648	3,500	4,827	3,202	5,330	4,390
Germany	1,364	1,441	1,509	919	1,488	1,755	2,013	2,390
New Zealand	975	1,448	1,366	1,225	1,106	1,820	2,070	1,890
France	1,410	955	1,680	1,100	1,132	1,004	1,079	648
Proportion (%)	96%	97%	92%	92%	96%	93%	95%	91%
Others	2,303	1,249	4,094	4,420	2,435	4,227	3,331	6,369
Total	5,7859	49,219	52,031	54,106	57,956	63,659	68,626	71,221

Note: Data is collected with the cooperation of foreign embassies and includes only students with Taiwanese citizenship enrolled in foreign educational institutions outside Taiwan.
(Source: Ministry of Education, Taiwan, 2019)

5.2: Migration patterns and motivations

In this chapter, the patterns and motivations behind decisions to move from Taiwan to the UK is considered in more detail in order to provide a basic understanding of this migration choice. Looking at the answers to 'Why did you choose to work here?' makes one international migration pattern in this case study of highly skilled Taiwanese people particularly obvious: the study-driven category. Over a half of the respondents (23) said that their initial plan for the move was short-term study rather than permanent immigration, and most (16) came to pursue a UK Master's degree. Overall, five main migration patterns can be categorised by migration motivation: (i) study (23); (ii) work (8); (iii) family integration/the trailing spouse (6); (iv) relationship/love (2); and (v) lifestyle (1) (See Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Motivations for migration to the UK
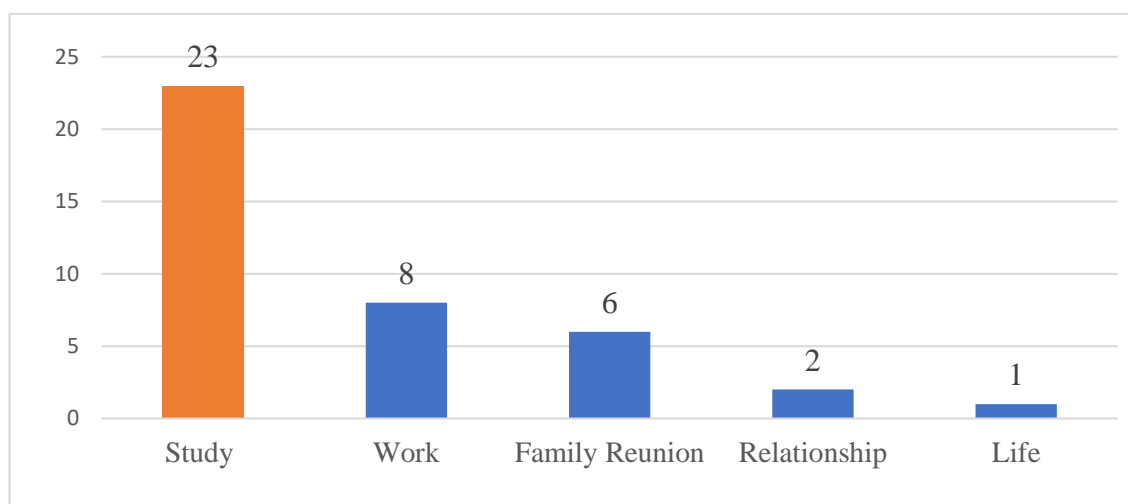
Note: The results find five types of migration motivation: (i) study (23); (ii) work (8); (iii) family integration/the trailing spouse (6); (iv) relationship/love (2); and (v) lifestyle (1).
(Source: the fieldwork data)

As discussed above, international student mobility is deemed to be economic migration, and is likely to be a strategy for working in the receiving country. Some migration scholars have discussed international student mobility in the category of skilled international migration (Van Riemsdijk and Wang, Eds., 2016; Mahroum, 2000). Given that English is an international language, receiving higher education in Western universities – especially in English-speaking countries – can cultivate and accumulate practical human capital that increases not only subject expertise, but also English language skills and intercultural knowledge to enhance living and working globally; it is also beneficial in promoting personal economic and social status. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) argue that such an investment can be seen as a purchase decision, and international migration in turn becomes a way to seek a return on overseas education.

The 23 study-driven participants cited various factors to explain why the UK became their study destination. The importance of an English-speaking environment, British culture and history, as well as university ranking and academic reputation, were the reasons most highlighted. The second most important factors were associated with ease of application, study length and the cost of a Master's degree. To further understand the level of preference, participants were asked: 'was the UK your first choice?' Only three reported that their first choice for overseas study was not the UK but Holland, Japan and the Nordic

countries based on study subjects and cultural preferences. Although the UK was not their first study choice, they admitted that they were eventually motivated by the ease of the UK entry requirements, the lower cost of a UK Master's degree and the higher ranking of UK universities.

> *Um…in the beginning, I didn't think I will stay. I was thinking about how the work, the career will be. And I was thinking about going to Holland because it is kind of centre of Europe. So it kind of became my priority. But the UK has its own advantages; one is easy to get in – Holland is more difficult – and also, another thing is because the price, a short-term for a Master's degree, only take one year (#UK6, female, interior design).*

> *In fact, my first choice is not the English-speaking country but Japan…I wanted to study in University of Tokyo, but because Tokyo's living expenses and tuition fees are too expensive, then I turned to English-speaking countries ... I applied to a lot of the universities in the United States, and then the UK, I only applied to Edinburgh, as a result, I only got the offer from Edinburgh, haha! (#UK31, male, biomedical science).*

> *Er…my first option was the Nordic countries. Um…but I was – I wasn't trying to migrate. I just wanted to live somewhere for a little while, so my first option was the Nordic country but then I applied for the Master's degree and the – the UK university happened to have a higher ranking; therefore I just came here (#UK35, female, energy).*

As the data shows above in Table 5.1, Australia has remained Taiwan's second-largest overseas study destination over the past decade; however, Australia was mentioned only once in the destination choice questions, when one participant responded: 'lacking information about Australia and New Zealand'. From the interview narratives, when it came to where to study abroad, the US – the biggest winner in the global higher education and global talent competition so far – was the most mentioned in comparison with the UK. Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) indicate that word-of-mouth referrals and opinions from parents and relatives potentially create a peer culture, which is very likely to influence migrants' decisions. The fact that the US, with many world-class universities, is not only seen as the most popular option for Taiwanese people to study abroad, but is also a dominant location for Taiwanese academic researchers with PhD backgrounds in US domestic universities. This migration culture influence was as one participant stated:

Um…got the scholarship studying in Iceland, and then, after the study, I originally still wanted to go to the United States to further study because Taiwanese people all go to the United States. I originally wanted to go to the US – I also have got the offers – but I felt that I had already studied for so long, plus another year in Iceland, so later, I considered it will only take me one year to study in the UK but two years in the US (#UK26, 30-30, female, higher education).

On the other hand, those participants migrating for work, relationships/love or family together, stressed that destination choice depended on their working opportunities and a wish to live with a loved one, rather than on the attractiveness of the destination itself. Among them, only two have a UK education background (see Table 5.2). Those migrating to seek relationships/love or family integration have a partner or spouse – either a Taiwanese, British or EU citizen – studying or working in the UK, so were eligible to find a job after arrival through a spouse/partner visa. In addition, one single male interviewee working as a semi-retired freelance re-migrated from Switzerland to Scotland a few years ago. This type of 'lifestyle migration' is well documented in international retirement migration studies, often categorised as elite travel with a combination of work and leisure, or describing a relatively affluent individual in search of a better way of life in idyllic places (Ibrahim and Tremblay, 2017; Benson and O'Reilly, 2009; MacCannell, 1999).

Table 5.2: Migration patterns, by education degree/person

Study	Work	Relationship (love)	Family Integration (Trailing spouse)	A new life
UK BA+MA+PhD (1)	Taiwan MA (1)	Taiwan MA (1)	Taiwan PhD (2)	Switzerland MA (1)
UK MA+ PhD (1)	Taiwan BA (3)	Taiwan BA (1)	Taiwan MA (1)	
UK PhD (3)	US PhD (1)		UK MA (1)	
UK MPhil (1)	US MA (1)		Japan (1)	
UK MA (16)	US BA (1)		Japan MA +Netherlands MA (1)	
UK BA - Medical school (1)	UK MA			
	+France MA (1)			

Note: The majority of the participants (23) originally moved to the UK for study, and most of them studied a one-year Master.
(Source: the fieldwork data)

5.3: Access to the local labour market

Underemployment involves multiple factors; it affects even native-born university graduates with innate language proficiency and local knowledge. However, low levels of education and working experience tend to increase the risk of labour market exclusion (Rosholm, 2001). Human capital is thus crucial for highly skilled migrants in search of a decent job in their destination country. In fact, the supply-demand equation of human resources for foreign skilled workers is closely linked to the development of education, industry, economic circumstances and national immigration policies, which vary across different countries. Although fresh foreign graduates are often seen as potential skilled workers in the host country, national policies for integrating them into the domestic labour market play a significant role in controlling numbers.

The 2018 MAC report shows that when the UK post-study visa route, first introduced in 2004, changed in 2012, the number of international students applying for a visa extension for work declined sharply from over 45,000 to about 6,000 per year. In addition, the main UK visa route for non-EEA foreign skilled workers entering the UK under the PBS, namely the Tier 2 work visa, was under a numerical limit control through monthly allocations (MAC, 2018). Over time, UK immigration policies have been formulated and adjusted according to the changing socio-economic environment in response to public concerns around immigration. Hence, highly skilled migrant participants have experienced different regulations and procedures to access the UK labour market.

Regarding seeking job opportunities in the UK, it would be reasonable to assume that most non-EEA international students would find it difficult to compete with home graduates and EEA students in terms of English proficiency, local cultures and networks. In addition, with the increasing number of international students around the world since the late 1990s, competition among foreign students seeking job opportunities in Western developed countries is obviously growing. In analysing job vacancies driven by the knowledge economy, previous studies and recent statistics reveal that personnel from science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields or the business-related disciplines are the most wanted among the highly skilled. Moreover, report show that proportionately more international students than native-born students tend to enrol in science and technology courses in developed countries (MAC, 2018; She and Wotherspoon, 2013; OECD, 2008; Suter and Jandl, 2006). Since there have been different

levels of competition in seeking job opportunities, it is worth investigating access to the UK labour market for well-educated migrant participants.

5.3.1: UK higher education as beneficial human capital

The majority of participants (23) originally moved to the UK for study. By the time they reached the stage of wanting to remain to work in the UK, almost all successfully managed to switch from a study to a work visa within three months – the one exception worked using her partner visa after completing a PhD course. In addition, they worked in diverse industries in the UK labour market – which offers more job opportunities within a bigger, global-scale system in a different cultural context compared to Taiwan's market structures – such as financial business, interior design, entertainment, construction and logistics. Therefore, it would be presumptuous to claim that foreign students or professional personnel in non-STEM fields tend to find it difficult to develop their career abroad. As one participant said:

> *I came as a student. The reason at that time was relatively simple because I like the animation industry here [...]. This school has European art and culture backgrounds. So maybe it was because of historical and cultural factors that made me choose the UK. Compared with the US, the industry here is more diverse – [...] the image and the multimedia industries are very different from those of the US and Taiwan – and then I think it is a good choice because I cannot see such a cultural background in other places (#UK6, 30-39, female, entertainment).*

Moreover, the possibility of gaining access to the labour market in a new destination does not depend only on personal skills per se; job search strategies, sources of information, financial support, and local connections can facilitate the process. In this regard, Sandoz (2020) believes that the interplay of migrant individuals and the institutional environment in which they are embedded impacts job opportunity. For example, migrant students can benefit from affiliations developed by their higher education institutions, which offer not only legitimate knowledge and skills, but also help them to reach out to local markets. According to official UK data, universities are one of the largest sectors in many local economies, and overseas students have been the largest group in net migration figures since 2010 – around a quarter of total immigration to date (ONS, 2021; MAC, 2018). Hence, a high-ranking university, offering excellent academic education and research, functions as a server inputting and outputting skilled migrants, which produces a knock-on effect on the supply-demand system.

Vertovec (2002) notes that universities offer significant networks for skilled migrants, especially foreign students. Several instances from 23 study-driven interviewees provide evidence that UK higher education functions as an effective broker of human capital to facilitate access to local markets and to contribute to a proper skill match between work and personal education and training. Of the five participants with a UK PhD degree, four worked as postdoctoral researchers or were involved in teaching jobs in their own universities during their studies or after graduation, representing their first jobs in the UK. Moreover, ten of the 23 participants stepped into the local labour market through job vacancies, job fairs and related activities hosted by their universities, or engaged in school projects in cooperation with global or local industries. Most of the job-seeking information and resources offered by their universities are generally open to every student, but require an individual to take the initiative and to have personal aspirations in order to take advantage of the connections. The participants graduating from the UK universities in London, Leeds, Sheffield, York and Edinburgh are examples of this.

One participant studying international business became a local start-up entrepreneur and set up her own company after graduation. She still retains regular connections with her university, as she explained:

> *I have an office in OOO University, then I more or less have contacts with er…British and Chinese people working here; maybe they have been working here for a long time, […] sometimes the university offers me some activities, networking activities, sometimes I know people because of this network activity (#UK33, 30-39, female, wedding service).*

Some gave credit to their university's reputation for helping them to find a job. Two interviewees who studied in medical science and architectural design undertook a series of skills training programmes to obtain British professional certificates recognised by the local market, and this became the main reason for them to stay to work.

5.3.2: UK work experience is as important as UK education

Some participants emphasised the importance of augmenting a UK higher education qualification with work experience in local job-hunting. However, they pointed out that work experience gained in the UK is more valuable, because overseas work experience is only for the employer's reference, and is unlikely to be accumulated or transferred into

UK working qualifications. One participant working in the financial sector said that he had worked as a manager in Taiwan in the same industry, but had to start at a junior level in the UK. Previous research into labour market experiences of highly skilled migrants has found similar issues across many countries in different regions, and this experience is perhaps not limited to non-white migrants in Western countries; similar evidence was observed in Harvey's (2012) case study of highly skilled British personnel in Canada.

Before coming to the UK, over half of all the participants had work experience in Taiwan and other countries; those with no employment history are mostly from the student-driven cohort. Gaining recognition for previous skill qualifications or certificates obtained in the country of origin seems problematic; six participants with a UK educational background recalled their job-search experiences, and especially mentioned that work experience was in fact more important than an education degree in their professional fields.

> *You got a job mainly because they looked at your work experience. Probably they may look at your qualifications, but if you enter this team, you only have to prove your own abilities and ideas, and they usually listen to your opinions, then get in work. Afterwards, you seem to be one of them (#UK6, 30-39, female, entertainment).*
>
> *In fact, the United Kingdom has a key point. That is, they don't care so much about academic certificate, they care much about experiences than your qualifications (#UK7, 30-39, female, financial services).*
>
> *Actually, it didn't take much time to find a job. Probably ... from finishing my Master's thesis to get a job, it was almost ... two more months, only two more months. Then ... but it was really a big challenge to find a job at that time because ... er ... this is my first job in the UK, the challenge is quite big. The British people pay more attention to work experience rather than education degree; then the first challenge means that you have no UK work experience. Yes, it is true that you have work experience in Taiwan, but no work experience in the UK, so they hesitated to hire you (#UK24, 40-49, male, financial consultant).*

In this study, higher education and work experience are identified as two significant elements of workable human capital that embody economic opportunities. It might not be surprising that the findings reveal that participants with a UK educational background have an advantage over other respondents in searching for job opportunities in the UK. The former hold not only a 'legitimate' education certificate endowed by the host country, but have also personally built up an information network and local cultural connections while studying. Their interview narratives in describing how smoothly they obtained a job are self-evident. For instance, five interviewees said they had been '*lucky*'; 11 answered '*went smoothly*'; two used the term '*immediately*' or '*very quickly*'. In addition,

four participants were already engaged in their current jobs before graduation. Only one mentioned that she had sent out hundreds of *curriculum vitae*, and eventually had only very few interview opportunities; nevertheless, she confidently added that, '*finding a job was not difficult for me*' (#UK6, female, interior design).

5.4: Job opportunities without a UK education degree

Among all the participants, only three stated that it was very stressful to find a job within three months; these are working holiday visa holders with bachelor's degrees (two Taiwan and one US graduate). One way to understand the process of seeking jobs abroad in the global talent competition, and to identify the disadvantages of labour market exclusion for 'migrants outside the UK', is to explain how those without a UK educational background succeeded in being recruited by UK-based employers. It might not be surprising that a UK foreign graduate is able to work part-time or full-time in the British labour market, in terms of immigration policies, location advantages and the legitimacy of his/her educational qualifications. The following section looks specifically at those participants who migrated without a UK education degree; comparing the experiences of the study-driven cohort provides a different angle, clarifying how differences in human capital influence access to job opportunities in the UK. Without an explicit criterion to measure, claiming that 'the best and the brightest' stay to work after overseas study should be contested; in exploring this point, this case study presents a range of migration patterns and trajectories of well-educated migrants. Some moved several times across national borders to progress up the career ladder, some moved with their spouses, or accepted a lower job status.

5.4.1: Cultural gaps and necessary marketable skills

For those who originally entered the UK to study, the decision to stay to work often followed later, based on their – presumably positive –experiences in the UK. For others (17), highly skilled migration was not always motivated by individual career ambitions; in some cases, well-educated people migrated to bring their family together, or were looking for relationships/love. Despite without UK educational background, overall, fifteen of them consider their jobs match their skills and interests. For example, two

female respondents with Taiwan PhDs are trailing spouses following their husbands to the UK, but not especially for work purposes; one found a research job, and the other became self-employed within a few months. One male participant living in London, who came for a relationship/love, described the challenges facing him in search of a job due to a lack of UK cultural context:

> *I came here after finishing my Master's degree in Taiwan […] um...the problem is that I studied media in Taiwan, but this kind of work needs a lot of understanding of the local cultural contexts, so when I wanted to contact the British media industry at the beginning, it was not that easy. So afterwards I chose my current job in the trade industry […] I was finding [a job] very quickly. […] When I started to look for job-related information, the first thing was, in fact, the English they wanted was not only the English ability, but more... when I just came, I didn't know the local cultural context […]. So I found out, ok! In media industry, I may not have the way to entry so easily, I may need er...not reach the goal at a single leap, I need a period of time, integrate, understand, live, then I can have such the ability. So I was thinking, well, my English is ok, then I used to work in media industry in Taiwan, so er…I also know something about the internet, having done something related to online media marketing, so I am now doing this for my company, doing trade business, internet, website er…management this kind of work. So at that time, I transferred to this industry a bit fast. Yes! (#UK15, 30-39, male, international trade).*

Opportunities to successfully integrate into the UK highly skilled labour market without a foreign degree happen for a reason. In this example, previous work experience in Taiwan helped the interviewee to smoothly obtain a job, and he identifies a lack of British cultural understanding as the major barrier to working in the UK media industry – something hard to acquire in a short time. This disadvantage seems to back up the notion of Bourdieu's capital theory in relation to accumulating capital. For those with a UK degree, the accumulation of cultural capital through Western education systems is more likely to create a favourable position for them to integrate into the labour market. As further evidence, a female participant who majored in English language at a Taiwan university was hired as a key worker in UK local government within three months of her arrival. She explained that she previously worked for the UK and Canadian public sectors in Taipei, was familiar with and quite liked both working cultures, and so developed a lot of interest in working abroad.

In addition, #UK15 pointed out that IT capability is more likely to be recognised as transferable skill and knowledge in the global labour market; two other interviewees without a UK educational background support this finding. The research also finds that participants with fashion and art design skills, with or without a UK degree, show more

confidence in finding a skill-match job, since the skill per se heavily relies on personal talent and places far more emphasis on creativity than on language proficiency. More details are shown in the following discussion about how they have enjoyed working in the UK.

5.4.2: Transition from overqualification to skills match: working holidaymakers

Three participants with Taiwan bachelor's degrees, reported their motivations for moving to the UK as looking for a better environment for career development, and all had previous work experience in Taiwan. One migrated through skill migration path as a self-employed artist. The other two entered through the UK Youth Mobility Scheme, known as the overseas working holiday (Tier 5 visa). They initially took up low-skilled jobs – restaurant service and retail sales – and perceived and experienced a job-skill mismatch during the working holiday period. Subsequently, they were promoted to higher-level positions: a manager responsible for food marketing and a software designer respectively, sponsored by their companies to switch to the Tier 2 work visa before their working holiday expired.

In general, economists and sociologists divide employment status into permanent, temporary and casual work, and conceptualise underemployment in terms of wage loss and educational requirements. In fact, the perception of underemployment also originates from individuals' subjective feelings of overqualification, lack of growth and dissatisfaction at work (Feldman, 1996; Khan and Morrow, 1991). Such a situation is confirmed by this interviewee who carried out undesired temporary work as a working holidaymaker.

> *I was just thinking about changing career. Then, there was a chance for the working holiday in the UK. [...] I got Tier 5 visa in 2016 [...] I was seriously looking for a job for about one or two months. At that time, my savings were almost gone, then I first started to work in a luxury retail store while I was looking for a design-related job. It took almost one year. My supervisor knew that I have the expertise of IT design, and then [s]he helped me to transfer to a skill-related position. So I actually waited for my desired job for more than one year (#UK10, 20-29, female, IT software services).*

In the past decade, there has been a gradual increase in the popularity among young university graduates for joining overseas working holiday programmes, although this

phenomenon is not within the discussion of highly skilled international migration. The working holiday programme targets young people aged 18 to 35 who intend to travel for six to 24 months taking paid temporary work. As with the UK, many developed countries attract young graduates from abroad in this way, but the policy design may vary, and the programme is open only in certain countries. For example, New Zealand incorporates working holidays into temporary migration programmes for highly skilled migrants (Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009). In contrast, Australia's working holiday visa scheme is employed to address shortages of low-skilled workers in certain industries, such as accommodation and agriculture (Corcoran and Rowe, 2016; Corcoran et al., 2013; Tan and Lester, 2012).

The 'hidden rules' for working holidaymakers seeking jobs in the UK can be found in Taiwan's social media, including Facebook, the Backpackers website, and Crossing magazine. They tend to offer strategies for seeking temporary jobs in London, combined with European tourism information. The typical working holidaymaker is not expected to be ambitious or capable of competing with skilled professionals in the labour market. However, this different migration route for graduates without foreign degrees has potentially created an opportunity to become highly skilled migrants. In fact, the narratives and experiences in these cases depict more struggle and vulnerability compared to other participants. It contrasts with the discourse around highly skilled migration in the existing literature, which often describes subjects landing in their new destination with a better socioeconomic status, and without struggling with any transition. The female working holidaymaker mentioned in this case started her job as a restaurant waitress, and is in her 30s working as a business executive for a UK-based Japanese food company. Although the two stories in this study succeeded through their personal efforts – drawing on their skills, performance and UK experiences – recognised by their companies, such is not always the case in reality.

As discussed above, IT skills seem to be more in demand in the UK labour market. Another male participant entered through a working holiday visa after completing his US bachelor's degree, and found a skill-match job in an IT department. He also points out that work experience is as important an element of human capital as education or equivalent skills.

I have been to the US but as far as I know work visa there is difficult to get [...] unless you have many years of work experience, then you may have a chance, but when I went abroad for study, I have no experience in this way, so directly didn't consider it. [...] I just came when got a working visa. [...] one thing is ... tut! ... If you are sure to come, you have to find the job first, because in my case I came to find my job after coming here. [...] At that time, I got heavy pressure, ha! [...] It took about three to four months (#UK38, 20-29, male, IT).

Evidence is also presented by a female IT participant with a Taiwan Master's degree. She found her first UK job directly and was offered a Tier 2 work visa when she was still working in Taiwan. She supports the image of Australia's working holiday as normally involving unskilled or low-skilled work.

Hmm, actually I didn't plan to immigrate to somewhere, I was just want to live abroad for a while, and so I applied for a work visa, then I consider myself don't really want to go to Australia to pick up fruit, I don't really want to do some labour jobs so I still want to do something like office jobs and I still want to go somewhere speak English because I think it would be easier compared to speak other languages. So I was considering the UK and Ireland, and I got the UK work visa first so I came to the UK (#UK37, 30-39, female, IT).

5.4.3: Transnational companies and professional social networks

In this study, three participants studied in the US and migrated to the UK for work: a PhD biotechnology scientist motivated by a career opportunity offering entrepreneurship investment; a financial expatriate with a Master's degree attracted by European culture; and the aforementioned fresh IT bachelor's graduate entering through a working holiday programme. Among them, the first two participants obtained American citizenship before leaving the US, and indicated UK wage levels to be significantly lower than those in the US. Their UK job positions were directly arranged through professional networks and by company transfer, rather than their competing with others in the UK labour market.

The intracompany transfer of highly skilled workers in transnational corporations is a typical channel in the global economy. In world cities like London, New York, Tokyo and Singapore, many international finance corporations arrange transient professional migration in accountancy and investment banking in order to efficiently enhance the knowledge, expertise and skills of their staff for operating global business (Beaverstock, 2002; Mahroum, 2001; Beaverstock and Boardwell, 2000). The female financial expatriate's re-migration from the US to the UK exemplifies the case. She says that she

was particularly fond of European culture and travel, so applied for a job transfer from New York to her company's European headquarters in London.

In fact, Beaverstock's (1994, p.336) early studies on world cities and banking organisations find that expatriate bankers are directed to global financial cities which combine career opportunity and an attractive city life for the high-class stratum – as Mahroum (2001, p.28) describes, 'important soft factors such as the cultural and convivial affinities of these cities'. Globally, London has been a top spot as a world financial hub to attract numerous overseas professionals to exchange skills or develop careers; from this participant's viewpoints, it is more than just a place for work:

> *I studied in the United States, am already a US citizen. If it needs a comparison, the salary in America is higher, but I personally like European culture and history, also [I] considered language. Because as I work in finance industry, so the headquarter is in the UK, our market includes Europe. The company allows me to choose one country to work in, I then chose France, and then returned to London at weekends. […] Because I like traveling, the UK is a hub of Europe so you can travel everywhere (#UK14, 30-39, female, finance).*

On the other hand, certain job positions, especially those of higher-level managers in the global labour market, are not open to everyone. Apart from seeking highly specialised technological and managerial skills, recruitment policy largely depends on company culture; for example, Japanese companies are more likely to employ their own managerial experts than local skilled personnel, as are companies in Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan (OECD, 1997). Since there are relatively fewer higher-level job positions, in some cases the recruitment approach is through professional agents. For example, executive search firms in Europe's leading cities came into the picture as many companies increasingly expanded towards international standing in the early globalisation era (Boyle et al., 1996). Such channels are still open in seeking potential candidates from abroad when a suitable person is not available or is not being considered in the host countries (Harvey et al., 2018).

Another approach is through close personal social networks established from similar professional circles. The effectiveness of social networks in helping a would-be migrant to access employment and housing in a new destination has been widely addressed in migration network research (Castle et al., 2014; De Haas, 2010; Curran, 2002; Findlay and Li, 1998; Massey, 1990), and is very likely to guide migrants into specific places and occupations (Vertovec, 2002). Some empirical studies show that researchers tend to

migrate through their own ad hoc, work-related networks, while engineers are more likely to move through recruitment agencies (Meyer, 2001; Vertovec, 2002).

In the following example, a transnational network connection with an ex-colleague – a migrant settled in the UK – played a crucial role in recruiting a high-level manager from the US for a newly established company. As mentioned above, although the participants from the US commented that average salaries in the US are much higher than the UK, a Taiwanese American scientist who had never considered Britain as his immigration destination moved to the UK in his 40s for a new career opportunity that he could not have accessed in the US.

> *I chose the UK because I could involve in this start-up, so I can involve the funding of start-up, so I can have more ownership, yes! This is what I cannot have in the United States. There is no such opportunity in the United States, yes. [...] I never wanted to transfer to the UK, this opportunity happened to er ... it was just someone here coming to find me and asking me whether I was interested in this; [...] because in the United States, scientist is in a high-level social status, but I was unable to go up to this managerial level, I came here to be provided such a managerial level experience, which is relatively unique; however, it cannot be said that there is no way to find such experience in the United States (#UK28, 50-59, male, biotechnology).*

5.5: Increasing competition for highly skilled migration

This study provides evidence that labour market opportunities for highly skilled migrants are very likely to be influenced by domestic economic recessions and changes in British immigration policy. One participant with a UK Master's degree returned to Taiwan after graduation and came back to the UK several years later, after his wife received an offer of employment in London. He arrived in the UK and started to look for a job, but said, 'it was unsuccessful I think the reason was because I have left the UK too long'. He eventually entered his current company through the introduction of a Taiwanese colleague. He viewed social networking as very important in his case and shared his experience:

> *In 2008, the year I graduated, and I just studied construction economy management, so that was the worst time at that moment. So I didn't stay to find a job at that time, I went back to Taiwan (#UK22, 40-49, male, professional architect).*

The 2008 economic recession influenced job opportunities of all migrant groups, in a different way at different levels. 2013 ONS data reported that the UK unemployment rate rose from 5.4% to 7.9% within one year due to the economic crisis, and the rate for migrant groups was 9.4%. In such conditions, non-EU migrants were likely to suffer a more unfavourable situation, since they lacked the right to claim welfare benefits in the receiving country, which increased their financial uncertainty, in turn affecting their intentions to stay. Also, restrictions on the work visa made it difficult for migrants to change jobs between different sponsors (Vargas-Silva, 2016b).

Borjas (2001) presents a different perspective, arguing that highly skilled migrants tend by nature to be more mobile than natives, so that their unemployment rate during a downturn may relate to a job-seeking strategy as they move to a new destination for different opportunities. However, it might be useful to look at specific industries facing financial challenges when discussing the correlation between economic downturn and highly skilled employment, in order to further examine different degrees of impact.

In addition, three participants living in the UK for ten years who completed their studies before 2012 reported that it was easier for them to step into the local labour market than it was for those graduating in later years; and since British immigration policies keep changing with increasing numbers of international students, there is more and more competition, along with different restrictions, among highly skilled foreign workers employed in the UK. As the evidence from one of the participants shows:

> *Before the financial crisis, as long as you were here to study a Master's, basically, you got a not-too-bad grade, English is ok, you can find a sponsor. At that time, it is 2005-2006, 2005-2006; then after 2006, in 2007, it began to have a sudden economic turndown [...] It has become not that easy to find a job in 2012 (#UK12, 40-49, male, financial professional).*

Although it cannot be denied that there is a strong link between British higher education and the labour market, the latter holds the major power to determine who gets which jobs. In terms of the historical-structural perspectives, the process of industrial restructuring by globalisation is a top-down economic transition. Since the idea of globalisation was supported by the US and the UK in the early 1980s, they have been assessed as the two least regulated labour markets among the industrialised countries (OECD, 1994; Jones, 1998). Therefore, the openness and deregulation of the labour market are vitally in favour of capital investment and foreign skilled workers seeking overseas job opportunities. In addition, post-war Britain has become more and more ethnically diverse, which has not

only created more need for international connections, but also has been beneficial to the global economy.

Secondly, unlike other English-speaking countries, the UK introduced the PBS for selecting non-EEA national workers and students only in 2008; however, Britain has continued to maintain many of the highest ranked academic institutions, with 18 of the top 100 universities in the world, second only to the US (27 representatives) (The Times Higher Education, 2020), attracting international students and researchers. Such market freedom and immigration policies allow and facilitate highly skilled international migration, which can partly explain increasing numbers of qualified foreign workers coming to the UK. The next chapter shifts the focus to the relationship between highly skilled migrants and their employers, their colleagues and the work culture they encounter at the workplace.

5.6: Summary

This chapter focuses on pre-migration motivations, providing an overview of the migration patterns of highly skilled Taiwanese people in the UK. The existing literature tends to explain highly skilled migration in economic terms. The research findings identify five types of highly skilled migration: study, work, family integration, relationships/love and lifestyle. Their reasons for migration to the UK include economic and non-economic aspects, with the pursuit of higher education a main factor in highly skilled migration. The exploration of destination choice and access to local labour markets highlights how human capital accumulated in different backgrounds produce different labour market experiences.

This study shows evidence that international students are potential highly skilled migrants. The UK's 'home-made' migrant students tend to have more advantages in the local labour market of the destination country. They hold a 'legitimate' education certificate recognised and favoured by the host country, and the effective linkage between university and market paves the way for fresh foreign graduates entering the local labour pool. This is important because foreign students' social capital in the host society is established mainly within and around campus. In addition, human capital is the basic and crucial ticket for entering the global market for the highly skilled, and this is not only limited to

education and training; work experience also plays an important role for skills matching and as a qualification for employment. Working holidaymakers provided unexpected findings in this case, demonstrating a different storyline in the international mobility of the highly skilled.

Combined with the participants' perspectives, the final section demonstrates how the UK's less-regulated market structure, its leading higher education system, and its ethnically diverse society continue to enhance the dynamic international flow of highly skilled people. The host society offers job opportunities, but the decision to continue to stay to work presumably depends on how migrants perceive the return on migration, and on their workplace encounters. The next chapter examines the degree of their job adaptation and satisfaction, exploring what kind of working conditions most attract migrant participants, what kind of challenges they face, and why issues occur? Apart from higher earnings, what elements make their work more attractive, and presumably have a direct impact on their future migration decision-making?

Chapter 6: Working in the UK

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the migration patterns of highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK, and their reasons for destination choice. The UK-related human capital, i.e., a UK higher education background, work experience and academic affiliation, is found to be more advantageous in accessing the local labour market. This chapter focuses on migrants' positive and negative experiences in the workplace, and explores migrants' perception of the British work culture, the relationship with 'others', opportunities and barriers. It first presents the general perceptions of British work culture by analysing migrant participants' narratives collected from diverse industries. By asking open questions, this research looks at key elements of the UK work environment that attract and favour migrant professionals. Secondly, this chapter examines work challenges facing highly skilled Taiwanese migrants, with a particular concern about gender issues in the workplace. Migration research into highly skilled workers has been criticised by some scholars for lacking female perspectives, and for excessive attention on STEM fields. This chapter contributes to adding different gender voices among highly skilled migrants, and data presents from various industries in the UK.

As previously discussed in the literature review, Ravenstein (1885, p.181) considers that migration is 'in search of work of a more remunerative or attractive kind than that afforded by the places of their birth'. The research analysis includes both economic and non-economic terms, and the elements perceived by migrant participants as comprising 'attractive kind' of work. Although job opportunities for highly skilled workers depend on personal human capital, cultural and social capital are also crucial for them in dealing with challenges occurring in the workplace, especially in an ethnically and culturally different country. Therefore, the research explores the attractiveness beyond economic factors of working in the UK, and examines issues in relating to cross-cultural adaptation. Migrants' narratives around British work culture, satisfaction and challenges are three topics for the following discussion.

6.1: The perceived 'British work culture'

Based on a rational choice model, traditional migration theories tend to assume that most migrants understand wage differences among regions, and have preparedness before

movement. Also, migration network theory stresses that would-be migrants can obtain information about settlement or work conditions from their acquaintances, in order to facilitate the migration process. However, information about workplace organisational culture is not always accessible, especially for migrants who originally moved for study purposes. In addition, information on migration provided by others is not always correct.

The findings challenge the assumption of well-preparedness for skilled international migration. Only five of all the participants stated that they knew a little about working conditions in the UK from their siblings, British teachers, British husbands and British former colleagues working in Taiwan before migration. For instance, one participant collected migration information from websites and family members, resulting in a perception that 'British people are not easy to deal with'. He later found that this differed from his work experience after arrival; as he commented:

> *Even my sister told me that the British is [are] not easy to dealing [deal] with or making [make] friends with, so I stopped some time [to plan to go abroad] [...] The British work culture is totally different to what I think on the internet. People are friendly (#UK5, 30-39, male, education administrator).*

Any migrant wishing to work in a host country needs, to some extent, to be familiar with a set of organisational norms and cultures in the workplace. In this research, there is no specific definition for the connotation and manifestation of 'British work culture'; rather, it is constructed and interpreted through the narratives of the participants. This point applies the grounded theory approach, aiming to create a general concept by collecting migrants' positive and negative experiences in the workplace. As Sheridan and Storch (2009, p.1) note:

> Intercultural theory places an equal emphasis on home and host cultures in migration research […] Grounded Theory allows for the exploration of various theories in different fields and the emergence of new or deeper interpretations of intercultural experiences, including where research has not engaged deeply with or avoided intercultural contexts.

I explained to the participants that the research question was not asking 'What do you know about ''British work culture''?' Instead, it concerns 'What is British work culture to you?' and 'How do you perceive British work culture in your workplace?' Through their answers, the findings present a better understanding of migrant participants' general work-related attitudes and preferences, and their interactions with others in their working environment. They identify key elements of work conditions that most concern the

participants, and how these elements encourage or discourage their staying to work. These elements: respect, equality, diversity, flexible working hours and more holidays, are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

6.2: 'Respect' highlighting British work culture

Although human capital theory considers skilled migration as a rational choice for seeking higher income among regions with wage differences, empirical studies have shown that non-economic factors are important in attracting migrant professionals. In general, working conditions influencing a person's perceptions of work satisfaction include mental and physical elements, such as wage levels, job hours, holidays, legal rights and working ambience (Poggi, 2010; Böckerman and Ilmakunnas, 2008). By asking 'What did you enjoy most about your job?' The research question aims to explore attractive factors to explain why migrant participants prefer working in the UK.

Anticipated economic benefits encourage people to migrate for work. In this regard, according to the respondents, the UK's average salaries are higher than those in Taiwan, while they are relatively lower than those in the US and some European countries like Switzerland. Likewise, living costs and the tax burden in the UK are also higher than those in Taiwan. Most importantly, the study shows that non-economic factors are more important than economic ones concerning working in the UK. From the narratives, flexible working hours and equality emerge as two main elements of British work culture that most concern highly skilled participants.

As shown in Table 6.2, work-life balance (such as more private free time), as well as feeling equality under less top-down management (i.e., a less hierarchical approach) were highlighted by the participants. Although the participants could offer various answers to a single question, the most common answer (37) revealed that the biggest difference in working in the UK compared to Taiwan is the lower-pressure working environment that allows employees to work fewer hours and to more freely enjoy their private time and personal holidays. The second biggest difference (11) was British leadership and management style over subordinates, described as more open and equal, less dominating or less hierarchical in the workplace. The third most popular answer (8) was associated with colleagues' characteristics. By analysing word frequency in the interview narratives,

these three non-economic elements are identified as significant features within British work culture. In particular, 'respect' is the word most mentioned by the respondents, such as respect for personal professional skills, differences, private time, and listening to participants' ideas.

Table 6.2: Migrants' perception of British work culture

The perception of British work culture	Frequency
Flexible working hours	7
Valuing private time/respect for personal time	6
More holidays	6
Work-life balance	5
Fewer working hours	5
Duty ends after clocking-off/no need to overwork/punctuality	5
Easier to arrange holidays	3
No hierarchy/a flatter system/less bossy/no top-down/equality to talk/listen to you/open to discussion/free to talk of anything/human-centred management	11
People are open-minded/really friendly/integrity/freestyle/ sensible/ polite and principled	8
Economic – Higher salary/better welfares	7

Note: This table lists the main answers to 'what is British work culture', including economic and non-economic incentives.
i. Working hours: flexibility and fewer working hours, more holidays and work-life balance (37).
ii. Leadership style: open and equal, top-down communication and work relationships (11).
iii. People: people are more open-minded, friendly and polite (10).
iv. Wage: Higher salaries and welfares (7).
(Source: the fieldwork data)

6.3: Flexible working hours and more holidays

As discussed above, the findings reveal that working time is one of the significant issues raised by most participants. Several used the word 'flexible' to describe how they have more options for working time arrangements, such as 'working without punching a time clock, or being able to leave earlier if completing work'. On the other hand, 'flexible' was also used to explain their supervisor-subordinate relationship, which is not as rigid as

Taiwan's model – generally a top-down or seniority system. The benefit of flexible working time is especially favoured by female participants, be they single or married. As examples:

> *I feel that it is very important to flexibly allocate working hours, because everyone can work from home. This is completely different from Taiwan. Yes, I have to specifically mention this (#UK11, 30-39, female, food industry).*

> *The working hour here is not as long as that in Taiwan, people in Taiwan often work overtime, here is, when the time is up, your manager, even your boss just tells you 'go home quickly', and then the working hour is also more flexible, I feel. In the UK, we don't need to punch in when we commute to work (#UK18, 20-29, female, logistics).*

> *Actually, I feel that the UK is at least…at least, in terms of my working in academic field, that is – that is very flexible, so that is you – most bosses don't care about your working hours, like my boss. I- I was told by him on the first day at work, 'He doesn't care about work- working hours', and then many of my colleagues often work from home if [s]he doesn't need to be present (#UK23, 30-39, female, medical research).*

As for working pace and time, three participants said that it was not easy to fit in the working environment in the beginning. Two of them soon identified this issue, explaining that it was because they once worked in Taiwan's relatively fast-paced environment, so that they worked too fast to fit into the new workplace; as a result, they found they were not welcomed by other colleagues, and even experienced unnecessary tension with them.

> *The work pace [in Taiwan] is very compact and the working hours are very long; this often happens. When I just came to work in the UK at that time, um…my colleagues called me Miss Speedy, because I just act quickly, I quickly get things done, and then everyone felt very stressful. Later, I realised that I can't bring that kind of Asian thinking in [anymore] or want to please the boss, to listen to the supervisor (#UK25, 40-49, female, fashion designer).*

Regarding working hours and holiday entitlement, in the UK almost all workers are legally entitled to 5.6 weeks' paid holiday (approximately 28 days) a year (GOV.UK, 2020). Similarly, the Taiwanese government sets regulations for working conditions to allow most people to work on the basis of a 'five-day workweek' pattern, and the regular working time of workers shall not exceed eight hours a day or 40 hours a week. However, these regulations on working hours, recess and holidays often operate on an accumulated seniority system at many public sector and private organisations, and this tends to be more rigorous for junior staff. For example, a newcomer is entitled to only three days' paid holiday a year, and the maximum number of annul holidays for every employee is 30 days

(Ministry of Labour, Taiwan, 2020). Also, some participants said they might be reticent about taking time off in Taiwan due to visible or invisible pressures from bosses or colleagues, even if they have the right to claim annual leave – as evidence below:

> *In here, we got 20 plus eight bank holidays. That's most the, most of the companies' policy: 20 plus eight. In Taiwan, I only got seven plus eight, so with the holiday policy and also with the time you want to arrange your holiday, in Taiwan, if you want to arrange your holiday, maybe your line manager will ask you not to do much, because they say they don't have enough people, or they do have other reason (#5, 30-39, male, university administrator).*

> *The working environment in the UK was what I felt...[...] that is, the reason that I was willing to choose to stay, and then very simply, such as some advantages are...um... the working environment is more flexible, compared to Taiwan, compared to the previous experience, also, er...their holidays are more, so you can have more personal and more leisure time to plan, so this will be an important reason for me [...] I have a lot of friends they also often say, 'I really want to stay. I really don't know how to go back to Taiwan to adapt into that kind of work environment', they are very worried, they may enter the company without any holidays in the first year, there will be only seven days' leave after the second year (#UK15, 30-39, male, international trade).*

> *So, when you say you have some private issues or whatever have to leave office earlier or come to work a little bit late or you need to use some annual leave, people won't judge you (#31, 40-49, male, Research technician).*

However, flexible or fewer working hours do not equal lower work pressure. The findings show that participants working in the fields of academic research, high-school teaching, medical services, IT and architecture tend to express their work stress. For example, an architectural designer stated that workload is much heavier than in Taiwan due to the different working patterns in UK construction.

> *Because in the UK construction industry, they prefer consistent, that is, you work from design to engineering, even to on-site construction, they all hope to do like that, so maybe the difference from Taiwan! It's very hard to achieve it [work-life balance] in this industry. It's really hard in this industry. It's like you are still talking about work after you get off work. That is what happens in this industry (#21, 20-29, male, construction).*

Moreover, those just starting their careers, i.e., with no more than three years' experience, stated that they did not feel relaxed at work and needed to make more effort because they were newbies in the UK labour market; young start-up entrepreneurs in particular felt they were sometimes struggling with business marketing.

6.4: 'This is my preferred working environment': respect, equality and diversity

Bandiera et al. (2010, p.417) believe that 'individuals are embedded in a network of social relationships that shape their incentives and constraints, and ultimately affect their behaviour and outcomes.' In addition, research on organisational behaviour and sociology indicate that the supervisor-subordinate relationship has impacts on individual performance and job satisfaction (Wesolowski and Mossholder, 1997). In this case, evidence comes from participants who worked in Taiwan before migration, or who once worked for other ethnic employers in the UK. They express their preference for working with British line managers or bosses, in order to enjoy a more equal relationship.

> *[when] I was in Taiwan, although the company I stayed is also a start-up company, the boss is actually very flexible then the welfare is relatively better than the traditional industry, but after I came to the UK and found that – ah! –it seems to be, you can say anything you want to say, it tends to become a flatter management system (#UK15, 30-39, male, international trade).*

> *When I was working in Taiwan, I felt that I was not treated as an … equal person. That is, maybe it was because I was young at the time, maybe I did a little bit basic-level or junior management position… I felt most of the time, the boss is, what the boss said is what it was, there was little room for negotiation; but here will be relatively, er…to listen. At least, if you say that [s]he does not agree with you, [s]he will make sure what you want to speak first, here, you will not feel that your idea is something ridiculous (#UK13, female, 30-39, high school teacher).*

The more equal relationship at work, a relatively tolerant space where individuals' voices can be heard in top-down communication, was mentioned by three other young participants, and from one female participant working in UK government. For example:

> *I feel it's different [to Taiwan] but it is probably quite common in the West – it seems that it's not to stand on ceremony; for example, when I call my boss, I just call the name, and I don't call 'manager', [with] more cordial feeling (#UK38, 20-29, male, IT professional).*

> *Sometimes even the off time has not come, when you finished your work, the boss will ask you 'do you want to go home earlier?' Then you will be asked to go home directly. I think their culture is, they don't want ... as I myself feel…as I myself observe that your supervisor doesn't want to have the 'top-down' feeling between both of you. [S]he can sit at your table when [s]he comes to talk to you. Then when you go to chat with your boss, you can also sit at his/her table. [S]he will not feel that you don't show respect for him/her or how can you do this? But generally, if you work for Taiwanese enterprises, how can you just go to the boss's office sitting on his desk to chat with (#UK39, 30-39, female, government worker).*

Another three participants worked under leaders from non-British backgrounds in the UK, such as Indian or Pakistani, and confirmed their preference for working in a British-style management system. One female interviewee even left her job due to bad experiences within a different work culture dominated by a Middle Eastern employer. However, they added that if the employer was a second-generation UK immigrant, then the leadership style would possibly be closer to a more British culture. Two offered their observations:

> *It's quite comfortable with British colleagues, but Indian colleagues they have some thoughts that are very different from ours, because they have a strong class concept [...]. The boss, the entire company culture, is the concept of class; but after all, our design department is for the British market, so the entire design department is composed of all British people, the working atmosphere has no such a class ..., but when meeting with the company leader, you felt that the concept of class was very obvious (#UK25, 40-49, female, fashion designer).*

> *Er...actually well, I have working in the UK for three years, so I worked for three companies already. And I think every company has different culture, so I really don't think you can describe the culture based on the nationality or the company. The first one I worked the owner is a Pakistan immigrant, he is super mean. I was still angry to be honest, the second is totally British, the culture is like what immigrants would think about – they are very relaxing, they are very er…work-life balanced, they are very like open-minded and provided you a lot of benefits (#UK37, 30-39, female, IT professional).*

With the knowledge economy increasingly driven by rapid globalisation, Florida (2002) argues that the emergence of a new social class defined by creative ability is a fundamental source of economic growth. As he puts it (ibid., p.ix):

> A scientist or engineer, an architect or designer, a writer or musician, or if you use your creativity as a key factor in your work in business, education, health care, law or some other profession, you are a member [of the creative class].

Florida's (2002) understanding of 'the creative class' tends to align with the nature of highly skilled workers. As discussed in the literature review, he argues that an environment with a social culture of openness, tolerance and ethnic diversity is appealing to creative people. As he indicates (ibid., pp.x-11):

> Economic growth was occurring in places that were tolerant, diverse and open to creativity –because these were places where creative people of all types wanted to live. […] Today's professionals see themselves as members of a broad creative force, not as corporate officers or organisation men: Thus they gravitate to stimulating creative environments – to places that offer not only opportunities and amenities, but openness to diversity, where they feel they can express themselves and validate their identities.

The research findings uncover a favourable work culture – involving respect and equality – perceived by the participants that tend to support Florida's (2002) argument. Moreover, compared to Taiwan, working in the UK's ethnically diverse society became the thing the participants enjoyed most. The 30 participants with employment status, including one working in a UK-based Taiwanese company, reported colleagues from more than one country. Including the ten self-employed participants, all reported feeling comfortable working with people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Of these, six responded feeling 'very/quite comfortable/happy'. When asked 'What would be the most enjoyable thing at work?' the answers most often given are the diversity of people and cultures (6), and an open and equal working environment (6) (See Table 6.4).

> *I feel that the culture itself really allows personal approach, a personal growth, how you like to shape the work [...] you have your own priority, personal issue, um… lots of flexibility for your own circumstances. [...] You have lots of flexibility, um… so I think that's why it's very attractive (#UK26, 30-39, female, university project manager).*

One participant mentioned that her colleagues were from many different countries and backgrounds, and the company's slogan stressed 'excellence comes from diversity'. Therefore, she was quite pleased to work there; she shared her experiences from a company meeting to promote marketing products and services:

> *The marketing I am working now may require some brainstorms. [...] I have to think about these promotions almost every week, and then you have to seek for innovation and change to attract customers. Sometimes I feel that with people from different countries, they will have different ideas. Sometimes I feel like, oh! This idea is really the only him [her] can think of, and I felt very good, it was very different from what we thought. It should be said that it is really very interesting, yes! That is, chatting with people from these different countries, or when you encounter bottlenecks, talk to them, they will sometimes inspire you and give you more ideas— eh! (#UK18, 20-29, female, logistics manager).*

Interestingly, a distinction between viewpoints based on gender is found in the perception of individualism at work. For female participants, individualism refers to more power to take decisions, and space to carry out work. For men, individualism means that personal work duty is much clearer, so people can leave the office after clock-off time, and there is no need to cover others' work as a team. As one participant said:

> *They are more individualistic. That is, yes! It is individualism! It's like their work distribution is much clearer – very clear, that is – I will leave after I finish my today's job, and I will not care about what happens to my team. I will just leave work after finishing work (#UK21, 20-29, male, architect).*

Table 6.4: The most enjoyable thing in the workplace

The most enjoyable thing	Frequency
People from different backgrounds/people and cultural differences	6
Open and equal working environment	6
Working independently/more individualism/doing your own job	4
Doing your own duty/no need to do others work	2
Work-life balance system	2
Learning how to run a business	2

Note: This table lists several answers to 'what is the most enjoyable thing at work', the most mentioned responses are identified as:
  i. Diver people (6)
  ii. Open and equal working environment (6)
  iii. Independence and individualism (4)
(Source: the fieldwork data)

6.5: Work challenges: cultural conflicts and intercultural communication

On the other hand, the findings uncover unfavourable situations for highly skilled Taiwanese migrants working in the UK. These issues are found to be strongly related to individual social and cultural capital in dealing with 'annoying' barriers or challenges faced in workplaces. In a global city such as New York or London, interaction with people from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds often happens in everyday life. Such diversity in the workplace is praised by some studies as positive in many ways, such as promoting inspiration and competence at work. However, Al-Jenaibi (2011; see also Martin, 2014) argues that this benefit tends to be overstated in the theory; in reality, diversity also brings about challenges. Al-Jenaibi's (2011) research conducted in the United Arab Emirates demonstrates the negative impacts of 'miscommunication, dysfunctional adaptation behaviours and the creation of barriers that reduce the benefits diversity can bring to the organization' (ibid., p.147). Intercultural communication is thus of importance not only for organisations but for individual migrants working among diverse ethnic people. When considering work difficulties/challenges, as one interviewee said:

In the workplace, of course, the pay is higher, this is for sure! Then, another one, er... I think, basically, getting along with people, it's the same everywhere. ... When you are at work, basically, it means the issue of getting along with others (#UK12, 40-49, male, finance).

In the UK, multiculturalism is the principle for diverse ethnic migrants to express and maintain their own origin cultures; some companies accommodate international workers specifically to help develop their global business. However, multiculturalism is arguably more likely to be fully practised in personal private spheres; in the workplace, it is necessary to understand cultural gaps in order to interact with others effectively, and to establish interpersonal relationships. In this regard, empirical studies have shown that migrant workers, in some cases, are expected to blend into a company culture which is closely associated with the local culture. Friberg (2012) asks whether ethnic inequality in the labour market is influenced by employers' stereotyped notions or caused by the different social norms and behaviours that migrants bring.

Many migration scholars have provided evidence to explain the difficulties and barriers migrants face in integrating into the host country. They often discuss discrimination against or challenges facing immigrants, based on race, gender and ethnic attributes. The potential disadvantage of non-white status for non-EEA immigrants from Asia in an English-speaking host society is perhaps visible, and the results are rarely surprising. To avoid this bias, some scholars suggest understanding barriers to immigrants in the host country at different skill-levels, ethnic migrant groups, and in different settings, in order to avoid a generalised conclusion. For example, Rodriguez et al. (2012) observe that the labour market exclusion also happened to British skilled migrants to Canada, partly due to a lack of certain professional qualifications required from employers, such as licence/certificate exchange and recognition, and partly because of the local natives' attitudes towards immigrants. Beaverstock's (2005) research into white British financial expatriates moving from London to New York indicates that cultural gaps in the workplace could become an issue despite there being no language barrier. Evidence from his case (pp.263-4):

All ICTs found it difficult to embed themselves into their New York office's culture and politics. [...] Many worked with just US colleagues, and some even spoke of little contact with other British staff, there are about 30 in the office . . . we don't speak to each other (3). All suggested that they had to behave very differently and think very carefully before they spoke or made any physical contact with colleagues (e.g., telling jokes . . . and slapping on the back as one respondent noted) because of the strict equal opportunities and harassment legislation.

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6.5.1: Language and cultural barriers

In this case, the participants working in the UK inevitably shared similar issues related to intercultural communication and understanding that most first-generation immigrants tend to experience in the destination country. Several participants (13) responded that the most challenging/difficult issues at work were language and cultural barriers, which affected them in two ways: language and cultural gaps, and the British co-workers' way of speaking using implication, i.e., with meanings hidden behind the words. The language and cultural barriers for them sprang from the inadequate knowledge of specific English terms or of the precise descriptive skills needed for work. This issue was especially mentioned by participants working in design fields, including interior design, architecture and fashion industries. Likewise, self-employed skilled migrants also felt challenged when they needed high-level English to manage relationships with business contractors and customers well.

In addition, those whose work was related to art design stressed that they needed to increase their local knowledge and to become familiar with British culture in order to understand local customers' tastes, and then to deliver their own products with a local sensibility.

> *Tut! This is really very difficult! Because firstly, you don't know what they are thinking about, secondly, you don't know what they like – their aesthetics are different from ours – and the third, you don't know which medium they use, saying what kind of media did they learn about your company? Yes! So I feel this is the most difficult point. Then you have to express your company's ... tut! Many details ... features, and many key points of details must be paid attention to, whether these points integrate into the local...culture (#UK33, 30-39, female, wedding service).*

Apart from the issues mentioned above, participants working in administrative departments said that stronger cultural knowledge would help them to improve their social chat in the office, because many topics, such as British history, the people, TV programmes, sports and hobbies, are parts of British culture embedded in daily conversation.

6.5.2: The way the British speak: you have to read between the lines

The second common issue points to the implications and attitude within British communication rather than the English language itself. Eight participants commented that their British work colleagues are very polite but don't speak directly, so that they have to interpret the true meaning behind the words. Some learned a lesson through misunderstanding in mutual communication, which impacted on work performance or an interpersonal relationship. Two participants who had previously studied and worked in the US for several years also felt this cultural shock. As they described:

> *I didn't know [British work culture] before – and I worked in America before coming here. Now I feel that they don't speak directly. That is, very polite, but they just speak indirectly, you have to read between the lines, don't know what [s]he really wants to express (#UK14, 30-39, female, finance).*

As another higher-level managerial professional put it:

> *[You] need to have a certain degree of sensitivity, that is to say, to be honest, it's not the same as the US. The US is not like that, because the way here they speak is more implicit, especially in work relationship, er ... that is to say, when I just came from the US, I have no way to detect this kind of sensitivity, which sometimes causes work troubles (#UK28, 50-59, male, biotechnology).*

Many informants in this study graduated from the UK, and are assumed to be more familiar with the British context than other respondents. One of them grasped how she finally grabbed the right idea from her line manager after spending some time to adapt to the expression of polite phrases, and now she worked more smoothly.

> *The British are more gentleman more indirect, so sometimes [s]he does not speak directly, [s]he goes around like that, then you have to guess what [s]he is talking about, it is sometimes pretty tired, just unlike us, we go directly, being happy if we are happy, being unhappy if we are not happy, yes! Although sometimes, sometimes when I am talking to my manager, sometimes he does not agree with me, then he will say, 'oh! I totally agree with what you say, but…,' the part after BUT is the point. Those words in front of the sentence are just being polite. Maybe don't let you feel too sad, as long as you hear the word 'but', 'however', the sentence after that is the key point. The sentence before that is basically just a courtesy (#UK18, 20-29, female, logistics).*

Another male participant recalled that he did not immediately understand why his British work colleague was angry with him for something until others told him later, and he still wondered why the British have to behave in such a way.

It's subtle. Sometimes you don't know how to read between the lines, but when I asked a friend who is close to me, he will say, he will tell me, 'He was not happy at the time, don't you know that?' I will say, 'Oh? Then why not speak it out? Then I watched the British drama, I found that, really!? These people are going to suffocate themselves? Yes, so, it happens, too. Although the drama is relatively exaggerated, in real life, it will encounter some (#UK15, 30-39, male, international trade).

Table 6.5: The most difficult or challenging aspects of the workplace

Difficulties or challenges in the workplace	Frequency
Language and culture barriers: not knowing much about British history, celebrities' names, local and popular culture	6
Language and culture barriers: specific words in professional fields/picking up precise words for expression	4
The connection is not deep/feel there is a gap due to language and culture	3
People don't speak directly/you have to read between the lines/have to think of the meaning behind spoken words	8
Have to drink to get into a social circle at the workplace	5
Stereotypes of Asian people	3

Note: This table lists the main answers to 'the difficulties or challenges in the workplace', including:
  i.   Language and cultural barriers: professional English and local cultural knowledge (13); the British way of speaking (8)
  ii.   Drinking culture: drinking as a way to get into social circles (5)
  iii. Bias or discrimination against immigrant workers: bias influencing work performance and limited job promotion opportunities (3)
(Source: the fieldwork data)

6.6: Drinking culture and ethnic stereotype

Five participants said their companies regularly host staff social events to promote working relationships, such as birthday or Christmas parties and after-work drinking in pubs. They understood drinking culture as a major way to socialise with people in the UK, both in work and non-work spheres. However, they considered this to be quite challenging for them. Drinking culture is generally prevalent in Europe, not just in the UK (NHS, 2019), and also occurs in Taiwanese society, especially for business talks. However, compared to the UK, alcohol is not seen as the major method of social bonding in Taiwan,

where food – dining together – is more customary. One participant stated how she adapted herself into British party culture:

Life in Taiwan is friends' gathering for eating, then you can consider the British party as a dinner party. The way of gathering is not the same. They gather for drinking wine or drinks like that. Right! (#UK7, 30-39, female, financial service).

As Seaman and Ikegwuonu (2010, p.34) describe drinking habits in the UK: 'For friendships to flourish outside work, however, going for a drink was often key to enabling the deepening of relationships that workplaces often did not facilitate particularly well.' The pub – a place for drinking – is an integrated part of English life and culture (Fox, 2004), and people drink 'to belong' or 'to fit in' (Hamilton, 2014; Litt et al., 2012; Seaman and Ikegwuonu, 2010). Participants who wanted to integrate themselves into their work culture, but found drinking alcohol to be a burden, tried to negotiate between the need to build work-based networks and the sense of belonging to a company; for example:

Colleagues invite me to drink, I won't specifically say...i.e., if they, if drinking with them, that is fine; if they want to go to the second and the third places to drink more, I won't follow (#UK22, 40-49, male, architect).

Further evidence suggests that the ability to drink alcohol is important in preparing to be an immigrant worker in the UK; as one participant commented:

To practice personal drinking capacity first before coming. I feel that the Taiwanese social skills needed to be strengthened (#UK14, 30-39, female, financial professional).

On the other hand, the findings tend to suggest that highly skilled workers suffer less racial discrimination at work. When asked about challenges at work, only four informants had concerns about 'ethnic stereotyping' or 'discrimination' existing in the workplace or in their daily lives. Notably, they used the word 'stereotype' rather than 'discrimination' to describe how other co-workers might look at them from a different viewpoint, which may suggest hidden but not explicit racially discriminatory behaviour. From their narratives, 'discrimination' was used when female participants described how gender issues were generally entrenched in their working conditions, and when describing negative experiences encountered in the private sphere.

However, as Bourdieu (1986) argues, capital accumulation takes time. Ethnic stereotypes, in some cases, could be countered by accumulating cultural capital based on educational ties and positive working relationships over time. For example, one participant, who

studied in the UK after graduating from high school and worked in a supervisory position, showed his self-confidence about the knowledge of British systems and mentioned stereotypes of Asian people:

> *Treating me differently…suppose it won't happen like that; because someone often tells me, that is ... um ... yeah; for example, many people, many people will tell me, that my idea is not the same as their stereotype, yes, actually ... yes, actually ... for them to say basically is relatively… maybe the idea is a bit more Western. […] for Asian people, there are also some in my group, usually Asian people are relatively quiet, or work quietly, or less speaking, that kind, this is, this probably most British or Western stereotypes about Asian people or Asian culture education. Er … I will say, if [the challenge] unavoidable, maybe in…maybe in a strange meeting, and then most people in the meeting are the British, usually the beginning will be a bit more difficult! Er ... but, over time, you find your own place, then it has actually no problem, usually it is the beginning! Because everyone all has certain stereotypes (#UK27, 30-39, male, aeronautical engineering).*

In another case, a female participant perceived both ethnic and gender discrimination embedded in the existing work environment, as analysed in the following 6.7 section.

6.7: The perceived gender issue in the working environment

Many migration scholars note that globalisation has resulted in a segmented labour market, in which migrant workers are divided into low and high skill levels, and the supply-demand system is often included or excluded on the basis of class, race and gender (Grigoleit-Richter, 2017; Bailey and Mulder, 2017; Rodriguez et al., 2012; McDowell, 2009; Mogalakwe, 2008; Khadria, 2001; Dustmann, 1994). In historical-structural views, economic reconstruction is transformed by an expanding global flow of capital and materials, which has long been dominated by asymmetrical powers (Castles et al., 2014). Beaverstock (2005) argues that gender inequality lies within the powers that still influence women's working opportunities and conditions in today's labour market. Grigoleit-Richter (2017) also provides evidence of the impact of gender bias on skilled migrant women working in traditionally male-dominated German STEM fields, which still prevails to date. In addition, the difference in family obligations between men and women often makes skilled career women face additional barriers to catch up with their male counterparts in obtaining job accreditation or arranging training time (Rodriguez et al., 2012; Iredale, 2005). In some cases, women suffer a 'wage penalty' due to status-based discrimination in the workplace (Correll et al., 2007). England et al.'s (2016) case

study in the US found that women with high skills and high wages also experienced an unequal payment penalty.

The interviewees in this case include both women (24) and men (16). The findings tend to suggest that most female participants did not encounter or perceive gender inequality in the workplace. Only three female participants complained about negative experiences. Among them, one said that her company policy does not allow employees to inquire about others' salaries, so she was unable to know whether she was being treated unequally based on gender. Notably, another two informants worked in higher education institutes where racial or ethnic diversity is generally emphasised and encouraged; however, they encountered racial discrimination in the workplace.

> *I think women, if you are a British woman, of course there are differences. That is, if you are a female, and then you happen to be a foreigner, then there are double barriers in this structure. Because I study sociology, and then I married a sociologist, so sometimes I talked about this stereotype. Yes! That's it! I have a friend who may be male may be from Indonesia, and he studies science, so [he did] not [sense this problem] so much… (#UK26, 30-39, female, university project manager).*

Another shared her experience:

> *Researcher: What do you think about gender issue? Do you feel-? (interrupted)*
> *Interviewee: I have, I have been sexually discriminated against. Work colleagues. This is extremely rare in the UK, but I have encountered it. Yes.*
> *Researcher: This discrimination came from er... is the UK…? (interrupted)*
> *Interviewee: Nope! From his personal behaviour.*
> *Researcher: Personal behaviour.*
> *Interviewee: Yes!*
> *(#UK23, female, 30-39, medical research).*

Female self-employed participants reported that gender was not a problem for them in operating businesses in the UK, including in the IT industry, deemed to be a male field. For the employed participants, overall, the findings suggest that they felt they were treated with more respect in the UK than in Taiwan. For example, the clergywoman, who had previously worked in Taiwan and France for 10 years each, said that:

> *Yes, I-I- I feel quite supportive. People here they are a bit conservative, but they are quite supportive and very caring, and they respect me more er…to the clergywomen. Because in Taiwan, people also respect pastors but er…less equal. They respect men more than women. […] and the working um…the clergyman they are more er…they have more possibilities…women…er…they could have those positions that men can do, they don't want, you know? So you cannot*

compete with men, yeah. And here is quite equal. Its, er…yeah! (#UK17, 60+, female, clergywoman).

From her narratives, France and the UK share the same degree of gender equality, both better than Taiwan. In fact, gender issues in the workplace present different types of impact on migrants in a different way. In this case, it is hard to generalise their experiences without a further, wider examination of data. Moreover, the perception of gender equality is often influenced by participants' previous work experience, company policies and fellow members. As mentioned above, financial and professional businesses in the UK are traditionally male-dominated (Beaverstock, 2005); however, two female and two male participants working in these sectors confirmed that women in their companies are treated equally. One male participant said that his company stressed gender 'balance', not only in terms of gender equality, but also about respect for transgender people. Another male participant even felt that such gender 'equality' policy was actually 'unequal' to men:

> *In order to comply with the gender equality policy, last time our company had to especially offer a woman a promotion position, making the men-women proportion look better. It is actually unfair to men because in this financial circle, male professionals are usually more than women (#UK12, 40-49, male, financial professional).*

While another commented:

> *In the United States, it has a relatively average proportion. In the case of Europe, our industry is mostly male, especially in France. They themselves have elite clubs. In the UK, I will say women are not relatively weak (#UK14, 30-39, financial professional).*

A few female participants stated that they were aware of a wage difference between men and women in the UK labour market, but that luckily it did not happen in their companies. However, their observations of female colleagues tended to suggest that a single unmarried woman is very likely to encounter a barrier to promotion before marriage, due to anticipated future motherhood.

6.8: Summary

This chapter investigates the positive and negative experiences of Taiwanese highly skilled migrants working in the UK. From participants' perspectives, a sense of being respected is the key feature of British work culture. Its connotation was identified as

referring to respect for personal private time, personal skills and opinions, gender and individual differences. Moreover, flexible working hours and more holidays, and open and equal relationships between employees and their supervisors were found to be most attractive elements when considering working in the UK. The image of British work culture for them is in line with the perceived satisfaction at work. Such a management style and working patterns – open, equal and diverse – were suggested to be difficult to achieve in Taiwan. The nature of highly skilled workers and the preferred work conditions in the UK tend to echo Florida's (2002) emphasis on 'creative cities' attract the 'creative class'.

On the other hand, this study reveals that common difficulties or challenges facing most participants are language barriers and cultural gaps. These disadvantages inevitably and unsurprisingly were found among first-generation migrants; well-educated, highly skilled migrants – especially knowledge workers – in many cases have a particular need for high-level English proficiency or knowledge associated with the receiving society. In addition, the findings suggest that few highly skilled migrant participants perceived or suffered discrimination in the workplace. There is no evidence from the financial or IT fields, often cited for gender inequality in the study of highly skilled migration. Again, the perception of gender equality from most participants was as compared to their previous experiences in Taiwan.

Chapter 7: Everyday practice in the UK

Chapters 5 and 6 outline the labour market experiences of highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK. Migration decision-making is considered to be based on a mixture of economic and non-economic factors, involving the interplay of personal economic, cultural and social capital. In the past decade, migration studies have focused more on migrants' lives in transnational contexts, and less on addressing local encounters in the receiving societies. Povrzanovic Frykman et al. (2016) identify this knowledge gap, arguing that the study of the well-being of highly skilled migrants needs to look at both work and non-work domains in order to better understand factors influencing whether international professionals stay or leave. Personal human capital embodied in economic capital is crucial in order for highly skilled workers to qualify for working abroad. However, migration decisions cannot be explained by economic factors alone. In some cases, non-monetary conditions play an important part in shaping migration direction in the absence of wage differentials between countries of origin and destination (Massey et al., 1993). As discussed in Chapter 6, urban studies stress the relationship between people and places. Scholars such as Florida (2002) believe that a city's social environment embracing diverse and tolerant cultures has a significant impact on the migration decision of knowledge workers.

This chapter explores migrants' everyday practices in the place where they work and live. The questions are associated with the participants' decision to move to a specific city, their perceived self-identity and place-belongingness, and how they define a better life in the UK. Bourdieu's concept of habitus provides a thinking tool for this chapter to further understand migrants' dispositions and preferences with regard to their adaptation to, and perceived well-being in, the new settings. This thesis assumes that their lived experiences in the host society will shape their decisions whether to remain or to leave; a positive perception of well-being increases the possibilities of their choosing to stay, while the reverse is true. This chapter considers highly skilled migrants' local embeddedness and contributes to the existing literature of highly skilled migration, which often discusses migrants in transnational spaces, neglecting the importance of connection to a locality (Meier, 2015; Schiller and Çağlar, 2013).

7.1: The choice of residential location

Foreign skilled workers are regarded as important elements in promoting knowledge-based economies and world cities in the globalisation era (Benton-Short et al., 2005; Castells, 1996; Beaverstock, 1994). Previous research has probed migrants' homemaking, identity and belongingness in a new place, and more and more policymakers pay attention to the impact a city's characteristics have on attracting highly skilled workers. Global cities such as London, New York and Paris aim to establish themselves as 'urban knowledge capitals' to draw clusters of talent from all over the world (Beckers and Boschman, 2019, p.761; Sassen, 2012).

Massey writes of 'space as the product of interrelations; as constituted through interactions' (2005, p.9). The city or the place where people live can 'reflect as well as shape their inhabitants' values and outlooks in various ways' (Bell and De-Shalit, 2013, p.2). Migrants' lived experiences are embedded in the places where they reside, and everyday encounters with others in the neighbourhood extend their perception of the living environment (Beckers and Boschman, 2019; Meier, 2015). Their local experiences thus could differ according to location. In this study, the participants were recruited from ten different cities, mainly in the cities of London, Manchester and Edinburgh. Although highly skilled migrants are regarded as resourceful actors who tend to be able to select their location within a cost-benefit calculation, their choices are in fact constrained by a limited opportunity structure (Haug, 2008). The findings show that most participants – including the 23 who originally came to study – chose to settle in cities that offer them job opportunities.

For example, one informant who graduated from Leeds University went to work in Manchester, giving up a better job offer in the Netherlands after taking the familiarity of location and the English language into consideration. It is evident that a city with more job opportunities is a strong magnet for migrant residents. London offers more job opportunities in the creative and leading industries, apparently attracting participants from across England, including those who had studied in the Brighton and York areas.

> *I personally like Edinburgh, but there is no job for me. The reason I chose London was nothing more than job opportunities here, big cities, still, big cities are better to find a job (#UK18, 20-29, female, logistics).*

Because I used to live in Brighton, and… I can see that there are certainly much more opportunities for- especially for entrepreneurs […] yeah! In London, and there are a lot- a lot of networking and events, either free or charged, and they have various topics that I can- I can choose (#UK16, 20-29, female, self-employed, business consultant).

In this case, 'which city to live in' depended largely on job opportunities, and almost all the study-oriented interviewees tried to seek their first UK job from familiar areas near their universities. Only the 'lifestyle' migration participant who left Taiwan as a teenager and re-migrated from Switzerland to Scotland in his early 50s achieved a 'self-selected' preference and attitude over the relocation choice. As he explained:

I chose to immigrate to here instead of somewhere else. The advantage is because the language, English, English language. The disadvantage is the…er…I think UK has um…I wouldn't…I…but for me is not the UK. The reason I chose to move here is because of Scotland. I think Scotland is friendlier than the rest of the UK […] I think Edinburgh is quite sophisticated and is- is very er…compared to London, is more comfortable, it's my opinion (#UK32, 50-59, male, freelancer).

When considering residential location, previous research into chain migration observed that migrants tend to cluster within their own ethnic communities. For example, Haug (2008, p.591) claims that 'the attractiveness of places of residence is determined by the location-specific social capital, [i.e.,] social affiliation or relations.' However, this is not the case in this study, the results show that the distance to the workplace and quality of life were the participants' main concerns. In fact, only a few from London mentioned that there were Taiwanese people living in their neighbourhood. This could be partly because highly skilled migration functions differently than other types of group migration, and partly because of the relatively lower proportion of Taiwanese migrants in the UK.

7.2: Multiple identity and place-belongingness

Within the push-pull model, migrating for better life chances means that the perceptions of life satisfaction influence migration decision-making. Lu (1999) indicates that quality of life in a residential situation involves emotional engagement; a place that feels safe and like a home can increase the likelihood of a person deciding not to move. Moreover, a place of residence not only provides a sense of security for individuals (Meier, Ed., 2014), but also shapes perceptions of the outside world and understanding of neighbours (Bachelard, 2014). Migrants' sense of home and belonging are thus cultivated in their

everyday practices; their individual self-identity is reconstructed, and continues to be associated with dwelling places, environments and everyday encounters (Cuba and Hummon, 1993; Johansson et al., 2020). As Boehm et al (2010, p.1) describe:

> Migration is inherently characterized by rupture – a break, change, distance, division – and it necessarily includes the everyday: even in, during, or perhaps because of cases of acute disruption, social life persists.

Rather than considering cities as concrete entities, many urban geographers and social anthropologists, such as Çağlar and Schiller (2021), Sassen (2014) and Robinson (2011), stress relational analysis in understanding people and places. Moreover, Çağlar and Schiller (2021) argue that migrant emplacement and urban regeneration are mutually constituted in the process of city-making, interconnecting various networks of communities, institutions and organisations, including individuals in different social positions. A migrant's identity and belonging are thus multilevel in terms of their interconnection with all the actors across nations.

Belonging is often considered to be a synonym for identity, especially associated with national/ethnic identity or the notion of citizenship (Antonsich, 2010a). The research participants are first-generation migrants, so many of them (17) identify themselves as Taiwanese, feeling a sense of belonging to the Taiwanese migrant community, or to Taiwanese friends in the UK, including those who have obtained British citizenship (See Figure 7.2). In particular, those who entered as working holiday makers reported that Taiwanese friends in the UK provided important emotional support during their first two years. If identity is defined by ethnic boundaries, only one entrepreneur participant, who has stayed for over 20 years and has lived a transnational life between Taiwan and the UK, identified herself as a Taiwanese and British. Also, four participants have lived in the UK for more than 10 years – two of them have British spouses and felt themselves as belonging to the UK.

Beyond the ethnic lens, migrant identity and belonging can be reconstructed through movement and the place-making process. Human geographers have observed that the interrelationships between people and place often vary spatially and temporally across locations. 'Sense of place' means people develop an identity within, and attachment to, a place that are rooted in the environment from feelings of 'being at home, belonging, comfort, and security' (Antonsich, 2010b, p.122). In this way, the findings show that

seven of the highly skilled migrants considered that individual identity transcends ethnic boundaries, and expressed their sense of belonging to a local community or city.

This is especially the case for those living in London – a global city – which has a talent pool to provide new ideas and career opportunities. The term 'Londoner' was used by the respondents working in 'creative' industries, such as the interior designer, film director and architect, to define self-identity and place-belongingness attached to their 'territorial' professional field/city. As one participant explained:

> *London um is very international, multi-cultural, many foreigners. That is why I feel belonging (#UK8, 30-39, female, interior design/supervisor).*

This is perhaps similar to Gidley's (2013) study of young ethnic people in urban spaces, which suggested that attachment to place can transcend skin colour, and that multiple identities negotiate within the space of a neighbourhood, making it slightly easier for them to feel a sense of belonging. In fact, London's huge diversity not only creates a site of cosmopolitan imagination; its global market and rich amenities also deepen dependence on a place in which an individual can pursue economic goals and enjoy desired activities (Antonsich, 2010b; Stedman, 2002).

Valentine (2008, p.324) states that 'the city of the twenty-first century is being reimagined as a site of connection.' She expresses concern about feelings of anxiety caused by encounters with difference, but this anxiety in a global city – London – is set aside by Nava (2006, p.50): 'a more generous hospitable engagement with people from elsewhere, a commitment to an imagined inclusive transnational community of disparate Londoners.' From Valentine's (ibid) perspective, the feeling of 'cosmopolitanism' is celebrating 'new hybrid cultures and ways of living together with difference but without actually spelling out how this is being, or might be, achieved in practice' – Valentine thus argues that 'cosmopolitanism' is simply a form of celebrating difference without implementing actual practices. Migrants tend to embrace and enjoy such a cultural mix; city life and a global community can create a cosmopolitan atmosphere that offers an imagined, liberal and welcoming discourse for everyone, and creates a space for sharing a collective identity beyond ethnic boundaries.

Also, highly skilled migrants' identity and belongingness can be linked to their work – the place/people they committed to with passion, preferences, professional skills and efforts – and thus they can tell their own stories. Eight of the participants across the UK,

both male and female participants, expressed a sense of belonging to work-related groups: their working team, academic circle, company or a cluster of small business owners. One female entrepreneur defined herself as one of a 'talent pool', or 'like-minded' members of her local community. She had moved home many times within the UK, and finally settled in Brixton.

> *Actually, there are very few Taiwanese, almost none. I have never seen one and very few Asians here […] I think this place is very similar to my character […] I want to use the word just 'down to earth'. The people here are very creative, because the resources on our area are not rich enough, […] so everyone will find a way to create something that has its own style. […] I like a place full of conflicts so I think London is more valuable because there are so many people with different cultural backgrounds coming to live in London, and then creating and spitting out different sparks, and so many entrepreneurs and independent companies, I may belong to this group more. They used to use the word: 'hipster', but now it seems not quite the same thing. Is it a bit more like 'young starters'? 'self-starters'? 'start-up?', that is, the young people who want to independently create their own style (#UK6, 30-39, female, film and animation director).*

Recent urban studies have presented the emerging global cultural economy as a strategy for integrating cities to a new imaged space beyond national boundaries (Balibrea, 2017; Kong, 2012). As Yeoh (2005, p.945) notes: 'cities are "going global" on the basis of integrating economic and cultural activity as an urban regeneration'. In this process, Schiller and Çağlar (2013; 2021) believe that cities do not function merely as containers that provide spaces for migrants from elsewhere to settle and work; migrants and cities are mutually constructed and interact in the process of city regeneration. A participant in the study gave an example that supports this argument, mentioning how Brixton's successful regeneration has attracted many young artists from different backgrounds to cluster in what has become a cultural hotspot. She described Brixton as 'down to earth', similar to her personality – the self, promoting her identity consolidation and well-being. When an individual intentionally attributes meanings to a place, the relationship between place and self is established (Antonsich, 2010b).

In addition, the degree of internationalisation, safety and migrant-friendliness of a city was strongly stressed by several participants as contributing to their place-belongingness. One participant described how he felt very much at home in his adopted city:

Sheffield is a city that you can feel safe, and you can count it as one of your home. But London I will say it's more about tourist place where you can see around but you don't want to stay too long. But Sheffield is always comfort, I quite enjoy every day walking around. I will say Sheffield is a city that can really feel that the international vibe without going to London. I will say London is quite dangerous (#UK5, 30-39, male, university administrator).

One female participant directly obtained a UK job offer in Taiwan, but then struggled for recognition of Taiwan education and IT skill certificates when she tried to work for another UK company. She was frustrated because she was questioned by local employers who were unfamiliar with Taiwan. Consequently, she decided to move from Newcastle to Manchester, where she found herself more welcomed and thus easily integrated into the city. As she described:

The first two year I lived in Newcastle, it is not a place very friendly to immigrants, so the first year I was quite tough. People just thought I was from somewhere they never heard, because I got my education degree from Taiwan, so they don't really recognise it, because I am from somewhere they didn't know, so they… they… they even question about my language skill and question about whether I can get into the British culture, whether I can get along well with the English. So, I got a lot of questions, but I think it's just a bad case in Newcastle because there are not so many immigrants, they don't know how to deal with immigrants. However, since I moved to the…Manchester, there are so many immigrants so they – you know, a kind of familiar with how to make friends with immigrants – so I think there is less – no big problems since I moved to Manchester (#UK37, 30-39, female, IT).

Moreover, the cultural ambience of a city enhances a sense of belonging and is linked to class preferences and social habitus. Another interviewee explained why he did not live in the city, which he works; instead, he chose to live in another city where he described as 'a university city' with a lively urban environment and ethnic diversity:

Um ... I feel that choosing a city should be related to job! Although I don't work in the same city, the place I live is not far away from the workplace; then the reason I chose to live here, I feel is the environment here is better! […] Our company is in Derby. Derby is a more like an industrial city. Nottingham is a university city, and there are many ... more diverse things, different races, and then the streets are much livelier, at least, in where I live (#UK27, 30-39, male, aeronautical engineering/supervisor).

Massey (2005, p.56) indicates the importance of time in understanding people's lives in a space as an open, ongoing process of production and connections. As she mentions, 'time is isomorphic with space, and that space and time exist as a continuum, a unified totality.' Time is as important as space in shaping and reshaping migrant place-making identities and experiences. In this study, two migrants' place-belongness still remained

with their first migration destinations – New York and Paris – where they worked and lived for more than five and ten years respectively. Their lived experiences in the UK thus differed within different social-cultural settings. The one who had lived in New York said:

> *The British culture is not so inclusive, not as good as the United States. Here, you can't see the middle class in London, only the very high or very low [class]. But in many living areas, there is no separation. You will see some strange people in a good area. I really don't know where they come from, lying on the ground. In the United States, there are a lot of the middle class, I would feel that I belong to that group, I don't see which class I can belong to here (#UK14, 30-39, female, finance).*

Figure 7.2: Self-identity and sense of belonging in the UK
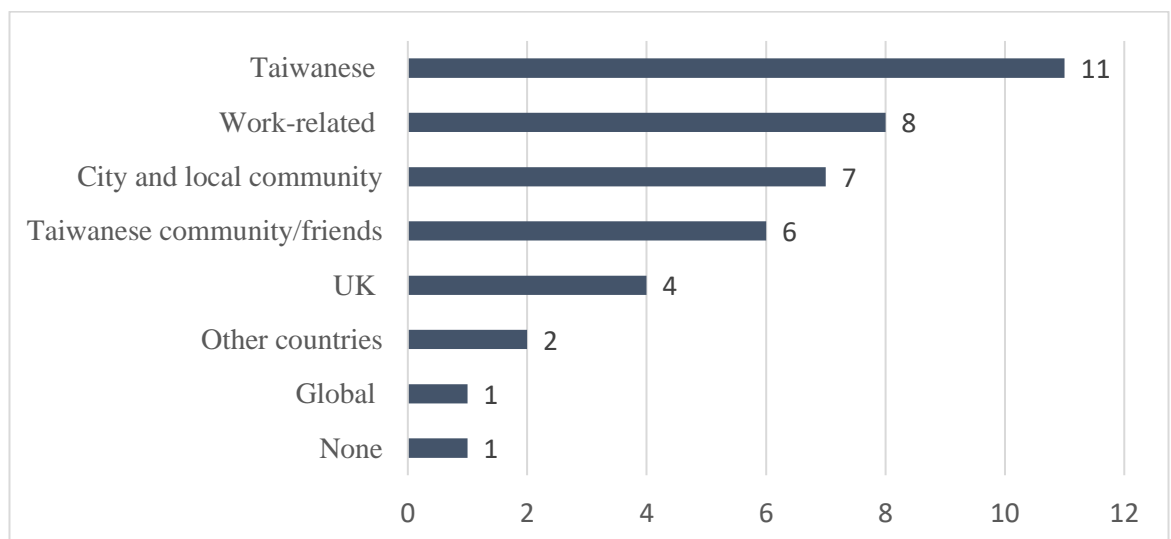
Note: Migrant participants' multiple identities and sense of belonging transcend ethnic boundaries.
(Source: the fieldwork data)

7.3: A divided landscape of residential satisfaction

There is a risk in generalising migrants' lived experiences in the UK if looking only at case studies conducted in London, the location most studied. The study shows that the residential experiences of the participants living in Greater London, Greater Manchester and Scotland are different, with different concerns voiced about residential preferences and satisfaction. The subjects' identity, belongingness and residential satisfaction are thus

affected by their residential location in a 'divided' landscape. Those living in London tend to express more concern about housing and residential location; for instance, which 'zone' or 'area' to live, to some extent, implies a person's social position, class and lifestyle, making the selection of residential location not simply about finding a place to settle. However, as a global city, London is a super-diverse urban community (Gidley, 2013) that allows migrants to have multiple choices to locate themselves for their own cultural preferences or practical needs.

From their narratives, they tend to be particularly aware of distinct, predominant ethnic enclaves within London. One participant mentioned that although the North Green district belongs to the Bengali community, the Tube near his house linking to the workplace is very convenient for all family members. However, people often lying drunk on the street on their way back home raised the safety issue. Most of the London suburban participants, live with their family members and emphasised the need of a 'quality of life', away from a buzzing city. In contrast, young single migrant participants are more concerned about good housemate relationships, and tended to seek ethnic or cultural proximity, especially female participants. One respondent decided to live in an area where she found a Japanese community, near Shoot-Up Hill, London; as she explained: '*I think the education I have in Taiwan is more like a Japanese culture*' (#UK10, 20-29, female, software IT). Another young female, self-employed, mentioned that she shared a flat with Taiwanese friends, not only for similar living habits and cultural preferences, but also for safety. She invited me to her flat and told me that she had heard that Hammersmith is a safer area in London. She led me to her favourite breakfast café just around the corner, and walked for about five minutes to the high street, '*See! This is the place for doing business*' (#UK16, 20-29, female, business consultant).

Overall, most participants living in London tend to be satisfied with their city life. They reported how the image of being a Londoner directly endows them a social position of 'global citizen'. In addition, the city per se has high added value in many aspects, including job opportunities with leading and featured industries, historical and cultural attractiveness. They also perceived London as more inclusive than other cities in the UK, not only from the social climate within the city, but also from the political profile of the 2016 Brexit referendum. Several participants used the Brexit voting result to support their own observations; for example:

When you vote for the Brexit, er…you can see, London they vote to stay, because London is a metropolitan, and there are so many foreigners, so they vote to stay in The European Union, but the other part of England, no! No! No! No! No! No! No! Right? That's why my experience here in London is good. But maybe if you go out from London you will feel that they are quite anti-foreigners (#UK17, 60+, female, clergywomen).

London is relatively tolerant and can be regarded as more inclusive now. In fact, what you mentioned about the UK, its entire classes are divided very clear. Like when we first came, we didn't understand it (#UK20, 60+, female, self-employed).

I say many people in the UK, especially the aged… those not in London or Manchester such big cities, i.e., people in British small cities, suburbs, like middle England, that kind of mentality is that – I don't like foreigners, I don't like immigrants (#UK26, 30-39, female, college project manager).

On the other hand, the participants from Greater Manchester, including Bolton and Salford, also noticed multiple racial and ethnic groups, and some stressed their major concerns about city crime and safety. This has undermined their perceived well-being in everyday life, as addressed especially by three female participants. As one of them said:

Safety. I don't feel safe… every day. Hmm. when I walk on the street, I don't feel safe. I was holding the key with the sharpen part between my figures and I was um…be aware that people walking around me (#UK35, 20-29, female, energy staff).

As previously discussed, human capital theory considers both the economic and non-economic rewards of migration (Hercog, 2008; Sjaastad, 1962). Sjaastad (1962) points out that non-economic returns include personal preferences for particular surroundings, which influence migration location choice. The findings from participants living in Edinburgh appear to exemplify this case. All showed overwhelming preference for their living environment and the idyllic Scottish landscape, beautiful scenery, cultural heritage, friendly and high-quality people. The semi-retired freelance writer highlighted the friendly Scottish environment. Others migrating there to study did not know much about job opportunities until they graduated, and realised that labour market exclusion of migrants seemed to be worse than in other bigger cities like London.

One of them mentioned that the Scottish government did not want to see any ethnic ghettos developing in the city, implying a different policy for maintaining a city's landscape. However, the attractiveness of the Scottish aesthetic lifestyle and natural scenery motivated them to stay and face more challenges instead of migrating within the UK. As one participant said: '*I don't feel that I can breathe properly in London*' (#UK31,

40-49, male, research technician). The trailing spouse who followed her Taiwanese husband studying in Edinburgh had a very positive lived experience during her stay:

> *This is a capacity city, that is, we can get anything in a short distance whether the nature you like or the cultural things you like, then everything in life is very, very convenient, so I like this city very much, and then the quality of people is very high, so here we don't feel, it should be said that I hardly feel, cultural shock and discrimination against or exclusion, so I think this point is very ideal (#UK29, 30-39, female, self-employed/media design).*

7.4: The perceived well-being post-migration: a relaxing lifestyle

As discussed in the literature review, neoclassical economic (NE) theory and the new economics of labour migration (NELM) theory have generated a contested conclusion to explain return migration (see Chapter 3.6.1). NE theory assumes that higher income can offset the social-psychological costs of migration and reduce intentions to return, while NELM theory asserts that migrants have 'a location consumption preference' for their origin place, so that return migration happens naturally after they achieve economic goals in the host country (Schiele, 2020). Based on a cost-benefit calculation, human capital theory goes beyond a single discipline, indicating that migration is for both net economic and social-psychological returns, and is not limited only to monetary income.

Subjective well-being bas been a neglected topic in research into highly skilled migration (Povrzanovic Frykman et al., 2016). It is a concept relating to life satisfaction or happiness through acquiring material goods or non-material feelings, which has implications for migration decision-making. In other words, perceived well-being/life satisfaction lies in 'what migrants themselves identify as important for ''living well''' (Wright, 2011, pp.1459-1460) after evaluating their life post-migration. Since it is generally agreed that people migrate for better life chances (Castelli, 2018), as Nowok et al. (2013) argue, 'migration itself causes a boost in happiness', which encourages migrants to continue to stay to enjoy their life.

Previous quantitative research evaluating the effects of life satisfaction on migration decision-making has incorporated both objective and subjective indicators, such as interpersonal relationships, social support, economic situation or discrimination (Nowok et al., 2013). Some results report that higher levels of education and income are significantly related to a higher level of life satisfaction (Helliwell, 2003; Diener et al.,

1993). Highly skilled migrants are generally defined as the well-educated migrating for higher earnings. To understand their perceived well-being in the UK, they were asked questions about 'what do you enjoy most about living in the UK?' and 'how would you describe your UK life (to your friends)?' Most participants gave one specific answer to identify the most important element based on multidimensional evaluations, including economic values (e.g., higher income) and social-psychological (e.g., people and culture, feeling free and independent) returns. Some answers, such as 'British passport' can be seen as net returns of both economic and social status.

In this regard, the most common answer among the participants (ten) is 'relax', referring to 'work-life balance', 'quality of life' or 'lifestyles of health and sustainability (LOHAS)', which allowed them to work fewer hours and enjoy more private time for leisure. This answer does not differ significantly based on age or gender; both female (six and male (four) interviewees aged in the 20s to the 50s felt the same way. This coincides with the image of British work culture constructed by most participants (see Chapter 6.2). Obviously, work conditions would influence personal private time arrangements and significantly shape perceptions of life satisfaction as a whole. Here are two examples:

> *Relax. After busy work, I just come back to get a rest. Nearby the house… this house is mine, there are many parks nearby, and there are still many arts and cultural activities in the non-art season (#UK4, 50-59, male, artist).*

> *Er…high quality life. I try to work and leave on time…and I can go to gym [after work] compared to Taiwan (#UK8, 30-39, female, interior designer).*

Another participant cited 'LOHAS' without any hesitation to describe the biggest benefit of living in the UK. She came to Brighton in her 20s to study for a Master's degree, and liked to join in outdoor activities in her leisure time. Despite her preference for Edinburgh, she accepted a job offer in London after graduation. During the interview, she smiled continually and spoke slowly:

> *I often tell my friends that my British lifestyle is LOHAS, […] I feel the working environment in the UK is not as tense as in Taiwan, and without so much pressure, I feel, yes, then when we are in the office, it is unlike in Taiwan everyday a group of people bury in work, i.e., just working, working, working. Like us, we still have teatime, it's about 3 pm. Our work starts at 10 am, but in fact there is one and half an hour for lunch time, just going out for eating around 1.5 hours and 2 hours, it not that long in Taiwan. In addition, at about 3pm, there will be another teatime. That is – that is – starting to get some small tea sets, eating, chatting like that, very relaxed (#UK18, 20-29, female, logistics manager).*

Some empirical studies have shown that work and non-work life satisfaction are closely linked, and mutually affected. Generally, there is a positive correlation between job-life satisfaction (Rain et al., 1991; Rice et al., 1980), and in some cases, the dual relationship is stronger for women than for men (Ernst Kossek and Ozeki, 1998). In this sense, it is argued that lower job satisfaction is more likely to result in lower life satisfaction (Rode, 2004). For instance, lower income may directly reduce job satisfaction and living standards. In this case, young participants seem to have lower life satisfaction than others, especially in Manchester. There are two examples. First, the young female participant who previously studied in America as an exchange student, and then studied for a Master's degree in the UK. When it came to the most enjoyable part of work, she expressed dissatisfaction with the company's policy that did not allow employees to share salary information, and with the shortage of social events for them to attend. Regarding non-work satisfaction, she first kept silent, and then responded:

> *I think the main thing for me is I don't drink often so I normally don't go to drinking events, but drinking is the main social way here, I will say, so that means for me UK life is trying to find something else for myself to be happy (#UK35, female, 20-29, market manager/energy engineering).*

To the following question, she replied:

> *Researcher: So what you – I mean, what do you enjoy in everyday life?*
> *Interviewee: It's really difficult.*

Another young male interviewee previously studied in the US and entered as a working holidaymaker. He smoothly transferred to a general work visa after two years. He doubted a relatively relaxed UK work environment could meet his career aspirations:

> *I feel... tut! ... Generally speaking, the pressure is not too much, but – but I feel this is not good, because I want to work a little bit harder (go fighting). Then it became ... I myself personally ... I feel I will be affected by the environment. If everyone works more harder, so do I; however, if everybody is relatively... tut! more relaxed, I will be more relaxed, too! That is, you probably ... less likely to ... I don't want to work under an urgent circumstance but want to be in ... (#UK38, 20-29, male, IT professional).*

Later he stated that life in Manchester was not as satisfactory as he had expected:

> *I am easy-going. For me to say, I just feel Manchester is very small […] I would love to go back to London. Because I think London has more opportunities. More, more, more terrific things, and then there are not many here (#UK38, 20-29, male, IT professional).*

It is evident that work and non-work domains are closely interrelated. However, this study does not generate enough strong evidence to conclude whether lower job satisfaction causes lower life satisfaction; some examples from the findings demonstrate different results – that is, that those dissatisfied with their current job for different reasons still perceive positive life satisfaction in non-work aspects. In this regard, Rode (2004, p.1207) argues that job satisfaction may not necessary be a causal influence on life satisfaction, suggesting consideration of 'personality', 'disposition' or 'core self-evaluations', all of which might play important roles in self-perceptions of well-being. The research findings tend to support Rode's argument.

Apart from work-life balance, secondary significant elements in relation to perceived life satisfaction/well-being can be grouped into physical (e.g. travel, people, local culture and entertainments) and psychological (e.g. feeling free, more independence, and privacy) experiences. This suggests that individual dispositions fitting into local socio-cultural settings, and cultural preferences over the receiving country, can increase the degree of life satisfaction, and in turn contribute to social integration.

Table 7.4.1: The most enjoyable thing in UK non-work life

The most enjoyable thing	Frequency
Relax/more private time/work-life balance/quality of life/LOHAS	10
Travel in the UK and European countries, more entertainment activities	5
People (variety, friendly, polite, charming)	4
British culture (art, culture, language, British indirect way of speaking, sarcasm)	4
Be myself/feeling free/independent/less restrictions on me	4 – female
Privacy/keeping good distance/less gossip/simple interpersonal relationships	4 – 3female and 1gay

Note: This table lists the popular answers to 'the most enjoyable thing in the UK non-work life', including physical and psychological elements:
  i.   Relax (10)
  ii. Traveling and city amenities (5)
  iii. Friendly and diverse people (4)
  iv. British culture (4)
  v.   Feeling independent (4)
  vi. more privacy and keep distance (4)
(Source: the fieldwork data)

On the other hand, regarding the challenges of non-work life, the results find that the most common answers (13) are language barriers (seven) and sociocultural gaps (six). These issues are the same as the most difficult/challenging things facing them in work domains (see Chapter 6.5). In addition, anti-social behaviour and drunk people on the street were identified as direct influences on residential satisfaction, as happened in the Greater London and Greater Manchester areas. These challenges perhaps happen to all migrant groups 'living with difference' (Valentine, 2008). The difference here is understood as 'being together of strangers' (Smyth, 2008; Iveson, 2006, Young, 1990) and the 'throwntogetherness' (Massey, 2005) in a shared space. Living in a city, encounters and interactions with 'others' are usually through the mundane realities of life, such as talking to people on buses or in shops. These everyday practices and interactions with others are referred to as 'civil exchanges' (Valentine, 2008, p.324), ways of feeling an association with places, in which members establish social relationships in a public sphere.

In reality, racial and cultural differences matter, and inevitably create a social gap between migrants and non-migrants. Valentine's (2008, p.325) empirical research based in three UK locations: London, the West Midlands and the South West, concludes that daily encounters differ from 'meaningful contact' that can deepen interpersonal relationships; geographic proximity may shape people's location identity, but does not necessarily change people's values and attitudes towards others. Valentine and other scholars have observed that treating strangers with courtesy in a UK public space, i.e., the polite/kind way of speaking or behaviour, is often deemed as a common social norm among the white majority, but cannot be identified as corresponding to 'having respect for difference' (ibid, p.334).

Valentine (2008) points out that cities are sites of connections with social exclusion. The white majority faces the risk of a changing society, in which the traditional paradigm has been eroded at the cost of the openness of globalisation. In this sense, the political discourse of multiculturalism or the notion of cosmopolitanism implies a social gap between different ethnic/minority groups. Hence, migrant participants' identities and sense of belonging to UK cities are often constructed in an imagined and contradictory manner. For example, they may illustrate people as being friendly and polite, but meanwhile sense the distance between them. The migrants are integral to the city and the strangers, but are simultaneously distinct from them.

Table 7.4.2: The most challenging thing in the UK non-work life

The most challenging thing	Frequency
Language barrier/ Scottish accent/British don't speak directly	7
Social and cultural gaps/different eating habits	6
Anti-social behaviour	4
Drunk people	3
Racial discrimination/Brexit means xenophobia	3
Difficult to integrate to local people/poor local networks/the society is more and more closed	3
Homesickness	3

Note: This table lists the popular answers to 'the most challenging thing in the UK non-work life', including:
  i.   Language barriers (7)
  ii. cultural barriers, including eating habits (6)
  iii. Anti-social behaviour (4)
(Source: the fieldwork data)

7.5: Gender differences: independence, privacy, personal growth

This study recruited more women (24) than men (16) as participants. The results show no significant gender difference in migration motivations of pursuing higher education and career development through international migration. For example, businesswomen were driven by self-interest to pursue career success and a better life chance in the global market, enjoying and reshaping a new identity in a new space. Overall, both male and female participants weighted economic rewards as important factors in migration satisfaction, as one female participant described:

> *I think if in Taiwan, it is ...there is a big gap between your rent and your income, and then because the income in the UK is very good, we can also travel abroad and Europe, got a British passport, er ... so, it is very convenient, then your life is in a manageable way (#UK26, 30-39, female, university project manager).*

However, participants' narratives suggest that female participants (seven) tend to articulate social-psychological satisfaction rather than physical elements as perceived well-being, such as feeling independent, maintaining personal privacy and keeping good distance. Three of them most enjoyed the feeling of independence partly because of the empowerment at work and partly due to the more personal autonomy and liberty of not living with their family members in Taiwan. For example:

Oh, er... the UK's workplace makes me feel independent.... the choice. The independence to operate business options, that is, the independent concept (#UK11, 30-39, female, business development executive/food industry).

I am more autonomous, because the reason I am not in Taiwan is that my parents have a lot of controls [on me], I think it is mainly the reason (#UK26, 30-30, female, project manager/higher education).

It is perhaps not so surprising, given the long-standing bias on gender roles in a male-dominated system that perpetuates traditional social norms and institutions positioning women in domestic roles and men in public activities. In Asia, the ancient Confucian thinking (551 BC) has deeply influenced Chinese social values (Yum, 1988; Huang and Charter, 1996; Park and Chesla, 2007). Confucian theory declares five fundamental relationships (wu-lun) in setting up social hierarchies and as moral education: the ruler-the minister, father-son, husband-wife, elder-younger brother, friend-friend. This ideology can also be found in Western culture, such as the dichotomy of Gemeinschaft (community-based) and Gesellschaft (society-based) in the German tradition (Tönnies, 1955; 1974). In this context, men's and women's roles have been politically constructed and socially normalised without consideration of individual differences.

However, gender relations assumed to be 'complementary and functional' are changing because globalisation brings about modernity and social transformation (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2000). The presence of migrant women in the global market, including domestic workers and highly skilled professionals leaving family members behind in origin countries, sets a good example. Hence, migrant women illustrated how they enjoyed more self-independence and autonomy while living abroad. For some, leaving behind family members and friends due to migration tended to have its positive side for mental health. Four participants (three female and one gay male) preferred living in the UK in order to enjoy more personal privacy and to keep a good distance from others; neither would have been achievable in Taiwan.

One directly complained about a relationship dilemma and family conflicts between she and her mother-in-law due to her infertility problem, which has been a psychological stress for the family, eventually pushing her and her husband to stay in the UK. As she said:

The advantage is having privacy. In Taiwan, everyone likes to spread the words. Parent-in-laws and sisters-in-laws they all can't understand me. On the contrary, everyone keeps a little distance here. Friends and neighbours won't gossip you. [...] Because I am unable to have any child, but this is not my problem, we have checked, my husband also has some problems, too, but people in his family only blame me, always saying the same thing, causing the relationship between mother-in-law and me is very tense, sister-in-law also stand by her mother. My husband said since so, we would not go back anymore, I can imagine how they comment on me in my back; however, I can't hear it here, keep my ears quiet and no one will judge you and pass on these bad words (#UK9, 50-59, female, physician wife).

The failure to maintain a good marriage could make women, and in many cases both men and women, find it difficult to face other family members and friends, or suffer from discrimination in their society. Another female interviewee described her unhappy marriage after migration to the UK. She eventually separated from her husband, and stressed that the simple life in the UK without complicated relationships would be better for her. This evidence opposes the naive assumption of a household approach of NELM theory that sees family members as a cooperative unit in migration decision-making.

Although there is less research into gender differences among migrant business owners in job satisfaction, previous related studies argued that higher pay is likely to play a positive influential factor for men employees but not for women (Sappleton and Lourenço, 2016; Solesvik, 2013; Moses and Amalu, 2010; Sloane and Williams, 2000). In addition, some scholars note that men tend to perceive well-being from work experiences and women from family-related fields (Choi and Chen, 2006; Parasuraman et al., 1992). In this case, two female entrepreneurs remarked on their self-improvement/self-growth through the process of starting a UK business, and cited striving for self-fulfilment as the most enjoyable thing in the UK. They migrated to the UK in their 20s and 30s respectively, and both turned from international students into international businesswomen.

These two female migrant entrepreneurs offer a different and balanced perceptive of our understanding of women's roles in work domains and family obligations. They identified career development as an important factor in increasing their migration happiness, as would men. Their family members in the UK – a Taiwanese husband (#UK33) and a British spouse and children (#UK40) – are quite supportive of their career development. In particular, the Taiwanese husband is a trailing spouse who quit his job in Taiwan to accompany his wife to study and develop business in the UK. He said: 'I have to walk out of my comfort zone'. For them, the initial stages were not without difficulties, and the

business world is always full of ongoing challenges, but, in turn, obtaining 'know-how' within the process made it all the more enjoyable.

> *I used to have a British friend who know more about me, and then I sometimes told [her] him about something I did in Taiwan, […] then [s]he will challenge me, kept asking me why, why did you think about this, why doing this was better, why? [S]he kept asking me why? Then later, probably I have never thought about it, then I tried to answer the reason, but I later found out, eh – their research spirit is really stronger than ours, and then I was a bit irritated at the beginning, being irritated I meant why did you keep asking me why? Don't you believe in me? […] Haha! So at that time, I was a little bit angry, and then later on, I feel er … [s]he gave me a good lesson. That is to say – I have to understand ... everything I do, tut! What exactly why I did it? The second thing is why it would be better to do this? Who said it is good? Yes! That is to find out the reason and the answer instead of blindly to do something that someone asks me to do (#UK33, female, self-employed/wedding service).*

In this example, she illustrated how she gradually cultivated a higher degree of 'self-awareness' to 'know why and how to do things better' through interacting with other people in the UK. She found it has been very beneficial for developing inner self-growth and stimulating her entrepreneurship. She ascribed this cultural shock to Taiwan's educational system that led to a relatively lower research impulse, unlike Western education.

Another female businesswoman has run a business in the UK for more than 20 years. She said she learned how to overcome challenges in search of business niches in the local and global market, and enjoyed self-confidence. One of the difficulties was in understanding local regulations, due to the language barriers; as she responded:

> *It is about how to manage a local business of the United Kingdom. Every time when I encounter difficulties, every idea being generated, and after solving each difficulty, I increased confidence in this way afterwards. For example, the process of company registration and employee recruitment, etc. After overcoming a difficult and obtaining experiences, my mood calmed down (#UK40, 40-49, female, self-employed/IT trade).*

Similarly, the work-life balance in the UK allows a Taiwanese migrant father to have more time to engage with his family activities instead of only providing material resources to maintain a family. Compared with life in Taiwan, he highlighted life satisfaction in the UK as *'enjoying more family-oriented life' (#UK12, 40-49, male, financial professional).*

Apart from that, the study of female migrant entrepreneurs offers a different and balanced perceptive of our understanding of women's roles in work domains and family obligations.

There has been a growing focus on feminised migration since 1990, and gender equality as a central component of democratisation has been advocated and practised in many democratic countries. However, gender-based discrimination remains in the interpretation of women's roles under neoliberal capitalism. Yüce_ahin and Yazgan (2017) argue that migrant women tend to be invisible and weak in the patriarchal labour market due to lasting masculine-dominated authority. Recent studies conducted in the OECD area have shown that highly skilled women still face job exclusion in STEM fields, and migrant women are more likely than men to face both ethnic and gender bias in their migration experiences (Purkayastha and Bircan, 2021; Riaño, 2021; Grigoleit-Richter, 2017). One of the female participants observed this phenomenon when she encountered challenges at work:

> *By culturally, East Asian female is the odd one then sometimes, if you really encounter some ageism, then a little sexism, they will feel that by culturally, East Asian's female are more subordinate (#UK26, 30-39, female, university project manager).*

Biologically, women are deemed as life-givers who are bound to stay at home to take care of family members and carry out housework duties. Consequently, women tend to be less mobile and easily lose the chance to participate in 'social life' – a platform for men to develop their decisions and control power (Yüce_ahin and Yazgan, 2017; Newbold, 2017). As a result, conventional gender roles cast fathers as breadwinners, mothers as caregivers (Eagly and Wood, 2011; Kendall, 2007), and this has an impact on power relations among family members and on migration pathways. Consequently, men's out-migration for work is often taken for granted but women's is not; sons may thus obtain more monetary and emotional support than daughters for overseas living.

It is argued that patriarchal hierarchies remain, despite modernity, with gender inequality for both men and women existing in different political and social contexts. Many studies describe migrant women as victims with limited capabilities and resources; however, this is not always the case. Scholars like Višić and Poleti-Ćosić (2018) argue that discussion of gender inequality needs to examine structural factors at local, national, regional and transnational levels. In fact, gender roles are negotiated in diverse contexts, and depend on power relations among family, community, and organisation members. As discussed in Chapter 6, female migrant participants tend to perceive more gender equality at workplaces in the UK compared to Taiwan. As for perceived well-being in non-work

spheres, they tend to express feelings of independence, autonomy, privacy and personal growth, reflecting Taiwan's traditional social-value constraints on women's roles.

7.6: City air makes migrants free

Apart from gender differences in narratives of perceived well-being, this study reveals the impact of sexual orientation on personal lives in the migration experiences of the LGBTQ community, as discussed by many scholars (Fournier et al., 2018; Nash and Gorman-Murray, 2014; Asencio and Acosta, 2009). However, specific focus on professional LGBTQ subjects is scarce in the migration literature. On the one hand, most migration theories assume that migrants are (expected to) be heterosexual (Kosnick, 2016; Luibhéid, 2008); on the other hand, skilled migration is often categorised as a typical area of economic migration, in which the highly skilled are depicted as the 'best and brightest' or 'talented' workers, while research into LGBTQ people is often conceptualised within 'non-normative' sexualities, and the subjects' migration patterns are largely related to those of refugees and asylum seekers, and to human rights and HIV/AIDS issues.

Migration to a new place can reconstruct a person's sexual orientation, perhaps especially for LGBTQ people. Valentine (2014, p.5) points out that the 'spatial visibility' of LGBTQ communities and street parades can draw people's attention to the issue of LGBTQ rights, and this tends to strengthen LGBTQ people's sexual identities to fight against their detractors. In Western host societies, LGBTQ people's self-disclosure of their sexual orientation, i.e., 'coming out of the closet', is generally acceptable and even deemed as a healthy way of developing the self (Roy, 2013). Under the political discourse of neoliberalism, LGBTQ people are generally tolerated, and certain rights are protected by the authorities, such as same-sex marriage.

Such a social context makes LGBTQ migrants feel better able to develop and express their sexual identities, and gives them more opportunities to meet other LGBTQ people, so that in turn they are more likely to experience greater sexual autonomy and freedom after migration (Adam and Rangel, 2015; Avelar, 2015; Asencio and Acosta, 2009). After long-term efforts by LGBTQ activists, Taiwan in 2019 officially became the first nation in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage (Kuan, 2019; Jeffreys and Wang, 2018). This policy is recognised as progress on human rights, although it immediately provoked public

protests against LGBTQ equality by some who regarded it as undermining religious and traditional Chinese family values. This shows that Taiwan as a whole may be not ready to accept LGBTQ minorities.

Many studies have reported how LGBTQ people have suffered from systematic discrimination and marginalisation, and on their need to escape oppression and stigma, and to find safety/a safe haven, a quiet place, or privacy (Hereth, 2021; Allen and Lavender-Stott, 2020; Kahn and Alessi, 2018; Suriyasarn, 2016; Coon, 2003; 2012). In this research, of two gay participants who originally migrated for study, one mentioned that he quite enjoyed 'privacy' and 'keeping distance', showing how the gay-friendly environment in the UK increased his sense of well-being.

Classical urban theorists indicate that city life has different impacts on the subjective states of residents. Georg Simmel (1997) thinks that city dwellers are more likely to be 'unburdened by the expectations of traditional institutions and other individuals' – as the old German saying goes '*stadtluft macht frei*' (city air makes free) (Debies-Carl and Huggins, 2009, p.343). In other words, the alienation of city life wherein a person can merge oneself into metropolitan cultures and enjoy anonymity. For migrant participants, living in UK cities means a greater chance of encountering 'a world of strangers' (Lofland, 1985) As one participant remigrating from Paris to London described, *'enjoying cosmopolitan' (#UK17, 60+, female, clergywoman)*. Such urban alienation characterised by different ethnical and cultural elements enables individuals to develop their own personality and lifestyle (Debies-Carl and Huggins, 2009; Gans, 1982).

In terms of dispositions and habitus, men and women respondents shared common views of enjoying British cultural attractiveness and natural environment in their lived experiences. For example, the male scientist interviewee most enjoyed his village life in the Cambridge area. The consumption activities of city life, including experiencing material and sociocultural goods and services, seem to be very appealing to both men and women participants. Although some participants who previously migrated to other countries for study and work said that they did not really appreciate 'the implicit way the British speak' or 'over-drinking culture' at work, they stated that they enjoyed British culture most in their non-work life. Experiencing different lifestyle and cultural diversity in the destination country adds value to the advantages of migration. As one male scientist put it:

Interviewee: I ... quite enjoy.

Researcher: OK. More details? Like what makes you feel happiness or enjoy most?

Interviewee: I can only compare with the United States. The United States is a very big place, OK, like many places in many states I lived before, when going out the city, there is usually the shopping centre, nothing fun! It's all very boring, very boring in the culture, too, right? Or watching sports games, it's, it's a consumption society, you know. Britain is not that worse. Um ... in the UK, you drive about 30 minutes and you ... or every hour, you will have a place such as National Trust, many different villages, very good! I like it! Like me, I also live in a village, and feel this life is pretty good. Yes, then enjoy this, you know, enjoy this leisure time more (#UK28, 50-59, male, higher manager/biotechnology).

The World Values Survey in 1981-2019, across many different types of country and society, carried out by Ronald Inglehart reveals important findings. First, increasing income levels tend to contribute to rising happiness and life satisfaction; however, when economic factors reach a certain point, lifestyle factors seem to become more important than income incentives. Second, based on evidence from many advanced industrial societies where intergenerational values have shifted from 'survival' to 'self-expression', people born in the Post-War era have moved beyond the starving stage and pay more attention to quality of life (Inglehart, 2007; 2018). These 'postmodern values' involve a wide variety of basic social and cultural norms, emphasising less hierarchical control from institutions and more individual self-expression.

These findings are in line with Florida's (2005) arguments of the relationship between cities and the creative class, in which the creative people are attracted by a given environment where the socio-cultural climate is open, tolerant and diverse. Moreover, he argues that the creative class is driven by the experiential life and sees the environment with cultural heterogeneity as a stimulus. As Pine and Gilmore (2011) propose, the consumption of experiences is about spending time enjoying a series of memorable events or intangible services rather than purchasing material or tangible goods. Two participants stated:

Definitely, the most enjoyable part is people. [...] for me to say, life in the UK may be more relevant to London, not to the UK, that is: 'huge variety', many! It's like if you go to the US, unless you go to New York or downtowns, you won't find that the race is so mixed-up, even if it is mix-up, it is quite single. Here, because there are too many countries in Europe, and everyone is very easy to entry this 'still European city', so like this floor, most people are not the British but are the European. Then there is a good company here, the boss is American, so here you can meet people of all cultural backgrounds (#UK6, 30-39, female, film director).

London is actually one of the top international cities in the world, the global world, so people from all countries, English or other languages can be heard while walking. This is a good thing. It is a very international city. On the one hand, London is a tourist city, so it is actually quite convenient in all aspects. The transportation, the information you find, or the friendliness for foreigners are pretty good (#UK21, 20-29, male, architect).

7.7: Summary

This chapter investigates the lived experiences of Taiwanese highly skilled migrants living in the UK, demonstrating the relationship between migrant professionals and the cities they inhabit. The migration direction of highly skilled professionals closely links to the knowledge-intense economy and national immigration policies. The findings seem to support the idea that the decision to live in a specific city is mainly conditioned by work opportunities, and London offers evidence that a global city can attract and accommodate migrants from everywhere than other urban areas. In this case, the residential location-preference was considered in a practical way rather than based on the community ethnicity. However, two significant groups within the sample showed nuanced differences. Single young migrants renting a house in the UK relied more on ethnic bonds; second, those living in Scotland mainly considered living locations according to their cultural and environmental preferences.

Regarding the formation of identity and the place-belongingness of highly skilled migrants, the results suggest that the city/workplace – with talent clusters, ethnical diversity and a migrant-friendly ambience – plays an important role in promoting a city's attractiveness and in reshaping migrant identity and place-belongingness. It is evident that migrant professionals' self-identity can go beyond ethnic boundaries to be attached to multiple spaces. For example, belonging to work-related circles rather than a wider concept of UK society. These economic or non-economic factors compose of a 'hard and soft infrastructure' in their migration directions and in place-belongingness. The evidence supports Florida's (2002) idea that a city's socio-cultural environment with ethnic diversity and cultural tolerance makes it more attractive to creative workers.

However, Florida (2002) places a great emphasis on the importance of people and cultural tolerance, and this has not been universally recognised (Ewers et al., 2018). In this study, career opportunity rather than social and cultural attractiveness was found to be the main

driver for most highly skilled migrants to relocate to a specific city. This study argues that Florida's paradigm, emphasising people, culture and amenities as elements to attract people to live and work in a specific city, might be more useful in explaining the perceived well-being after settlement rather than the main migration drivers of the creative class.

For most of the interviewees, the work-life balance was the most enjoyable aspect of lifestyle post-migration, and it was also identified as the perceived image of British work culture. Also, the most commonly perceived difficulty/challenging element – language and cultural barriers/gaps – was found to overlap work and non-work experiences. It is not surprising that international migration goes against the traditional role of women embedded in male-dominated civil society and in most high-end industries. Through its qualitative approach, the research demonstrated nuanced gender differences in perceived well-being. Women pursue self-profit goals just as men do, and demonstrate self-efficacy in modern cities and the global market. However, the research findings show that under the long-term gender inequality and anti-homosexual bias embedded in their origin country's social structure, female professionals and gay participants tend to enjoy more personal privacy, self-autonomy and self-growth as perceived enhancements to well-being through migration.

Chapter 8: Social networks and social capital

Chapters 5 to 7 analyse migrant participants' labour market experiences, and the relationships between them and the city by looking at individual preferences, habitus and cultural proximity. Migration network theory values kinship and friendship ties as significant resources, offering physical and mental support to facilitate the migrating process. Scholars argue that migrants' social networks contribute to the formation of ethnic communities and a sense of belonging, which shape migrant integration into the host country, and migration outcomes: to stay or return. Social capital derived from social networks can be accumulated, and is associated with the reproduction of class, status and power relations (Bourdieu, 1986); thus, it has impacts on migrants' integration into the local society, and is strongly linked to subjective well-being (Kindler et al., 2015; Poros, 2011; Eve, 2010).

Due to spatial changes incurred by international movement, migrants continue to construct and maintain different types of social network in varied locations (Ryan, 2007, 2015b; Eve, 2010). Although recent studies have examined the changing nature of migrant networks post-migration, there is less research into the formation of, and barriers to, local networks of highly skilled migrants in the host country; little is known about how important these networks are to them, or how they are mobilised in everyday practice (Hommerich and Tiefenbach 2018; Gill and Bialski, 2011). Given the ambiguity of the meaning of social capital, Hommerich and Tiefenbach (2018) suggest a focus on trust, network, and norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness as three pillars.

This chapter explores the formation and strength of social networks post-migration among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK and the local population. It focuses on where and how they make new friends, including co-ethnic Taiwanese or 'others', and whether the 'bonding' and 'bridging' social ties are strongly or weakly connected, positive or negative to their migration experience. Previous studies of migrants' social networks focus more on co-ethnic resources which facilitate the migrating process; this chapter contributes by addressing social linkage with locals after migration as an influential factor in re-migration decisions. In addition, while the quantitative approach often measures 'absent' or 'present' social networks (Crossley, 2010, p.8; Edwards, 2010, p.5), this qualitative research enables an exploration of 'what is going on' (Crossley, 2010,

p.18) through analysing the formation, experience and complexity of interpersonal relationships.

8.1: Friend-making in the new place: 'bonding' and 'bridging' ties

As Eve (2010, pp.1232-1236) indicates, migrants have to 'make transitions, "enter" into new groups (a school, a workplace, a family of marriage, a new neighbourhood or village, an association, etc.)' in the new destination, re-organising social networks for work and non-work purposes. The interviews concerned how participants make local friends in the UK, and how these social ties influenced their work and life. Regarding friend-making, Conradson and Latham (2005) argue for a more precise definition of friendship in order to analyse the formation of migrant social networks. Although the meaning and degree of friendship largely depend on individual subjective feelings, in general, the definition of friendship includes the positive experience of mutual liking, trust and support. Gill and Bialski (2011) further suggest separating friendships into close friends, buddies and acquaintances. If friendship is defined loosely as involving many people, the participants met new people and made new friends offline (during place-based physical activities) and through online social networking sites.

As Table 8.1 highlights, the findings show that 34 participants participated in local place-based community activities to make new friends, including art/sport/learning events (22), volunteering (8) and parent circles (4); friend-making through the workplace/business circles is also a major channel for them (21). The use of online social networks (6), such as Meetup and LinkedIn, to find people with shared interests appeared to be popular among participants in their 20s and 30s, especially in London. In contrast to these 'local' channels, Taiwanese home associations in the UK tended to be a less popular approach (10). Several participants offered multiple answers, showing place-based activities and online websites are generally not mutually exclusive routes to establishing social networks, especially among young single participants.

In terms of different types of activity, both male and female participants showed personal interests in volunteering, learning, exercising and cultural events, and many expressed an interest in various types of local event. Even the male informant who described his life as 'plain and nothing special' selectively attended several local community activities:

Local friends ... I mostly through… participate in some er ... public lectures and then...have a chance to meet someone who is like-minded, er ... mainly through this way. Then I tend not to…through drinking events from a bar such a thing. Colleagues invited me to drink, I won't specifically say...i.e., if they, if drinking with them fine; they want to go to the second and third places to drink more, I won't follow. So it is less likely to meet drinking buddy. The friends I made…still tend to be... of course I would also like to attend a few events and a few social associations, and may make some friends, such as the wine tasting learning club, they have a WSET certification course, I would like to attend this class, then you may know such friends, like this (#UK22, 40-49, male, professional architect).

Table 8.1: The development of social networks in the new destination

Work colleagues/ Business circle	Local community/Neighbours			Online Meetup/ LinkedIn	Taiwanese association In the UK	Others
	Volunteer/ charity	Sports/learning/ cultural events	Parent circle			
21	8	22	4	6	10	9

Note: The ways migrant participants developed social networks after arrival, including:
   i. Local place-based community activities (34).
   ii. Work-related networks (21) and Taiwanese association in the UK (10).
   iii. 'Others' (9) include tenants, friends' friends, British spouse/boyfriend/friends.
(Source: the fieldwork data)

Four interviewees working in teaching, academic research (three) and medical services (one) gave unexpected answers reporting that they did not have time to attend any community activity, including Taiwanese association activities, due to being busy at work. On further examination of their social characteristics, these male and female informants were aged in their 30s to their 50s, married, and lived with their British or foreign spouses in London; family time after work perhaps, to some extent, counterbalanced the desire to seek new friends. However, they are among the five participants who said they have not yet achieved a work-life balance in the UK. Apparently, their occupations appeared to largely explain this situation. As two examples said:

> *Researcher: So what kind of community activities would you attend?*
> *Interviewee: I feel is ... I don't know, in fact I don't.*
> *Researcher: You didn't particularly attend any?*
> *Interviewee: I seem to be too busy to go.*
> *(#UK23, female, 30-39, medical research)*

Ah! Almost all my friends are from colleagues, [...] participate in some local activities, I feel because er... my job makes me busier, there is no way to attend activities to meet people, participation in events; for example, it is one-off, so after participating, it was ended, everyone would not contact again, so that I feel a little difficult to make friends with, if you don't come across er…more like-minded colleagues, in fact, I don't think the chance to make friends outside the workplace is big (#13, female, 30-39, high-school teacher).

On the other hand, there are currently more than ten Taiwanese place-based home associations registered with the Taiwanese government in the UK offering different information and activities for business, religious, sports or cultural services (See Chapter 2.4). When the participants were asked about whether they joined Taiwanese home associations/activities, ten said they once attended social events, and only five were active members. In fact, Taiwanese home associations are based only in larger cities, with more than half in London, in accordance with the distribution of Taiwanese populations in UK cities. In such a circumstance, not every participant has access to an ethnic community near home.

Apart from geographical distance, time, money and personal interests are also considered important factors influencing willingness to participate in ethnic community activities. Gill and Bialski (2011) argue that the migrant network is in a state of ongoing evolution according to actual needs and social structural factors. Two examples from Nottingham and London show how geographic proximity and perceived value are considerations for participation. As they said:

Interviewee: Yes, normally art and cultural, food, music, um… like local exhibition something I interested in. Um…
Researcher: So in your area, don't you join any Taiwanese society?
Interviewee: No – just no! It's really strange, most of them are in London.
(#UK26, 30-39, female, Nottingham).

Researcher: So – you don't participate in Taiwanese associations' activities?
Interviewee: I participated once, but I felt it was not organised very well. So, the participation fee was too high. Ha.
(#UK13, 30-39, female, London).

For some, social networks may be not only for friend-making, but also have to meet business purposes. One female entrepreneur stated that socialising with people running similar types of business in the UK would be more helpful than meeting co-ethnic Taiwanese migrants doing business in different fields:

Interviewee: Haha! There is no partner who can inspire you, you know? So sometimes I feel quite lonely, because, tut! Friends ... um ... of course, getting along well with these local friends, but the friends who are really able to inspire you are actually not that many. Then I feel that sometimes business friends are quite interesting. That is, you talk about business with them, then you can learn some insights, and then there is a stimulus point within it, that's it! Yes! So it is actually different levels.

Researcher: Have you ever thought about joining the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce?

Interviewee: Oh! But the key point is that the chamber of commerce is nothing. Yeah! The chamber of commerce is not very useful to us (#UK33, female, 30-39, wedding service).

The findings show that six participants tended to prefer establishing their 'own' place-based communities/networks from their workplaces or non-work spheres to develop and extend friendships; therefore, they are more likely to engage in creating personal social networks linking with locals rather than relying on ethnicity-based friendships at the established Taiwanese home associations. Despite the implied obligation to contact other migrants, they set up these free social groups as volunteers, and appeared to feel more satisfied with such personal networks where they bonded with people with shared interests. One informant working as a university activity organiser successfully built up his local friendship circle, which combined with his job duties:

I will, hahaha! I will, I have a XXXX Society. Having a XXXX Society. Because I work in the university and quite a few of my friends [...] Haha! Yeah! XXXX is just as my name. Er…it's not really that kind of things. Before- before the semester starts, we have like er…orientation week, we will have like er…welcome week sort of things, and then, because um…I met quite a lot of friends at that time, and everyone like kind of, you know, have connections, and we all have Facebook, somehow, I add them all, and then I put them all in a group. So that if we have like some activities that we wanna go; for example, movies; for example, Christmas market, or like if we wanna have a wing's night, chicken wings' night on Wednesday, so, yeah (#UK5, male, 30-39, Sheffield, university administrator).

In another example, a female participant who had studied physical training in Taiwan could not find any job related to her professional skills in the UK; when she achieved a more established life after several years, she said she wanted to pursue her interests and practised personal skills through volunteering. Her 'sports club' has attracted both Taiwanese migrants and locals in her city. As she stated:

I have a walking group which many people are the local elderly retired pensioners. So every Thursday I walk with them…and then I have been volunteering for eight years, so this is a community to me, too. And they are mostly elderly, too. […] the second one is the- the stretching exercise I provide for them as a volunteer. […] stretching class or you can call that sitting Pilates. Yeah! Because many of people who attending my class they have problems with their joints, which is they are fairly old, they have arthritis, they have replaced hips, etc., etc., so they cannot go to the gym and do normal class so go to my modified Pilates class (#UK30, female, 50-59, Edinburgh, part-time teacher).

Robert Putnam inspired many scholars to apply 'bonding' and 'bridging' networks to examine these two distinct formations of migrants' interpersonal relations in terms of ethnicity (See Chapter 3.3.4). However, some scholars, such as Ryan (2015b), Geys and Murdoch (2010), Ryan et al. (2008) and Leonard (2004), have argued that the dichotomy of bonding and bridging networks is hard to delineate within the complex and fluid nature of migrant social ties upon arrival. The findings of this thesis are in line with their suggestion, and demonstrate how highly skilled migrants in the UK develop their bonding and bridging social networks simultaneously. For some participants, local connections were more accessible and connected to everyday practices than co-ethnic social ties. In fact, these two types of networks co-exist, are often mixed, and in some cases overlap.

For example, the Manchester Taiwanese Association was established by Taiwanese migrants working in the city, supported by their British spouses or partners in managing and organising Taiwanese activities and an English website. They organised Taiwanese festivals or engaged in local events, such as Manchester Pride, generating community activities open to all local people rather than serving only immigrants of Taiwanese origin. In addition, the current prevailing use of online social media provides a platform for people from different ethnic and geographical backgrounds to interact. In this context, it is harder to make a hard distinction between in-group or out-group networks by ethnic background, especially among migrant professionals who may have more financial resources and channels to extend their personal social connections with the locals.

8.2: Work-related networks

Bourdieu (1986) considers that the formation of social capital is based on class boundaries and can be accumulated over time, a system that the privileged class uses to protect and maintain its own interests and power. Moreover, the Great British Class Survey conducted

by Savage (2015) reveals that social networks are generally tied to social class in order to share useful information and even gossip. Migrants, especially first-generation migrants, are seen as 'outsiders' in the host society, their ethnic, family or other origin backgrounds representing a class boundary between them and the locals. This ethnic disadvantage is likely to influence their connection to locals in many ways, including job-seeking and promotion, as well as housing and integration. However, in terms of the economic and social ladder, the findings suggest that highly skilled migrants in the labour market have more contact with white-collar workers to form social capital compared to the low-skilled. Such a position could, to some extent, diminish barriers to entry into mainstream society, and may establish their local embeddedness.

In this case, nearly half of the interviewees (21) stated that the way to meet and get acquainted with 'British friends' was through the workplace. Several mentioned that this was perhaps the best and only way to know the white British, and most reported that they would attend work-related activities as often as possible to foster this relationship – as two examples illustrate:

> *Um…I think, as we just said before, the British already have their own life, their social networks. The only way for me to have some local British friends is through my work. We are comfort in working together for one thing. After work, we just go home (#UK8, female, 30-39, interior design).*
>
> *Hmm ... actually, I don't participate in local activities a lot in this way. I can only say that our company has tried to extend the so-called social networks as much as possible. The company has helped to promote it. […] then even in my own team, in my team, my team leader has made efforts, of course, the way he did wasn't so obvious, but he made it naturally, let it develop. Then the company will provide some CSR, that is, an activity that everyone adds in, and then everyone comes to participate (#UK 34, male, 40-49, financial services).*

In fact, developing friendships and maintaining social networks, whether in place-based communities or online websites, rely on repeated exposure (Ryan, 2015b). For migrant participants, the workplace allows formal social ties to develop and accumulate institutionally and systemically among highly skilled professionals. Work colleagues are also helpful sources in obtaining locally relevant knowledge. Several participants mentioned that if they encountered and needed to deal with local issues in daily life, such as purchasing or repairing a house, discussing a TV programme, understanding local social norms or choosing a holiday destination, work colleagues were the first people they wanted to consult. However, from the participants' narratives, the bond with 'the British people' at work tended not to be as strong as they expected, compared to that with their

former colleagues in Taiwan, or social bonds with other nationals in the UK or in previous destination countries. For example, the female participant considered herself as one of a 'talent pool' of 'like-minded' members of her local community that made her feel a sense of belonging to the residential area; she commented that the British personality tended to maintain 'weak-tie' friendships:

> *I think people here may be sometimes too rational because everyone is doing something for a goal. So, in fact, I think sometimes, some teams in Taiwan sometimes have more emotional bonds. The British, you know, the British personality is colder and calmer, and more rational, so I don't think there is a deep bond there. And because Taiwan has the seniority system, the senior people will take care of you. Well, people here, they are looking that you have to be independent by yourself (#UK6, 30-39, female, film director).*

The 'weak-tie' friendships, to some extent, also influenced the participants' perceptions of 'teamwork' and the characteristics of British work culture. One of the young respondents thought that the emphasis on individualism in Western society made personal work duty clear, but resulted in less concern for – and support of – co-workers. As he commented:

> *They are more individualistic. That is, yes! It is individualism! It's like their work distribution is clearer, very clear, that is, I will leave after I finish my today's job, and I will not care about what happens to my team. I will just leave office after finishing work. This is quite different from my previous work in Taiwan. When I worked in Taiwan, it was more like…I felt like a team. Everyone is more likely to take care of each other. Then to see whose jobs cannot be done well, then to cover him [her], but such a thing is less likely to happen here (#UK21, 20-29, male, architect).*

The 'weak-tie' friendships at work may also be shaped by the principle of work-life balance encouraged in the UK, which implies that social ties in the workplace are not expected to 'interrupt' or 'break into' personal private life. In this case, a female entrepreneur interviewee described attitudes towards social relationships among company employees:

> *Our company has a good working atmosphere, but the work and life are clearly divided. My company employees also come from different nationality, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Finland, and also the local British (#UK40, 40-49, female, IT trade business owner).*

The findings suggest that friendship ties forged in the workplace appear to fulfil an information-gathering role with regular contacts, making them more than just acquaintances; and these are generally maintained in a loose way in the private sphere

(Granovetter, 1983). However, work-related social ties are vital for migrant professionals' integration into the host society. Bourdieu (1986; see also Ryan, 2015b) argues that friendship-making does not always follow a fixed pattern, and much depends on personality and mutual willingness. Evidence from the single mother participant exemplifies the case. The composition and interests among her work colleagues created a different friendship pattern and produced a denser network of social activities than for other participants. In this example, she was happy to take up the invitation of work colleagues to bring her small child out to enjoy some outdoor fun with other family members during private time. As she said:

> *In the past, when my child was still little, there was no chance to go out, but I went out with some other mothers for a coffee, or when they have some charity activities, I went for help. Now, like my colleagues, yes, sometimes... the British like to buy kind of camper vans, that is, driving a car like a car with pickup truck in the back to go out for a holiday, just go camping, now we will see which colleague has such a car, we will drive out to have fun (#UK39, 40-49, female, government key worker).*

In addition, the nature of the work may also influence how a person perceives and maintains work-related social networks. For example, a self-employed artist participant demonstrated that work-related and non-work social networks can be tied together and across countries. He established multiple social networks bonding and bridging people between Taiwan and the UK to communicate ideas and cooperate in domestic and transnational art projects. Unlike the salaried employees, the self-employed artist working on different independent projects enjoyed more work autonomy; the distinction between work and home life tended to more flexible, and the relationships between him and his working partners engaged in business appeared to be closer.

> *Neighbours. The interaction is very good, they will help me to collect parcels and sometimes eat together; at the interpersonal level, there are also some friends from the art circle who have been acquainted with because of working together; there are also Taiwanese and British friends from political circles, project management teams, cross-party group on Taiwan. I was commissioned to do some art planning cases during the art season (#UK4, 50-59, male, artist).*

Outside the workplace, most participants in this study tended not to make much effort to make friends in relation to their work. Overall, only four informants, working in the IT, art and business fields, mentioned that they would spend their private time attending social events related to their professional fields to connect with friendship circles and obtain information.

8.3: Community-based social networks

Over half of the participants (22) reported that participating in sports/learning/cultural events near their homes was the major way to meet new people and make new friends. This friend-making was based on shared interests and being like-minded, beyond ethnic boundaries. The class boundary is thus drawn according to their similar 'tastes' and 'interests' associated with individual cultural capital. One participant from London, living with her Taiwanese husband without children, described most of her neighbours as educated professionals, and social contacts were made through walking dogs:

> *Maybe the experience could be different in different areas, as large part of people here are white European immigrants, and people we knew through dogs – Spanish, Italians, and then maybe other central European people – and they are all professionals, they are that kind, just like us, well-educated […] I don't deliberately establish a relationship with the British or whatever ... just to join the group in a timely manner instead of doing it on purpose, because I just did what I like to do […] Just like us ... we have dogs, and then we started to connect with these dog owners in the community, then we might just bring the dogs to meet other people together, they are mainly British people (#UK25, 40-49, female, fashion designer).*

In contrast to Bourdieu's (1986) concept of social capital, Putnam's (2000) *Bowling Alone* emphasises that extensive social networks developed through civil engagement can generate social capital and contribute to solidarity and social commitment among members. In this case, volunteering for local UK- or Taiwanese-funded charity work provides a good example, and is the community-based activity most mentioned by eight male and female participants of different ages and from different cities. One participant was inspired by a UK charity job while he was studying in the country. He was received with warm hospitality by a British volunteer, so he and his Taiwanese wife went on to devote themselves to charity activities. As he said:

> *We participate in some local charity fund-raising activities to build up some relationships, and then do some volunteer work. Then I feel the most influential is to participate in; when I was a student, I joined an organization called Host UK. They let the British volunteer ... receive international students, and then we know one of our good friends in that process. We have kept contacts for many years since then, and often go to their home or they come to London to visit us, and from this process, because he is an Englishman, a native Englishman, an Englishman who grew up in a rural place, he took us to their church enthusiastically, took me to know their friends, and we all know their children, and even their grandchildren, so through this process, we also understand the British culture better. When it comes to community, if it is the local community in the UK, I will think that we are very close. Then ... yes (#UK 24, male, 40-49, financial consultant).*

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Another female entrepreneur migrant also said she was inspired by the prevailing spirit of British charity; therefore, she engaged in charity work for both UK and Taiwanese non-profit and religious institutions when she achieved career success, which enabled her to make more contributions.

Putnam (2000) considers the intention of 'helping' to be associated with altruism, volunteering and philanthropy, comprising a good part of social capital in civil engagement. In 'doing good for other people' (ibid, p.117) with the locals, the nature of volunteering in charity is generosity and openness to others, implying that migrants can feel more welcomed in such a social ambience and would find it relatively easier to make friends through participation. Moreover, the findings show that they tend to enhance their self-confidence and well-being by devoting personal time and energy to this community. In a similar vein, a case study of the role transition of Taiwanese middle-class career women into full-time homemakers after migrating to Canada (Chiang and Stephenson, 2016) found that women living in an 'astronaut family' (see Chapter 2.1.3, p.35) – their children in Canada and their husbands living in Taiwan – played a particularly active role in volunteering as a major part of their civic participation, offering them a way to integrate into the receiving society. Although this study has more female participants (16 men, 24 women), the results show that the proportion of women participating in charity work tends to be higher than men. The findings suggest that civil engagement like charity activities tends to form positive social relationships and social capital among members, supporting Putnam's (2000) perspectives.

However, community-based networks outside the workplace do not always form strong-tie friendships – it depends on a person's social role in these activities and the purpose of participation. Overall, the participants tend to consider making friends with British local people is unlikely to develop a strong-tie relationship. Even some of those married to British husbands who have lived in the UK for more than five years felt the same way. As one participant illustrated:

> *Just to understand British people they are friendly but not as friendly as Americans (#UK26, 30-39, female, project manager).*

Another female participant offered a more detailed illustration underlining the ethnic boundary around the local British people, and their attitude towards making friends:

*First of all, I organise some community events myself. So I know some local people. I wouldn't say I er…I wouldn't say I have local social networks, because the thing is, this kind of community event is – people come, people go, and they like to keep distance, they don't want to be your BFF [*best friend forever*]. They come and they go. They enjoy random chat for the evening. They may come next month, they may not, um…unless you are going to organise something more personal, like a house party or something, otherwise you will never get really close unless – unless they are not locals, like a lot of – a lot of, um…people who just arriving this country come to my event because they want networks, those kind of people they actually stay and become actual friends, um…otherwise British tend to be just being acquaintances. (#UK36, 30-39, female, senior manager).*

Barriers to making friends with the locals is discussed in Chapter 8.4.

8.4: Barriers to friend-making

The British anthropologist Kate Fox (2004, p.253) states that pubs 'are quite an important part of English culture', and represent 'a micro-society' (ibid, p.254) where drinking alcohol and pub-talk involve sociability. As discussed in Chapter 6, several participants (five) expressed an awareness of drinking culture in the UK as a popular means of socialisation; however, they also identified integrating into social circles through drinking as the most difficult/challenging aspect of work. Three participants recognised drinking alcohol or pub culture as a way to make friends with locals, but they chose not to drink for 'integration'; drinking seems especially out of favour among most of the younger participants. Eight interviewees stressed that they preferred making local friends based on personal interests, rather than purely to attain integration. Here are some examples:

A lot, I will go to listen speeches, to do SPA, etc. […] No, I don't go to pub, I don't like it, it is very noisy! (#UK 3, 20-29, female, career coach).

In terms of the relationship with the local community, in fact, I feel that the degree of my participation is quite high. But I don't volunteer for integration, that is not my intention; my intentions are: I want to learn, I want to know more people, I like to interact with people, so that is my intention (#UK 2, 30-39, female, academic researcher).

I feel it's still… because I myself like sports so I still ask people out for exercise. Because it's more… they probably sense that they drink too much wine on weekdays, if taking the initiative to invite, 'going rock climbing this holiday, weight training?' they probably are more likely to attend. Because I myself won't invite them to drink, because I don't drink, I won't ask them to drink (#UK21, male, 20-29, architect).

On the other hand, although self-employed people are generally considered to be the ones involved more in social networks in order to develop business opportunities, one unanticipated answer from a young female self-employed interviewee living in London reflected her social difficulty. She applied for a Tier 1 visa to stay to work as a business consultant after completing her education in Sussex. She said that she understood the importance of social networks and location for running a business, but still found it difficult to make local friends due to shyness.

> *Um…maybe the personality to be shy, I feel I am – I am still not really up for a lot of networking but here everything is based on networks. Because for me is still not very easy to make friends. I have been here for six months, but…I mean in London, but I still find it difficult, maybe it's part of because, er…when I do networks, I do networks for my business so if there is no er… need for meeting up for business, it is not very easy to become friends after work (#UK26, female, 20-29, self-employed business consult).*

She moved to London because she realised it was a place full of diverse events for her to attend, especially for business-related networking; however, she was not interested in other local community activities.

> *I – I don't see… I don't know is there a lot of community activities here, maybe there are some, but I didn't…sometimes they hold like some vintage markets or street food markets, I just…not very keen to this kind of activities (#UK26, female, 20-29, self-employed business consult).*

As a strategic alternative, she connected only with her preferred business cases and selected customers on the one hand, and maintained strong local ties to Taiwanese friends in London on the other. At the micro level, this is perhaps an example of the downside of ethnocentric networks, which arguably create ethnic boundaries and potentially undermine individual opportunities for social cohesion in the host country (Crowley and Hickman, 2008; Putnam, 2000; Portes and Landolt, 1996, 2000). However, friend-making is associated with class, taste, interests and social/business purposes, and depends on mutual willingness, as this chapter has discussed.

It is not surprising that language, cultural gaps, and racial boundaries are barriers to making local friends for migrants. Social discrimination against LGBTQ individuals also significantly impedes a person in developing social circles. Although several participants in this research confirmed the UK as gay-friendly and more tolerant of the LGBTQ community, social discrimination against gay men in certain places was pointed out by one gay participant. Although the UK and Taiwan both legalised same-sex marriage – in

2014 and 2019, respectively – homosexuality remains unacceptable to many families and religious organisations in Taiwan, and same-sex marriage is still forbidden in the Church of England (BBC, 2019; The Guardian, 2021). This respondent sensitively complained about how he felt unwelcome at his local church (anonymous in this citation to protect individual privacy):

> *But I – I do have some…local, very old friends from church. Yeah! Not anymore. In the past I went to er…XXX chapel to do some services, and but not anymore […] But because the congregation don't – eek! Really… see gay people or the foreigner is acceptable in the… still quite…I don't know how to say that, I don't…especially the most of the old people I know, they passed away. Because they – when I knew them, they are in their late 80s, even 90s, so er…the new congregation, they were younger but actually they were much more closed, conservative than previous so-called old older people, but I don't feel comfortable; that's the reason I don't go there anymore.*

Six migrant participants found it difficult to make friends with the local British. However, some studies report that even migrants from a European background who can speak fluent English share the same feeling. For example, Ryan (2015b, p.1673), who researched the friendship-making of highly qualified Irish migrants to Britain, states that 'the challenge that migrants may face in attempting to develop closer relations with English people has been noted elsewhere and can apply to highly qualified' (also see Ryan and Mulholland 2014; Kennedy, 2008).

Eve (2010) notes that co-ethnic gathering is seen as natural in terms of cultural proximity, and thus an examination of how migrants form personal relations has to explore aspects beyond ethnic identity. Sociologically and empirically, Eve offers a social explanation for friendship-making, arguing that people build up in- and out-group relations on the basis of mechanisms to generate interpersonal interaction in the context of producing and reproducing local culture. It cannot be denied that cultural proximity and origin similarity contribute to a higher possibility of mutual dependency and beneficial resources where there are co-ethnic ties; however, both co-ethnic and interethnic contacts often take place in a functional way to achieve personal goals and gain access to resources. This appears to be true when considering migrants' relatively disadvantageous social status in the adoptive society, and limits on personal limited time and energy in creating social ties with others in a foreign country. Therefore, bonding or bridging are both happening in parallel and are instrumental for migrant professionals meeting different social needs.

8.5: Strong local connections: key person

Anthias (2007) indicates that social networks can be valued as social capital only when resources are mobilised and accessible in practice. In this sense, this distinction of social networks and social capital means friendship is connected with – and develops into – strong and weak ties. The findings of this research show that some participants have established more social connections with locals than others. Eve (2010) points out that one key person in personal networks can play a significant role in extending direct or indirect connections to others, as echoed in Ryan's (2015) empirical evidence. Similar evidence was found in this case, with this important role played by the migrant participant's child, or a close British friend, British spouse/partner or boyfriend/girlfriend.

As Table 8.1 shows, 34 participants attended place-based community events or online meet-up groups to encounter new people, creating opportunities not only for forming new local networks, but also for developing deeper social bonds or long-term relationships, such as falling in love, living with a partner, or marriage. There is evidence, especially from six female participants, showing the possibility of friend-making and developing further intimate relations/marriage through community activities, and these are not limited to the British locals. Some examples show that migrants from different countries attract each other through shared interest social events. They said they met their current spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend from online or physical social events, and easily shared emotional feelings as immigrants living in a foreign city. One female informant said that she met her Nordic boyfriend when listening to a speech in the city where she lived. Another female informant lives with her Irish partner in London after they met on an online dating site. The 'significant other' plays an important role in supporting migrants' social networks and encouraging them to continue to stay. For example, when describing who can be seen as close friends in one's mind, a female participant said:

> *First is Taiwanese but the second one because of my boyfriend, so he is a student, for a student I think they have more opportunities and more time to have er…activity or gathering. Also he is British, so, and he is very open-minded, so he is very good at having a lot of different friends, and then he is good at inviting, introduce people to each other so then I became a friend with his friends as well, and he becomes a good friend of my friends. So it's like mixed (#UK35, 20-29, female, market manager).*

A local British person perhaps represents the most effective way to make local friends, better still if he or she is a significant other. Nine interviewees provided evidence that

they were able to broaden local friendship circles through introduction by a key person, normally their British spouse or a British friend who shared social circles with them. Another example:

> *Oh, there are some people I know through the introduction of friends of friends. Because, because, I don't know, in the UK, very often, it is friends' friends' birthday parties, such as moving a house, then going to meet people, then I will go to the birthday party every year. Then every year the birthday comes, you have to go again, I will feel that friends of friends I would like to know, there will be many parties, social occasions may have to go, yes. So this will be the main method for me to build up social circles. Yes, hmm (#UK15, 30-39, male, intermediate manager).*

One of the gay marriage samples firmly described making friends with the British as 'impossible'. When I asked how he had got to know his British husband, he explained it was through friends' introduction:

> *Because my husband is British, so I have a lot of local, so-called local friends from him, if from myself, except for the colleagues, no! It's impossible! (#UK31, 40-49, male, research technician).*

Another important agent in bonding or bridging social networks between migrants and others was found to be their children. Four parent participants said that they were able to make more acquaintances and exchange information with other parents through participating in community or school activities. Two mothers said that they had more opportunities to discuss family issues with other mothers living in the UK before children reached school age.

> *It's a lot, a lot, party, children's birthday, if there is a family activity there, they will invite [me]. Colleagues' activities will also be invited (#UK12, 30-39, male, financial professional).*

In comparison, building social relationships with other ethnic migrants in the UK may be more attainable in terms of shared identity as migrants, with common issues encountered in the host society, or familiar Asian cultural backgrounds. More than 18 participants referred the closer ties of social networks with their non-English foreign spouse or boyfriend/girlfriend (e.g., Chinese from Mainland China, German, Spanish, Irish migrants, etc). Here are three examples:

> *Once in a while, I went to Chinatown to see some Chinese paintings, my Asian friends, one from Malaysia, and the teacher from Beijing, and Hong Kong, too (#UK8, female, 30-39, interior design).*

I know a lot of BBCs [British born Chinese]. [We] would go to dinner together, and attend some classes such as art classes I am interested, and also get to know some immigrants there. Basically, I found that in the class, the British have their own group, and immigrants have their own group (#UK14, female, 30-39, financial professional).

Those close British friends are the ones who marry a Taiwanese wife or a Chinese wife. Yes! I feel that it may be the reason that the connection is stronger, and will be able to be closer, yes! So the relationship with their husbands is very good, even sometimes we go hiking together, then go to ... cook together, yes! This part, I feel the connection is stronger. Then the other part is my business needs, and then I will know some working partners or manufacturers, etc., tut! Yes! But I feel business part is not the same as ordinary friends (#UK33, female, 30-39, wedding service).

Moreover, migrant friends from other countries with different types of networks may offer a helping hand to connect business networks based on class-based friendships. One female self-employed participant attended free English language courses for immigrants upon arrival in her neighbourhood, and later made several immigrant friends through this course; these friends later circulated information on her media services when she started her business.

So such a class, I got to know people, the teacher became my friend, too. Then some are conversation classes – in conversation class, everyone has a better degree, can have friends from all countries. Spanish friends, immigrants, then these will be my local friends. Of course, networking is helpful for me, because er ... after all it is entrepreneurship, so entrepreneurship requires social networks, and then you have to deliver this message. [...] then your existing friends, these are the most important partners. Then my own workstyle is that many of my customers are introduced by friends, or customers who have already cooperated with me and are very satisfied with my service, so they reintroduce their friends to come, so this is completely networking (#UK29, 30-39, female, media design).

8.6: Summary

This chapter explores the development and degree of bonding and bridging networks among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants after they settle in the UK. The results show that most of the participants tend to make 'British friends' through the workplace, a trusty and instrumental social network, but one that comprises weak-tie relationships. Local connections based on highly skilled migrants' social class can be seen as their vital social capital in the receiving country. Outside the workplace, they mainly seek friends through location-based and online social activities. Putnam's concept of 'bonding' and 'bridging'

networks along ethnic axels generates a simplistic divide of co-ethnic and inter-ethnic ties, ignoring the complex nature of migrants' networks. Given that Britain is seen as a highly international society, bonding people 'like me' is not limited to co-ethnic people; rather, it could refer to 'like-minded' people, based on shared interests or migrant identity.

Secondly, this study argues that migrant friendship-making is function-oriented in terms of individuals' limited time and energy for developing new networks in a foreign country. The formation and composition of social networks are driven by mental or material needs. The migrants tend to selectively engage in social networks that interest them, so that the nature of the social networks joined is not compromised by a search for integration. In addition, the degree of participation in location-based Taiwanese ethnic activities seems not to be very high due to the limited number of co-ethnic home associations, and considerations of distance, budget and personal interests. Of all the community-based activities, volunteering for local charities was found to be the most effective way for several participants to establish social networks, bringing about more self-confidence and perceived well-being. This finding seems to support Putnam's (2000) arguments about the positive impact of civil engagement on social capital.

On the other hand, it may not be surprising that the barriers to establishing local social networks relate to social-cultural habitus and personal disposition. In this regard, there are no distinct gender or age differences, but gay participants perceive social discrimination in certain places, so tend to establish friendship within their own social circles. Finally, strong-tie social connections with locals are mainly confined to intimate relationships. The results identified how a key member – a British close friend/boyfriend/girlfriend or a spouse/partner, or children of school age – in migrants' post-migration life can naturally expand their friend circles and further facilitate local connections.

Chapter 9: Who goes where?

Chapters 5-8 analyse the working and living experiences of highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK. Previous migration studies have indicated that migrants have to effectively transfer their personal skills, social and cultural capital to the new destination and establish them there in order to seek a better life (Pîrvu and Axinte, 2012; Syed, 2008). This study offers insights into how differences in personal capacity for that capital influence individuals' migration experiences. It further shows how social demographic characteristics, such as gender and age, generate nuanced differences in migrants' narratives and subjective feelings. The interview questions involving work and non-work experiences allowed migrant participants to review their post-migration life in the UK, and several answers were found to overlap these two spheres; for example, work-life balance has been considered a significant factor concerning stay in the UK.

The inadequacy of traditional theories of international migration of skilled people, and empirical work into explaining the return or re-migration of highly skilled migrants has been recognised by many scholars (Pîrvu and Axinte, 2012; Harvey, 2009; Cassarino, 2004; Iredale, 2001; Gmelch, 1980). Previous studies have argued that unforeseen changes happening in the origin country during migrants' absence make them hesitant about, or ill-prepared for, return. (Dustmann and Weiss, 2007; Gmelch, 1980). However, returning to the homeland is never the only option for highly skilled migrants (Tabor et al., 2015). In terms of migration qualifications under the points-based immigration system (PBS), highly skilled migrants are more likely to stay to work or re-migrate to other countries.

This chapter seeks to ask the ultimate question of 'will you decide to remain in or to leave the UK in the future?' and identify what are the determinants relating to human, cultural and social capital in the re-migration decision-making process? How do social characteristics or individual attributes influence re-migration intentions? Exploring these questions contributes to recent increasing research around the locality of highly skilled migrants, focusing on the impact of post-migration experiences on migration decision-making, and exploring the relationship between them and the host society. Within a push-pull model, this chapter aims to identify possible factors that determinate re-migration intentions in a UK context and touches upon the present time and space in the migration process.

9.1: Key determinants of re-migration decision-making

After uncovering participants' work and lived experience through interview questions, the final part of the interview concerned the determinants of their decision to stay in or leave the UK. Participants were asked directly about their future re-migration intentions and reasons behind them. The collected answers can be grouped into four types of migration decision-making: (i) (temporary/permanent) stay (25), (ii) leave (seven), (iii) unsure (five); (iv) transnational life (three). A diverse range of answers and reasons was given, and in a few examples, more than one key reason was given for why a respondent wanted to stay. Overall, the findings identify working conditions and family members as two main factors influencing re-migration intentions, both strongly associated with human capital and social ties. When considering re-migration plans, culturally related factors, such as fascination with British culture, and lifestyle preferences, tend to be less important than economic considerations and family members (See Table 9.1).

The factors influencing participants' re-migration intentions were found to be very different from their motivation for migrating to the UK. This is partly because over half of the migrant participants originally came to the UK to study, and partly due to the influence on their decision-making of life events that happened after migration, such as marriage. Even for those who originally came for work, their re-migration plans were shaped by their experiences in the UK. The key reasons for decisions to stay or leave are discussed in the following sections.

Table 9.1: Reasons for re-migration decision-making

Decision	Reasons	Type	Counts
Remain **(25 persons)**	Job opportunity/career prospects/better working conditions	Economic	6
	The leading international working environment		2
	Work-life balance		2
	Obtaining UK permanent residence permit first (3)/citizenship (1)		4
	British/foreign spouse/partner	Family	10
	Bad relationship with family members in Taiwan		2
	Well-being of and benefits for the whole family (Taiwanese wife and child)		1
	Expanding world-view		2
	Getting used to UK life		1
	Have gained citizenship		1
	China's threat	Political	1
	Air and water quality		1
Leave **(7 persons)**	Parents in Taiwan are getting old	Family	1
	Pregnant, with (Taiwanese) husband finishing studies; needs more family support		1
	Taiwan is where respondent grew up; hoping to make contribution		1
	Taiwan is 'home,' with beautiful memories		1
	Dissatisfied with job salary and burden	Economic	1
	Tax problems and children's economic future		1
	Leaving after gaining overseas experience		1
Unsure **(5 persons)**	Brexit's impact on business	Economic	1
	Depending on business situation/retirement pension and welfare		2
	Unsure career future		1
	Brexit's impact on immigration status/rights (the interviewee holds an EU visa)	Immigration policy	1
Transnational life (3 persons)	Running international business across the country	Economic	3

Note: some participants offered multiple key reasons for remaining in the UK
(Source: the fieldwork data)

9.2: The determinant of remaining: better working conditions

The research findings support most research into highly skilled migration, which stresses the importance of economic reasons for migration decision-making. In this case, economic factors were highlighted by 14 participants – more than half of the interviewees (25) who intended to stay. This can be seen as an 'economic incentive package' offered by the UK's immigration policy and its labour market. These economic rewards include higher wage levels/more job opportunities/career prospects (six), the leading international working environment (two) and work-life balance (two), as well as the right to apply for a UK permanent residence card after working continuously for five years (four).

Among this group, three participants in their 20s who have worked in the UK for about two to three years considered staying to be a three-year or a short-term plan, needing periodic review of working and living conditions in order to consider length of stay further; however, they shared the goal of obtaining a UK permanent residence permit as their priority motivation for staying. In addition, the perception of work-life balance – fewer working hours and more leisure time – the most important element of life satisfaction/perceived well-being (See chapter 7), was mentioned by only two participants, so was seen as less important than economic opportunities.

Zaletel (2006, p.628) states that the quality of the education system and the supply-demand chain for research and development are two main 'soft' national advantages attracting highly skilled workers (discussed in Chapter 3.5.1). In this case, participants working as academic researchers emphasise that the UK has more research funding and a better research environment than Taiwan in their professional fields, enabling it to develop a leading position in the industry, and this influenced their decision to stay. The evidence from two examples:

> *London is different, it is a big society. Everybody competes with each other. If you do not have ability, what can you do? So you have to compete with yourself. Basically, there is the biggest difference to me. In the past, I grew up in K city, then studied in H city, then came to study for a PhD in London. […] it has become a big shock to me. But this won't influence my intention to stay here to work. The working environment is the key reason I would choose to work abroad as the research I want to do in Taiwan grows slowly, after all, resources abroad are much more (#UK 1, male, 30-39, bioengineering).*

By comparison, it is an international workplace in the UK, even if you don't have many foreigners around you, there are already many foreigners when compared with Taiwan, right? So your work contents can be very international in many cases, that is, their vision, there is also a stage, even if you do it at university, just like your research projects, there are Germans, there are Australians, um… or your visitors are from all over the world, from the US, from Africa, um… different. Proportionally, most of your work contents are more about international exchanges. Then I think in Taiwan, I may think that my friends rarely have such opportunities (#UK 26, female, 30-39, college project manager).

From the participants' narratives, the UK working environment offered them a better international platform to promote their talent across the world and to cooperate with more countries to achieve further progress. It enabled them to maximise personal human capital that could not have achieved the same level if they had stayed in Taiwan; therefore, the decision to stay to work enabled them to grow with their organisations. In addition, working in the UK can be a stepping-stone in career development, as they all mentioned in the interviews: '*In my career plan, the whole world is within my consideration*' *(#UK1, male, 30-39, bioengineering)*. Notably, the study found academic researchers to be the people among all the samples who reported experiencing discrimination in non-work spheres, and also who had not achieved work-life balance, due to heavy workload (see Chapter 6.3); however, such experiences and work burden seemed to have no negative impact on their strong desire to stay in the UK to work.

However, in comparing experiences with the US, the participant re-migrated from the US to work for a UK-based biotechnology company commented that:

The British er … academic innovation is good. But the British, tut! the application is too slow […] Application, that is, to directly apply the original finding, there is no way to compare this process with the United States, but even so, the United Kingdom is still good (#UK 28, male, 50-59, biotechnology).

Previous migration theories and empirical studies have highlighted how the gap in economic and market structures between the country of origin and the receiving country constitutes a great trigger for human mobility across borders within the pull-push model (Castle et al., 2014; Syed, 2008). Highly skilled migrants with greater degrees of human capital are important to the knowledge-based economy, and thus are often attracted to certain developed countries where their professional skills bring net economic benefits both to them and to the receiving country. From Taiwan to the UK, one female researcher showed her strong desire to stay to fulfil career passions despite her family members hoping she would return to them in Taiwan:

It is actually my own personal decision because this is something I am interested about and want to do. So most of my family members all hope I will go back, but my own decision is to stay here. Then I don't let them influence my decision [...] So my feeling is that even if I go back to Taiwan, I can't find anything that I have a passion to do [...]. So after that I hope to get British citizenship, then I will decide where my next destination is. But the ultimate decision actually, for me to say, will depend on where the work is, I don't mind moving to other countries again; whatever, as long as the job is what I am passionate about. This is more important to me. (#UK2, female, 30-39, social science).

Although Pîrvu and Axinte (2012) argue that migrants' decisions to leave or to return to their homeland are often taken at the level of family, regardless of different or conflicting reasons among family members, this example shows that highly skilled migrants might be keen to pursue their own career goals as opposed to meeting the parents' expectations. As discussed in Chapter 7.5, both male and female highly skilled participants showed their aspirations and passion in pursuing career development by choosing international migration, suggesting that such migration behaviour should be discussed without gender bias.

9.3: The determinant of remaining: family members

Family ties are found to be as significant as working conditions in re-migration decision-making. Family was the most important factor influencing the decision to stay for 12 participants. This is especially the case for women and gay men living with their British or European spouses/partners in the UK. One female participant who previously studied and worked in the US hoped to return to the US in the future, but currently chose to stay in the UK for her British partner. In another example, one female informant answered that: '*I have no choice. I married a British*' *(#UK36, female, 30-39, renewable energy).* These findings suggest that female respondents in a family relationship are more likely to regard themselves as relatively passive decision-makers on re-migration decisions. Unlike single migrant participants, who tend to make migration decisions in terms of their individual needs, married interviewees considered the whole family as a unit in re-migration plans.

In this study, female Taiwanese migrants were more likely than their male counterparts to find a British/foreign life partner in the UK. The results show that almost all the married female participants with British or a foreign husband/partner (e.g., Irish, Spanish or non-

British citizens) said they chose to stay in the UK. Given that most of their significant others are native English speakers, it would be more difficult for them to settle in Taiwan where English is not their native language. Also, if Taiwanese migrants' spouses are from different countries, considerations of re-migration destinations become more complex. This might be one of the reasons why there are more long-standing women migrants than men recorded in UK immigration data.

On the other hand, the female participant who is a Taiwanese trailing spouse will tend to follow her Taiwanese husband back to Taiwan, despite having developed her own career in the UK. For example, a Taiwanese couple in their 40s without children, both living and working in London over 15 years, said they would return to Taiwan soon because their parents are getting old. Another female Taiwanese participant from Edinburgh planned to return to Taiwan partly because her husband was due to finish UK higher education, and partly due to her pregnancy. Although she had become successfully self-employed in a start-up enterprise in Britain, the couple chose to leave, and the woman stressed the need for family support while pregnant. As she said:

> *Because I am pregnant, so I … er … will return to Taiwan to give birth recently. Then we, just as my husband's academic programme to be over, so we will plane to go back for the time being, because the family support actually at this stage, for us to say, is very, very important. Yes, so there is no plan [to stay here] for now (#UK29, 30-39, female, media design).*

Research conducted by González Ramos and Bosch (2013) reveals that obtaining childcare services through formal or informal networks, such as support from family members, is important for professional migrant women in managing family responsibilities. Therefore, flexible working time, childcare support systems and gender equality policies are taken into account in making re-migration decisions.

Most research into highly skilled migration often illustrates women as the trailing spouses; however, two male participants in this research cohort followed their Taiwanese wives who came to the UK to work and study. This situation did not imply that the trailing spouses had less successful careers in Taiwan; rather, they went together as a family into a new life chance as migrants, 'giving up their comfort zone', as they described it, to support their wives. As Tabor et al. (2015) indicate, migration decision-making among family members always involves negotiation processes through power relationships, gender roles and economic and social considerations.

On the other hand, one woman interviewee suffered from fertility problems (See Chapter 7.5) and two gay male participants reported that their family members in Taiwan put pressure on them before migration, so that remaining in the UK became a long-term plan. For example, one gay participant found a job and a life partner soon after moving to the UK but said sadly that his parents in Taiwan still cannot accept his gay marriage, so he had no plans to take his British husband back to visit them. As he said:

> *Because it is really a big thing and we still try to figure out a way to communicate with my parents (anonymous gay male participant A).*

Both gay informants said they were very lucky to have their British parents-in-law, who regarded them as their own sons and treated them very nicely. As the other participant said:

> *Because I married, and my husband is a British, so yeah! And then I don't contact with the so-called biological family in Taiwan anymore because I am gay, and kind of being kick-out, so for me-, my only family member now is my husband (anonymous gay male participant B).*

As discussed in Chapter 7.5, this is evidence that family plays an important part in migration decision-making; however, the relationship with family members left behind in the origin country is not always as positive or cooperative as claimed in the new economics of labour migration (NELM). Similar evidence from Asencio and Acosta's (2009) research into Puerto Rican and Latina/o migration to the United States suggests that sexuality is not the reason LGBTQ migrants left the homeland, but is a factor in their decision not to return. For those born and raised in a heterosexual family, migration can be a strategy for moving from 'repression to liberation' (Luibhéid, 2008, p.170).

9.4: Key reasons for leaving: family/place attachment and economic considerations

Although nearly half of the samples were selected from Greater London (21), the number in this area intending to leave (three) is no higher than that for other parts of England and Scotland (see Table 9.4). This phenomenon might not be surprising in terms of greater job opportunities, richer city amenities and the global position of London. For them, the intention to leave was associated with work dissatisfaction, homeland attachment and parents left behind in Taiwan, respectively. For those living in Manchester and other English cities, the intention to leave was related to lower satisfaction with life in

Manchester, and homeland attachment; also, one IT worker said working abroad was only a short-term plan to obtain overseas experiences, rather than permanent migration.

As discussed in Chapter 7.4, the participants from Scotland expressed a strong preference for Scottish culture and the beautiful landscape. Two of them, the self-employed artist and the entrepreneur, have lived a transnational life since migrating to the UK. To be more specific, the 'transnational' life herein means self-employed participants who repeatedly travel between Taiwan and the UK (Portes, 1999); in particular, bridging and connecting business ideas and resources across national borders. Another entrepreneur participant living in Manchester shared these characteristics.

Table 9.4: The result of re-migration intentions, by location, gender

Area	Re-migration intention	Male	Female
Greater London (21 interviewees)	Remain (15)	6	9
	Transnational		
	Leave (3)	2	1
	Unsure (3)		3
England (13 interviewees)	Remain (8)	4	4
	Transnational (1)		1
	Leave (3)	1	2
	Unsure (1)	1	
Scotland (6 interviewees)	Remain (2)	1	1
	Transnational (2)	1	1
	Leave (1)		1
	Unsure (1)	1	

Note: England: cities in England excluding London

(Source: the fieldwork data)

Among participants who resettled in the UK as their second or third migration destination, some intended to return to their previous receiving country: South Africa, France, and the US, respectively. Although most have settled down for five to ten years and enjoyed

working in upper-level management in the UK, the reasons for intending to re-migrate still revolve around economic considerations and family ties. For example, the clergywoman respondent migrated from Taiwan to Paris for work; after ten years, she transferred to serve the UK church under another ten-year contract. She migrated to the UK alone while her child was studying in Germany. Her intention to retire in France sets the example of international migration as a cost and benefit consideration.

> *Er…actually I think France, France is the best choice and I have tried to live there. And I really like there! Stay there and to…if I am going to retire, I will prefer to stay there. […] Yes, because [the welfare] is really well-provided in terms of the government policy. There is a lot of er…a lot to give for those who lower middle-class people. […] Yeah! You will feel very secure. But here, I think is more capitalist. Yes! and so I prefer to stay there [France] if I retire. But here now I just want to benefit er…to learn to er…to improve my English, to work in English after ten-year in France, I think I can learn something else (#UK17, female, 60+, pastor).*

Another single male participant previously migrated from Taiwan to South Africa with his parents when he was a teenager. After finishing high school in South Africa, he moved alone to the UK for higher education and completed his PhD study. In considering a future migration destination, he showed more attachment to the first destination – South Africa – where he had lived with his parents. His profile photo on social media was a faded picture with African friends. In his narrative, he presents multiple identities belonging to the places he lived; however, family members play an important role influencing migration decision-making, as he explained:

> *Um … for such a thing, I haven't had this kind of idea, I don't think too far, usually a plan about two or three years is far enough, so I don't particularly feel I want to stay here forever, but at present, I don't particularly think of not staying here. Basically … that is, just feel, yes, just look at my own thoughts at the moment, what I want … and then make a change! […] when I am here, I am an Englishman, then when I return to Taiwan, I am a Taiwanese; when I return to South Africa, I am a South African […] Um … maybe…return to South Africa! Because my sister married and lived in South Africa (#UK27, male, 30-39, aeronautical engineering).*

In addition, research into highly skilled migration among East Asian families has uncovered the phenomenon of 'migration for children's education/better future' to English-speaking countries (Watkins et al., 2017; Alipio et al., 2015; Ley and Kobayashi, 2005; Khoo and Mak, 2000; Mak, 1997). For some, Britain may not be the most appealing destination choice among English-speaking countries. One participant studied and worked in the US for more than ten years, then moved to the UK with his established

family because of an unexpected career opportunity. After living in the UK for nine years, he asserted that, '*being a Taiwanese and an American*', he had no intention of obtaining UK citizenship, due to the tax burden. As he commented:

> *Honestly, I have thought that living in the UK is pretty good, but I haven't wanted to stay here yet. Mainly because the children are Americans, they all want to return to the United States, it's related to children. […] Because that is to say…some people's purpose is for children education; some people's purpose may be to stay here, some may want to make some money back, but here is not a good place for making money back, yes, because the taxes you pay when you are young, because the taxes here are quite heavy, and then you pay your insurance. When you get old, you have insurance here. But that is, after retirement, you don't need to pay for insurance, don't pay, right? You can just go to their NHS system (#UK28, male, 50-59, biotechnology).*

Tabor et al (2015) believe that 'migration desires are both influenced by and influence the social context within which the person exists'. The responses collected at the individual level inevitably involve social and structural elements in a broader way. Individual perceptions of salary standards in different areas and work/life satisfaction are often the result of comparisons to the country of origin or the previous migration country.

9.5: Key reasons for leaving: city attractiveness, age differences

Social characteristics of the participants, such as age and marital status, also shed light on the factors that could affect re-migration decision-making. Although those planning to leave the UK, or unsure of their decision, might be aged from the 20s to the 60s, the importance of city amenities tends to be highly emphasised among participants in their 20s. Without family members close at hand, they show more interest in seeking social and leisure activities in order to experience life overseas. As a result, life and work dissatisfaction was found to directly impact re-migration decisions among younger participants, and their re-migration plan was often made at an individual level.

One female participant living in London complained about opening hours of many shops being too short, so that she could not enjoy more night life after working:

Researcher: Anything you feel uncomfortable, sick of it, so you cannot enjoy your life or work here?

Interviewee: Yeah! Because I think especially for the habits, the shops used to shut down very early, after 6 pm. Because I usually work here for 6 or 7 but after I finished my work, I can't do everything, as well as er… oh…my gym, my gym closes at 10. Yeah, because in Taiwan everything opens until 11 o'clock (#UK38, male, 20-29, self-employed business consultant).

Another young male participant agreed that London is international and magnificent; however, his salary was not good enough to afford life in such a global city. In addition, he explained that the working atmosphere in his company was not as good as he had experienced in Taiwan, so he had made up his mind to leave after obtaining a professional Architect's Certificate, deemed valuable in the global market. Living in London meant a higher cost of living, which potentially reduced the net economic return of migration. As he explained:

No, currently none, I am currently planning…because I am planning to get an architect licence certification here, I am currently planning, because the usage rate of British architect licence in the global is quite high, after getting that, I probably want to leave […] Britain is actually an important centre of global culture for many industry, like heavy industry, technology or design, London or the UK is an iconic city […] In fact, if the salary here is good, and then it can make me live a good life, I won't want to return home, but for now, it is a bit difficult (#UK21, male, 20-29, architecture).

Outside London, two young single migrants expressed their dissatisfaction with life in Manchester. The issues concerning public safety and city amenities discouraged them from continuing to stay, and they were planning to move either to other countries or to London. As one participant said:

I would love to go back to London. Because I think London has more work opportunities. More, more, more fantastic things, there are not so many here. Er … at this stage, I would like to try to get a permanent residence permit. […] Yes! so I want to achieve that, it will make a difference because... if needs a work visa, in fact, the employment chance is much less, and you have to be extraordinarily better than others. The company will choose the one who does not need a visa first and so… (#UK38, male, 20-29, IT).

Previous empirical studies have pointed out that age is a significant socio-demographic variable in migration decision-making. In general, migration intentions decrease with age, so people tend to migrate when they are young (Steiner, 2019; Ette et al., 2016; Coulter et al., 2011; Harvey, 2009). The findings show that differences in re-migration intentions by age seem to be consistent with this argument. More specifically, results of this research

provide evidence that young people tend to be unsettled, and continue to move again (Harvey, 2009; Ritchey, 1976; Sjaastad, 1962).

By contrast, among those planning to leave (seven), three participants over 40 expressed their homeland attachment and family obligations to take care of their parents in Taiwan, which became a strong driver for their return. In general, filial piety in parent-child relationships is generally emphasised more among Chinese societies and seen as reciprocal (Ho, 1994). Saxenian's (2002) empirical evidence on global networks of immigrant professionals in Silicon Valley also shows that Indians (60%) and Chinese (40%) migrants cited family networks as among of the most important factors in influencing return considerations. However, the three informants living in the UK without any British family members seemed to find making the return decision easier than did those with British/foreign spouses.

9.6: Brexit impacts on the self-employed and employed

Ten self-employed businesspeople and 30 skilled employed workers participated in this research. The findings show that most of them consider economic conditions and family members as the determinants of re-migration decision-making. Cultural attractions or social discrimination seem have no influence on re-migration intentions. These results apply to both the self-employed and employed workers. However, Brexit was found to have a nuanced degree of economic impact on individuals according to working status and in turn may generate different migration outcomes.

In fact, Brexit has significantly influenced many people politically, economically and socially. Brexit appeared as an issue for concern when participants mentioned in the pilot interview new immigration policies; it was also brought into the dialogue during the main interview process. Most of the employed informants said that they have not been influenced or would not be affected by Brexit due to having permanent working contracts. Their attitude towards Brexit and working status seemed to be more confident. However, those working as higher-level managers, or the self-employed, including business owners and young start-ups, perceived a structural change, and expressed more worries about business development. To some extent, it influenced future migration plans of self-

employed business owners, as they tend to bear more economic risks. Two examples follow:

> *Because I am a designer, the development is stopped. Because I don't know how the price will go higher or lower, so they stop investment. So my company do very high-end luxurious designs, they stop, so now most of jobs are from Dubai (UK#8, female, 30-39, interior design supervisor).*

> *There is a big impact. The number of our current investors suddenly became less. Because many investors of the start-up companies are the Europeans, team companies, and then they start to take the money back because of Brexit. It is a very big (impact) [...] very worried, and in fact, Brexit basically represents xenophobia. Of course, London is still fine, but when you are out of London, you will feel that. When you stay in such a country, I am not sure how long I can stay. If Brexit plan passes, maybe we will return in a year or two, who knows? The downside is just like what I said, everyone worries. The bright side is that you will become more active. You will seize every minute because you don't know when you will leave (#UK6, female, 30-39, film and animation producer).*

With a more balanced view of the global impact of Brexit, another business owner brought with her a family business model and capital to the UK and set up her own business after completing higher education. She decided to live a transnational life between Taiwan and the UK to achieve personal global career ambitions. If her international business can be gradually made manageable in the future, she and her husband would like to return to Taiwan. She considered Brexit as one of the global changes, and its impacts were not limited to the UK. As she stated:

> *I feel the current difficulties facing the world are almost the same! I don't feel it's just the UK! So, of course, I feel that the current UK politics is still chaotic, er ... that is, this kind of thing about whether Brexit; it is really quite chaotic, but I feel this is a tsunami that the whole world will face, not just Britain, like Taiwan, Hong Kong, mainland China, and the United States, actually all, this global change is too drastic! Not only the United Kingdom, I feel I actually don't really worry about these things because worrying is useless! Yeah! That is my own views (#UK33, female, 30-39, wedding service).*

Higher-level managers, self-employed individuals and business owners, who have to take more – or full – responsibility for their business growth and economic performance, appeared to be more sensitive to the changes incurred by Brexit; their careers and businesses are more likely to be subject to geo-economic risks. For them, the changing nature of migration means the meso- and macro-level factors from outside environments, such as national policies, economic opportunities, and employment status in the host country, are unlikely to be entirely controlled by the migrants themselves. Some scholars

observe that changes in ongoing economic circumstances tend to play a predominant role in migration direction (Snepenger et al., 1995; Williams et al., 1989).

9.7: Summary

To answer the research question, this chapter uncovers the re-migration intentions of highly skilled Taiwanese residing in the UK. After revisiting their post-migration experiences of working and living, most of the participants took working conditions and family members as the most two important factors in considering re-migration. This demonstrates how the highly skilled consider migration returns on their human capital, based on a cost-benefit calculation. In terms of Bourdieu's economic, social and cultural capital concept, it is apparent that cultural factors do not really play a significant role in influencing the decision to stay or leave. In addition, the factors for re-migration intentions are different from the motivations to move to the UK, and the direction of re-migration is not limited to a return to the homeland.

At the micro-level of analysis, this study's results are in line with human capital theory and micro-economic theories of migration which assert that individuals pursue and maximise returns on their education/training and skills. In other words, they tend to support the argument that highly skilled migration is economic migration, as evidenced by most participants choosing to stay for better working conditions and related economic rewards. Second, in this case, family-related obligations to loved ones left behind in the homeland do not significantly contribute to return intentions; instead, conflict with family members in Taiwan is a strong push factor for leaving the origin place. In this case study, family members in some examples did not have close social ties, making the participants decide to leave Taiwan and stay in the UK. This challenges the assumption of NELM's household approach that migration decisions are taken as a family strategy to reduce economic risks, with family members in co-operative or intimate relationships. In addition, those female participants in interracial marriages are more likely to stay in the UK. Married participants overall considered re-migration plans at family level, beyond individual decisions.

On the other hand, the intention to leave is strongly related to age and the degree of work/life satisfaction. In this case, migrant participants in their 20s experienced lower

degrees of work/life satisfaction than others, and this directly discouraged them from staying. Among the researched group, city amenities and consumption choices seemed to be more important to young informants than to others. Moreover, home attachment and belongingness tended to grow with age, with previous receiving countries rather than the origin place considered as migrants' second homelands. This evidences the multiplicity of migrant identities attached to place, across national borders; however, this destination choice is still related to economic considerations and family members. Finally, the study finds that Brexit tended to influence the self-employed and employed migrant participants in a different way. The self-employed and higher-level managerial workers have more concerns about economic impacts from Brexit on their business, and this added more uncertainty to consideration of re-migration.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to understand how highly skilled Taiwanese migrants consider moving to the UK, and how their work and non-work experiences post-migration influence future re-migration intentions. Against the backdrop of the destination society, it seeks to identify the determinants of the decision to stay or to leave among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK. Applying Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital, the research questions exploring migrants' experiences focused on an individual's human, cultural and social capital. A mixed-method approach was used to collect data, mainly through semi-structured interviews, together with questionnaires for investigating the participants' work conditions and social-demographic characteristics. The analysis of migrant participants' narratives is based on traditional migration theories and empirical studies into highly skilled migration. Nvivo software was employed to manage the codes and produce visual images to demonstrate key concepts of the findings.

Empirical evidence from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with highly skilled Taiwanese people working in a variety of industries in different cities, explained their re-migration decision-making after moving to the UK. Social demographic data on the researched group offers nuanced differences in their experiences and re-migration intentions. The findings support previous research related to international skilled migration, but also poses challenges for studying the mobility of the highly skilled mobility. This concluding chapter summarises the main findings from this case study, related arguments with previous research, the implication of the findings, and the contribution of this thesis to the existing research. The final part provides suggestions for future study.

10.1: Key findings and related arguments

This study firstly provides different migration patterns and motivations among Taiwanese migrants in the UK, including study, work, the trailing spouse, relationship/love and lifestyle. Most of them received higher education outside Taiwan, mainly in Western countries, and 23 originally came to study. Given that the UK is the second most popular destination for overseas students worldwide, the most significant driver for migration from Taiwan to the UK tends to be 'industry-led' (Iredale, 2001). This study supports the

contention of most migration studies that foreign students are the main source of highly skilled migrants, and includes them in its exploration of highly skilled international mobility (for example IOM, 2021; Rana, 2019; UNESCO, 2018; Verbik and Lasanowski, 2007; OECD, 1997; 2001). In terms of human capital theory, and from the participants' narratives, the factors influencing the choice of destination can be seen as consumption/investment behaviour which in turn encourages the migrants to stay to seek return from international migration.

Secondly, the main focus of this study is on the impact of Taiwanese migrants' experiences post-migration on their re-migration decision-making. Against a UK backdrop, the reasons for moving to the country and drivers for re-migration intentions present differently within a push-pull model. Overall, the majority of the participants (nearly 30) intend to stay after working in the UK. Through qualitative, in-depth interviews, they defined 'a better life chance' through migration to the UK, according to their perception of economic and non-economic elements of satisfaction. Although traditional migration theories have been widely criticised for their neglect of skilled workers, with an overemphasis on economic considerations as a cause of migration, this research supports the general assumption that economic factors dominate migration decision-making among the highly skilled. Most importantly, rather than defining economic factors as simply pecuniary interest, this thesis demonstrates multiple-level, economic-related factors that highly skilled migrants pursue, seeking to maximise the value of migration. The research analysis identifies higher wage levels and more working opportunities as the primary economically based considerations among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants. The next most important factor is obtaining a UK permanent residence permit or citizenship. These elements are categorised as an 'economic incentive package', and help to provide deeper insight into economic factors affecting migration decision-making in the UK context.

Apart from monetary incentives, evidence regarding most participants' perceptions of British work culture, and their preference for UK-style characteristics of top-down management – respect, equality and diversity – seem to echo Florida's (2002, 2005) insights into a social environment, with tolerance, diversity and inclusion culture being more attractive to 'the creative class'. However, this thesis argues that decisions on international movement for work cannot be stimulated solely by these non-economic factors; earnings are still a primary concern. Florida's argument tends to be borne out by

perceived well-being among knowledge workers after migration, as opposed to them claiming social factors as key migration drivers before they relocate. Another added-value aspect of working in the UK most highlighted was fewer working hours/better work-life balance, which differs significantly from working environments many interviewees experienced in Taiwan. These findings also reflect Ravenstein's (1885, p.181) suggestion in *The laws of migration* that most migrants expect a more profitable or 'attractive kind' of work in a new destination (see Chapter 3.4.2).

It should be borne in mind that degrees of perceived well-being and geographical/socio-cultural differences are often shaped by comparison with migrants' previous environments; therefore, a few participants who previously lived in the US, Switzerland and Austria – where average salaries are higher than in Britain – exhibit different viewpoints about economic chances from those migrating from Taiwan. However, 'work-life balance' is the factor most mentioned in work and life satisfaction by the majority of participants migrating from Taiwan; they found this balance hard to achieve in Taiwan, but only a very few had failed to realise it in the UK. In this regard, human capital theory, gauging migration's economic and non-monetary rewards (Hercog, 2008; Sjaastad, 1962), is more suitable for a general explanation. The analysis of this study demonstrates various socio-cultural rewards through migration to the UK, with examples such as traveling around Europe, enjoying British culture and people, as well as feeling free/independent, and enjoying more personal privacy. In contrast, those in their 20s who have worked for less than three years intend to leave, which relates directly to their lower satisfaction with work and life; for the over-40s – including a couple with a double income and no children, and a single mother with only one child, who have been the UK 15 and five years – return is driven by emotional attachments with the homeland.

As important as economic opportunities, family members were found to be determinant in shaping re-migration directions among participants, especially those married or with partners. From this finding, this thesis agrees that the NELM approach is useful in analysing migration decision-making based on a household unit rather than an individual rational actor (see Chapter 3.3.3). However, this is not always the case when applied to single highly skilled migrants with personal aspirations and capacities, who tend to think and move individually. In this case, the influence of family members on migration decision-making came from two different directions: parents and siblings with blood ties, and spouses/partners and children, based on affective relations. The latter are found to be

more crucial in influencing migration decision-making. In addition, this study demonstrates how intra-family conflicts can push people to leave their familial birthplaces, a factor largely neglected by NELM theory, which sees migration as a household strategy to reduce economic risks between two areas. In some examples, the main reason highly skilled people choose to stay away is tense relationships with original family members, notably gay interviewees cutting connections with parents in Taiwan. International migration has been generally recognised as the result of combining economic and non-economic reasons. This case study suggests that economic-related incentives and family members are two determinants of re-migration decisions among highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK.

10.2: Bourdieu's concept of capital

Traditional migration theories focus more on low-skilled workers and stress economic factors for migration, failing to delimit personal migration decision-making in terms of different skill levels, or to incorporate non-economic factors. Skilled migration under the UK's points-based immigration system is selective, requiring individual aspirations and abilities to make it happen. Since highly skilled migrants can be distinguished by their higher human capital, and a single discipline cannot explain the complex nature of international movement, this thesis links Bourdieu's (1986) concepts of capital to interdisciplinary knowledge and explore the experiences of highly skilled migrants. It bases this approach on the assumption that individual capacities – human, social and cultural capital – are interrelated and affect migration experiences, outcomes and decision-making (Bauder, 2017). The research analysis shows how the different capital a person holds can influence life chances and integration into the host society.

First, human capital as directly convertible into economic capital is the key for highly skilled participants to obtain access to the UK labour market. Chapters 5-6 find that such human capital comprises qualified education/skills and related work experience, especially where fresh UK graduates are found to be more favoured by local employers. The advantage of a 'legitimate' educational background increases and accumulates both human and cultural capital, creating more job opportunities for labour market integration. In contrast, without these favourable conditions, and faced with gender or ethnic discrimination in certain industries, the subjects may experience labour market exclusion.

The interviewees with Taiwan bachelor's degrees who entered host countries to work as holidaymakers exemplify this situation. They experienced overqualified employment in their early careers after arrival. This phenomenon seems not to be limited to non-EEA migrants; some empirical research into highly skilled migrants, such as Harvey's (2012), has similar findings. Moreover, although this study provides evidence that IT skills tend to be more marketable and globally recognised, the UK attracted Taiwanese migrants to several leading and featured industries, such as fashion design, art, finance and architecture, highlighted by participants.

In cultural capital aspects, Chapter 7 examines migrants' social habitus in the UK and the relationship between them and the city where they reside. Most participants decided on a home city mainly according to job opportunities, except for those living in Edinburgh, who expressed overwhelming preferences for Scottish landscape and culture. Moreover, there is no 'Taiwanese community' in the UK, due to the relatively low numbers compared to other migrant groups. The decision of residential location within a city generally took into consideration business elements, safety, transportation convenience, quality of life, and cultural preferences, rather than a co-ethnic cluster. The study finds that participants living in London tend to be more aware of ethnic boundaries and social class in their residential choices, and the position of London as a world city, to some extent, promotes their satisfaction with city life. In contrast, those from Manchester are more concerned with urban safety, which undermined their perceived well-being.

Identity and place-belongingness are diverse and in some examples fluid, as discussed in most migration research. In particular, migrant professionals felt a sense of belonging to their work circles, thereby deepening their embeddedness in the local place. Moreover, expressing place-identity is also found to be more relevant to their everyday practices, instead of creating a new identity and belongingness to the UK country; for example, 'Londoner' or 'Manchester Taiwanese'. This migrant identity attachment to the place/community instead of belonging to a bigger concept of a society/country is in line with Gidley's (2013) observations. The place-belongingness is also found to be embedded in where they once lived, including previous migration destinations – Paris and New York were mentioned – and social norms and local attitudes to migrants were often perceived based on a comparison between two countries. Overall, only a few people in academic fields felt excluded or suffered discrimination in their lived experience. They tended to more aware of these issues, but this did not affect their strong intention to stay, due to the

better research environment they established in the UK.

On the other hand, data analysis of Chapters 5-8 finds that the challenges and difficulties of adapting to work and non-work domains share something in common, and are strongly related to cultural capital. Language and cultural gaps were found to be the main barriers to labour market and local society integration, and this influences personal self-confidence, work performance, friendship-making with colleagues and the locals, and business management, with or without a UK degree. Although many participants received Western higher education, such challenges still exist because they are first-generation migrants originating from non-English backgrounds, and their jobs generally require higher-level English. Apart from the language per se, cultural gaps in the workplace and among local social networks are referred to as 'the indirect way British people speak' and 'drinking culture'; a few also mentioned British history and eating habits.

In fact, the 'polite' way British people converse, sometimes causing misunderstanding among foreigners/migrants, has been addressed in British social anthropologist Kate Fox's (2004) research. She explains that the implications behind words can be understood as a British sense of humour, and pub talk represents another way to show different relationships between local people. Overall, most participants tended to recognise that local cultural knowledge and social habitus are hard to accumulate in a short time; even those living in the UK over 20 years found the British accent sometimes difficult to understand. However, they showed strong willingness to integrate into the workplace by participating in work-related activities, comfortable with keeping their own cultural habitus in private spheres.

These research findings are generally compatible with most migration research that recognises cultural gaps as potentially influencing social integration. However, this study argues that cultural gaps function as a two-way influence on participants' preferences in British work and non-work life. On the one hand, the gaps potentially draw a boundary between them and others and undermine individual work performance and opportunities, as well as social integration and local connections. On the other hand, most highly skilled migrants enjoy ethnic and cultural differences and diversity in the UK, which became an attraction before and after migration. For example, some said 'charming' Scottish people and landscape were the most enjoyable thing about living in the UK, and some mentioned British accents, indirect ways of speaking, or even sarcasm as cultural fascination in their everyday lives. The two-way influence may explain why integrating return migration

decision-making often generates inconsistent conclusions. Under Bourdieu's conceptual framework, this thesis confirms that cultural gaps are not as determinant as economic and family reasons when considering re-migration decisions.

In the social capital aspect, migration network theory emphasises how interpersonal relationships help a would-be migrant arrive and resettle in the process of migration (De Haas et al., 2020; Dekker and Engbersen, 2014; Poros, 2011; Haug, 2008). In Chapter 5, UK universities linked to local industries played a facilitator role in giving several participants access to the local labour market before and after completing their higher education. This affiliation with the migrants' UK universities became important in developing local social capital more than personal social networks in search of job opportunities. Moreover, to cultivate local social networks after migration, friend-making mainly grew from the workplace and participation in place-based community activities. Although friendships at work tended to represent weak ties, they were perceived as the major source of British local friends and information.

The double social status of being a migrant and a highly skilled worker offers participants the opportunity to establish different kinds of friends. Outside the workplace, participants were more likely to develop local social networks based on shared interests and being like-minded in a natural way, rather than through the deliberate intention of social integration. Their social network development is often beyond ethnic boundaries, which seems to back up the argument of some researchers that the dichotomy between 'bonding' and 'bridging' ties in studying migrants' social networks makes it hard to illustrate the complex nature of friendship (Ryan, 2015b; Geys and Murdoch, 2010; Ryan et al., 2008; Leonard, 2004). In addition, the degree of joining Taiwanese home associations among participants is low partly because these organisations are located only in larger cities, such as London, Manchester and Edinburgh, and partly due to personal interests and budget considerations.

Moreover, volunteering for local UK- or Taiwanese-funded charity work is found to be popular among participants and brings about positive experiences in interacting with the locals, yielding more perceived well-being. Similar findings have been discussed around Taiwanese middle-class migration to Canada (Chiang and Stephenson, 2016). These seem to support Putnam's (2000) observations that volunteering and philanthropy generate a good amount of social capital in civil engagement to bring people close. Overall, this study finds that the most important element in social capital from personal networks

influencing social integration in the UK is a migrant's significant other: a British husband/partner and their children in the UK, who also became the key people shaping re-migration decision-making.

10.3: Social demographic differences

At the micro level, age, marital status, gender and employment status are considered important social demographic variables in migration decision-making. First, none of the participants migrated to the UK with their parents; apart from a cleric, they came to the UK in their of 20s to 40s regardless of length of stay. Participants who expressed the most uncertainty about their career future and who intended to return home are mainly among the young singles group in their 20s. That is to say, young people are more mobile than older ones. This seems to correlate with the recent Migration Observatory report (2016) that 'migrants tend to be young when they arrive, typically as young adults coming for work or study'. In addition, this study provides evidence that dissatisfaction with salary standards, city safety, amenities and consumption choices, influence migration decision-making among young participants, in both internal and international movement.

In this case, approximately 15 participants have British/foreign spouses, and women are more likely to have interracial marriages in the UK. Migration decision-making turned out to be a family-level consideration among the married cohort; conversely, single migrants tended to decide their future migration directions based on individual migration experience. Family members bonded through affective relations were considered more important than parents/siblings outside the UK in planning future re-migration directions. Migration to the UK for a better future for children seems to be less related to this case, because over half of the participants migrated as single international students and most interviewees (31) are single or in a double-income-no-children relationship. Nearly ten participants lived in other countries before migrating to the UK. Some said they would allow and support their children in choosing their own study destination outside the UK.

No significant gender differences were found in motivation to migrate the UK for study, work, family reintegration or relationships; and in some examples, men were the trailing spouses following their Taiwanese wives. After arrival, both men and women participants showed their passion for their careers, and enjoyed cultural elements in non-work spheres.

However, nuanced differences appeared in women's narratives that perceived more development of the 'self' and innate satisfaction from working abroad, especially among female entrepreneurs. This can be understood in the context of traditional social hierarchy imposing constraints on women's self-expectations and career aspirations; hence, they perceived more autonomy and independence through overcoming challenges abroad. Moreover, gay participants found themselves able to freely express their own gender identity and to develop their talents in a more tolerant UK society. Migration for them seems to be a solution to avoiding family conflicts, and they sought a new life chance in a strange place where there is seldom judgment on them. A migrant physician's family suffering infertility felt similarly accepted. This is perhaps a surprising finding, less displayed in empirical studies relating to highly skilled migrants, which often portray highly skilled workers simply as people with a strong desire to pursue economic rewards. The alienation of city life in a new destination, surrounded by foreigners and keeping a good distance from others, made these migrants feel free (Debies-Carl and Huggins, 2009, p.343, see Chapter 7.6).

In terms of employment status, this study finds that self-employed migrants are more likely to live a transnational life – regularly traveling across borders to deal with international business – and tend to put more effort and time into their work than do employed workers. Only five of the participants working as employees perceived a lower degree of work-life balance, and the reasons were found to be related to workload in specific industries: teaching, academic research and medical services. In addition, the self-employed and the employed workers were concerned about the effects of Brexit on economic opportunities in a different way. The self-employed participants, such as start-up/entrepreneurs, considered themselves more likely to be influenced by this policy change. However, Brexit influenced only one self-employed start-up in migration decision-making, as it could cause the loss of European business resources.

Table 10.3: Social demographic characteristics of participants, by person

Employment status (%)	Full-time employed (28)	70%
	Part-time employed (2)	5%
	Self-employed (10)	25%
Education (%)	PhD (8)	20%
	MA/MPhil (25)	63%
	BA (7)	18%
Marital Status (%)	Single (17)	43%
	Married (20)	50%
	Widow (1)	3%
	Separated (1)	3%
	Divorced (1)	3%
Children (%)	With children (9)	23%
	No children (31)	78%
Period of Stay (%)	0 - 2 (6)	15%
	2 -5 (15)	38%
	5 -10 (6)	15%
	10+ (13)	33%
Migratory trajectory	UK as first migration experience (27)	67%
	previous migration to other destination country for study/work/migration with parents (France, Japan, Iceland, Ireland, Mainland China, Netherlands, South Africa, Switzerland, US) (13)	33%

(Source: the fieldwork data)

10.4: The contributions of the study

This thesis contributes to the literature on skilled migration decision-making among non-EEA migrants in the UK by exploring migrants' experiences of working and living, since research in these areas is emerging and the related literature is still limited. Firstly, an increase in the number of Taiwanese people migrating to the UK and the implementation of UK points-based immigration (PBS) happened simultaneously between 2008 and 2010, and little is known about these migration patterns and experiences. In addition, research into migrants in the UK has often looked at majority groups from the EU or postcolonial areas, so Taiwanese people from a non-EEA area are relatively invisible. This thesis

makes an original contribution to a better understanding of migration from Taiwan to Britain in the 21st century in discussing the emerging phenomenon of skilled migration and PBS case studies.

Secondly, this micro-level research reviews the strengths and weaknesses of traditional migration theories and adds recent empirical studies to an interdisciplinary knowledge, while developing three analytical focuses based on Bourdieu's concept of capital. This research framework does not limit its scope to a traditional economic lens, but draws on valid theoretical and empirical arguments from conventional and empirical work for data analysis. It makes contributions to fill several research gaps revealed in recent related studies by examining migrants' perceived well-being and their local connections with the host society. The focus on experiences post-migration covers work and non-work spheres to demonstrate a relatively holistic picture for unpacking the complexity of migration decision-making.

Methodologically, the sample selection reflected the distribution of Taiwanese-origin immigrants in Britain, adding more female examples. The qualitative in-depth interview approach contributed to generating rich data narratives in comparison to a quantitative survey. The findings uncover a de-emphasis in the existing literature on gender and sexuality in skilled migration decision-making and experiences. By adopting feminist perspectives and related research into LGBTQ migration, this thesis discusses problems experienced by women and gay participants, such as family conflicts resulting from parental patriarchal control, homosexuality and infertility, and how these problems in turn became a strong push factor for not returning to Taiwan. It is evident that seeking greater gender equality and sexual freedom can be much more important than economic factors when considering re-migration. This approach also helped to reveal hidden reasons behind migration considerations, in which gay participants had a say to illustrate their own identities and feelings. This study is thus able to distinguish certain determinants of migration decision-making from what comprises national 'soft' advantages in a more explicit way.

10.5: Future research and implications of the findings

Based on the contributions made by this case study, there are recommendations for further research, as well as implications for immigration policy. Although this thesis focuses on highly skilled Taiwanese migrants in the UK, its theoretical framework can explain the interplay of various capital on the decision-making of individual highly skilled migrants in general. This thesis suggests that it will be clearer that marital status after migration plays a significant role in influencing migration directions and migration patterns among highly skilled personnel. To be more specific, establishing a new family in the host country is more likely to help migrants settle down for the long term. This life-event change is no less important than obtaining citizenship in the receiving country. Demographical investigation of family types, especially interracial marriages, can be a useful indicator for developed countries in predicting migrants' future migration intentions.

Building on traditional theories relating to individual- or household-level migration decision-making, this study suggests further research could explore more non-economic factors to strengthen the arguments made here. Human capital theory and the ability-aspiration model emphasising individuals' abilities to seek international migration is a realistic assumption, and a feasible one for conducting research; Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital covers economic, social and cultural dimensions, providing an interdisciplinary thinking tool to identify and unpack considerations around migration. Although the application of Bourdieu's (1986) 'forms of capital' in migration studies or other social fields is not new, many studies often use only one form of capital to examine particular issues, similarly to the separation of work and non-work experiences to answer a given question. In addition, given the significance of gender and sexuality on migration decision-making, it is suggested that feminist perspectives and LGBTQ migration studies be incorporated into migration theories in the analysis of migration experiences.

This study suggests that the decision-making process involves a complex cost-and-benefit calculation, and embraces individuals' various capital in experiences. In exploring migration experiences along with Bourdieu's concepts of capital, this thesis is able to identify which dimension is more determinant in migration decision-making among highly skilled migrants – economic or family factors. This thesis also argues that cultural gaps arguably tend to be a two-way driver influencing social integration on the one hand,

while attracting migrants on the other. This has its implications for immigration policy in the statement and practice of multicultural principles.

The study findings suggest that it would be of interest to further explore the relationships between migrants and the cities where they reside. Even when migrant professionals migrate to the same destination country, their experiences vary in different cities. Similar evidence may be found in different cities across countries where the social-cultural environment shares common characteristics, so that policy makers could create or improve working and living conditions preferred by highly skilled workers in order to retain or attract them. Thus, the study of migration decision-making would continue to involve economic, social and urban studies to answer how people move in response to their location.

Moreover, an investigation of the effects of Brexit on self-employed migrant business would be relevant to this thesis. Recent research into global talent management has examined the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic on identity and career potential among highly skilled migrants of Asian background working in the UK, and how it changed individuals' perceived well-being and interpersonal relationships (Chen et al., 2021). Future research could explore the Covid-19 pandemic with regard to highly skilled migrants' economic and non-economic situations, which in turn influences their decision to return or re-migrate.

Appendices

[Appendix 1]

Part I: Work in the UK

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in the UK? Was the UK your No.1 choice to migrate to?
2. What do you feel are 'British working culture'? is that similar or different to Taiwan?
3. Most of the time, do you feel comfortable working with your local co-workers? And how about their attitudes towards foreign workers?
4. What is the most difficult thing or any challenges you encounter when working in the UK?
5. What for you has been the best learning experience in the workplace?
6. What advice would you give to other Taiwanese workers arriving in the UK for the first time?

PartII: Life in the UK

7. Can you describe the city where you live?
8. What is the most difficult thing or any challenges you encounter when living in the UK?
9. What is a 'British way life' for you? Do you think that any of your attitudes and values towards Taiwan and UK society have changed?
10. Do you feel any British habits to be difficult for you to accept or to prevent you from enjoying your work or leisure?
11. Do you feel that you have achieved a work-life balance situation?
12. How do you build up social networks with local friends? What kind of community activities do you attend?

Part III: Future Plan: the decision to stay or to go

13. Do you have a long-term plan to stay here after working abroad?
14. How do you think about the UK future? Is the UK changing fast and developing, or is it 'stuck' in the past?
15. All in all, will you encourage people in Taiwan to move to live and work in the UK?

[中文版]
第一部分： 在英國工作

1. 在英國工作有哪些優點和缺點？英國是您移民的首選嗎？

2. 您覺得'英國工作文化'是什麼？和台灣有什麼相似或不同？

3. 大多數時候，您是否覺得與當地同事一起工作很自在？他們對外國同仁的態度如何
呢？

4. 在英國工作時遇到的最困難或挑戰是什麼？

5. 對你來說，什麼是工作場所上最好的學習經歷？

6. 您對首次抵達英國的其他台灣職人會有何建議？

第二部分：在英國生活

7. 你能形容一下你住的城市嗎？

8. 在英國生活中遇到的最困難或挑戰是什麼？

9. '英國生活方式' 對你來說是什麼？你認為您對台灣和英國社會的任何態度和價值觀都
在移民後發生了變化嗎？

10. 您覺得英國人的什麼生活習性難以讓你接受或使您無法充分享受工作或休閒嗎？

11. 您是否認為您已達到工作與生活的平衡狀態？

12. 你如何與當地朋友建立社交網絡？你參加什麼樣的社區活動？

第三部分: 未來計劃:去留決定

13. 你在國外工作後有長期計劃留在這裡嗎？

14. 您如何看待英國的未來？英國正在迅速發展變化，或者過去是否 '陷入困境' ？

15. 總而言之，你會鼓勵台灣人在英國生活和工作嗎？

[Appendix 2]

Personal Information Questionnaire

This research applies *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)* to protect personal information.

- Consent form will be erased after the interview takes place.
- Audio recording with permission will be erased after transcripts accuracy have been confirmed.
- Participants will be anonymised in all transcripts (e.g. UK#001). The full transcripts will only be accessible to the researcher or her supervisor.
- Any personal information that can indirectly and directly make the individual identifiable will not be used in this research.
- Personal emails and contact messages will be deleted if (s)he does not wish to take part; participants' personal contact information and transcripts data will be retained until the project is finished (expected in 2021).

本研究採用歐盟新條例: 通用數據保護法規（GDPR）來保護個人信息:
- 面談後，同意書將被刪除。
- 確認訪談紀錄抄寫正準確性後，將刪除當事人同意下的錄音。
- 參與者將在所有訪談紀錄中被匿名（例如英國＃001）。
- 完整的抄譯內容只有研究人員或其指導教授 (Simon Parker)可以看。
- 任何可以間接和直接使個人被識別的個人信息都不會用於本研究。
- 不希望參加者的個人電子郵件和聯繫信息，將被刪除;
- 參與者的個人聯繫信息和訪談抄錄資料將保留到本研究專案完成（預計在 2021 年）。

Please answer the following questions:
1. Age
☐ 20 – 29
☐ 30 – 39
☐ 40 – 49
☐ 50 – 59
☐ 60 +
☐ Prefer not to say

2. Gender
☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Other
☐ Prefer not to say

3. Marital status

☐ Single
☐ Married
☐ Divorced or widowed
☐ Prefer not to say

4. Family Reunion

Do you live with any significant family members <u>now</u>? Please choose all that apply

☐ Spouse/partner
☐ Child/Children
☐ Other family members
☐ None of above

5. Work

5-1.What is your current working status

☐ Full-time employed
☐ Part-time employed
☐ Self-employed
☐ Unemployed
☐ Retired

5-2. What industry do you work in? Please specify: (e.g. Education, Law, IT, Trade, Government, Finance, etc.)

5-3. What best describes your occupation?

☐ Higher managerial/professional/administrative (e.g. doctor/lawyer/company director/ judge/surgeon/ school head teacher)
☐ Intermediate managerial/professional/administrative (e.g. school teacher, office manager, junior doctor, bank manager, police inspector, accountant etc.)
☐ Supervisory or clerical/ junior managerial/professional/administrative e.g., police officer, clerk, nurse, etc.
☐ Other, please specify:

6. **Education**

6-1.What is the highest level of education that you have completed to date?

☐ Associate degree (a two-year post-secondary degree)
☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ Master's degree (MA, MS, MBA)
☐ Doctoral or professional degree (e.g. PhD, EdD, MD, JD/LLD)

6-2. Have you ever studied abroad? If YES, please indicate the country:

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