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Social Determinants of International Students' Mobility: Enhancing the Capabilities of PhD Students from Turkey

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Social Determinants of International Students' Mobility: Enhancing the Capabilities of PhD Students from Turkey

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University of Westminster for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As I am myself an immigrant in the UK, I have often faced the same question: Why did you come here? I have always provided two reasons for this firstly, I just wanted to start a new life from zero as the prime meridian (Longitude 0º) is in Greenwich, which is in this country. Secondly, it has been always my dream to become an academic; however, my opportunities for achieving were limited in Turkey. Nevertheless, when I decided to leave from Turkey, I was totally aware of the verb of 'göçmek' in Turkish language has more than one meaning, some of those being 'to emigrate' and 'to collapse'. Hence, there was always the possibility that leaving Turkey could have ended in collapse. I feel very lucky because I have been surrounded by wonderful people that both encouraged and helped me to start a new life and make my dream came true.

My boundless gratitude is owed to my amazing supervisors Dr. Rebecca Wang and Professor Linda Clarke, without whose support and guidance, this work would not have been possible.

Dr Rebecca Wang, previously was the lecturer for my masters degree and I am very grateful that later on she became my supervisor by reminding me 'you had told me you will do a PhD and continue as a lecturer in the University of Westminster'. I am now at the end of the PhD and partly starting the teaching, so I am truly grateful that her constant support and encouragement helped me a lot in making aspirations become reality. Since my masters degree, working with her has undoubtedly contributed a lot to both my professional and personal development. Her intelligence and dedication to academia as well as to her students makes her such a gift for any students in higher education. I am one of those lucky ones who has been guided by her wisdom. She has been my role model and always be.

As to Professor Linda Clarke, whenever I tell any academic that she is my supervisor, I have always heard the same sentence 'she is one of the best; you are so lucky'. That has been so true and I am very grateful for her exceptional academic guidance and constructive criticism during my studies. One of the biggest things I have learnt from her is about being critical as an academic, which is essential for becoming one. I can truly say that her figure as a supervisor was not limited only with my professional development, but also to my personal development. She taught me that a more just world is possible, when holding a commemoration of Bastille

Day, thus demonstrating an optimistic belief that things will get better in the future, which I have since grasped on to.

I must express my heartfelt gratitude to Professor Ibrahim Sirkeci, for his generosity, valuable advice as well as both continuous academic and emotional support during my studies.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Max Harris not only for checking my grammar and making very valuable suggestions, but also his encouragement and support during my studies.

I owe a debt of thanks to my colleagues Gustavo Espinoza, Pinar Demir, Lilit Baghdasaryan, Fatima Maatwk and Ali Can for I would not able to have survived this journey without having constant supports.

I would like to extend my special thanks to, Kanyanee Ingsa, Marco Cuvero and Olimpia Burchiellaro not only for their enormous support, for making me feel welcome in the PhD office.

Lastly, I must express my heartfelt gratitude to my family. My mum, Serpil Dilek, is the strongest woman I have ever known, who taught me to chase my dreams; without her belief in me I could not have survived this journey. To my husband Stephen Fidler, I am very grateful not only because he provided me the opportunity to study for the PhD, but also his unwavering warm support has been greatly appreciated. I really do not know what I would do without him. My brother, Deniz Dilek, is not just a brother, for he is also my best friend, having provided me unlimited support and help during the years of my academic journey. Sevilay Hisar, my second mother, thank you very much for always believing and supporting me. Lastly, my thanks go to my uncle for always supporting and being next to me and my grandmother, who I lost many years ago, but she will always be in my heart.

Thank you very much to all of you for everything!

I dedicate this work to the memory of my father, who always said that "Let people live their life as they want as long as they are happy" and taught me to see life from a different side through the lyrics of a poem by Nazim Hikmet Ran.

Living is no joke,
you must live with great seriousness

like a squirrel, for example.

I mean expecting nothing except and beyond living,

I mean living must be your whole occupation.

You must love this world so much

to be able to say "I lived"...

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

"I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, this dissertation is result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Westminster or any other institution."

Name Setenay Dilek Fidler

Signature _____

ABSTRACT

Student mobility is part of the increasing internationalisation of higher education in the 21[st]century, being used by many as a stepping-stone for a career away from the country of birth. Despite acknowledgement of its contribution to human development and to a country's economic development, this form of mobility is highly complex. For many of those involved, it represents a process of transformation underpinned by multiple factors and concluding with a decision whether or not to adopt migrant status. This research focuses on international PhD student mobility, a topic overlooked generally in the literature. The aim is to identify structural and agency factors influencing international mobility and to elicit how these impact on students' capabilities to become mobile. From a theoretical perspective, this is achieved by drawing upon Structuration Theory together with the Capability Approach and applying these in the context of PhD students from Turkey in the UK.

The findings, derived from 45 semi-structural interviews at macro and micro levels, reveal that political and socio-cultural factors are the main concerns of students with non-return plans to Turkey. Whilst political factors, particularly political freedoms and discrimination, lead to restrictions on academic and employment capabilities, socio-cultural ones, including family and societal pressure, as well as division and polarisation in Turkey, limit students' capabilities in terms of freedom of life-style choice. With agency factors, ethnicity restricts the capability of expression of identity, whilst the level of acquired capability of independence varies according to gender. These differences provide evidence that agency factors play a significant role in mobility and thus it is essential that future work should include the capabilities of individuals, as well as micro level factors. Further, it is elicited that studying abroad enhances the capability of becoming a cosmopolitan citizen and, hence, being mobile.

The conclusion drawn is that student mobility depends on whether a country can provide the opportunity for capabilities (freedoms/power) to flourish, with minimal perceived insecurity. For many participants, neither Turkey nor the UK was the country where they felt they could exploit their capabilities and they were looking for opportunities in third countries. This was owing to the lack of freedom in many aspects of life in Turkey and the strict migration policies' in UK.

The current study provides an extended framework for understanding the impact of structural and agency factors on mobility and the capabilities associated with mobility. Mobility groups identified are: for non-return students, Impo-Mobile, Voluntarily Mobile or Hyper Mobile; and for return students, Constant Immobile or Inconstant Immobile. The thesis can provide valuable pointers for further research and inform government policies on how to attract highly qualified individuals.

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INTRODUCTION

"Student mobility is never a neutral act – something that 'just happens'. Rather, it is filled with social, cultural and political meaning. Therefore, is a worthy subject of study – how they come to travel, how they travel, how often, and to what effect." (Waters and Brooks, 201, p130).

1. Introduction and Background

Today, a country's economic and social achievements rely more than ever on scientific knowledge and its application to innovative services and products (Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011). Since information and knowledge have become the center of a country's economic growth and development, this new concept is called the 'knowledge economy', which relies on intellectual capability rather than natural resources or physical materials (Powell and Snellman, 2004). Consequently, the knowledge economy has meant an increasing demand for highly qualified people. This demand has been met by either promoting the number of graduates in higher education or attracting and retaining highly qualified people from outside of the country, particularly when skill gaps cannot simply be filled by the indigenous population (Hopkins and Levy, 2012).

Whilst the proportion of doctoral graduates is relatively low in comparison with other segments of the overall population, their crucial role in the knowledge-based economy is undeniable (OECD, 2010). The reason for this is explained by Auriol (2010). Doctoral studies require a special training and also additional training is necessary for the acquisition of post-doctoral positions. Furthermore, a doctorate is the highest level of education degree, which makes doctorate holders the best-qualified people in the creation and utilisation of innovation and knowledge. The shift towards a knowledge-based economy has resulted in a rising trend in the international mobility of doctorate holders in the last decade (Millard, 2005; Auriol et al., 2013). This has been the case especially since international experience is seen as essential for an academic career (Ackers et al., 2007) and academic research became part of worldwide activity, which is based on global communication and travel (de Wende, 2015). Mobility amongst academics has resulted in them being defined as "scientific pilgrim(s)" by Mahroum, (1999, p174) and this mobility is seen as a natural and a key component of academic life (Thorn and Nielsen, 2006), even if some doctoral candidates had not originally expected to lead such a mobile existence (Gill and Guth, 2008).

Docquier and Rapoport (2009) define non-return PhD holders' as "the cream of the cream", and Bouwel and Veugelers (2012) describe them as an "elite brain drain", thereby emphasising the fact that they are the best and brightest ones amongst highly qualified mobiles. Hence, understanding their mobility has become important, prompting the need to address Dervin's (2011, p3) question: "What do we really mean by Academic Mobility?". According to Ivancheva and Gourova (2011), academic mobility can be conceptualised not only as transfers of skills, but also knowledge. They also add that the mobility of researchers should not been seen as one of the typical parts of skilled migration because it depends on a given research discipline and researchers' mobility is shaped by the attitudes and objectives of a number of actors, including, for example, scientists, knowledge-based companies, research institutions and policy makers. Similarly, Ackers (2005) stresses that the nature of academic mobility is more fluid than permanent migration, which is a "one time event". Additionally, Mahroum (1999) highlights that highly skilled people are not a homogenous group. Therefore, the drivers behind their mobility vary. In sum, there is not much known about how the mobility of academics occurs (Czaika and Toma, 2015).

In this thesis, international student mobility is investigated as a part of academic mobility. Evidence (e.g. Bhagwati, 2003; Stephan et al., 2013) suggests that the majority of academics who are working in foreign countries have previously studied abroad. Consequently, investigation of academic mobility should also involve international PhD student mobility (Czaika and Toma, 2015). International students are, for example, described in much research as an important component of highly qualified migration, in demand by governments for recruitment (Beine et al., 2013; Levatino, 2014; OECD, 2014) or seen as a "precursor of future migrations" (Tremblay, 2004, p3). In particular, amongst international students, doctoral candidates are recognised for their academic success and capabilities in relation to the creation of innovation (Bilecen 2013). Due to the recognition of the crucial role of international students and researchers in the creation of knowledge economy, those who do not return to their country of origin after graduation have been a matter of increasing concern for countries' governments, policy makers and international organizations (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; MPG, 2012; UUK, 2014). For PhD holders especially, who are seen as key components of a knowledge-based economy, this issue has become more significant (Auriol et al., 2013). Further, despite an increasing number of post-graduate holders, there is still a shortage of skilled people, which has been an ongoing matter in many countries. In Europe, for example, it is estimated that the shortage of skilled people is between 800,000 and 1,000,000 researchers (de Wende, 2015). For

that reason, in recent years there has been rigorous competition amongst countries to attract researchers and it is assumed that the battle for highly qualified people is likely to increase in future years (Meyer, 2003; Avveduto, 2012; Boeri et al., 2012). Hence, understanding the factors encouraging or discouraging their return and non-return decisions to their home countries has become important (Dayton-Johnson et al., 2009; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013).

2. Research Rationale and Significance

The thesis is focused upon the mobility of PhD students from Turkey (Sending Country) in the UK (Receiving Country) by drawing upon the Theory of Structuration of Giddens and Sen's Capability Approach. The main motives behind this are as follows;

First, despite a rising trend in international student mobility worldwide, international student mobility remains an unexplored area. Doctoral researchers in particular have been overlooked (MPG, 2012; Beine et al., 2013; Lindberg et al., 2014; Czaika and Toma, 2015). Earlier studies largely focused on the impact of globalization on the international mobility of goods, unqualified workers' and capital but showed less concern with the international mobility of highly qualified professionals (Solimano, 2008; Docquier et al., 2011). In particular, international academics, researchers and student mobility have received scant attention until recently (MPG, 2012; Beine et al., 2013; Lindberg et al., 2014; Czaika and Toma, 2015), despite, previous studies (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2003; Gribble, 2008) often indicating that studying abroad is a first step to permanent migration. The debate over whether or not international students may be termed migrants or mobiles as well as whether they represent brain drain or brain circulation has been an ongoing issue considered by policy makers, international organisations and academics (Bilecen, 2009; Avveduto, 2012; Lindberg et al., 2014). Further, regarding the limited number of prior studies (e.g. Hazen and Albert, 2006), these are mainly based on investigation of undergraduate student mobility (Knight and Madden, 2010) and only very few have focused on the motivations influencing doctoral researchers' mobility, so this is a process not very well understood (Gueno, 2015; Pasztor, 2015; Netz and Jaksztat, 2014).

Second, due to less attention being given to international student mobility, a number of aspects remain unexplored in the literature. Little is known about what international PhD

students do upon graduation (Suoglu, 2012; Lee and Kim, 2010) and about the international mobility of academics, in particular, factors enhancing and inhibiting their mobility together with their experiences in a host country (Bilecen, 2009; Kim and Locke, 2010). Gibson and Mckenzie (2009) and Harvey (2011) claim that the reasons for leaving the home country or vice-versa, returning back to the home country, are still unexplored in the literature. It is also unclear whether studying abroad stimulates the decision to remain in a country of study or what conditions lead to the non-return decision of students (Levatino, 2014). In addition, highly qualified mobility is often identified as a brain drain, exchange or gain (Ozbilgin et al., 2013), and the debate about whether or not this qualified mobility represents a brain drain/brain gain or a brain circulation remains ongoing (Avveduto, 2012). Regarding the potential risk of losing qualified people, there has been a growing concern about the mobility of higher educated graduates in different countries (Bonnard and Gired, 2014). For PhD holders, especially, who are considered key elements in the creation of a competitive knowledge economy (Auriol et al., 2013), this issue has become even more significant. Therefore, it is necessary to pay close attention to the motivational factors of international students' mobility and the consequences of mobility on students' career paths (Bonnard and Gired, 2014).

Thirdly, although international students are seen as highly beneficial to UK's institutions and economy, the drivers behind studying abroad, particularly for those who come from developing countries such as students from Turkey at doctorate level, is not completely understood (Jena & Reilly, 2013). Only a limited number of studies (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005) have investigated highly qualified mobility from Turkey. Further, these studies have mainly focused on students and professionals from Turkey in the USA (e.g. Oguzkan, 1975; Gungor and Tansel, 2003) or in Germany (e.g. Sunata, 2011; Suoglu, 2012; Aydin, 2014), rather than those in the UK (Thomson et al., 2008). Given that each country has its own migration policies and economic features, the factors affecting student mobility are highly differentiated according to destination country. Hence, a study focusing on PhD students from Turkey in the UK provides new knowledge on the topic of mobility.

Moreover, it is important to probe how academic mobility has been affected by the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) practices, which has run the Turkish Government since 2002. That is, because, according to World Press Freedom Index (2018), Turkey has moved from a partly free country to a not free country owing to a declining in freedom since 2002. On the same lines, much research, such as a study by Esen and Gumuscu (2016), has recorded that since that

year, there have been increasing anti-democratic practices by the government, claiming that the AKP government has been turning Turkey into an authoritarian regime. For instance, regarding freedom of speech, in January 2016, 1128 academics, including non-Turkish ones such as Noam Chomsky, David Harvey, Slavoj Žižek, Etienne Balibar Immanuel Wallerstein, and Judith Butler, signed a petition calling for the halting of violence against Kurdish civilians in the Eastern side of Turkey. However, the domestic academics were accused by the government of promulgating propaganda for terrorist organisations and many of them have been subject to detention on criminal charges and/or been subjected to travel bans (Baser et al., 2017).

Baser et al. (2017) have contended that the real crackdown on freedoms, particularly freedom of speech, was in response to the peace petition, when Erdogan defined terrorism as any opposing voice covering academics, journalists, authors, and MPs regardless of their allegiance, with his words: "It is not only the person who pulls the trigger, but those who made that possible who should also be defined as terrorists" (Amnesty International, May 2017). After the attempted military coup in July 2016, a greater number of academics, writers and journalists have been faced with AKP government persecution from intimidation to prosecution (Amnesty International, May 2017). The report Global Threats to Academic Freedom (2015) revealed that academics in Turkey are being threatened, especially those teaching in areas of research that the Turkish Government does not agree with. Some scholars such as Sirkeci (2016) highlight an increasing number of Turkish academics applications to funding organisations such as the Scholar Rescue Fund and adds that the current politic atmosphere is pushing academics into either leaving the country or cancelling their return plans, claiming that "it might be as big as the scientists' exodus from Nazi Germany" (Bucak, 2016). Recently, President Erdogan has also dubbed international students from Turkey as volunteer spies, stating that: "Those who were sent to the West for education come back with only the West's culture, losing their identity. Those who the country has waited for to solve its problems have come back as the West's volunteer spies" (Sanches, 2017).

According to Studyportals (2017), there has been a huge increase in the number of the visitors from Turkey to their website, which has been threefold since 15th July 2016. Notably, the highest number of visitors are currently studying for a PhD abroad or looking to do so, a figure that was 4.4 times that of the previous year just after the attempted coup in 2016. That is, a steeply increasing number of visitors are described by the International Education Portal, whereby the uncertain future of Turkey is leading students into looking for foreign education

and hence, there appears to be a brain drain in progress. However, there has not been much research conducted with a focus on the impact of the current political turbulence and the increasing crackdown on freedoms in terms of academic mobility, including regarding international student mobility.

Lastly, *previous studies have often been based on one level (micro or macro) of analysis and have overlooked the capabilities and aspirations of individuals (Wolfel, 2005; de Hass, 2014; Schevel, 2015):* A number of scholars (Arango, 2000; Castles and Miller, 2009; de Haas, 2014) have highlighted the difficulty of establishing a universal theory of mobility and hence, it has been termed as being under-theorised (de Haas, 2014). One of the reasons claimed for this is the complexity of incorporating macro and micro level theories (de Haas, 2008; de Haas, 2014). Despite the limitations of the Push-Pull model based on the neo-classic approach, such as its inability to show whether pull or push factors are more decisive and its dependence on macro level analysis (de Haas, 2008), mobility, including international student mobility, has mainly been explained through utilisation of this model (Lu et al., 2009). However one level of anlaysis cannot provide a complete explanation of mobility (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005) for this requires the investigation of both macro (structural) and micro (agency) factors (Favell et al., 2007).

In addition, some scholars such as Suoglu, (2012) and de Haas (2014), have suggested that earlier studies have failed to explain how development at both the individual (e.g. gaining a better education) and national levels (e.g. improvement in GDP) affects mobility and have overlooked the capabilities and aspirations of individuals in the mobility process. Unlike the existing assumptions of traditional mobility theories, development at the individual and national level, for example regarding education, whilst leading to increased knowledge and skills, also heightens the awareness of alternative life styles, thus increasing mobility aspirations as well as capabilities (de Haas, 2014). Mobility involves human beings (Alonso, 2011), which is why studies on mobility should include the aspirations and capabilities of individuals (Anderson and Keith, 2014; Levatino, 2014; de Haas, 2014; Schevel, 2015).

Accordingly, for the thesis, PhD students from Turkey in the UK are investigated through the application of Structuration Theory, which allows both macro and micro factors as well as the relationship between those factors to be included in one framework. Moreover, the Capability

Approach is drawn upon, so as to include the capabilities of individuals in the mobility process in this study.

The main research question addressed in this thesis is: 'How do social determinants enhance or inhibit the capabilities of students to become mobile?'.

3. Thesis Structure

The thesis consists of four parts divided into seven chapters in total. The first part includes the context of the study. Chapter 1 focuses on international student mobility through a discussion about studying abroad covering specifically the motivations for and barriers to student mobility or in other words studying abroad, as well as including the outcomes of studying abroad at both the individual and national levels. This is followed by Chapter 2, which draws upon earlier study findings, with the aim of providing understanding of the structural (macro) - political, economic, professional and socio-cultural - and agency (micro) - demographic, educational and attachment - factors influencing international students' return or non-return plans to their home countries.

Part 2 concerns the theoretical considerations for the thesis. Whilst Chapter 3 discusses Structuration Theory (ST) and its applicability to international student mobility, Chapter 4 evaluates the main aspects of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA), which is the second theoretical approach adopted for the research. Further, in order to explain why ST and CA are put together into one framework, it is shown how the two complement each other by identifying the similarities and dissimilarities.

In Part 3, the methodology applied in the thesis is explained and justified. In Chapter 5, the methodological approaches used in order to achieve this study's objectives and to address the research questions are explained and justified.

Part 4 discusses the findings of the empirical investigation. Specifically, in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, they are presented and discussed in relation to the theories adopted (Structuration Theory and the Capability Approach), whilst also being compared to those in the extant

literature. This allows for the research questions to be addressed. The thesis closes with a conclusion containing the contributions made, reflections and suggestions for future research.

PART 1 CONTEXT

Chapter 1: International Student Mobility

This chapter will provide a critical overview on academic mobility by specifically focusing on international PhD students through the evaluation of certain assumptions and the contrasting findings from previous research. It will attempt to contribute to an understanding of the main motivations of PhD students for studying abroad and the link between international student mobility and Brain Drain together with Brain Circulation. First, it will give an understanding of international mobility by exploring the main motivations and barriers behind international student mobility together with the outcomes of mobility. Following this, whether we can attribute the phenomena of international student mobility as being a sub-category of mobility or migration, will be reviewed. Finally it will evaluate the concepts of 'brain drain' and 'brain circulation' in relation to academic mobility.

1. The Mobility of International Students

Student mobility or, in other words, studying abroad is defined by The Institute of International Education (IIE) (2014, p4) as "basic training for the 21st century". At the European level, in the last ten years, policy makers have been considering international students as being a potential source for highly qualified migrants (MPG, 2012). As a result, the EU's research policy centers around the construction of a European integrated Research and Higher Education Area (Van Bouwel and Veugelers, 2013). In order to achieve a competitive and sustainable European Union Area, the European Commission (EC) initiated the Europe 2020 Strategy in 2010 (ESPON Atlas, 2013). One of the main aims of the 2020 strategy is the achievement of 'Smart Growth' or, in other words, economic development through the improvement of knowledge and innovation (EC, 2010). In order for this to succeed, a number of steps have been utilized by the EU with the aim of advancement in research training, the development of research collaboration on an international level, the improvement of technology together with knowledge connection and transfer between academia and industry (Morano-Foadi, 2005). "Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality", which also includes student and researcher mobility, is a first strategic objective of Europe 2020 Strategy (The Council of European Union, 2009, p3).

Several steps have been taken by the EC, particularly since 1987 with the aim of stimulating mobility in academia. These are the EU Erasmus and Socrates programmes (to encourage undergraduate and postgraduate student mobility) (Dincer, 2014) and Marie Sklodowska-Cruie (to encourage researcher mobility)(EC website, 2015). Utilization of the Erasmus Programme in the European Area is, for instance, defined as "a major catalyst for student and faculty interest in international mobility" (Jacobone and Moro, 2015, p310). The Bologna Declaration, especially, which started with 29 European countries in 1999 and expanded to include 47 countries by 2011, is seen as a new step in the internationalization of education. The reason for this is that, since 2002, the Bologna Declaration is not limited to EU members but also non-EU member countries (Teichler, 2009; Waters and Brooks, 2011). In subsequent years, a number of changes took place. The Socrates and Erasmus programmes were for instance, replaced by the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) in 2007 (Dincer, 2014). Currently, LLP activities have been continued under the Erasmus + programme 2014-2020 (EC website, 2015).

The international mobility of students and the researchers, which can take place through participation in existing mobility programmes (e.g. Marie Sklodowska-Cruie) or through an individual's own funding at either undergraduate or postgraduate level, has become "a key component of internationalisation strategy" (Sweeney, 2012, p15). Worldwide, the number of international students was two million in 2000, increasing from 3.6 million in 2010 to more than 4.1 million in 2013 (UNESCO, 2016), and is anticipated to escalate to 7.2 million by 2025 (Hawthorne, 2008; Docquier et al., 2011; MPG, 2012; Jena and Reilly, 2013). Worldwide, the rate of increase in student mobility is greater than the rate of increase in overall migration (King et al., 2010). The top destination countries are the US and UK, which are hosting 19% and 10% respectively of the total number of mobile students worldwide, with the highest student flows from China and India. Some countries such as Luxembourg, San Marino and Bermuda have a greater proportion of students studying abroad than those who are studying in their home country (UNESCO, 2016).

Table 1: Top Countries of Origin of Foreign Students, by Regions of the World, in 2011

North America

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
United States	62	90%
Canada	47	96%

Europe

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
Germany	132	98%
France	80	97%
Russian Federation	71	65%
Italy	63	97%
Ukraine	55	55%

Western and Central Asia

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
Turkey	83	75%
Kazakhstan	58	15%
Saudi Arabia	57	76%

Eastern Asia

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
China	723	85%
Korea	139	96%
Japan	39	95%

South-East Asia

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
Viet Nam	61	82%
Malaysia	61	80%
Indonesia	43	63%
Thailand	28	86%
Singapore	21	94%

Latin America and the Caribbean

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
Brazil	35	89%
Colombia	32	93%
Mexico	29	92%
Peru	24	80%
Venezuela	19	69%

Africa

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
Nigeria	57	73%
Morocco	56	91%
Zimbabwe	41	36%
Algeria	27	95%
Cameroon	25	91%
Tunisia	23	81%

South Asia

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
India	223	90%
Iran	61	65%
Pakistan	49	76%
Nepal	30	85%
Bangladesh	30	69%

Oceania

	Students abroad (in thousands)	% in OECD countries
Australia	13	96%
New Zealand	6	98%
Solomon Islands	5	5%

Note: Countries in red are the overall top countries of origin.
Source: OECD and UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

Source: OECD (2011)

Table 1 shows most mobile international students' country of origin. Due to a lack of a central data, together with other difficulties such as the fact that methods of calculation for international students vary according to country, published studies mostly utilize data by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2011). 2011 is therefore the most recent data year for worldwide international student flows. Accordingly, countries with a red colour represent the highest-level of outbound international students (ICEF Monitor, 2014). The table also shows that Turkey is the major sending country in its region, and also that there are greater numbers of students outbound from Turkey compared to some of the countries inside and outside of Europe (see international students' flows for e.g. France, Russian Federation, Canada, Japan and Brazil).

One of main motivations behind choosing Turkey (Sending Country) and the UK (Receiving Country) is that the UK is the second most popular destination for international students in the world. The total number of higher degrees (research and taught) of international postgraduate students in the UK was 191,140 in 2014/2015 –*UK (76810), EU (22,685) and for non-EU countries (91,645)* – (UKCISA, 2016). This implies that almost half of total students in both research and taught programmes emanate from non-EU countries. According

to the office for National Statistics, international students comprise the second highest proportion of the UK's migrants (Jena and Reilly, 2013; Sturge, 2018). On the other hand, worldwide, the number of students from Turkey studying abroad increased from 34,600 in 2001 (Eurostat, 2014) to 45,000 in 2015 (UNESCO, 2016). The main destination countries for students from Turkey are the USA, Germany, Bulgaria and UK. It is necessary to mention that low skilled and highly - qualified mobility from Turkey is different with respect to destination countries. While Western Europe is the main destination for unqualified and semi qualified migrants, qualified/ highly qualified mobiles' target country has been the USA since the 1950s. From this date, a large number of qualified people from Turkey preferred further education and training in the USA (Gokbayrak, 2009) as a result of a closer association with the US through the establishment of the so called ''Truman Doctrine'' in 1947 and the advent of NATO membership in 1952, as well as the adaptation of the US education system in Turkish Universities in the 1950s (Gokbayrak, 2009).

According to the British Council's Survey (2014) of 4,816 students in Turkey, almost 70% of students believe that Turkey's development relies on educated individuals and 95% of students would like to pursue their education abroad. Although both enrolment in higher education (from 4.25 million in 2011/2012 to 5.45 million in 2013/2014) (British Council, 2015) and the number of universities has increased (from 70 to 176 in the last decade), the quality of education (ICEF monitor, 2015) and expenditure for Research and Development (R&D) and ancillary services are still below the average for OECD countries (OECD, 2014b).

Table 2: Annual Expenditure per Student for R&D and Ancillary Services in Tertiary Education
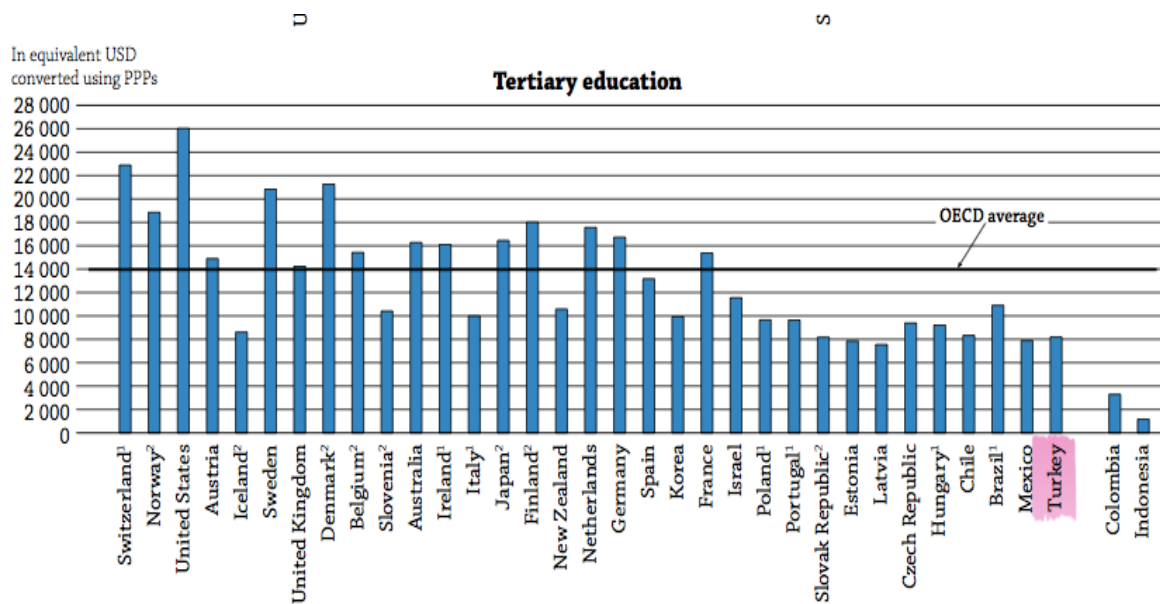
Source: OECD (2011b)

The USA is the main destination country for postgraduate students from Turkey. However, according to the British Council, this amount will show a declining trend of around 0.7 % in the coming years. By 2024 the USA will remain as the main destination country followed by the UK and Germany (ICEF monitor, 2015). A forecast by the British Council (2012) indicated that the largest numbers of international students will emanate from China, India, South Korea, Germany and Turkey by 2020. It is therefore of no surprise that Turkey has become one of the target markets for international students of late for the UK (HM Government, 2013). It is also one of the top four emerging markets for international students together with Saudi Arabia, Brazil and Vietnam (WES, 2012). Around 3,300 students from Turkey acquired their higher education in the UK in 2014/2015 (UNESCO, 2016).

1.1. The Main Motivations for International Student Mobility

Gaining an understanding of the main motivational factors behind mobility is important. The reason for this is that mobility has an impact on all of aspects of society from the economy to scientific policy (Moed and Halevi, 2014). However, existing studies have mainly examined undergraduate students' international mobility (Knight and Madden, 2010); only a limited

number of studies have focused on the motivations influencing doctoral researchers' mobility and this remains an unexplored area of international migration (Gueno, 2015; Pasztor, 2015), hence one that is not completely understood (Netz and Jaksztat, 2014). In addition, although the benefits for international students of both the UK education system and the economy are widely accepted, the motivational factors behind their acquisition of education in the UK are not properly understood, particularly for students from developing countries (Jena and Reilly, 2013). Therefore, investigation of motivational factors behind PhD students leaving Turkey to study in the UK is significant.

Motivational factors behind academic mobility have been explained by some researchers. For instance, according to Ackers (2005), they can be identified as related to employment prospects (e.g. career opportunities and wage differences), wider economic expectations (e.g. quality of life) and personal development (e.g. travelling and exploration of a different culture). Similarly, a well-known study by MORE (Mobility and Career Paths of EU Researchers) (2010) suggests that the main determinants of researchers' mobility can be classified into two groups: personal motivations (factors related to individual and family) and professional factors (career goals, research facilities and financial incentives such as remuneration). However, a number of studies indicate that the motivations behind international mobility vary according to the type of highly qualified group. For instance, Ackers (2005) suggests that academic mobility is shaped by career-related factors, in contrast to traditional economic migrants, and it cannot be seen as either voluntary or forced migration. Therefore, it would be better to think of this as a "continuum of choice" (Ackers, 2005, p6).

Along with Ackers (2005), a commonly held view is that the drivers behind academic mobility are professional, in other words career-related, rather than economic (Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011; Conchi and Michels, 2014). A number of studies similarly highlight the impact of career considerations on academic mobility, such as a study by Kyvik et al. (1999), based on the international mobility of Nordic doctoral students. They revealed that mobility is an important part of the PhD process and give three main reasons for mobility: contribution to research work (e.g. collection of data and literature), general research qualifications (e.g., seminars and connection with new research community) and personal development (e.g. language skills and self esteem). Delicado (2010) also investigated the mobility trends and motivations of Portuguese PhD seniors and students. His study revealed that the main

motivations behind Portuguese researchers' mobility are professional and scientific. Similarly, Baruffaldi and Landoni (2010) examined the effects and determinants of international mobility amongst 497 international researchers, consisting of a group of PhD students, professor/researchers with tenancy and temporary professor/researchers in Italy and Portugal. Their research revealed that the researchers' mobility was driven by professional and personal factors. In addition, Geuna (2015) suggests that researchers whose mobility is career-oriented or financially- oriented gather more professional benefits from mobility than those who are mainly motivated by family and personal determinants.

Accordingly, previous studies have often revealed that PhD students' and researchers' motivations are mainly based on professional factors. In contrast, a large number of studies (e.g. Novak et al., 2013; EC, 2014; Beerkens et al., 2015) have examined international students, particularly focusing on Erasmus undergraduate students. Although it is assumed that acquiring education abroad has a long-lasting impact on students' future career prospects and future migrations, motivational factors behind a foreign education (i.e Erasmus) were often found not to be related to a student's career (de Grip et al., 2009). In other words, although undergraduate students represent one type of academic mobility, there is a significant difference between undergraduate and PhD student/researchers' mobility motivation. For instance, Jacobone and More (2014) investigated the impact of the Erasmus programme on undergraduate students. They revealed that the main motivational factors behind studying abroad were the acquisition of personal skills (e.g. practising a foreign language and experiencing living in a foreign country) rather than academic and professional skills (e.g. acquiring professional experience and academic achievement). Similarly, King and Ruiz-Gelices (2003) found that 'foreign language improvement' and 'cultural experience' were the two main motivations behind studying abroad.

Some other studies highlight the role of networking and previous mobility experience in academic mobility. Ackers (2005) suggested that the existence of networks and personal contacts increased the tendency towards mobility as well as having an important impact on the location decision. For instance Guth and Gill (2008) investigated the main factors influencing the mobility of Polish and Bulgarian doctoral students. They revealed that, although scientific expenditure (e.g. better equipment and infrastructure) is found as the main driver in their mobility, networks also played a crucial role. Similarly, a study by Millard (2005) based on Italian academics in the UK, also underlined the important role of networks

and collaboration both in the location decision and in mobility. The impact of previous mobility experience has also been analysed by some researchers. Netz and Jaksztat (2014) investigated the international mobility plans of German doctoral candidates. Their study revealed that there is a positive correlation between previous mobility experience and mobility plans. Similarly, previous mobility experience is found to be a decisive factor in the future mobility plans of international researchers (e.g. Bouwel and Carine, 2010; de-Grip et al., 2009).

In addition, some other studies have emphasised that mobility trends and motivational factors vary according to the field of study, gender, country of origin or geographical distribution of the mobility. For instance, MORE (2010) reported that, although professional factors are indicated by researchers as the most important factors behind being mobile rather than financial and cultural factors, the study also underlined significant differences amongst researchers according to their geographical distribution. Personal factors are just as important as professional factors in the decision to be mobile made by researchers going from the USA to the EU, in contrast to those going from the EU to the USA. Similarly, the EURODOC (The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers) survey on doctoral candidates in twelve European Countries by Ates et al. (2011) revealed that international mobility motivations and patterns can vary according to the respondents' country of origin and gender. In comparison to researchers from European countries, those who come from non-European countries have lesser possibilities for mobility and for all countries male doctorate candidates are more mobile than females. In terms of field of study, while the SIU (2011) survey based on the international mobility of PhD candidates in Norwegian Universities, suggests that the PhD students' mobility in the humanities field is 71%, this rate is only 26% in the medical sciences; in contrast, Finn (2012) claims that mobility rates for science and engineering doctorates are higher than for the social-sciences.

There is only a very limited number of studies that have included international student mobility from Turkey. However one of the few studies in this area was conducted by MORE (2013), which provides some data on the mobility of international PhD students' from Turkey. The findings showed that the main drivers for mobility amongst PhD students from Turkey are career-related such as: facilities and equipment (97.6%) and career progression (95%). Additionally research funding was found to be one of the major driving factors behind their mobility, which stands at 92.5%.

1.2. Barriers to International Student Mobility

Inhibiting and facilitating factors in researchers' mobility have been reported by a considerable number of studies (e.g. MORE, 2010; Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011; MORE, 2013; NordForsk, 2014). For instance, one of the well-known studies published by the Rindicate Group (2008) on researcher mobility included eight countries (Hungary, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain and United Kingdom). It investigated the factors inhibiting academic researchers' transnational/cross border mobility and their career development. According to the study, some of the main inhibiting factors are the unavailability of funding, insufficient language proficiency, lack of satisfaction in terms of social security benefits, dissatisfaction with the quality of life, strict immigration policies and personal relationships.

A large number of studies have demonstrated that funding is a main barrier to researchers' mobility (MORE, 2010; Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011; MORE, 2013; European Commission, 2015). For instance, a recent study by Gueno (2015) focused on the mobility of researchers covered thirty countries and revealed that funding has a huge impact on becoming mobile. Similarly, research by Kulonpalo (2007), based on factors enhancing and discouraging Finnish researchers' mobility revealed that funding and family concerns are the two main factors discouraging researcher mobility. Along the same lines, Knight and Madden (2010) investigated the international mobility of Canadian doctoral students, focusing specifically on those in the social sciences and the humanities. Students' responses indicated that funding is a major mobility barrier for almost 90% of students. Furthermore, according to Rindicate (2008), funding is not only a significant barrier for currently mobile researchers but also an extremely important inhibiting factor for researchers who would like to become mobile in the future and those not currently interested in becoming mobile. In contrast, some other studies, such as a study by Kyvik et al. (1999), revealed that family obligation is one of the major inhibiting factors, which is just as important as funding source. Similarly, findings from NordForsk (2014) revealed that family and personal factors are significant obstacles to Nordic researchers' becoming mobile. In addition, MORE (2013) underlines that the role of the family in being mobile differs according to a researcher's country of origin. Family concern is higher amongst non-EU researchers than EU researchers. Similarly, a report by The European Commission (2011), based on students from 27 EU Member States, supports MORE's (2013) findings, highlighting the varying impact of family commitment according

to country of origin. For instance, family commitment was one of the main reasons (41%) for students from Turkey not becoming mobile, whereas this rate was only 7% for Swedish students.

Some other studies (e.g. Rindicate, 2008, Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011) also demonstrate that job security and stability are the major concerns amongst researchers. For instance, a study by Bonnard and Gired (2014) claims that many PhD students experience difficulty finding a constant position in the labour market abroad, especially as this issue is more widespread in academia. On the other hand, a number of studies have also indicated that being away from the home country gives rise to a fear amongst researchers of losing job opportunities in the home country (e.g. Avveduto, 2004; Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011). Similarly, NordForsk's (2014) findings in relation to barriers to researcher mobility indicated that Nordic researchers lack faith in the security of post mobility future employment opportunities and recognition of their mobility achievements by their home country institutions after return. In addition, MORE (2013) highlights the impact of geographical distribution on researchers' concerns. Job security has a relatively high priority for EU researchers who are at present mobile abroad as well as for non-EU researchers mobile abroad in non-EU countries compared to non-EU researchers mobile in the EU in previous times. Additionally, although some studies, for instance Gueno (2015), found that compared to other factors (e.g. funding, personal factors), immigration regulation is the least important factor influencing mobility, some other studies (e.g. Rindicate, 2008; MORE, 2013) have shown that immigration rules/ visa issues for researchers who come from Non- European countries can be another important inhibiting factor. For instance, MORE (2013) examined researcher mobility from 45 countries and found that acquiring a visa and work permit is one of the largest barriers to the mobility of PhD students from Turkey compared to other countries, followed by language and searching for accommodation.

Based on previous studies' findings, the other main factors inhibiting researcher mobility relate to the personal characteristics of researchers, including: age, gender, marital status (Gueno, 2015). For instance, mobility rates are higher amongst male PhD students than female students (e.g. Moguérou, 2004; Bouwel and Carine, 2010; SIU, 2011), being married/having partner reduces the likelihood of mobility (e.g. Ackers et al., 2007; More, 2010; Netz and Jacksztat, 2014). Additionally, shortage of time and information (e.g. Avveduto, 2001; Knight and Madden, 2010; Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011), language

proficiency (e.g. Avveduto, 2001; AUCC 2007; Rindicate, 2008; MORE, 2013), inflexible programme of study and lack of awareness of home university (e.g. AUCC 2007; Knight and Madden, 2010; Sweeney, 2012, IIE, 2014) have been shown to be the main barriers to becoming mobile.

2. Mobility or Migration?

One of the main debates is whether international students are considered as migrants or mobiles (Bilecen, 2009). According to King (2002, p90), there is a "never-straightforward boundary between migration and mobility". Similarly, Murphy-Lejeune (2002, p2) suggests that: "Migration and mobility are envisaged as two facets of the same phenomenon", implying that mobility and migration are two sides of the same coin. In other words, the drivers behind international migration are usually seen as volatility and instability in either politic or economic features of the home country (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002). However, as a result of globalisation, both the patterns and forms of migration have changed. Most notably, some of the major changes in international migration from the past until today can be categorized as the feminization of migration (Alonso, 2011; Hoffman and Cynthia, 2013), highly skilled migration (Salt, 1997; Li, 2008; Beine et al., 2013) and international student migration (King, 2002; Murphy-Lejeune, 2002; Butcher, 2004). Student mobility is seen either, as a part of acquiring opportunities for the purpose of career development, which means international students represent mobiles, or as a tool which makes becoming a permanent resident easier, so affirming that international students are migrants. In either case, student mobility has become a natural part of academic life (Conradson and Latham, 2005).

The difference between migration and mobility for international student flows is mentioned in some studies. According to the United Nations (UN) (1998, p10) definition, the long-term migrant is: "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." On this point, the majority of students, particularly bachelor degree and postgraduate students, can be defined as long-term migrants. Along the same lines, earlier studies have tended to see student flows as a type of migration, considering the distance and duration of the programme, in which students on bachelor, master and doctorate programmes are compared to those on exchange programmes (e.g. Erasamus) and

on short term language courses, who are not seen as migrants (Bilecen, 2009). For instance, according to King et al. (2010) mobility refers to a short-term movement, which is conducted with the likelihood of return to the home country (e.g. Erasmus programme). On the other hand, 3/4 years studying abroad can be seen as a longer-term movement, which may be a more appropriate description of international migration. However, like short-term moves, the probability of returning home can also be high in longer- term moves. Similarly, according to some studies, such as Tremblay (2004) and King et al. (2010), student mobility should be considered as international migration, particularly as a precursor for future highly skilled migration. In contrast, Findlay et al. (2006) explain that they adopted the term 'mobility' instead of migration because their sample consisted of the students who study abroad for a short-time period (between 3 and 12 months) as a part of the Erasmus and Soctorates programmes, and because students define themselves not as migrants but mobiles by describing studying abroad as 'having a mobility experience'. According to Bilecen (2009), if studying abroad occurs for a short time, it cannot be seen as a form of migration. International students are immigrants if their education requires staying in the country of study for a long period of time and this education increases their employment opportunities in a host country post graduation. Nevertheless, she also adds that international students are not a homogeneous group and cannot therefore be categorized either as permanent/temporary migrants or migrants at all. Consequently, some researchers opt for the term 'migration' (e.g. King, 2002; Butcher, 2004; Beine et al., 2013), whilst others prefer to use 'mobility' (e.g. Findlay et al., 2006; King et al., 2010) for international student flows.

As this study is based on PhD students from Turkey, it would not be incorrect to call these students long-term migrants. However, this study will use the term 'mobility' instead of migration because, in the first place, mobility represents a process, which involves various elements as well as implying continuousness, rather than being seen as a "one way ticket" (Murphy-Lejeune, 2002, p2). Castle (2008) considers that the term migration should be discarded from the literature because the movement of people in the 21st century differs from the 19th /20th century as a consequence of advancements in technology and transportation which render movement fluid. Accordingly, older traditional views on migration are no longer relevant to explaining movements of people, even if this occurs in the form of studying, marriage or only for lifestyle purposes. Studying abroad does not cease with the student remaining in one geographical location, but instead consists of frequent movements that cannot consequently be fully explained purely in terms of migration. Additionally, a number

of studies (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Hazen and Albert, 2006) have found that international students intentions regarding whether to return or not to their home countries changes over time. The sample, for this study consists of PhD students and the aim is to reveal their plans regarding to return or not to Turkey after graduation. For this reason, it is difficult to say which of the students who expressed a willingness not to return to Turkey will actually follow this through and remain in the host country. Furthermore, it is important to remember the complexity of people's movement, which differs according to individuals' own motivations and is influenced by a numerous institutions and agencies (Salt, 2005).

Secondly, this study aims to capture processes rather than outcomes. International students' distinct migration processes, in other words students switching experience from student visa to becoming residents, as well as how this process occurs, has received very little attention. There has been particularly scarce qualitative examination in this area (Robertson, 2011). According to UNESCO (2001) "Academic mobility implies a period of study, teaching and/or research in a country other than a student's or academic staff member's country of residence ('the home country'). This period is of limited duration, and it is envisaged that the student or staff member return to his or her home country upon completion of the designated period. The term 'academic mobility' is not intended to cover migration from one country to another". Along the same lines as the academic mobility definition of UNESCO, PhD students from Turkey correspond to 'mobiles' rather than 'migrants'. This study is about the mobility of PhD students from Turkey, seen as a stock of future highly qualified workers whose careers are pursued either in Turkey, in the UK or a third country, focusing in particular on the period of study in the UK and investigating their mobility plans.

3. The Outcomes of International Student Mobility

3.1. The Individual Level

A commonly held opinion is that the mobility of students, researchers and staff leads to "excellence in research; it is important for personal development and employability, it fosters … a capacity to deal with other cultures "(BFUG, 2009, p4). According to Sweeney (2012), students' mobility is advantageous not only to students but also to institutions as well as to the whole country. Several studies indicate that studying abroad impacts positively on the

career progression of students. For instance, MORE (2013) found that 80% of researchers agreed that mobility enhanced their research skills. Furthermore, PhD students from Turkey indicated that a major positive outcome of international mobility is overall career progression. On the other hand, a study such as Rindicate (2008) has revealed that the majority of respondents prefer longer-term mobility (e.g. years as opposed to months). The reason behind this is that, although longer-term mobility brings a number of difficulties, the research benefits are greater in comparison to short-term mobility.

Previous studies have frequently suggested that the main advantages of studying abroad include, for instance, improvement in foreign language proficiency (Mellors-Bourne et al., 2013; Jacobone and Moro, 2015; King and Ruiz-Gelices, 2003) and self-efficacy/self-reliance (Milstein, 2005; Gu, 2012; Bridger, 2015). According to Findlay et al. (2006), studying abroad not only improves students' human capital (e.g. foreign work experience, improvement in foreign language) but also enhances social and cultural capital, helping students to acquire a range of skills such as soft skills (e.g. leadership)(e.g. Gu, 2012; de Moor and Henderikx, 2013), inter-cultural skills (e.g. Dwyer and Peters, 2004; Crosman and Clarke, 2010; Clarke et al., 2009; Jacobone and More, 2015), a cosmopolitian outlook (e.g. Rizvi, 2005; Singh et al., 2007; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2013; Bilecen, 2013), enhancement in expectations (e.g. increased socio-economic and prospective transnational mobility) (e.g. King and Ruiz-Gelices, 2003) and establishment of a transnational/International network/ collaboration (e.g. MORE, 2010; Water and Brooks, 2011; Ivancheva and Gourova , 2011).

The impact of mobility on scientific productivity and academic achievement has frequently been considered in previous studies (Cruz-Castro and Sanz -Menéndez, 2009). Mobility is defined "as a tool for creating contact surfaces" (Melin and Janson, 2006, p113). International experience allows scientists to access both wider and more open networks that also impacts on their publication productivity (Cruz-Castro and Sanz -Menéndez, 2009). For instance, research by Jonkers and Tijssen (2008), on the impact of mobility on research collaboration and scientific productivity amongst 76 Chinese researchers who returned to China after gathering international experiences in several host countries, demonstrated that international experience has a positive impact, leading to an increasing number of international collaborative networks and international co-publications of researchers. Melin's (2004) findings corroborate Jonkers and Tijssen (2008), who reported that a postdoc abroad often enhanced both research collaboration and co-publication. Similarly, Van Bouwel and

Veugelers (2013) found that mobility is favourable for researchers, enhancing a number of facets, namely for instance scientific productivity, career development and recognition by peers. A study by NordForsk (2014) drew similar conclusions, that researchers staying abroad for a short time become more productive not only as a result of having more time to research but also because they become better at planning their time and focusing on research. A considerable number of studies corroborate this view, that mobility facilitates academic performance and productivity compared to the non-mobility of academics (e.g. De Flippo et al., 2009; Reiner and Meyer, 2012; Franzoni et al., 2013).

In addition, Baruffaldi and Landoni (2010) underline that keeping links with a home country is as important as international knowledge networks in the creation of better scientific productivity in a host country. Controversially, a study by Cruz-Castro and Sanz-Menéndez (2009) investigated the relationship between scientific performance and rewards amongst 1,583 scientists in Spain. Although it is assumed that academic mobility enhances career prospects in some countries such as, in American universities, a positive relationship between mobility and career prospects amongst Spanish scientists could not be found. They revealed that the absence of mobility is a strong indicator of timing rewards, in the form of gathering permanent positions. Similarly, Fernandez-Zubieta et al. (2013), investigating the relationship between 171 UK researchers' mobility and academic performance, found no evidence that mobility increased researchers' productivity.

Some other studies have investigated whether or not mobility impacts on researchers' career prospects and job opportunities. For instance Ivancheva and Gourova (2011) conducted a survey within the FP7 project E*CARE in 8 European countries of 869 researchers and 313 stakeholders in order to reveal the challenges to the career and mobility of researchers. 40% of participants believed that mobility is one of the main factors enhancing their career prospects. Similarly, according to a study by Avveduto (2004), almost 55% of PhD students believe that studying abroad provides wider job opportunities both in the home country as well as behind national boundaries. However, although both these studies show that researchers believe that mobility may generally enhance their career prospects, they also have some concerns in relation to recognition and job opportunity in their country of origin. Ivancheva and Gourova (2011) revealed that the majority of students have doubts about whether international experience increases their recognition after returning to a home country. Similarly, Avveduto's (2004) study found that around 34% of students indicated their fears

that being in a country far from their home country for a long-term period may result in losing job opportunities at home. In addition, Bonnard and Gired (2014) underline a link between mobility and return intentions in their investigation of international mobility and the construction of scientific careers for French PhD graduates students. Their study showed that one of the major reasons for non-return decisions is being far away from French networks and recruitment practices, which leads to difficulty in gathering a steady position in France. They concluded that mobility might have an adverse impact on the decision to return.

Some other studies also attempted to answer whether or not studying abroad opens doors to an international career. For instance, King and Ruiz-Gelices (2003) examined the subsequent migration behaviour of University of Sussex graduate students. They found that students who had one-year's education abroad during the university study period are almost twice as likely to migrate abroad and four times as likely to work abroad, compared to non-mobile students. On the other hand, although studying abroad is beneficial in terms of providing a number of advantages such as the acquisition of intercultural skills and a foreign language, which are more likely to contribute to enhanced career prospects of students, little is known about the employability outcomes of international students after graduation (King et al., 2010; Hopkins and Levy, 2012). Sweeney et al. (2012) suggest that future studies must focus on revealing the link between mobility and employability opportunities.

3.2. The National Level

The increasing mobility of students and academics can be seen as one of the features of internationalisation in education (Waters and Brooks, 2011; Bhandari and Blumenthal, 2012; Barth, 2014). Today, government policies of developing, and also the most developed countries' as well as universities encourage domestic students to study abroad. A period of studying abroad has, for instance, become a necessary condition for many Harvard University degrees (Brooks and Waters, 2011). However, the mobility of international students, from particularly developing countries may result in the non-return of students or, in other words, skill loss (Tremblay, 2004; Gungor and Tansel, 2005, OECD and The World Bank, 2007). A number of studies have therefore sought to discover whether or not international student mobility associated with studying abroad results in students becoming highly skilled migrant

workers or, in other words, whether or not studying abroad increases the non-return tendencies of students to their home countries.

According to the OECD (2010), it is expected that between 15% and 35 % of international students will remain permanently in the country of study. Evidence from the findings of previous studies (e.g. Dreher and Pautvaara, 2005; Teichler, 2007; Rosenzweig, 2008; Roberstson, 2011) suggest that many students prefer remaining in the country of their study or moving into a third country instead of returning back to the home country. For instance, Bouwel and Carine (2010) investigated migration patterns of international PhD holders who gained their PhD in the USA. Their study's findings showed that only (15%) returned to their country of origin after completing their PhD degree in the USA. However, the remaining 50% of international students stayed in the USA and 35% moved into a third country. Similarly, the study by Barutffaldi and Landoni (2010) of foreign researchers in Italian and Portuguese universities found that, although researchers' mobility is often temporary, during the period of stay in a host country they outlined plans for their future movements. Their findings indicated that a large number of researchers prefer to go to another European country or the USA instead of returning to their home countries.

Gribble (2008) underlines the changing patterns of international student mobility, claiming that, until a few decades ago, the majority of international students were funded by aid programmes and therefore, were expected to return home after graduation. However today, many international students are self-funded, which makes their return or non-return decision more of a choice than an obligation. Evidence suggests that many of them prefer to settle abroad. Furthermore, Gribble (2008) also adds that for many countries, such as Australia, international students represent a future highly skilled workforce in the light of an ageing population and skill shortages in specific areas. This is highlighted by Robertson (2011), who points to the existence of a link between studying abroad and skilled migration with the example of Australia. He indicates that this link emerged as a result of favorable policies towards international students by the Australian Government after 1998, allowing them to switch their status from student to migrant by gaining permanent residency in Australia.

The question of whether or not studying abroad increases the probability of non-return students has become prominent, as has recognition of the increasing trend in highly qualified mobility. For example, while worldwide the migration rate is 2.63% for poorly qualified

people, this rate is 6.6% amongst highly qualified people (Docquier et al., 2011) and a number of authors have considered whether the potential benefits of mobility outweigh its possible negative consequences. According to Avveduto (2012), there are both pros and cons of mobility. Studying or working in a foreign environment brings a number of benefits at the individual and institutional as well as the country levels. However, it also includes the risk that the temporary nature of mobility may become permanent. Baruffaldi and Landoni (2010) emphasise that the mobility of researchers is entirely confirmed as a natural and desirable phenomenon, which provides benefits for both sending and receiving countries, but controversially, they also underline the negative consequences of mobility for a sending country, resulting in the loss of qualified individuals, known as the 'Brain Drain'. Along the same lines, Byram and Dervin (2008) also suggest that mobility includes positive and negative aspects. The question arising therefore is whether a potential Brain Drain for the sending country also represents a corresponding potential Brain Gain for the receiving country.

Mobility of highly–qualified people has generally been discussed in the form of a brain drain for a long period of time. The brain drain term was coined by The British Royal Society in the 1950s and 1960s in order to describe the movement of scientists from post-war Europe to the US (Cervantes and Guellec, 2002; Davenport, 2004; Alam and Hoque, 2010). It is defined in the New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics as, "migration of engineers, physicians, scientists and other very highly skilled professionals with university training" (Docquier and Rapport, 2006). In order to highlight the harmful effects and benefits of skilled mobility, this has been defined as "Brain Drain" for a sending country (adverse impact on country's growth) and "Brain Gain" for a receiving country (positive impact stimulating a country's growth) (Balaz and Williams, 2014). Gibson and Mckenzie (2011) explain the usage of the term "drain" by using an idea originally expressed by Harry Johnson (1965, p299), that, "drain conveys a strong implication of serious loss". Nevertheless, some other studies suggest that highly qualified people's mobility does not every time lead to a 'brain drain' for a sending country. For instance, Lowell (2003) underlines two conditions needed for the presence of brain drain, including a major loss of the highly qualified population and that this results in harmful economic effects for a given country. Similarly, Christopoulos et al. (2014) summarizes the twofold harmful effects of brain drain for the origin country, namely the loss of human and financial capital and the concomitant reduction in economic growth, occurring in the absence of these highly qualified people.

Brain drain not only occurs when highly qualified people permanently settle in a foreign country but also when students do not return to their country of origin (Torres and Wittchen, 2010). With regard to non-return students, Pedersen (1990, p230), asks the question "Is there a brain drain?" The potential link between studying abroad and brain drain is also described by Dayton-Johnson et al. (2009, p161): "Migration is increasingly viewed as a tool for social mobility, with potential implications for education becoming a vehicle for migration and brain drain". Does this means with regard to non-return students that studying abroad can be seen as a journey from student status to highly qualified migrant worker status? This is described in several studies, where it is seen as "a stepping-stone to permanent residency" (Gribble, 2008, p25) or as "the first step toward settling in a foreign country" (Gungor and Tansel, 2003, p15). The mobility of international students, particularly from least developed and/or developing countries to developed countries therefore results in non-return students, widely known in the literature as a 'Brain Drain' for the sending country (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; OECD and The World Bank, 2007).

During the 1960s, research in this field focused only on the positive outcomes of the brain drain for developing countries. This positive view underwent a significant change in the 1970s and 1980s, a period called the "pessimistic period" by Docquier and Rapoport (2011) as it only focused on the adverse consequences of the brain drain (Solimano, 2008; Docquier and Rapoport, 2011; Suoglu, 2012; Milio et al., 2012). Since the 1970s, highly qualified people's mobility has been viewed as a one way flow which takes place mainly from least developed and/or developing countries to developed countries, thereby creating winners and losers (Gaillard and Gaillard, 1997). In other words, the mobility of qualified people from less developed countries to developed countries results in permanent loss for the sending country (Solimano, 2008). The reasons why highly qualified people cause a significant loss for source countries are explained by Docquier and Rapaport (2009), who suggest that, with regard to these highly qualified individuals, migration has often taken place from developing countries where highly qualified people are a scarce source and for that reason the movement has been seen as a significant human capital loss for the sending countries. Similarly, studies have focused on the causes and results of this issue and necessary solutions for policy makers, particularly from the economic rather than sociological or educational perspectives (Blachford and Zhang, 2014).

The discussion has been continued by several researchers and policy makers about whether or not the term 'brain drain' is appropriate to define current highly skilled mobility. According to Favell et al. (2007), the question of whether or not highly qualified people's mobility represents brain drain or brain circulation has become the main area in research on mobility for this group. Carr et al. (2005) argue that focusing only on brain drain is far from providing a complete picture. Similarly, Favell et al. (2007, p19) claim that the brain drain hypothesis " ignores or, at best, understates the frequent back and forth movement of migrants, ideas, knowledge, information, and skill sets that is now a routine part of contemporary transnationalism." Balaz and Williams (2014) also add that to see a highly qualified flow as a one way migration in the frame of brain drain versus brain gain does not allow us to consider other possible forms of migration such as 'brain training' (involving student mobility for non-return students), 'brain circulation' (recognition of return migration and circular movements), 'brain exchange' (a two way relatively balanced flow between more developed countries that does not bring either net gain or loss) and 'brain waste' (deskilling/ ending up less skilled jobs in receiving country).

Consequently, since the end of 1990s, the debate concerning highly qualified mobility has shifted from the brain drain/ brain gain debate to brain circulation (Saxenian, 2005; Favell et al., 2007; Zhang and Duncan, 2014). The reason for this is first that there is an increasing trend towards the temporary rather than permanent movement of highly qualified individuals (Gaillard and Gaillard, 1997). Secondly, sending countries might gather benefits through for instance remittances, transfer of technology, corporation, formal and informal ties (Gribble, 2008). Similarly, Meyer (2003) highlights that the changing patterns of highly qualified people migration have led to the loss of brain drain's characteristics. He defines the new form of migration as fluid, as including a number of occasional returns rather than permanent settlement, so that it is a multi-directional global movement that has an impact on both developed and developing countries.

The main driver of change in professionals' migration status from permanent to temporary is seen as a result of transnational networks, which act to "to perpetuate the intermittent and short-term patterns of movement typifying contemporary skilled workers" (Vertovec, 2002, p2). However, this dynamic has not been so evident in China and many other developing countries (Blachford and Zhang, 2014). Nevertheless, since the 2000s, brain circulation has been reinterpreted to include not only the physical return of highly qualified migrants but also

the return of knowledge, technology, resources and skills, using transnational social networks even without any physical temporary or permanent return (Suoglu, 2012; Blachford and Zhang, 2014). Therefore the phenomenon of brain circulation has since the 2000s occurred in two ways, either an emigrant returning to her/his country, which means the direct participation of brain circulation, or continuing to live in a foreign country by engaging in transnational actions with her/his home country (Zhang and Duncan, 2014).

According to Ackers (2005), the brain circulation phenomenon allows us to see the possible consequences of highly qualified mobility and its influence on both persons and regions. Unlike the 'brain drain' and 'brain gain' hypothesises the 'brain circulation' hypothesis includes a two-way flow of skill, knowledge, technology and capital, which is beneficial for both sending and receiving countries (Saxenian, 2005). It also conceptualizes migration as a continuing process instead of one-way moves. More notably, as a consequence of considering moves as knowledge transfer, it can take in a number of different forms, helping "to distinguish the issue of knowledge transfer from the physical presence of the individual migrant" (Ackers, 2005, p2). The development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has been seen as a major driving force behind brain circulation (Teferra, 2004), leading to the non-requirement of the physical presence of migrants (Blachford and Zhang, 2014). Although highly skilled migrants continue to live in a foreign country, they can still find ways to contribute to their home country's scientific and economic development through formal, organised, networking (Meyer, et al., 1997; Zhang and Duncan, 2014). In addition, in contrast to the brain drain and brain gain hypothesis, which is only based on the outcomes of highly skilled migration from the sending or receiving country perspective, brain circulation focuses on the process by which individuals, ideas and knowledge are circulated within a global context (Blachford and Zhang, 2014). Ip (2003) suggests that migration is no longer a single direction or linear. Circular movements to the home country and to a third country, as well as multiple residences, are becoming increasingly frequent.

Today, increasing numbers of studies agree that neither low skilled nor high skilled migration terminates with a permanent loss of individuals for the sending countries (Zhang and Duncan, 2014). There is now a substantial amount of evidence that highly qualified mobiles can act as a bridge between a country of origin and a host country through transnational actions in the form of the transfer of skills, knowledge and idea (Tejada et al., 2013). Some even become

'transnational' as they work and have residence and citizenship in more than one country (Saxeian, 2005). Vertovec (2002) highlights how transnational networks allow qualified individuals to work and live in an international area, giving the following example. An Indian IT worker can work in the USA at one time or at another time in several countries (e.g. Singapore, India, and Australia). Similarly, a study by Saxeian (2005) describes how Indian and Chinese highly qualified workers represent a significant proportion of the highly qualified workers in Silicon Valley, a well-known technology centre in the world. These highly qualified workers have contributed to the development of their home countries, resulting in strong professional and economic ties through the complex linkages between host, home and other countries. Therefore, the mobility of highly qualified people is no longer seen as a permanent loss or, in other words, a brain drain. As for other highly qualified mobile groups, the view concerning the mobility of international students and academics has shifted from brain drain to brain circulation.

An increasing number of studies (e.g. Meyer, 2003; Jon, 2009; Barutffaldi and Landoni, 2010) also claim that, in contrast to the past, the current mobility of academics is temporary and most scientists have built a web of relationships, shaped by their own careers as well as that of colleagues and students. Even if they return to the country of their origin or move elsewhere, they maintain these links with host institutions (Ackers, 2005). For that reason, the mobility of these groups no longer ends with permanent loss. Consequently, some studies (e.g. Saxeian, 2005; Favell et al., 2007; Appelt et al., 2015) stress that to look at academic mobility as a part of the brain drain/brain gain debate does not allow us to capture the dynamics of academic mobility. Brain circulation is a more appropriate term to define the current situation of both highly qualified migration and academic mobility. For instance, Conchi and Michels (2014), who investigated German scientists' mobility, concluded that, although it is possible to see some level brain drain in Germany, the amount of brain circulation is greater. Similarly, a recent survey by Appelt et al. (2015) examined research scientists' mobility patterns between 1996 and 2011 for 252 countries by using the World Development Indicators Database. They also reached similar conclusions that academic mobility reflects brain circulation rather than brain drain. Along the same lines, with regard to international student mobility, Brooks and Waters (2011) suggest that international student mobility should not been seen as single, one way flow from one country to another, which often ends with the return of a student, but rather needs to be considered as a compromise

between a number of complex transnational connections and networks which function to link students' country of origin and country of the study.

This view is confirmed by a number of studies (e.g. Balaz and Williams, 2004; Water and Brooks, 2011) as one of the acquisitions of studying abroad is the establishment of a transnational social network. In other words, international student mobility can be defined as multidirectional, which requires a more applicable term such as 'brain circulation' or 'brain exchange' instead of 'brain drain' (Bhandari and Blumenthal, 2012). Bilecen (2009) suggests that international PhD students are interacting with both the home and the host country a significant part of their time and, as a result, they live in multiple social spaces, which allow them to participate in the creation and circulation of knowledge. A survey by Lindberg et al. (2014) investigated the mobility patterns and transnational networks of almost 450 postgraduate international students in Zurich and revealed that more than half of non-return students sustain considerable professional contacts with their home countries, potentially ensuring an exchange of knowledge and skills. However, it should be noted that brain circulation, particularly circular movements of academics, has received little attention due to a lack of data and the temporary nature of this movement (Jon, 2009) and especially to the fact that PhD students are still a relatively undiscovered area (Bilecen and Faist, 2015).

In comparison to a decade ago, today highly qualified mobiles from many developing countries return to the country of origin or collaborate with the local actors by using transnational networks (Zweig, 2006; Favell et al., 2008; Daugeliene and Marcinkeviciene, 2009). For instance, China, India, Korea and Taiwan are experiencing more brain circulation, even if in some cases this shows itself as brain gain through the implementation of successful policies (Daugeliene and Marcinkeviciene, 2009). In the past, developing countries strategies to tackle the loss of qualified people was based on reverse brain drain, or in other words brain gain. However, recently countries have increasingly recognized a 'diaspora option' which encourages brain circulation in order to gain a contribution from non-returnees as an alternative to the actual return of a highly qualified individual (Zweig, 2006; Zweig et al., 2008). The Diaspora option is different from the return option. It does not physically return highly qualified people but aims at facilitating the mobilization of resources in relation to the home country's programmes via communication technology (Meyer et al., 1997). In terms of academic mobility, 'Scientific Diaspora' refers to the contribution of academics to the social and economic development of their home country, particularly in the areas of education,

technology and science. One of the well-known examples of scientific diaspora is the utilization of The Caldas Network of Colombia and the South African SANSA (South African Network of Skills Abroad) by Colombian and South African scientists in Switzerland (Tejada, 2012; Tejada et al., 2013).

Apart from countries' governmental policies, EU policies and international organisations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and European Commission (EC) (e.g. GCIM, 2005; IOM, 2005; EC, 2007) have also been supporting and highlighting the benefits of circular mobility. It is assumed that Brain Circulation will show an increasing trend in the coming years, especially through rapidly reducing or diminishing economic disparities between countries (Torres and Wittchen, 2010). Nevertheless, a number of concerns have been ongoing for several authors. Skeldon (2010), for example, highlights that recognition of the new features of international migration requires unilateral policies and implies that managing circular migration at both national and international levels requires the establishment of incorporating policies between home, host and transit countries. According to Newland (2009), obtaining secure residential status in both the country of origin and the destination country, particularly in the case of -dual citizenships-, increases the circular mobility of highly qualified people, resulting in a lack of fear of losing their secure status in both countries. Controversially, Castles and Ozkul (2014) argue that highly qualified people account for an important part of circular migration, as result of their frequent movements between the home and host country. However, paradoxically, destination countries' policies are often based on encouraging these qualified individuals to settle in the host country so that their circular mobility ends up with permanent residence in a destination country.

Although today brain circulation is more pronounced and supported by states and by policy makers, whether or not highly qualified mobility represents a brain drain or a brain circulation is still a matter of discussion (Avveduto, 2012). According to Bartram et al. (2014), a general assumption is that brain circulation has become more common in many countries. However the terms brain drain and brain gain together with brain circulation will continue to be applied and to preserve their meanings in the near future. The reason for this is that, for instance in the European context, brain drain still continues to exist particularly in relation to highly qualified people's movement from southern (e.g. Greece, Spain, Italy) towards northern Europe, as well as Canada and the USA. For that reason, it is difficult to say that the mobility of these qualified people can be presented purely in the frame of brain circulation. Supporting

the view of Bartram et al. (2014), Christopoulo et al. (2014) investigated the mobility of scientists from Greece after the recent crisis, especially focusing on the period between 2010 and 2013. They revealed that the current situation of scientific mobility from Greece is closer to 'brain drain' than 'brain circulation'. Furthermore, they also underlined the changing features of highly qualified mobility. Accordingly, today mobiles are younger and come from upper class families, in contrast to the past where mobiles were older and from lower social classes.

Recent studies define international student and highly qualified people's mobility in the form of brain circulation and also underline that highly qualified people's return may take place either in the form of physically returning or without returning but contributing to the home country's development through transnational networks. International collaboration is therefore seen as a key element if physical returns do not occur. However, not all countries offer the same level of opportunity in order to tackle the loss of highly qualified people or seek to attract them to return back. For instance, qualified people's loss in the form of brain drain has been more pronounced in Greece after the economic crises of 2010 (Christopoulo et al., 2014). In contrast, it is assumed that Turkey is encountering less and less of a brain drain nowadays but more brain circulation (Oxford Business Group, 2007). However, whilst international collaboration is around 90% for researchers in countries such as in Greece and Luxemburg, this rate is the lowest (between 60% and 65%) amongst researchers from Latvia and Turkey in comparison to other countries (MORE, 2013).

Previous studies have also shown that a home country's economic incentives alone are not enough but social, professional political factors also play a role in persuading highly qualified people, academics and international students to return. A number of studies (e.g. Dzvimbo, 2003; Panahi, 2012; Christopoulo et al., 2014) highlight that the lack of intellectual and professional quality of life, the presence of social and political discrimination and lack of freedom of speech are often reasons for forcing either researchers to leave or discouraging their return to their country of origin. In terms of student flows from Turkey, those who remain in a foreign country after completing their studies do not represent a new phenomena (Gungor and Tansel, 2005). However, after the economic crises in 2000 and 2001, the issue of non-returning students has become more important (Gungor and Tansel, 2014). Further, the recent anti-democratic practices by the Government in Turkey not only discourages students and researchers from returning to Turkey but are forcing them to leave Turkey

(Sirkeci, 2016). For instance, on January 2016, 1128 academics, who signed a petition, titled "We Will Not Be Party to This Crime." that sought peace in southeast Turkey were detained by the government (Human Rights Watch, 2016). The president of Turkey, Erdogan, called academics "Traitors who should be declared terrorists without weapons" and "ignorant people" (Diken, 2016). Asistant Professor Esra Mungan from Bogazici University, for example, who completed her masters and PhD degree in the USA and returned to Turkey, was arrested and put into solitary confinement on 17th March 2016 for signing the aforementioned petition (Bianet, 2016).

With the increasing pressure on academics, together with the case of Professor Aziz Sancar who moved to the USA to acquire a PhD and remained, winning a Nobel Prize in chemistry in 2015 (Sample and Randerson, 2015), the debate on the current situation of academics has again begun in society as many individuals from academics to journalists criticize the Government's practices face arrest or detention. Therefore, in contrast to the past, today, the question of 'whether a PhD student will return to Turkey?' is also added to the question of 'If Aziz Sancar had returned to Turkey after completing a PhD degree in the USA, would he have won the Nobel Prize?'

4. Conclusion

This chapter began by providing an overview of upward trend in international student mobility in higher education. Previous studies have underlined that as, a result of globalisation, there has been an increasing trend in the movement of capital, trade and goods across international borders, which has also involved greater movement of people as well as knowledge and technology (UN, 2002). Today, people are more likely to choose where they would like to either study or work when compared to the past, in response to the increase in individual choice facilitated by globalisation (Docquier et al, 2011; Brezis and Soueri, 2012). Moreover, qualified people are freer to move than the unqualified (Smith and Favell, 2006). A number of researchers, such as Boeri et al, (2012), argue that the demand for highly qualified people will continue to increase in the future as a result of the following factors: skill biased technology, an increase in specialisation in developing countries and an ageing population, particularly in Europe. Owing to international students being seen as a future pool of highly qualified people and many countries making efforts to attract them, their mobility

has received increasing attention in recent years. Nevertheless, the international mobility of researchers and academics has been paid relatively less attention compared to other highly qualified groups (Czaika and Toma, 2015). To address this, the aim is to provide understanding of international student mobility with particular reference to that from Turkey to the UK as the destination country.

Secondly, in this chapter there has been discussion on the main motivations for and barriers to international student mobility together with consideration of the outcomes. It has been explained that various factors play a role in such mobility. It has been noted that motivational factors behind academic mobility are often based on career-related factors rather than economic ones. That is, many students believe that their mobility is beneficial for career development and that international research collaboration improves the quality of their CV. Scholars have also ascertained that mobility positively impacts on researchers' productivity and job opportunities at both the national and international levels. In addition, previous research has underlined that international student mobility brings a number of benefits, including improvement in foreign language proficiency and acquiring intercultural skills. The presence of an academic network and previous mobility experience have also been found to be important motivational factors behind international student mobility. However, a number of studies suggest that motivational factors might vary according to criteria such as gender, field of study and country of origin. When it comes to the barriers to mobility, funding is often the main obstacle, followed by family and personal factors. Additionally, whilst benefits of mobility on career development is widely accepted, some students have concerns about whether their experience gained internationally will be acknowledged by home country institutions or worry about being able to maintain existing contacts when they are abroad so as to not jeopardise their job opportunities when they return.

Thirdly, this chapter has outlined the ongoing debate regarding whether it is more appropriate to call international students mobiles or migrants, explaining why some authors prefer the former, whilst others favour the latter. For this study, the stance adopted is that international students are mobiles. The main reason put forward for this lies in the reality that in the 21st century their movement does not imitate the traditional form of migration. That is, today, such individuals' movement is not one way, involving permanent settlement in the destination country, for in many cases movement back and forth is found. Additionally, regarding international students' plans, these change over time during their stay in the host country and

as a consequence, process is the focus rather than outcomes, i.e. what stimuli can lead to people being mobile or not.

Lastly, the outcomes of international student mobility at the national level, in terms of brain drain and brain circulation have been discussed. Underpinning the perspective of promoting the international mobility of students by governments and international organisations worldwide is the assumption that studying abroad is beneficial at the individual, national and international levels. That is, such mobility is seen as being an inevitable aspect of the 21st century, given increasing globalization. There is also the general assumption that studying abroad will end with the return of students to their home country, but the evidence suggests this is not the case. Consequently, many countries have been experiencing the non-return of students, seen as a loss of human capital for that country of origin. This has been particularly so for developing countries, where qualified people have thus become a scarce resource, leading to a brain drain, which has a detrimental effect on these nation's development. However, the corresponding development of ICT, which allows for qualified people to appear to be in a number of different places at the same time through the use of transnational networks, means that they can make a contribution to their home country's development without this requiring their physical return. As a result, a number of authors have suggested that today countries experience more and more brain circulation rather than brain drain. Countries around the world have been taking a number of steps in the form of both economic and non-economic incentives in order to encourage such circulation. The concern in the current study is not specific to this ongoing debate, for the interest lies in ascertaining how macro and micro factors influence the decision of PhD students from Turkey whether or not return to Turkey. As such the aim of this study is to go to beyond the aforementioned mechanical conceptualisations so to consider their complex dynamics in the transnational area. Regarding this, Thorn and Nielsen (2006) suggest that international students are an atypical mobile group, because they are mostly young, single and more mobile compared to standard mobile groups.

CHAPTER 2: Structural (Macro) and Agency (Micro) Factors in Student Mobility

This chapter discusses the factors at both the macro and micro levels influencing international students return or non-return plans after graduation by drawing on the findings from earlier scholars. Accordingly, first, how structural factors at the macro level, namely, economic, political, professional and structural ones, impact on student mobility will be discussed. Following this, the findings relating to agency factors, which pertain to demographics, education and attachment, will be presented and compared with those derived from earlier studies.

1. Introduction

According to the OECD (2010, p41), international students comprise a significant proportion of international migration and can be seen in the context of "two step migration", referring, first, to their attraction to individual countries and second, their retention as highly qualified migrant workers. Given there is increasing worldwide competition for international students, it is likely that the demand for highly educated individuals will continue to be a growing trend in coming years. Hence, it is now more important than ever to understand the factors behind those individuals' return or non-return plans to their home countries. It is also likely that the number of highly qualified workers moving across countries will increase substantially in future years (Boeri et al., 2012; Dayton-Johnson et al., 2009; Hercog and Laar, 2013). However, researchers' mobility has received only scant attention, in particular, the motivational factors, and their consequences remain underexplored (Baruffaldi and Landoni, 2010). Hence, in the following sections the structural (macro) and agency (micro) factors impacting on international students' return or non-return plans are covered in detail.

2. Structural Factors

Based on findings from previous studies, structural factors relevant for this research are economic (e.g. economic stability, employment rates, the level of income), political (e.g. political stability, academic freedom and immigration policies of a host or home country), professional (e.g. investment level for Research and Development (R&D) and quality of research environment) and socio-cultural (e.g. life style).

2.1. Economic Factors

Some previous studies (i.e. King, 2002; Ackers, 2005) suggest that there are differences between mobile groups and, thus, academic mobility would more accurately identified as referring to knowledge mobiles rather than economic ones. Czaika and Toma (2015), for example, explain that academics particularly from developing countries spend most of their time teaching, rather than conducting research, as well as suffering from insufficient research funding and facilities. Hence, many students at the commencement of their early careers prefer an international academic career in order to obtain greater academic opportunities. Further, some other studies claim that becoming permanently resident by acquiring citizenship is the main reason, rather than economic considerations. In other words, students who have an intense desire to stay in a host country believe that the first step is to obtain secure employment, in order to obtain citizenship and that overseas education, rather than education at home, is more valuable for a host country's employers; students prefer studying abroad as a pathway to settling in a host country, rather than for purely economic reasons (e.g. better job opportunities) (Water and Brooks, 2011). Similarly, Papademetriou et al. (2008) also claim that international students are hoping both to gather a better quality education and a visa for work. They are seeking these things in order to get permanent residence through exploiting job opportunities in the host country, rather than for purely economic considerations.

Nevertheless, one of the main benefits of acquiring education abroad is seen as enhancing job and career opportunities, which relate to economic considerations (Li, 2013). Balaz and Williams (2004) in their study focused on Slovakian students in the UK, found that a majority of the students believe that studying in the UK was economically advantageous in terms of bringing enhancement in job opportunities and higher salaries. In fact, according to some studies, students consider the destination country's employability opportunities when they are deciding where they wish to study. Regarding which, research by the House of Commons and Home Affairs Committee (2011) found that 56% of international students at the London School of Economics reported that entitlement to work after graduation plays a crucial role in their reasons for acquiring their education in the UK. Further, a significant role for economic factors determining students' remain and return plans has been shown, such as in one of the most extensive pieces of research by Song (1997), based on almost 800 scientists and engineers from Korea, who acquired their PhD degrees in the USA between 1960 and

1987. His findings revealed that comparison of economic conditions between Korea and the USA was the driver in their return or non-return decision making. Along the same lines, the impact of economic considerations on mobility, in particular, regarding income level, job opportunities, standard of living and economic stability have been found to be determining factors influencing students' decisions to return or non-return to a country of origin in a number of studies (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Baruch et al., 2007; Pengelly et al., 2008; Paile and Fatoki, 2014).

Regarding economic considerations, income level has often been shown by scholars as one of the important determinants of student mobility. For instance, Vasiljeva (2014) reported that international students' decisions to remain in Denmark were primarily based on a comparison of income levels between that country and their home countries. Similarly, a study by Chang (1992) revealed that higher salary was one of the strongest influential factors for non-returning doctoral and masters degree holders from Taiwan in the USA. Further, Musumba et al.'s (2011) research about international students in the USA also showed how students' country preferences changed, according to whether a home or a host country offered a higher salary. Along the same lines, income level was found to be a major encouraging factor for remaining abroad by other scholars, such as by Zweig (1997) and Morano-Foadi (2006), in the context of non-return Chinese and Italian students and academics, respectively.

In addition to income level, job opportunities and an economic standard of living have also been highlighted by other scholars. Regarding which, Paile and Fatoki's (2014) findings revealed that, whilst family/friends at home were the main determinants in the return decisions of international students, students' willingness to remain in South Africa was shaped by economic related factors, such as higher standard of living and employment opportunities. Similarly, a study by Arthur and Flynn (2011) reported that international students' primary reasons for staying in Canada were better job opportunities and a higher standard of living compared to their home countries. The same study also revealed that the fear of seeking a job and/or losing one in Canada was a main discouraging factor of international students' plans to stay in that land. Further, their findings also suggest that students' fears of being unemployed in Canada are based on employers' perspectives towards foreigners, such as whether they give priority to local students over international students. Another study by Hazen and Alberts (2006) searched for an answer as to whether international students in the USA are visitors or immigrants. Accordingly, whilst better

job/career opportunities and higher standard of living were the most common incentive to remain in the USA, a fear of being unemployed as a result of the glass ceiling in the USA, was one of the important reasons for students' returning home. Additionally, the features of working conditions including, being paid for working overtime, the availability of laws protecting employee rights, job satisfaction and recognition of achievement, have been found in the literature to be other important considerations in students' return or remain plans after graduation (e.g. Chang, 1992; Morano-Foadi, 2006; Arthur and Flynn, 2011).

To sum up, despite some scholars (King, 2002; Soon, 2012) claiming that student mobility is not shaped by economic factors, as explained above, the findings from many other studies (e.g. Chang; 1992; Pengelly et al., 2008; Paile and Fatoki, 2014; Vasiljeva; 2014) have demonstrated that economic considerations play a primary role in students' decisions return or not return to home. These contrasting findings could be due to the role of economic factors in student mobility differing according to country of origin. Lee and Kim (2010) explain that if there are not huge disparities between the home and host countries regarding economic factors, such as job opportunities and income level, then these will not play a prominent role in highly qualified mobility or in other words, non-economic factors increase in their importance. This claim is supported by findings from by Hazen and Alberts (2006). Despite of economic factors being identified as one of the significant incentives in their study students' decisions to remain or return, they also showed that, for those students who came from Asia and Africa, their home countries offered both higher status and greater job opportunities compared to those who came from European countries and North America. Hence, the former were less attracted to the better job /career opportunities and higher standard of living in the USA than the latter group. A second reason for this contrast in findings was put forward by Dustmann et al. (2009), who argued that the weight of economic factors depends on whether or not students' skills after graduation are more valuable in the country of origin or in the host one. Regarding which, Paile and Fatoki (2014) researched international students in South Africa, finding that those who were planning to return to their home countries often reported that their skills and knowledge were needed more there than in South Africa.

Regarding the impact of country origin, the current study's case is based on Turkey. As mentioned earlier, only a limited number of studies has been conducted about students from that country, including the well known one by Gungor and Tansel (2005). They found that

economic instability (economic crisis) in Turkey and wage differences with the USA were reported by students as the main reasons for not returning. The current study will allow for determining whether or not over last decade economic factors have continued to play a primary role in the case of PhD student from Turkey, in this case those studying in the UK.

2.2. Political Factors

Previously, scholars (i.e. Chang, 1992; Yang, 2007; Zweig and Changgui, 2013) have highlighted that the impact of political factors on the probability of international students' return or non-return plans can be related to either the sending or the destination countries. Specifically, from the sending country perspective, the main political factors resulting in the non-return of students have been often shown to include political instability, government intervention in social life by inhibiting the freedom of people, lack of freedom of speech in academia, poor human rights, conflicts amongst different ethnic groups, intolerance towards the opposition who do not support the government and government control over the media (i.e. Dzvimbo, 2003; Fransen and Kuschminder, 2009; Panahi, 2012). From a receiving country perspective, the politics often relates to the government of the host country's migration policies towards international students in terms of such matters as work and residence permits (i.e. Yang, 2007; MPG, 2012). Hence, here, the political factors are discussed from the sending and receiving country perspectives.

First, from the sending country perspective, despite the poor reporting of the mobility rates of highly qualified people worldwide, some studies, for instance Docquier and Rapoport's (2004) investigation about skilled migration from developing countries between 1900 and 2000 amongst OECD countries, revealed that highly qualified mobility was 30% higher in countries that experienced political instability and civil war. Previous studies, such as that of the UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) (2008), have often highlighted how the weight of political factors that impact on international students' willingness to remain in or depart from a country of study, depends on the political circumstances in their homeland. According to this particular study, these factors can play a significant role in the migration of qualified individuals who come from countries that suffer from political instability, insufficiency of governance, political persecution and corruption, with the migration of a high number of scientists from Iraq providing a good example of this.

Hazen and Alberts (2006) investigated the return or remain intentions of international bachelor degree students' in the USA. They reported that political factors were the least important in students' decisions to return to their home country, compared to other economic and professional factors, such as better career and employment opportunities. However, they also found that the political freedom in the USA was often considered as being one of the main reasons for the non-return of Chinese and Serbian students, who saw their homelands as being ruled by unstable and restrictive governments. Further the same study also reported that academic freedom was the third most common reason for remaining in the USA amongst international students.

According to Arthur and Flynn (2011), it should not be forgotten that some students' home countries are suffering from political and social conflict, which create a threat to the security and safety of individuals. Hence, it is not surprising that political stability and general safety can be the main concerns of students who come from those kinds of countries. In their research, comments such as "Life is peaceful here in Canada" (p232) reveal how this security was a primary reason for staying in Canada for many of their participants. Along the same lines, it was concluded by a number of scholars, such as Zweig and Changgui (2013) that political factors play a no less important role than economic, socio-cultural and professional factors at the macro level regarding student mobility. These authors investigated Chinese students and scholars in the USA and discovered that political factors were equally important to economic factors for Chinese professionals (students and scholars) when considering whether or not to stay in the USA. That is, whilst economic factors were found to be significant in their decision whether or not return to China, political instability was strongly discouraging this, followed by lack of political freedom. In a study by Li et al. (1996), the link between studying abroad and migration was investigated using two samples: Hong Kong Students in Hong Kong and Hong Kong students in the UK. Their findings revealed that political factors, particularly political freedom (freedom of speech and freedom of belief of religions), were the main concern in the students' mobility plans, whilst economic ones, such as employment opportunities, were much less important, as generally, their views about the economic situation in Hong Kong were positive. These scholars concluded that, so long as Hong Kong could provide a political stabile environment, students would be more likely to choose to remain or return there.

Similarly, an extensive study was conducted by Chang (1992), which included 824 students and scholars from Taiwan in the USA. Her findings suggested that, despite the fact that professional (e.g. better quality of research and teaching facilities, better professional career opportunities) and economic factors (e.g. higher income level) in the USA were the main attractive factors for remaining there, the political structure, including lack of political and academic freedoms and dissatisfaction with the intellectual climate in Taiwan, were also often expressed by the participants as key to their non-returning. According to Chang (1992), the authoritarian regime in Taiwan at that time and lack of political freedom was restricting academic freedom and sullying the intellectual climate and hence, discouraging students from returning. Gungor and Tansel's (2005) research elicited that political instability in Turkey, a sending country for the current study, was fueling the desire to stay away. In fact, it was one of the important considerations after economic ones amongst students from Turkey in the USA. Moreover, Szelrnyi (2006) pointed out that, for international students, maintaining ties with their home countries through the internet, media, friends and family, enabled them to compare political life between the country origin and the host country. His study was based on the mobility of Brazilian, Chinese and Italian students enrolled on PhD programmes in the USA. According to the same research, Chinese students often reported that one of their main their considerations was political conditions in the USA, particularly political security, which that country could afford them. In contrast to the studies (i.e. Zweig and Changgui, 2013) above underlining the strong impact of political factors on students' decision making processes, Imran et al. (2011) through investigation of the migration behaviour of medical students in their last year in Pakistani Universities, found that, compared to other factors, political ones were the least significant in students' willingness to leave Pakistan and start a new life in a foreign country.

Regarding political factors in the context of a receiving country, Waters and Brooks (2011) discovered that the mobility of students is influenced not only by education, but also, the migration and employment policies of a host country. That is, policies of a host country can be based on attracting more international students, with the intention of increasing their numbers in universities, or focused on retaining international students after graduation, so that they become part of the highly qualified workforce (Beine et al., 2013). According to a number of studies, a host country's approach towards students plays a crucial role, both in their choice of destination for study and in their return or non-return plans. For instance, a study by MPG, (2012) reported that the favourable migration policies of host countries have

a particularly significant impact on students' preferences for the destination country. Butcher (2004) also highlighted the changing behaviour of international students, with the example of New Zealand. A significant difference was found between international students of the 1950s and the 21st century. That is, whilst international students were encouraged to return to their country of origin in the 1950s, today those students are encouraged to remain through government policies, which open doors to permanent residency. Yang (2007), who focused on the destination country of choice of Chinese students for studying, found that an increasing number of these students were preferring Australia rather to the UK and the USA. This is because Australian immigration policies towards students make it easier to settle or, in other words, that country's policies are what McLaughlan and Salt (2002, p7) termed as "student switching policies" that enable a student to shift his/her visa status and obtain a work permit after graduation.

According to MPG (2012), changes in policies, with the aim of attracting and retaining international students through the adjustment of new laws and rules amongst many countries, explain why highly skilled migration also includes international students. However, not all countries have the same welcome policies. Whilst some countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Canada have welcoming policies for international students, others such as the UK, a destination country for the current study, have imposed relatively strict immigration policies on international students in recent years (MPG, 2012; the UUK, 2014). Research by the Migration Policy Group (MPG, 2012) on the influence of strict immigration policies on students, based on an investigation of the post study plans of international students in five countries (Germany, Netherlands, France, the UK, and Sweden), highlighted two important points: almost all international students are aware of the legal framework of destination countries in terms of work and stay permit legislation; and international students in the UK show the least willingness to stay after graduation in comparison to other countries (e.g. Germany), due to the strict immigration policies of the Government.

Regarding migration to the UK, the number of people who come to the UK for study make up 30% of all migrants (Vargas-Silva and Markaki, 2015; Office for National Statistic, August 2017). Non-EU students comprised 70 % of all international students in 2016 (The Migration Observatory, 2017). Despite the House of Lords (2014) and the UUK (Universities UK)(2014) recommending that the UK Government should remove students from the net

migration target in order to sustain the nation's competitiveness in attracting international students, these targets still include them (Office for National Statistic, August, 2017).

The latest report on international student numbers by the Office for National Statistic in August 2017 showed that these declined between 2010 and 2016 due to the changes in migration policies by the UK government. Some of the main changes include, the net migration target policy of the UK government since 2010 and the establishment of new rules in April 2012, which led to restrictions on students' remaining for up to two years after graduation looking for employment (Cavanagh and Glennie, 2012). Studying was the most common reason for migrating to the UK between 2009 and 2012. However, after this date, in 2012 and 2014 it became a second reason, after migrating for work and it remains the second most common reason for coming to the UK (Office for National Statistic, August 2017). Moreover, some other studies, such as that of Boeri et al. (2012) have underlined the important role a host country's perception towards foreigners plays in relation to highly qualified mobility, including that of international students. Regarding which, a report by British Future and Universities UK (2014), whilst revealing negative attitudes being held by the public towards other types of immigration, found that generally, feelings are positive towards international students, whose contribution to the UK economy is undeniable. According to the survey, 59% of the respondents believed that the government's net migration target should not include international students and 75% of those also agreed that the UK Government should give enhanced opportunities for these students by allowing them to work and stay in the UK after their graduation.

Nevertheless, recently Brexit (52-48 percent leave) took place on 23 June 2016. Despite the outcomes not yet being clearly known, a few scholars, such as Dennis (2016), have reported the potential impacts of Brexit on higher education and particularly on international student mobility. After referring to the findings from a recent survey by Hobson on international student mobility, he concluded that according to 82% of EU international students since the Brexit vote the UK has become less attractive for studying. Moreover, regarding non-EU students, the findings from the survey indicated that almost half of the sample stated that Brexit has affected their decision about studying in the UK. Amongst those students, 83% of them reported that after Brexit they will be less likely to choose the UK as a destination country for study. According to the very few studies (e.g. Dennis, 2016; Talbot, 2017) on the Brexit impact on higher education, there is an increasing feeling that foreigners are not

welcome. Regarding which, recent research by Sime et al. (2017), based on Eastern European students, has revealed that Brexit has brought increasing racism and a feeling that foreigners are altogether no longer welcome, with an unclear future also being seen for the UK. The small amount of extant research has been based on either how Brexit will influence destination choices for studying abroad (e.g. Hobson's Survey, 2017) or its influence on EU academics and students (Dennis, 2016; Tabor, 2017) and/or young EU individuals (Sime et al., 2017), rather than non-EU international students mobility plans after graduation. Hence, the current study, by investigating PhD students from Turkey in the UK, provides an opportunity to find out what Brexit means for such students in terms of whether or not Brexit is playing a role in their mobility plans after graduation.

To summarise, in this section, political factors have been discussed from both sending and receiving country perspectives. According to a number of scholars (e.g. Yang, 2007; Zweig and Changgui, 2013), who have highlighted the impact of political factors on international student mobility, their plans are affected by both the political features of the home country, such as whether or not it offers political stability and the migration policies of the host country in terms of whether or not they are favourable towards international student. With regard to the impact of political factors' on international student mobility, recent events in both Turkey (i.e. the military coup in 2016) and the UK (e.g. Brexit), have not been widely discussed by scholars and, this can be thus seen as one of the significant contributions of the current research.

2.3. Professional Factors

In the mobility field, findings from earlier studies (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Paile and Fatoki, 2014) suggest that some factors are predominantly more significant than others regarding the decision to return home or remain abroad. In contrast to studies (i.e. Song 1997; Vasiljeva, 2014) that have attributed a lot of weight to the impact of economic factors on mobility, some studies (i.e. Crescenzi, 2017) have provided evidence that professional factors are just as important in highly qualified mobility. A study by Thorn and Nielsen (2006), showed that, whilst a reasonable economic income level is important to scientists and researchers' decisions whether or not to return home, professional factors, such as the quality of the professional research environment, the structure for the professional reward system and

the availability of professional equipment are also key considerations of those academic individuals. Similarly, according to findings by Gungor and Tansel (2003), in addition to the fear of unemployment associated with the 2001 economic crisis being a major reason for non-returning to Turkey, an unsatisfactory research environment was often reported as a major factor for students remaining in the USA after graduating. According to the same study, the unsatisfactory research environment in Turkey as a result of the rapid increase in new universities with poor facilities, was dissuading people from returning there. Further, regarding the research environment, their findings also underlined that the issue of undervaluing academics in Turkey was encouraging many students to remain abroad.

However, other researchers (e.g. Mahroum, 2000; Baruffaldi and Landoni, 2010) have contended that different highly qualified groups have differing motivations to be mobile, with academics more likely to be driven by non-economic factors than those working in industry. In other words, international students' reasons for acquiring their education abroad and their decision to remain or return to their home country is related to professional (career-related) rather than economic factors (Mahroum, 2000; Ackers, 2005; Delicado, 2010; MPG, 2012). This claim is supported by Mahroum's (2000) findings that professional factors influencing mobility differ according to types of highly qualified individuals. He provided the example of a manager and scientist in order to demonstrate the differing factors behind academic mobility. Whilst the manager's mobility decision was simply based on the employer's requirements, scientific curiosity and personal aspirations were driving the scientist's mobility. Along the same lines, a study by Moguérou (2006), which discussed PhD flows from Europe to the USA, highlighted the important role of professional factors, including the reputation of universities and research policies towards improvement of R&D to attract academics.

Accordingly, regarding professional factors, scholars have identified how research facilities and the features of the research environment play a role in academic mobility. For instance, Ivancheva and Gourova (2011) discovered that the main motivations for the mobility of researchers (PhD students and post-doctorates) or in other words, the main driving factors behind working abroad, according to data from eight countries was as follows: career development (73%), working on a stimulating research theme (63%), being part of a collaborative research project (57%) and the prestige of the university (54%). They added that wages, a higher standard of living, family ties and business opportunities were not found

to be as important determinants by the participants in their study. In an extensive study entitled EURODOC (The European Council of Doctoral Candidates and Junior Researchers), Ates et al. (2011) surveyed doctoral candidates in twelve European Countries, aiming to investigate a number of dimensions that influence international students' decision-making processes. The PhD students were asked whether or not they had the intention of either staying abroad or moving abroad after completion. The students' responses indicated that the main motivations for their willingness to move or settle abroad was the belief that they would have better career prospects, followed by opportunities for collaboration with well-known scientists and the existence of better research facilities. Along the same lines, Baruffaldi and Landoni (2010) suggested that professional aspirations, including recognition of work and prestige, are strong determinants in academic mobility, whilst Hazen and Albert (2006) and Delicado (2010) asserted that power relations in terms of there being a hierarchal structure of higher education at home is a factor discouraging returning.

In addition, de Grip et al. (2009) pointed out the important role of research and development (R&D) in the mobility decisions of students, in their investigation of science and engineering graduates from 12 European countries. It revealed that graduates often migrate to three countries, namely Canada, Australia and the US, because these provide a greater level of R&D than elsewhere. Gill and Guth (2008) also investigated Polish and Bulgarian doctoral students' mobility and showed that the main reason for them leaving their home country was an insufficient amount of research and development investment, thus concluding that this is an important factor in mobility.

Further, the vital role of the independence of universities, the creation of a high quality research environment as well as fairness in the reward and recruitment systems have been identified as important in mobility decision making in other studies. For instance, Ackers et al. (2007) highlighted how autonomy in the working environment, freedom to work productively, fairness in recruitment and rewarding are important determinants in the mobility of academics. Similarly, Chang (1992) reported that working in a research setting that offers a highly intellectual environment, teamwork, prestige (value to academics) recognition in professional achievements and also reward for these were deemed important for Taiwanese students and scholars in the USA. That is, these academics believed that the USA offered better professional opportunities in terms of the research environment, enhancement in career prospects and creativity compared to Taiwan. According to a study by

Panahi (2012), which investigated the mobility of Iranian academics, in countries where political pressure is high, the research environment can be influenced by this and, hence, universities lack independence. This leads to the erosion of the research environment so that politics or ideology should not be involved where science is taking place, the autonomy of universities should thus be protecting.

Overall, professional factors influencing the mobility of academics and students have been identified in earlier works (e.g. Chang, 1992; Szelrnyi 2006; Gungor and Tansel, 2005; MPG, 2012; Panahi, 2012; Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) in terms career opportunities, research and teaching facilities (i.e. reachable data/material and technology), as well as the reputation of the universities. In many cases, due to poor opportunities (e.g. lack of a sufficient amount of investment in Research and Development (R&D) and tenure positions in academia), the mobility of academics and researchers is inevitable rather than a choice (Morano-Foadi, 2005). Hence, a growing number of scholars (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Bashir et al., 2014) have asserted that the provision of an advanced education system and career opportunities are essential elements in helping to reduce the number of non-return students. This claim is supported by the findings of a study of the experiences of Chinese returnees by Chen (2015). In this work, the changing features of Chinese higher education, specifically the internationalization of research universities through providing career opportunities towards academics with an international background, was described as a significant driver in Chinese academics returning home. The current study will deliver insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the features of the research environment in Turkey compared to the UK and the role of professional factors in the mobility of students from the former. Further, as proposed by Bashir et al. (2014), this will allow for an assessment as to whether or not Turkish research policies make the research environment attractive and also whether it is appropriate to encourage students to return to Turkey.

2.4. Socio-Cultural Factors

King (2002) in his study entitled, 'Towards a New Map of European Migration', highlights the changing features of international migration, particularly as a result of an increasing number of highly educated people and students. According to him, there is a need to focus on the new motivational factors behind international mobility because the mobility motivations

of educated peoples are no longer shaped purely by economic factors, in opposition to the traditional migration view. He defines mobility motivational factors for highly educated people as "a dream of self-realization" (King, 2002, p95). That is, the motivations behind the mobility of highly qualified people relates to fulfilling a dream, including willingness to travel in order to explore the world and experience adventures. Similarly, Mosnega and Winther (2013) argue that earlier studies have tended to explain highly qualified mobility from the economic perspective. Accordingly, the authors argue that such an approach leads to the neglect of such matters as individual situations and preferences and, hence, in particular, does not reflect the human complexity behind the mobility of the highly qualified, including international students. Further, regarding the determinants of mobility, they claim that, once socio-cultural commitment has occurred, the economic and financial concerns of students become reduced. Along the same lines, a number of studies (Ho, 2011; Chen, 2016) have referred to satisfaction with the social and cultural life as playing an important role in the return or non-return decision to a home country. According to those studies (e.g. Han et al. 2015), socio cultural factors impact on life quality and, thus, students' mobility willingness in many cases depends on whether a home or a host country provides a better quality of life.

Hazen and Alberts (2006) asserted that societal factors are those pertaining to social and cultural surroundings, such as whether or not gender roles are deemed to be fair, these having been reported as important motivational factors in students' mobility plans. They also added that, whilst the concept of life quality was defined by participants in their study in different ways, from the weather to a materialistic society, a common interpretation was that this pertained to "the non-economic, often intangible, characteristics of society" (p210). Along the same lines, different studies have involved using other criteria to define life quality. For instance, a model of highly qualified mobiles' destination choice by Papademetriou et al. (2008), showed that there are three decision-making facilitators in such mobility: the fairness and generosity of the welfare system; the perceived tolerance and safety of society; and life style and environmental factors. These writers also contended that life style and environmental factors are quality-of-life issues, in particular, in relation to the natural environment and climate aspects of a country. Further, UNESCO (1993) also highlighted how the meaning, interpretation and expectations of the quality of life are expected to change according to a particular society and the individuals within it. Accordingly, UNESCO (1993) adopted the definition of the quality of life by Dalkey and Rourke (1971), as a person's sense of wellbeing, his or her satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life, and/or his or her happiness or

unhappiness (Dalkey and Rourke, 1971, p8). The organization described the indicators of the quality of life as: development, including economic (i.e. GDP), objective social indicators (i.e. social participation, safety and human freedom) and subjective social indicators (i.e. perceived satisfaction and happiness regarding such as leisure time and environment).

Despite life quality having been understood and defined by individuals and authors in various ways, it has emerged as being one of the important factors in students' mobility plans in a number of works (e.g. Szelrnyi, 2006; Paile and Fatoki, 2014; Han et al. 2015). Further, findings from numerous studies (e.g. Ho, 2011; Riemsdijk and Wang, 2017) have highlighted how improvement to the quality of life is related to a range of factors, from achievement of a desired life style to the attractions of a country, such as tolerance and diversity.

Accordingly, some studies (e.g. Han et al., 2015) have revealed that life style preference is one of the important factors in the mobility of international students. This is often explained for instance, such as whether a student finds a preferred life style in a host country. If this is the case, she/he is more likely to stay (Soon, 2010), or in other words, dissatisfaction with life style at home might well encourage her/him to become mobile (Akl et al., 2007). For instance, research by Ho (2011), based on highly qualified Singaporeans in London, elicited that not fitting with Singapore's life style as well as not being satisfied with its societal rules and policies were significant reasons for non-returning. The opposite is also true, for instance, Chen (2016) found that one of the main reasons for Chinese academic returnees was their feeling more at ease within the homeland (Chinese) culture and society, when compared to being in the USA. Further, Li (2013) focused on Chinese postgraduate students in a UK university. Whilst investigating students' employability by looking at their engagement with both the international and Chinese labour markets, the findings revealed that students who show a greater effort in finding long-term jobs in the UK labour market are attracted primarily by British living and working environment styles, rather than the attractiveness of the job opportunities. The same study concluded that life style choice is a main driver in the willingness to gain long-term employment status in the UK and hence, remain here. Similarly, the important role of life style in mobility also emerged as a significant factor in a study by Musumba et al. (2011), who found that international students' decisions to remain in the USA depended on whether or not they integrated easily into the life-style in the USA. On the other hand, according to Soon (2012), life style is an important factor from a home country perspective. In his study, in which he investigated international students in New Zealand, it

was reported that life style, in particular students' perception of their home countries' lifestyles, had a significant impact on their return decision. That is, if a student was happy with the lifestyle at home, then the probability of returning home increased. Nevertheless, there are also some studies, such as one by MPG (2012), which have reported that preferred life style is one of the least important factors in international students' reasons for planning to return or not to their home countries.

Further, a study by Panahi (2012) based on Iranian academics, elicited that freedom in relation to lifestyle choice is an important driver behind academic mobility. Prohibitive cultural structures, such as societal pressure (i.e. Kennedy, 2010) and strict gender roles and/or gender inequality (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006) in a home country negatively impact on lifestyle, in particular, for female students and, hence, they are often very willing to remain in a host country where they obtain their desired lifestyle freedoms. One such study is that of Gungor and Tansel (2005), who found that female Turkish international students had a greater willingness to remain in the USA than male students because strong gender roles in Turkish society constrain achievement of life style freedoms and thus, encourage female students to remain in the USA, where a freer life style is clearly evident. Similarly, Hazen and Alberts (2006) found that greater freedom for women in the USA was one of the non-return reasons for female students who came from traditional cultures, such as India, where strict gender roles remain in place. Beaumont et al. (2017) discussed highly qualified female mobility in Poland and Germany and concluded that gender inequality in the home country was a significant factor in this mobility. Findings from a study by Kerr et al. (2016) also showed that gender inequality in Asia and Africa countries resulted in an increasing number of highly qualified female mobiles.

Regarding the achievement of a better life quality, in addition to desired life-style, the level of safety and comfort with such things as crime and transport infrastructure are also often raised in studies. Szelrnyi (2006), for instance, suggested that both life quality and comfort levels play important roles in students' mobility plans. The same study revealed that one of the main factors discouraging Brazilian students in the USA was lack of public safety in terms of the high level of crime in the home country. Similarly, crime and violence, such as burglary and kidnapping, were found to be the main reason for leaving home in Parkins' (2011) study of Jamaican highly qualified mobility. Moreover, according to findings from Paile and Fatoki (2014), a higher crime level in a host country (in this case South Africa) compared to a home

country was one the main reasons for the return of international students to their home countries. Additionally, Tabor et al. (2015), in their qualitative study, investigated the decision making process of highly qualified people from South Africa, India and UK/Ireland in New Zealand. Accordingly, interpersonal and social factors, such as safety through less crime as well as environmental attractions, including nature, cleanliness, less traffic and climate, were found to be key factors in choosing New Zealand as the destination country.

Lastly, regarding the search for better life quality, diversity and tolerance in the society have been found to be important determinants behind highly qualified mobility in a number of studies (e.g. Crescenzi, 2016). For instance, a study by Florida (2003) revealed that the mobility of highly qualified people is shaped not just by economic factors and but that life-style factors are of equal importance. The findings of the same study showed that the mobility of highly qualified people is not purely driven by factors related to economic prospects such as job opportunities; inclusiveness and diversity in a society are as important as such opportunities. Further, he added that "openness, diversity, and tolerance …These are the kind of places that, by allowing people to be themselves and to validate their distinct identities" (Florida, 2005, p7). Moreover, he brought the concept of "3T", which emphasizes talent (individuals with at least a bachelor degree), technology (as a function of high-technology as well as innovation) and tolerance (openness, inclusiveness and diversity). That is, if a country would like to attract highly qualified people, who can contribute to stimulating both innovation and economic development, it should offer this 3T (Florida, 2003). Similarly, a study based on East Asian Students in Canada by Chen (2006) revealed that diversity and tolerance in that country, was not just the reason for studying in Canadian institutions, but also one of the major factors in their decision to remain there. Riemsdijk and Wang (2017) investigated international students' mobility plans after graduation. They found that almost half their sample size pointed to diversity in the USA as one of the main encouraging reasons for remaining there. Along the same lines, other scholars, such as Crescenzi (2016) found diversity and tolerance among the main determinants of international student mobility.

In summary, through considering the findings from earlier studies (e.g. Chen, 2006; Parkins, 2011; Beaumont, et. al., 2017) the link between social-cultural factors and life quality has been demonstrated. Moreover, it has been shown how enhancement of the quality of life depends on various factors, from life style freedoms to crime levels in society, all of which can impact on student mobility. The current study will provide knowledge regarding whether

or not, as suggested by Boeri et al. (2012), highly educated people, in this case PhD students from Turkey in the UK, have great concerns about their new cultural-social environment. This investigation will thus provide comparative insights regarding the features of socio-cultural environment of Turkey and those of the UK, thereby revealing the role of socio-cultural factors in the mobility plans of PhD students from Turkey in the UK.

3. Agency Factors

From the findings of previous studies, agency includes demographic (gender, age, relationship status and ethnicity), educational (degree level, field of study and funding source) and attachment factors (ties with family and friends as well as a sense of belonging).

3.1. Demographic Factors (Gender/Age/Relationship Status/ Ethnicity)

Demographic variables include gender, age, ethnicity and relationship status. Generally, the influence of demographic variables on international students' return /or non-return plans is rarely considered in studies of migration. In particular, it is almost impossible to locate studies of women or gender relations in research on skilled international migration (Kofman, 2000). Studies on international student mobility have tended to be gender neutral, thus meaning this issue has been largely neglected (Parvati, 2009; Mitra and Bang, 2010; Docquier et al., 2011; Waters and Brooks, 2011; Nejad, 2013; Nejad and Young, 2014). Hence, one aim of this research is to address this matter.

Of the limited number of studies considering gender differences, some have considered whether or not reasons for studying abroad change according to this. For instance, Ona and Piper (2004) revealed that gender inequality is a major reason for studying abroad amongst female students from Japan. Their research suggested that Japanese female students believe that the acquisition of a foreign education might allow them to work in foreign companies in Japan, where they are more likely to be offered equal status and opportunities to their male counterparts. Lu et al. (2009), in their study based on the migration behaviour of Chinese undergraduate students in Canada, took a further step towards identifying gender differences in migration intention by showing how factors influencing migration behaviours vary according to gender. Their findings indicated that, whilst male students' migration behaviour

is affected by age and human capital, including language proficiency and academic achievement, family-related factors (e.g. economic background of the family and whether or not they have siblings) play a major role in female students' migration intentions. Further, some studies on international student mobility have included the impact of gender differences together with the socioeconomic background (education and income level) of students' families'. For instance, Gungor and Tansel (2005) reported that female Turkish international students come from families with a higher educational level in compared to male students and also have a greater willingness to remain abroad than their male counterparts. Lu et al. (2009) also highlighted the impact of social class according to gender and revealed that Chinese male students, who come from a middle class family backgrounds and Chinese female students from wealthy families, were more likely to stay in Canada.

In addition, some scholars (e.g. Musumba et al., 2011) have also elicited mobility rate differences between female and male highly qualified individuals. Despite findings from some studies suggesting that male students have a greater intention to migrate than female students (Aidis et al., 2005; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013; Akman, 2014) or that gender does not play a role in students' decision to remain overseas or return (i.e. Smart, 2006; MPG, 2012; Bijwaard and Wang, 2014), it is often concluded that females are more mobile than males. In this regard Finn (2012) investigated the stay rates of international PhD graduates from American universities and found that those for female PhD holders were higher than for males. Similarly, a study by Zweig and Changgui (2013) based on Chinese students in the USA, revealed that female students were more likely to remain abroad compared to their male counterparts. A recent survey by CPC (Center for Population Change) (2015) also indicated that female international students show a greater propensity to stay in the UK after graduation compared to males. Further, O'Neil et al. (2016) found that mobility rates of female highly qualified mobiles were not only higher than for lower skilled female mobiles but also, than for highly qualified males. In the past female mobility took the form of joining spouses or accompanying them and hence, they were dependents, but today they can be seen as a "lead migrant" (O'Neil et al., 2016, p9). Accordingly, the increasing female trend in migration is described as part of a new feature of international migration, representing its feminisation (Alonso, 2011; Hoffman and Cynthia, 2013).

Gender factors may play a strong part in students' return or non-return plans in countries where there is a large gender gap. This claim is supported by findings such as those of Gungor

and Tansel (2005) and Musumba et al. (2011). Whilst Gungor and Tansel (2005) reported that, in comparison to male students, female students from Turkey were more willing to stay in the USA due to the better life style freedoms offered. Musumba et al. (2011) asserted that searching for a better life including free expression and being able to pursue a desired career, were the main reasons for higher mobility rates amongst international female students from China, India, Turkey, Korea, Taiwan, and Mexico in the USA. According to the Human Development Report (2016), Turkey is ranked 71 out of 188 countries in the Gender-Related Development Index (GDI) and is not considered one of the countries in the world where gender equality is improving. Further, not much research has been conducted that includes the gender impact on either student mobility or students from Turkey. Hence, this is a key reasons why the current study aims to explore the impact of gender differences in international students in terms of their return/non-return plans to Turkey.

Regarding the effect of age on international students' decision to return or not return to their home countries, some scholars (e.g. the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2010 and Hercog and van de Laar, 2013) have reported that older students are less likely to return to their home countries, being more likely stay in a host country in comparison their younger counterparts, whilst others (e.g. Soon, 2010; Vasiljeva, 2014) have found that age is not a significant determinant in the intentions to return or non-return to the home country. Yet others (e.g. Massey et al., 1987; Lundholm et al., 2004; Gungor and Tansel, 2005) have elicited that mobility is higher amongst younger individuals. For instance, findings from a study by Shehaj (2015) held that younger students are more likely to become a part of the non-return student group. Along the same lines, a survey by the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (SVR) investigated 6,200 international students in Germany, France, the UK, Netherlands and Sweden and found that younger students had a greater intention to stay in a host country (MPG, 2012b). Similarly, Aidis et al. (2005) examined the migration intentions of around 1250 Lithuanian students from the most prestigious universities in the two biggest cities in Lithuania and found that younger students held more migration propensity than older ones because, from an economic perspective, their labour market prospects were greater and, in terms of human capital, there was a greater return on investment. Moreover, Gungor and Tansel (2005), referring Stark and Bloom (1985), attributed the higher probability of return of older students to the greater psychic cost of non-returning.

When it comes to the impact of relationship status on mobility, some scholars, such as Lu et al. (2009) and Musumba et al. (2011), have revealed that married international students are more mobile than single ones, others (i.e. Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012; Vasiljeva, 2014) have contended that being married/single does not impact on the probability of returning or non-returning of students; whilst yet others (e.g. Massey et al., 1987; Lundholm et al., 2004; Gungor and Tansel, 2005) have held that being single increases mobility. In addition, some studies (e.g. Szelrnyi, 2006) have highlighted how rather than being single or married, mobility is shaped by whether or not the partner/or spouse is from the host or home country. For instance, Mosnega and Winther (2013) investigated both post-graduate international students and recent graduates who remained in Denmark after graduation. They reported that students' mobility plans depended on their attachments to the host country. This attachment can be either about finding a job or a boy/girlfriend and consequently, if a partner is found from the host country, this increases the probability of an international student's non-return. Wang's (2014) findings also suggest that having a partner from the country of study reduces the willingness to return to the home country. Similarly, according to the findings of Gungor and Tansel (2005), whilst having a foreign spouse decreases the return propensity of students from Turkey, being married with a spouse from there might either decrease or increase the probability of returning, depending on the preferences and position of the spouse in the family.

Overall, regarding age and relationship status, earlier studies (e.g. Massey et al., 1987; Lundholm et al., 2004) have considered that the mobility of both low and high skilled individuals is higher amongst those younger and single. Nevertheless, given the limited number of studies (e.g. Musumba et al., 2011; Shehaj, 2015) that have included demographic factors, the current study provides an opportunity to see the role of the two dimensions of age and relationship status in student mobility.

Lastly, despite ethnic conflict having been confirmed as one of the reasons for mobility (Dzvimbo, 2003), studies are silent on how this may influence highly qualified mobility (Christensen et al., 2016) and hence, little is known about the link between ethnic conflict and academic mobility. Amongst the small number of studies, there are those of Bang and Mitra (2013) and Christensen et al. (2016), which investigated the impact of ethnic conflict on mobility by looking at highly qualified refugees in OECD countries, but both considered this from a civil war perspective. The former revealed that ethnic civil war increased mobility

by around 5%, whilst the latter elicited that non-ethnic rather than an ethnic civil war leads to mobility. Further, in spite of the increasing number of Kurdish refugees in Germany providing a good example of the existence of tension between the Kurdish and Turkish peoples (Sirkeci, 2003), only few earlier studies (i.e. Wahlbeck, 1999 and Sirkeci et al., 2012) considered these two groups in one investigation. The former study involved exploring the dispositions of Kurdish refugees from Turkey, Iran and Iraq in the UK and Finland, whilst the latter, investigated Kurdish and Turkish mobility from Turkey to Germany over the last 50 years, through without a specific focus on highly qualified individuals. Hence, there is not much scholarship related to how ethnicity impacts on international student mobility. Accordingly, the sample for this study also included 10 Kurdish students, whose voices provide an important contribution in revealing how ethnicity influences the mobility plans of these minority group students'.

3.2. Educational Factors (Degree Level /Field of Study/ Funding Source)

Educational factors relating to degree level, field of study and funding source have been identified as factors influencing student mobility. It should be noted that since this study's sample comprised PhD students, there is a comparative analysis across the different degree levels. Further, few scholars have investigated the impact of year of study on mobility as proposed in this study. For example, one study by Soon (2010) elicited that bachelor and postgraduate students exhibit a range of differences in terms of the rate of return and reasons for willingness to do so as opposed to remaining abroad.

Regarding degree level, a commonly held view is that mobility is higher amongst postgraduate students than bachelor ones. In this regard, Bhagwati (2003) and Stephan et al. (2013) found that many immigrants in the USA first arrived in the country to acquire a PhD and then pursued post-doctorate study. Gungor and Tansel (2005) also discovered that the staying rates for Turkish students remaining abroad are higher for postgraduate students than for bachelor degree holders. Similarly, Hercog and van de Laar (2013) examined the future migration plans of Indian students in a number of universities in India and found that PhD and post-doctoral students exhibited a greater tendency to migrate to another country than undergraduate and masters ones, a finding supported by a number of other studies (e.g. Soon, 2010). In contrast, Yoon et al. (2013) analysed 323 South Korean international students in

Japan and China and concluded that, in comparison to undergraduate and masters students, PhD students have a greater tendency to return home. Additionally, some research, such as that of McGill (2013), based on international students from 43 countries in USA universities, did not find any correlation between degree level and migration behavior, with the conclusion that degree level does not impact on students' location choice after graduation. In addition, the same study also recommended that, rather than degree level, the length of stay abroad should be taken account of in future work.

Regarding length of stay, some studies such as one by Card (1982) based on Philipinnoes graduating from schools in the USA, investigated why some students chose to return, whilst others remained. The study included the impact of the variable of length of stay on mobility and the findings revealed that, the longer this was, the greater the mobility. Similarly, according to Soon (2012), length of stay has a significant impact on students' mobility plans. His study revealed that international students who stayed for a longer period in New Zealand had an increasing probability to remain there, rather than either returning home or going to a third country. He explained this result as becoming familiar with New Zealand and gaining sufficient knowledge in order to draw comparisons between the home and host countries. Similarly, Gungor and Tansel (2006) discovered that length of stay has an impact on mobility in a positive sense. They gave a possible explanation for this as being increasing ties and attachment to the host country. This leads to an increasing psychological distance from both the social and work environment regarding the home country.

In contrast to earlier studies (e.g. Yoon et al., 2013; McGill, 2013) that looked at the impact of degree level on mobility, for the current research, the impact of year of study is investigated, specifically whether or not mobility differs for those still an early stage of their PhD (1st and 2nd years) and those nearing the end (3rd and 4th years). Hence, this can be seen one of the important contributions of this study.

In terms of the field of study, whilst some authors (e.g. Hercog and van de Laar, 2013) have claimed that social science students have a greater propensity to migrate than science ones, others (e.g. Aslangbengui and Montecinos, 1998; de Grip et al., 2009; Finn, 2012; SVR, 2012; MPG, 2012) hold that international science students are less likely to return to their home country. Soon (2010), in his study of the determinants of the return intentions of international students from a number of different disciplines, showed that health science students have a

lesser tendency to return home than those from humanities disciplines. He explained this as due to the applicability and transferability of skills and knowledge from the host to the home country. For some disciplines, it might be difficult or even impossible to transfer knowledge and skills, if they return home, especially students from less developed countries. Vasiljeva (2014) has attributed the higher tendency of natural science and medical students to remain in Denmark than social science ones to the demands of the Danish economy for certain skilled professionals or the level of proficiency in the host country's language that students are required to have. In a recent study by Han et al. (2015) it has been suggested that, in addition to the field of study, it is also important to consider whether a student's career plans are based on being in academia or outside of it. From their research investigating the return or non-return intentions of 166 international masters and PhD students' from thirty-two countries studying in the USA, it emerged that the career plan of a student after graduation was the main driver behind his/her willingness to remain in the USA or not. Moreover, there was a significant difference between those who wanted to pursue their career in academia and those who did not. 90% of students who intended to continue in a non-academic/research area wished to remain in the USA, whereas those intending to pursue academic-research exhibited an 86% probability of leaving.

Given that previous studies (i.e. MPG, 2012) have often indicated that science students are more likely not to return to their home country than social science students, it is understandable that much work has been focused on the former (e.g. Finn, 2012; de Grip et al., 2009). Furthermore, some studies, rather than comparing students from different disciplines, have investigated just one (e.g. management students by Baruch, et al. [2007] and accounting students by Pengelly et al. [2008]). McGill (2013) has recommended that future studies should be based on a comparison of international students from a number of different disciplines; and it is for this reason that the sample size in the current research consists of PhD students from a number of different disciplines across both the sciences and social sciences.

Lastly, a number of countries provide funding programmes both to support PhD students' mobility in order to increase their international skills and to ensure that there is some form of guarantee that the students will return. For example the "Young Talent Programme" in Brazil (Han et al., 2015) and a scholarship by the Turkish Education Foundation (TEV) in Turkey are manifestations of such programmes for those wishing to study abroad. When it comes to

the impact of the funding source on mobility, a commonly held opinion (e.g Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012; Bouwel and Carine; 2010) is that a significant proportion of non-returning students are those self-funding or funded by the host countries' institutions and organisations. As Bouwel and Veugelers (2012) have explained, funding from a home country may be a contractual obligation, thus making the return of a student mandatory, rather than he or she being given a choice, or a student may consider his or her return as a duty so as to contribute to the home country's development. If they do not return to Turkey or fail in their studies, they have to pay a large penalty (Turkish National Education Service, 2015). Research by Bouwel (2010) comprised a detailed analysis of PhD students' funding sources in terms whether these were through a grant or fellowship from a home country institution or a host country one. She found that the source of funding played a crucial role in a student's decision to stay or return, concluding that made who remained in the host country were more likely to be funded by the host country. Hence, she suggested that one way of attracting European PhD students to return from the USA would be to provide a funding source from the home country and recommended that the topic of the dissertation should be considered as another way of attracting students back when providing funding. In other words, funding should be based on European rather than USA oriented dissertation topics, with the aim of providing easier application of a topic title to EU society.

Overall, the funding source for studying has been confirmed in earlier studies (e.g. Bouwel and Carine, 2010) as an important indicator regarding students' return or non-return decisions. By considering the mobility differences between PhD students funded by Turkish sources and those by the host country, as well as self-funding, the impact of funding on student mobility will be uncovered. Further, considering that this study's framework is founded on the application of Structuration Theory and the Capability Approach, the analysis will be based on how an agent's capabilities are enabled and/or inhibited by factors at the macro and micro levels when seeking to become mobile. From this perspective, if funding from a home country makes returning home inevitable, as suggested by Bouwel and Veugelers (2012), then according to the study's framework funding should be considered as an inhibiting factor at the micro level for students who are wanting to remain abroad, but having been funded by the Turkish Government. That is, international students from Turkey who are funded by Turkish Government organisations, are expected to return and work for a period of time as directed by the government (compulsory service is often double the study period) in places chosen by it. If it is found that students in this predicament still strive to

remain abroad, uncovering the means by which they achieve this, will constitute a novel contribution to the field of mobility research.

3.3. Attachment Factors

Moving to a new cultural environment can bring both challenge and excitement (Geeraert et al., 2013). The movement of students is not only a physical journey from the home to the host country, but also one that includes multifarious changes, in particular in terms of their ways of thinking, feeling and behaving (Yang et al., 2006). In addition to the problems faced by in the host-country by students, international students also face unique culturally based problems, caused by the new experiences (Church, 1982). Findings from earlier studies (i.e. Furnham, 2004; Poyrazli and Lopez, 2007; Yuan, 2010, Wilson, 2011; Duru and Poyrazli, 2011; Wang and Hannes, 2014) suggest that discrimination, lack of efficient language propensity, financial problems, difficulty interacting with the host society and poor social support (i.e. family and friendship), are some of the common issues faced during the adaptation processes of international students.

With regard to mobility, adaptation has also emerged as an important determinant for international students as to whether to return to the home or to remain in the host country. For instance, the prominent role of adaptation in student mobility was underlined by a study of Baruch et al. (2007), which was based on the mobility plans of international management students in the UK and the USA. They showed that adaptation was one of the most common reasons for the return or non-return decisions of those students. Further, some studies considering the macro perspective, such as that of Poyrazli et al. (2004), have contended that a student's adaptation to a host country depends on cultural similarities and dissimilarities between the home and host countries. Accordingly, from their study, they provided evidence that Asian students have greater adjustment difficulties than Europeans in the USA as a result of the dissimilarities between Asian and Western cultures. Other scholars (e.g. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Zong et al., 2009; Delicado, 2010; Paile and Fatoki, 2014; Chen, 2016) from an agency perspective have highlighted that, at micro level, the agents, in this case students, can develop attachments with people (i.e. formal and informal ties) and locations (a sense of belonging), which lead to adaptations aimed at fitting in with the host country, and that this can also impact positively on their mobility plans.

Regarding attachment to people, as suggested by Ackers and Gills (2009), it is important to consider the fact that mobiles are "human beings with personalities and families" (Ackers and Gills, 2009, p14). According to Meyer (2001), the mobility of highly qualified people relies on more extensive and diverse networks than for low qualified individuals. Further, Bilecen and Faist (2014), in their study based on the effect of networks on the academic mobility of international students, asserted how these students should not seen as a homogenous group because, whilst some build an active network in the country of study as well as retaining these formal and informal ties even after returning back to their home countries, others do not either create networks or maintain these formal and informal ties after leaving their country of study. Whilst some earlier scholars (e.g. Szelrnyi 2006; Appelt et al., 2015) have explored whether formal ties, such as students' professional ones (i.e. research collaboration), are stronger in the home or host country in relation to mobility, the majority of prior research has emphasised informal family and friendship ties as being stronger drivers (e.g. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Soon, 2010; Lindberg et al., 2014) in this context.

Delicado (2010) investigated mobility trends and motivations of Portuguese PhD seniors and students and revealed that a willingness to be close to the family was a main reason for returning home. Similarly, a study by Soon (2010), focused on international students in New Zealand also showed that the return or not return decisions of international students were mainly shaped by family considerations. Along the same lines, the crucial role of family ties regarding student mobility was revealed by a number of other studies (i.e. Szelrnyi, 2006; Hazen and Albert, 2006; Gibson and Mckenzei, 2009; Paile and Fatoki, 2014). Chen (2016) investigated returned Chinese academics experiences and found that family was an important dimension influencing their return decision. The same study also revealed that a feeling of responsibility for looking after ageing parents was often mentioned by participants. Moreover, some research, such as that by Gungor and Tansel (2005), underlined the impact of family support on the return or remain decisions of PhD students from Turkey in the USA. Their findings revealed that the likelihood of remaining abroad increased with the support of family. Accordingly, they concluded that, particularly for Asian countries like Turkey where family ties are strong, individuals' mobility decisions are particularly shaped by the family aspect. In addition, some other scholars, such as Lu et al. (2009), highlighted gender differences in mobility decision making. They showed that whilst, Chinese male students decisions to remain in or leave Canada was driven by such matters as age and academic performance, family played a predominant role in female students' mobility. Similarly,

findings from the study by Chen (2016) also showed that the impact of family ties on Chinese academics return decisions differed according to gender. That is, the family aspect of desiring to be close to kin was found to play a significant role in the mobility decisions of female academics, which was not the case with males ones.

Similar to family ties, some other studies (e.g. Hazen and Albert, 2006; MPG, 2012) revealed that friendship ties are also important in international student mobility. For instance, Paile and Fatoki (2014) elicited that such ties were just as important as family ones in the context of international students leaving or staying in South Africa. Lindberg et al. (2014) investigated the mobility patterns and transnational networks of 450 graduated international students in Zurich to find out whether they could fit within the frame of 'brain drain' or 'brain circulation'. They revealed that the desire of being with family and friends was the second most common reason in the decision to return home. Again, other studies, such as that of Soon (2012) showed that international students with strong family and friends ties in their home countries were less likely to remain in New Zealand.

In addition to family and friendship ties, the attachment of a student towards a country, or in other words whether a student has a stronger sense of belonging a home or a host country, has also been shown in some research to be a significant driver behind mobility. In this regard, Chen (2016) suggested that the mobility decisions of academics are not shaped solely by career related factors, but also, a willingness to be close to the home society and family. She defined this is as 'nostalgic feeling toward home' (p56). This includes, in addition to family ties, a feeling of cultural belonging towards the country. According to the same study, a feeling of lack of belonging to the host society and being keen to assist in the development of China, were key reasons behind the return of most Chinese scholars. Further, she also noted that social science academics compared to natural science ones, particularly those whose research was related to China, had a stronger attachment to Chinese society, which appeared as a major return motivation. Hazen and Alberts (2006) also found that a feeling of not belonging to the USA and lack of friends, which often manifested itself as homesickness and loneliness, appeared as one of the important reasons for a willingness to return by international students to a home country in the context of international student mobility. Along the same lines, a study by Kellogg (2012), based on Chinese international students in the USA, suggested that the economic boost in China was not the only encouraging factor for

Chinese returnees, for behind this was also the desire to assist in the development of the country. Thus, national sentiment played a major role.

In summary, findings from earlier studies (i.e. Baruch et al., 2007) have suggested that adaptation is a significant determinant of students' return or non-return plans to their home countries. Further, from the agency perspective, previous scholars (i.e. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Gibson and Mckenzei, 2009; Soon, 2012) have indicated that attachment to people and a location plays an important role in the adaptation process and, hence, the mobility of international students. In this study, by investigating attachment factors, including family and friendship ties, together with a sense of belonging towards Turkey and the UK, the impact of these factors on the mobility of PhD students will be uncovered.

4. Conclusion

In this chapter, how international students' return and non-return plans to their home countries are shaped by various underlying factors at the micro and macro levels has been discussed and summarised. In this regard, first, the impact of structural factors, namely, economic, political, professional and socio-cultural ones in relation to student mobility has been considered. Subsequently, the role of demographic, educational and attachment factors or in other words agency factors, in students' plans to return or non-return to their home countries has been explained through consideration of investigations into different countries' experiences of this matter.

Regarding factors at the macro level, this chapter has been shown how the findings of different scholars' point to a variety of factors influencing student responses with, for example, professional aspects playing a major role in some students' return or non-return plans, whilst political aspects are more salient for others. In previous studies, it has been explained that, because each country has its own individual economic, political and socio-cultural features, the factors influencing mobility may differ according to the students' country of origin and their destination countries. That is, the factors impacting on international students' return or non-return plans to their home may be different, for example, for Chinese students in the USA when compared those from Turkey in the UK. Whilst accepting there have been a few studies that investigated the trajectory of international

students from Turkey, these did not consider the combinations of the main structural and agency factors impacting on those students' return and non-return plans and hence, the aim of the current research is to address this gap in extant literature.

PART 2 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

CHAPTER 3: Structuration Theory

This chapter reviews Anthony Giddens' Structuration Theory (ST), which is one of the theoretical approaches adopted for this research, by explaining its main features and the reasons behind why this particular theoretical approach was deemed appropriate given the context of the study, namely, international student mobility. Additionally, the advantages and disadvantages of ST are considered together with explanation on how to overcome the shortcomings of the theory.

1. Introduction and Background

Several theoretical and empirical approaches have been developed to explain international student mobility. Generally, the reasons for international student mobility have been based on human capital theory and consumption choice (Shehaj, 2015). From a human capital perspective, international student mobility is seen as an investment activity such as the expectation of better job opportunities and higher wages in the future (Sá et al., 2004). From a consumption perspective, non-pecuniary reasons (e.g. better quality of life, adventure) have been seen as the main reasons for students' mobility (Beine et al., 2013). Recently, an increasing number of studies has been conducted by using human capital theory (Agaisisti and Bianco, 2007). For instance, a well-known study by Rosenzweig (2006) proposed two models, the "school-constrained model" and the "migration model", to explain international student mobility. These two models are based on a cost-benefit analysis of the return on education. The former explains the main motivation behind international students' mobility as a consequence of insufficient educational facilities in a home country. Therefore, students acquire their education in a foreign country with the ultimate goal of increasing their human capital (higher return of education) and returning to their home country. The latter migration model assumes that international student mobility occurs when the returns from education are not high in their home country so that studying abroad becomes a tool in order to enter and stay in a host country.

International student mobility, whether it is seen as a part of taking up opportunities for the purpose of career development or as a part of becoming a permanent resident, has become a

common aspect for many students (Conradson and Latham, forthcoming). Nevertheless findings from a high number of studies (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2003; Dreher and Pautvaara, 2005; Bouwel and Carine; 2010) support Rosenzweig's (2006) "migration model". International students' mobility is often considered a subset of international migration more generally as well as a subset of highly skilled migration (Beine et al., 2013) and a precursor for future highly skilled migration (Tremblay, 2004). Hercog and Van de Laar (2013) point out that studying abroad is a kind of investment for international students, working and living in the country of study or moving to a third country instead of returning home. Bhagwati (2003) proposes that studying in the United States is the simplest way for foreigners to stay in the USA. He adds that it has been assumed that over 70% of foreign PhD students remain and gather citizenships in the USA. A recent survey by (the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration) (2012), based on over 6000 students from 25 universities in 5 countries (the United Kingdom, France, The Netherlands, Germany and Sweden), investigated international students' intentions for returning/non-returning to their home country by highlighting the main motivations behind their propensity to return/non return. The study's findings showed that two thirds of total students have a willingness to remain abroad after graduation (MPG, 2012b).

With regard to international students' mobility, as an aspect of international migration, it is necessary to refer to the main theories on international migration. Generally, international migration has been explained through following two distinct approaches: functionalism and structuralism (Goss and Linguist, 1995). Whilst, functionalism emphasizes a micro-economic process through consideration of the decision-making process of an individual, structuralism focuses on how social and economic processes at the macro level affect agency (Kurekova, 2011). Functionalism has been criticized for attributing a lack of a freedom of choice to individuals, which the structuralist approach advocates. Correspondingly, functionalists have criticized structuralists, stating that they ignore agency and assume that people are simply victims (de Haas, 2008). These two different theoretical approaches have led to a separation of micro and macro level analysis in migration studies (Goss and Linguist, 1995). However, using only one level of analysis does not provide a complete explanation of influental structural (macro) and agency (micro) factors in international migration (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005).

As a consequence of the dualistic structure in the social sciences, such as objectivism versus subjectivism, understanding the relationship between agency and structure has been an ongoing problem. This is also a key challenge for theories of mobility/migration, which have often relied on avoiding the problem of agency and structure despite its significance (Bakewell, 2010). Some authors (e.g. Arango, 2000; Castles and Miller, 2009) underline either the difficulty or the impossibility of establishing a universal theory as consequence of the complex characteristics of mobility/migration. According to de Haas (2008), the complexity of incorporating macro and micro level theories is one of the reasons for this difficulty.

There are number of theories which seek alternatives to the dualism that exists between agency and structure by offering a bridge between macro and micro level analyses (Kort and Gharbi, 2013), such as the morphogenetic Theory of Archer (1995) and Giddens' Structuration theory (1984). In order to achieve this study's objectives, both structural (macro) and agency (micro) factors and the relationship between the two need to be investigated. For this reason, this study will adopt the theory of structuration, which provides a means to bring both micro and macro influential factors into one framework (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; Akcapar, 2006).

2. Relevance of Structuration Theory

This study analyses the factors (structural and agency factors) underlying international students plans for their return or non-return to Turkey. It is arguable to what extent international students' plans reveal their actual mobility behaviours after graduation. As there might alter over time. However, at this stage, their plans provide an important indication of how many are willing to remain or return after completing their studies (MPG, 2012) and what factors influence these plans. As Ajzen (1991) proposes, plans are reliable predictors of eventual behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Revealing international students' plans in this study provides an indication of their future actual mobility behaviour, in accordance with Giddens' notion of strategic life-style planning.

Giddens builds up his views on modernity together with the relationship between new modern society and agency in his book Modernity and Self Identity (1991). He highlights the

important role of "strategic life-style planning" as a result of the number of life-style options in modern life, referring to life planning as a preparation of future actions of a human agency (Giddens, 1991). In other words, in a modern world, choices are greater than ever and strategic life-style planning is a tool of expression of human agency (Whittington, 2001). According to Giddens, there should be a separation between the notion of an option and a feasible option. The reason for this is that, if an agent has only one option, he or she loses agency because he or she cannot act otherwise. However, instead of saying that agency has only one feasible option, this also includes an agent's desires or wants; in other words, an agent still has motivations, which make it fairer to pursue (Thompson, 1984; Held and Thompson, 1989). Therefore, according to Giddens (1984, p177), structural constraints "limit the feasible range of options open to an actor in a given circumstance".

This research is based on international PhD students' from Turkey who are highly educated individuals with an internationally recognizable degree. Additionally, mobility has become easier and quicker than ever before, particularly, in comparison to unqualified people, as qualified people are freer to move (Smith and Favell, 2006), so there are a number of options for such students in relation to their future mobility plans. Consequently, this research will consider mobility as an option to stay abroad (in the UK or to move to a third country) or return to Turkey. It will endeavour to discover what the plans of international students from Turkey are after their graduation from UK universities, regarding the possibility of working and living in a foreign country (the UK or a third country) or returning back to Turkey.

The theoretical framework for this study is Giddens's Structuration Theory (see Figure: 1 on p. 118), which began in the New Rules of Sociological Method (1976) and the Central problems of Social Theory (1979), before a full presentation of the structuration theory was given in The Constitution of Society: Outline of the theory of Structuration (1984). This study will adopt three elements of Structuration theory namely: duality of structure, agency and power.

2.1. Duality of Structure

This study aims to reveal how different factors impact on international students' mobility. In order to achieve its objectives, both structure (macro) and agency (micro) level factors and

the relationship between the two need to be investigated. Existing studies in the mobility field are mainly based on macro level analysis. However, using only one level of analysis does not provide a complete explanation for influential internal (micro) and external (macro) factors (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005). In particular, international students' return or non-return decision process has been mainly investigated through the utilization of a push-pull model, a concept based on the neo-classic economic approach (Lu et al., 2009). However, the push-pull model has a number of weaknesses and limitations (de Haas, 2008): first, in the absence of structural constraints, it represents a cost-benefit analysis of individuals; secondly, it is impossible to explain return migration as a partial consequence of ignoring individuals' aspirations; thirdly, as a result of focusing only on external forces and causes of migration, it is a static model which makes its analytical application limited; finally, it does not answer the question of whether pull or push factors are more decisive in a mobility decision because it does not allow us to see the weight of different factors that impact on the decision making process.

Along the same lines, Han et al. (2015) argue that previous studies based on a push/pull model are concerned with a macro level analysis and place only limited emphasis on determinants at an individual level. These studies examine only the impact of single pull-push factors on international students' return or non-return decisions, rather than the interrelation between push and pull factors. According to Han et al. (2015), this explanation is far from providing a complete picture and the interactions between factors need to be explored. They found that international students' decision making processes depend on the interrelation of a number of factors, namely, socio-cultural, professional and individual.

Corresponding to theories based on a structural or an agency perspective, Giddens offers the notion of 'Duality of structure', which is also seen as the central span of structuration theory (Kort and Gharbi, 2013). Whilst a traditional dualistic analysis involves either a micro or macro level analysis, it is based on thinking of structure as external to agency (human action) (Kipo, 2014). The notion of 'Duality of Structure' is what Giddens calls the "phoney war" in order to highlight and overcome the distinction between micro (agency) and macro (structure) in social science (Layder, 2005).

Giddens argues that the relationship between agency and structure is simply dialectical (Ritzer, 2004). In other words, instead of separating agency from structure, Giddens thinking

requires agency and structure to be seen "as always interdependent and interrelated" (O'Reilly, 2012, p17). He proposes that micro (agency) and macro (structure) factors are connected in that they cooperate with each other and that neither of them is more important than the other; this is what he called the "duality of structure" (Wolfel, 2005; Lamsal, 2012; Bell and Thorpe, 2013). According to Giddens, structure is produced, continued and changed through agency. For this reason it is not accurate to conceptualize or analyse structure independently from agency (Kipo, 2014). The notion is proposed by Giddens as follows "the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize. Structure is not 'external' to individuals" (Giddens 1984, p25). In other words, corresponding to widespread dissatisfaction of traditional dualism in social science, Giddens offers the notion of the dependent nature of structure and agency. Structures are a vital source for action, which are also being either produced or reproduced through this action (Whittington, 2010). Another important point that he stresses is freedom of action, highlighting enabling and inhibiting roles of structures as against human actions (Hond et al., 2012). According to Giddens, structures should not be seen only as inhibiting but also enabling. This means that structures determine and inhibit human action (agency); the same structural factors also enable agency to take possible action (Barker, 2004).

A number of studies have adopted structuration theory (e.g. Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; Morawska, 2001/2011; O'Reilly, 2012) in order to explain mobility/ migration. These studies suggest that "duality of structure" provides a means to bring both influential micro and macro factors into one framework (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; Akcapar, 2006). For instance, Richmond (1993) in his study criticizes first the push/pull model, highlighting the shortcomings of the neo-classic theory and adopting Structuration Theory to provide an understanding of the movements of refugees by underlying the interaction between both motivational and social structural factors. He provides an explanation for how refugees' migration propensities are shaped by the interaction of a number of determinants, namely, for instance, environmental, political and economic. Along the same lines, Wolfel (2005) outlines the application of structuration theory in the migration decision making process by applying all six elements of Giddens' Structuration theory. He concluded that structuration theory provides a comprehensive explanation for migration studies by bringing both micro and macro factors into one framework. Similarly, Healey (2006), in his study uses structuration theory to explain the relation between asylum seekers/refugees experiences in the UK and structural/agency factors, focusing on how these migrants' experiences impacted

on their comfort level in the UK. The application of this theory allowed Healey to remove the dualism between agency and structure. One of the main aims of Healey's study was to present these migrants voices and their experiences, representing a theoretical contribution to refugee studies, and to show that the experiences of these two groups of migrants are influenced by both structural and agency factors.

Overall, instead of analyzing structural and agency factors separately, duality of structure suggests that we should pay the same level of attention to structure and agency without prioritizing either. It also allows us to see both structural and agency factors together with the relationship between them in one framework. A key element in the objectives of this research is to bring together both the structural and agency factors influencing international students' mobility plans.

2.2. Agency

In structuration theory, the agent (social actor) is an important subject of the social system (Stjernström, 2004). Giddens criticises both objectivism and subjectivism. He criticises objectivism as only emphasizing structures and viewing people as puppets, whose actions are constrained by these objective forces in social systems. According to him, the problem with subjectivism is that structures are totally produced by agents and their actions. Giddens argues for finding a way between objectivism and subjectivism (Ritzer, 2004; Parker, 2010). According to him, the main purpose of social analysis is to understand the activities of people (Whittington, 2010). For that reason, agents should receive more attention as 'social actors'/ individuals playing a crucial role in the social system (Stjernström, 2004). Structuration theory allows researchers to study and focus on the behaviours of agents in society by emphasizing the characteristics of the agent (Kort and Gharbi, 2013).

According to Giddens an agent is a "knowledgeable and capable subject" (Cloke et al., 1991, p97), aware of what and why he/she is taking a particular course of action (Wolfel, 2005). To be an agent means being purposeful, as people can provide reasons for their activities and are able "If asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons" (Giddens, 1984, p3). A purposeful agent means a person who is aware of his/her goals (purposes) and acts according to these (Hond et al., 2012). The agent in Giddens theory is both 'reflexive' and 'self-

monitoring', so capable of acting according to changing situations (Pérez, 2008). According to "The stratification model of the agent" (Giddens, 1984, p5), the three components of the actions/ behavior of an agent are: ***reflexive monitoring of action,*** a component influenced by an interpretivist approach (Pérez, 2008) and referring to the purposeful or intentional nature of people's behavior as they monitor both their own activities and the activities of others (Giddens, 1979; 1984); ***'rationalization of the action',*** as agents "maintain a continuing theoretical understanding of the grounds of their activity"(Giddens, 1984, p5); and ***motivation of action,*** implying the motives and desires driving us to act, which can be both conscious and unconscious (Thompson, 1984; Pérez, 2008) as agents' actions are composed of both intentional and unintentional actions (Wolfel, 2005). Furthermore, Giddens suggests that behaviors of the agent are driven by rationality, based on knowledge about society (Stjernström, 2004). The concept of human agents implies that people are knowledgeable about the social structures that constrain and enable them (Goss and Linguist, 1995).

According to Giddens, knowledgeability of an agent is a compromise between knowledge about recognition of their own actions and knowledge of the rules that they followed. Continuity of action occurs when an agent knows how to act in a particular situation as well as adjusts his/her actions in response to changes in the situation (Hond et al., 2012). At the same time, Giddens also shows the limits of people's knowledgeability as being constrained by the unconscious consequences of action (these do not necessarily need to be rational, if they are dictated by some unconscious behavior that a person is not aware of, and are often disregarded if they relate to conforming to society or financial motivations) and the unacknowledged/unintended consequences of action (referring to the results of activities when they are different from those expected) (Giddens, 1984; Wolfel, 2005).

Giddens' agency view is closely aligned with the aim of this research because, first, it is based on social actors (PhD students) with the aim of revealing the voices of students. Second, instead of simply seeing international students' return or non-return plans to Turkey as only the result of macro (structural) factors such as economic, political and socio-cultural factors, it seeks to show how micro (agency) factors such as gender, field of study and age influence international students' return/non-return plans, as well as the interaction between agency and structure. In order to ascertain this, it will explore the answers to the following two questions: what are the structural and agency factors impacting on international students' mobility?; and how do structural and agency factors enhance or inhibit the capability of students to become

mobile? Furthermore, it will view international students as capable, knowledgeable and purposeful actors, rather than viewing them as victims who cannot act upon structural constraints. This means that it is assumed that international students are aware of their goals and act according to these in relation to where they want to work and live after graduation and that they are knowledgable about constraining factors, which either do not allow them or limit their performance in achieving their goals. This is closely linked with Giddens view on agents.

In addition, as Giddens asserts, an agent has the capacity to transform structural factors and the application of Structuration theory can enable us to see how an agent challenges structures, in other words how people go about exercising agency in spite of inhibiting structural factors (Briones, 2013). For instance, a study by Goss and Lindquist (1995) utilizes structuration theory in the examination of international migration from the Philippines. They conceptualize a migrant as a knowledgable actor taking actions through institutions (particularly institutions of migration), which perform according to resources and rules as proposed by Giddens. On this point, we can see how students develop their capabilities despite the challenges of constraining structural factors. Additionally, the experiences of international students in a host country are shown as one of the significant determinants in their return/non return plans to their home country (e.g. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Han et al., 2015; Bilecen and Faist, 2015). Using Structuration Theory, Healey (2010) explains how asylum seekers and refugee experiences in the UK vary according to gender, finding that there is a significant difference between males and females in the use of coping strategies. He concludes that adapting structuration theory allows us to see how each individual experience is shaped differently by patriarchal structures. Therefore, just as adaptation of structuration theory allows us to gain an understanding of peoples' experiences in a host country in this case, it will help to give an insight into the experiences of international students from Turkey in the UK.

2.3. Power

In structuration theory, structure comprises resources and rules. Rules are divided into two types, normative where legitimizing action is a central concern and interpretative, based on how an agency interprets the world and related to the cognitive aspect of structure (Hond et

al., 2012). Similarly, resources consist of authoritative resources (having authority over other people/non-material resources) and allocative resources (having authority over material objects/material resources). Structures not only constrain human actions through rules but resources also enhance the actions of agency (Lamsal, 2012). The idea is that resources and rules are transformative, which means that they can be initiated, manufactured and reformed in different ways (Turner, 1986). Agents' actions are guided by rules but capacity is still required. Such capacity demands resources in order to perform (Turner, 2013). Giddens defines power as "the capacity to achieve desired and intended outcomes" (Giddens, 1984, p15) and as separate from resources, which means that power itself is not a kind of resource (Haugaard, 1997). Basically, resources generate power, in other words an agent uses resources in exercising power. Therefore, the notion of power, which may sometimes be unseen as both an enabling and inhibiting subject, comes from both authoritative and/or allocative resources (Haslett, 2013).

Unlike many theories, Giddens visualizes power not as a competition between people to achieve supremacy or between social classes but rather as a relationship between agency and power (Kipo, 2014), based on the capacity of the agent to "make a difference to the pre-existing state of affairs" (Giddens, 1984, p14). For him, power can be seen as a productive determinant, which refers to altering something. There is always a number of choices in people's lives and people have a degree of freedom in taking decisions. So that power is two-way (dimension of relationships) rather than one way (power of an individual over another) (Hond et al., 2012). In other words, an agent's ability to make a difference refers to the use of power (Gaventa, 2003; Whittington, 2010). Giddens also proposes that an "Agent is able to act otherwise" (Giddens, 1984, p14), implying the ability to contribute to a particular system even if he/she makes only a small difference to the world and agency has the capacity to either adhere to one system of practices or reject another (Whittington, 2010). According to Giddens, being an agent means having power. Therefore, the failure of the agent's capability of making a difference results in the termination of being an agent (Wolfel, 2005). He proposes that all agents have power (Whittington, 2001), though not at the same level, as some human agency has more power than others. The reason for this is that agents are empowered by structures at different levels, so that both agency and structures have different levels of power (Kipo, 2014). Further, in ST realisation of where their power emanates from, in other words what is its source and how this can be used, is important in order to determine the level of influence of the agent (Wolfel, 2005).

Morawska (2001, 2009)'s research is based on Polish migrants in America. According to her, existing migration studies do not offer a complete explanation for how people's options are shaped by structural factors and how they act upon these structural factors. In her study in applying structuration theory, she interpreted migrants as followers of their purposes "playing with or against different structures" (Morawska, 2009, p54) and their actions' are analysed according to the dialectic structure of power rather than looking at their activities as either produced only by structural factors or as related with agent. According to Wolfel (2005), power is an important dimension in migration/mobility studies. In some situations an agent loses the capabilities to influence the society, so also losing their agent status; therefore, moving into another society becomes an opportunity to regain this status. Again, Panahi (2012) in his study, based on the migration of academics from Iranian Universities, refers to the power element of Giddens, seeing, academics/professionals attach to the creation of change in society by using their capabilities. If they do not have the capability to make changes in the society where they live, once they find better opportunities, they will leave their country.

The research will attempt to reveal what factors influence a student's return or non-return plans to Turkey. In order to ascertain this, it is crucial to identify those resources of students which impact on their return/non return plans as well as showing their negotiations between choices and constraints, emanating from both agency and structural factors. Since the research considers international students as knowledgable, capable and purposeful individuals who are able to act upon constraining structures in some way, Giddens proposes that all agents have power and he sees power as transformative, in other words as the agent's capacity to perform upon structural factors (Lacroix, 2012). Giddens' power dimension will allow us to gain an understanding of students' resources and how resources influence their capabilities together with their plans to return or non-return to Turkey.

3. Shortcomings of Structuration Theory

Giddens' Structuration theory has been criticized by a number of authors, who can be categorized into three groups (Hond et al., 2012).

First, the main problem is seen as his notion of duality of structure, which has received a number of criticisms from Archer (1982; 1995; 1996), who criticizes Giddens' concept of an interdependent and interrelated relationship between agency and structure as "there is no sense in which it can be either emergent or autonomous or pre-existent or causally influential" (Archer, 1995, p97). Instead of conflating structure and agency, she has developed a morphogenetic cycle approach by suggesting analytical dualism, which is based on the independent existence of structure and agency (Archers, 1982; 1995). Similarly, Bakewell (2010), in his article "Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory" argues that there is a significant issue of articulation of a balance between agency and structure in the migration process. According to him, the missing part of structuration theory is that it does not offer a sufficient guideline as to how the balance between agency and structure can be achieved. Along the same lines, Kort and Gharbi (2013) state that Giddens focuses on agency rather than structure, giving the example of Giddens' power definition, based on human capacity, which ignores the power of structure so that the concept of duality of structure does not allow us to avoid a dualism between agency and structure.

The second criticism is the applicability of structuration theory to empirical research. Critics such as Gregson (1989) propose a dialectical relationship between agency and structure, in other words duality of structure, as agency and structure cannot be conceived separately. This makes it difficult to uncover the relationship between agency and structure, therefore limiting the empirical application of theory. Moreover, he concludes that structuration theory generates neither research questions nor proper categories for empirical research, as well as not showing clearly the application of theory into empirical research. Similarly, a number of authors (Craib, 2011; Hond et al., 2012) point out that structuration theory suffers from providing a complete and comprehensive explanation of the operational usage of agency and structure, which makes it difficult to adapt this theory to empirical research.

Lastly, there is a criticism of structuration theory in terms of the definition of quality. Turner (1986) argues that, although Giddens provides a number of diagrams showing key concepts of his theory, the definition of quality is problematic, being based on unclear and oversimplified explanations. Similar criticism comes from Jones and Karsten (2003) and Craib (2011). Craib (2011) highlights the difficulty of reading Giddens, describing structuration theory as akin to an omelette, which, given its ingredients, offers insufficient explanation as to how we can bring and organize these ingredients on to one plate. Similarly,

Jones and Karsten (2003, p8) claim that the main difficulty in structuration theory is "the quantity, density and specificity of Giddens's writing". They add that the main challenge of understanding structuration theory is as a result of the publication of 30 books in the last 30 years by Giddens, which include the development of structuration theory as well as Giddens' responses towards his critics. For instance Giddens responds to the critics of duality of structure by offering a two level analysis: individual and institutional. Goss and Linguist (1995) in their study, entitled "Conceptualizing International Labor Migration: A Structuration Perspective" used this two level analysis, individual and institutional, following Giddens' own recommendation, in order to overcome one of the main shortcomings of structuration theory. Similarly, in relation to the second criticism, which is the application of structuration theory to empirical research, Giddens suggests a number of recommendations to conduct empirical research such as that a researcher should consider the complex skills of an agent, particularly at the institutional analysis stage, as the agent's skills are separated out (Kort and Gharbi, 2013).

Despite a number of criticisms directed at structuration theory, it is advocated in some studies. For instance Chisalita (2006) suggests that the lack of proper guidelines in the theory increases the options of a researcher and makes it possible to use it together with other theories. According to Massey et al. (1998), if we consider current patterns and trends of international migration, the achievement of a complete explanation for international migration will rely on a combination of different levels of analysis and disciplines rather than focusing on one theory and a conceptual model. Moreover, in order to overcome the shortcomings of structuration theory, some authors, such as Kort and Gharbi (2013), suggest that utilization of a qualitative design and presentation of a new framework based on its reformulation would be better to new studies.

This study will provide a new framework through the adaptation and reformulation of both Giddens's Structuration Theory and Sen's Capability Approach into one framework. It will generate a number of contributions within this new framework. As an example, one of the main criticisms of structuration theory is that it does not offer sufficient explanation as to how we can assess the balance between agency and structure, perceived as a consequence of the dual structure between structure and agent. On this point, Sen's capability approach which lays emphasis on an agent will allow us to see micro (agency) by providing a better balance between agency and structure. Similarly, the other criticism is that structuration theory is

mainly based on identification and clarification of the relationships between agent and structure, which fails to provide an examination of the existing relationship between humans (Kort and Gharbi, 2013). By using structuration theory together with the capability approach, the research here could provide an understanding of how the interaction between factors at different levels (macro and micro) influence international students' decision making processes. Briones (2013) study is a good example, entitled "Empowering migrant women: Why agency and right are not enough" of how structuration theory and Capability Approach can be used together, in this case to explain female Philippine migrant domestic workers' international migration. She argues that structuration theory, rather than uncovering the agency situation, allows us to see how agency, through negotiation, transforms these structures and shows how these migrant women "can continue to practice agency despite structural constraints" (Briones, 2013, p10).

4. Conclusion

This chapter started with explaining how there is insufficient understanding of the main drivers behind international mobility due first, to the lack of a comprehensive framework, which integrates both macro and micro factors. Secondly, due to prior research having explained mobility from an economic macro level perspective, this has led to political, social and cultural aspects being commonly overlooked, or subordinated to economic factors. Lastly, owing to most scholarship on mobility being based on the push/pull model, how agency factors impact on mobility has been generally overlooked. Hence, it is concluded that it was vital to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework by including both structural (macro) and agency (micro) factors in the mobility process to uncover its determinants (Favell et al., 2007).

Accordingly, this chapter has sought to show the applicability of Giddens' structuration theory (ST), which facilitates the integration of macro and micro factors, thereby providing understanding of mobility through duality of structure, agency and power. Further, it has also been explained that, given that ST has received some criticism, its disadvantages have been overcome by utilising the theory together with Amartya Sen' Capability approach (CA) in the current research. The reasons for why the current study ST together with CA can deliver

robust insights into international student mobility will be provided in the following part of the thesis (Chapter 4) in detail.

CHAPTER 4: CAPABILITY APPROACH

This chapter discusses the main aspects of Amartya Sen's Capability Approach (CA), which is one of the theoretical approaches of this research. It covers the core characteristics of CA, giving an understanding of how ST and CA complement each other by showing the similarities and dissimilarities between these two together with its applicability for international students' mobility.

1. Introduction and Background

Mobility theories, particularly the neoclassic and the push and pull model, assume that mobility occurs from poorer areas to richer areas because an individual seeks to maximize his/her financial well-being and in the process escape poverty (Suoglu, 2012; de Haas, 2014). Consequently, development, or, in other words, decreasing economic disparities between countries is seen as the main tool to reduce migration (Andersen and Keith, 2014). Nevertheless, most mobility to the richest countries does not come from the poorest ones, but rather from middle-income developing countries (Suoglu, 2012). For instance, outbound mobility is higher from Turkey and Mexico than Sub-Africa (Anderson and Keith, 2014), because mobility requires material (financial), human (knowledge and skills) and social (other people) resources (de Haas, 2014; Schevel, 2015). The assumption of traditional mobility theories is that development negatively affects mobility, but this has to be offset against the fact that improvements in ICT and the decreasing cost of transportation have been shown to be facilitating factors in mobility (Levatino, 2014). Consequently, the traditional mobility approach is unable to provide an explanation for why some people are mobile in particular areas, but others are not (de Haas, 2008) and has also failed to explain why individuals become more mobile when development at the individual (e.g. gaining a better education) and national (e.g. improvement in GDP) levels occurs (de Haas, 2014). Thus, the question "Why is development often associated with more instead of less migration?" (Anderson and Keith, 2014, p1) is still largely unexplored in the literature.

According to de Haas (2014), the main issue in the functionalist and historical-structural theories is that social change in the form of development has been ignored by these theories. He argues that both human and economic development are closely linked to accelerating mobility by highlighting the findings from historical and current data analysis of worldwide

mobility (de Haas, 2010). Accordingly, unlike the existing assumptions of traditional mobility theories, a number of studies have suggested that development in society (from economic to educational) does not reduce mobility, but actually increases individuals' aspirations and leads to increasing mobility capability and aspirations (de Haas, 2014; Anderson and Keith, 2014; Schevel, 2015). In this regard, development at the individual level, such as education, not only increases the skills and knowledge of individuals, but also their awareness of alternative life styles. Therefore, higher education can lead to increased aspirations to mobility (de Haas, 2014). This is supported by evidence that qualified people are freer to move in comparison to those unqualified (Smith and Favell, 2006). Similarly, development at the national level, for instance, improvements in technology, reduces the cost and risk of transportation, which increases individuals' capability for mobility (de Haas, 2014). Accordingly, a number of studies (e.g. Anderson and Keith, 2014; de Haas, 2014; Schevel, 2015) have suggested that the impact of social change in the form of human and economic development on capabilities and aspirations of individuals should be taken account in mobility studies. This is because development increases the accessibility of individuals' to resources, including human, social and material ones, which leads to increasing capabilities and aspirations of individuals for mobility.

The current research is aimed at investigating how students' mobility plans are shaped by factors at the micro and macro levels as well as how far the capabilities of students play a role in this process, particularly in relation to whether or not studying a PhD in the UK enhances the mobility of students. Thus, theoretical and conceptual discussion around the Capability Approach, which interprets mobility as a function of individuals' aspirations and capabilities within a number of given opportunity structures by underlining how increasing capabilities means increasing aspirations to become mobile (de Haas, 2014), will enable understanding of the role of capabilities in mobility. This will involve going beyond a neo-classic economic macro level approach by giving insights into the cultural, political and social aspects underpinning mobility behaviours (Cenci, 2015). First, the core aspects of CA are presented. Subsequently, explanation with regards to the applicability of CA in mobility theories is provided and how its usage together with ST is beneficial for this research is demonstrated.

2. Relevance of Capability Approach (CA)

2.1. Core Aspects of CA

The Capability Approach (CA) in terms of the concept of capability was first proposed by Amartya Sen in 'Equality of What' (1980) and most extensively discussed and formulated in Development as Freedom (1999). Sen, an economist by vocation, introduced a humanitarian approach to his academic field (Agarwal et al., 2003). His theory has been applied to a wide range of disciplines, from development to social policy (Robeyns, 2003). It has also been further developed by a number of authors, in particular Martha Nussbaum and Ingrid Robeyns (Agarwal et al., 2003).

According to Sen, social policies and evaluations should be based on what people are able to be and do as well as on discarding barriers in order to expand the freedoms in their lives, so that they can live a life that they value (Robeyns, 2005). Unlike the traditional approach, which emphasises resources or utility (Clark, 2005), he discusses well-being and development through individuals' capabilities and functionings (Robeyns, 2003). That is, the core focus of CA is based on human well-being and this is understood through capabilities and functionings (Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013). Under the theory, peoples' lives are seen as "a set of 'doings and beings'–we may call them 'functionings'–and it relates to the evaluation of the quality of life to the assessment of the capability to function" (Sen, 1989, p43).

Core aspects of CA are based on three elements: agency, capability and functioning (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). Agency refers to an individual's ability both to realise and pursue desired results he/she has reason to value (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). Sen distinguishes between functioning and capability, whereby "A functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve" (Sen, 1987, p36). In his view, the notion of functioning has its root in Aristotle's writing and pertains to those things that an individual values doing or being (Tungodden, 2001). People's well-being comprises functionings that are valuable states or activities (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009), signifying an actual level of achievement (Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013). An alternative definition is that functionings represents a bunch of valuable activities and states that a person may be doing or being in order to achieve well-being, from being safe to being able to move (Deneulin and McGregor, 2010). They

could be either at the elementary level, such as being safe and being nourished, or more complex, such as having self-respect and being happy (Tungodden, 2001). However, it is important to be aware that functionings differ from both commodities and utilities. They are distinguished from commodities, because the latter reflect the objects that are used by people, whilst the former do not. Similarly, functionings differ from utility in that pleasure or happiness is just one of the aspects of evaluation of well-being in Sen's view, whereas from the classical utilitarian perspective, utility is seen as a metric of either pleasure or happiness in order to assess the well-being of an individual (Sugden, 1993).

Sen defines capabilities as freedoms in order to achieve these valuable activities and states (functionings) (Deneulin and McGregor, 2010; Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). Hence, just as the notion of capability denotes the range of different functionings from which an individual is able to choose, it also reflects the freedom of a person (Saito, 2003). It is also necessary to highlight two important points. First, according to Sen, freedom consists of two elements: opportunity and process. The former element of freedom denotes the capability of the agent to achieve what he/she values, whereas the latter aspect is that involved in the process itself at the personal level (Deneulin and Shahani, 2009). The second element, is that the notion of freedom used in CA should be understood in a positive instead of a negative sense, because according to Sen, freedom reflects "-freedom to-…. rather than -freedom from-" (Sugden, 1993, p1951). The reason for this is explained by Sen as follows: while functionings are closely linked with the living conditions controversy, capabilities in the form of freedom reflect the "positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead" (Sen, 1987, p 48). Freedom is introduced by him as "a good in its own right" (Sugden, 1993, p1951), in that being able to make one's life decisions is a beneficial thing. Thus, freedom can be described as one of the dimensions of human well-being (Sugden, 1993).

The expansion of individuals' capabilities is necessary because it provides a significant contribution to the quality of life (de Haas, 2014). They are based on what individuals are able to do or be rather than what resources they have (Walker, 2005). As such, resources do not carry intrinsic value, but rather we convey value on them if they create opportunity (Saito, 2003). That is, resources create opportunities instead of being an actual end goal and capability development relies on opportunities being created by these resources (Walker, 2005). Thus, the application of CA allows us to see what a person is able to do with the resources available, rather than what ones he/she has (Frohlich et al., 2001). This view is also

closely linked to the understanding of development stance of Sen, which is in contrast to earlier development theories that only consider the phenomenon from an economic standpoint (de Haas, 2008).

His development perspective puts humans first or, in other words, it is a people–centred development approach, the ultimate objective of which is the development of people in terms of their well-being, rather than seeing development as economic performance alone (Jahan, 2002). Sen argues that freedom is a main component of development, because it includes both instrumental value (contribution to economic well-being) and intrinsic value (contribution to quality of life) (de Haas, 2014). Accordingly, development is based on expanding choices of people through the enhancement of their capabilities and functionings, whereby "development is of the people, for the people and by the people" (Jahan, 2002, p2). Under the lens of 'The development of the people', stress is placed on the development of human capital and resources through health, nutrition and education, whilst 'development for the people' refers to its advantages being conveyed on people's lives. Lastly, with this perspective, as development is by the people, this highlights the fact that people are not just affected by development, for they are also directly involved in the process (Jahan, 2002).

Briefly, there are two main important points in his view. First, it is crucial to understand functionings because capability is seen as freedom to reach valuable functionings successfully. Therefore, functionings refer also to individuals' capabilities (Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013). Secondly, there is the need to understand the distinction between functionings and capabilities. Sen explains the difference between capabilities and functionings by emphasising the significance of having freedom to prefer one style of life to another. Consequently, this dimension allows the theory not to focus purely on realised achievements (Sen, 1999). That is, instead of emphasising only achievements, this approach concerns the 'freedom to achieve' in the form of freedom of choice, which is directly related to the quality of life of a person (Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013). Accordingly, capability reflects an individual's freedom to choose between contrasting ways of living and thus, freedom and capabilities cannot be thought of as two separated aspects (Sen, 2005). Consequently, once people have freedoms (capabilities), they can create their life as they want because they allow them to be the person they want to be and also this permits them to do things that they want to do (Robeyns, 2003). Therefore, in Sen's view, the concept of capability can be considered as one of freedom, in particular in relation to the current work

this concerns freedom to participate in education to and freedom to become mobile (Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013).

It is contended here, that the conceptualisation of mobility in relation to the theory of CA is useful for discovering to what extent international students possess the capabilities to become mobile. The reason for this is that the utilisation of CA allows for investigation of the role played by capability, functioning, agency into the mobility process in addition to other factors at the macro level (structural factors), such economic and political factors (Schevel, 2015). In sum, it is argued that CA can explain why some students are mobile, whilst others are not.

2.2. Why Amartya Sen's Capability Approach?

The reasons behind adopting this particular theoretical approach for this thesis are summarized next.

2.2.1. The link between Mobility and the Capability Approach

Since a key normative argument under CA is the focus on human well-being and how functionings constitute that of an individual (Martinetti, 2000), it would seem reasonable to pose the question as to whether or not there is any relationship between mobility and human well-being. According to Bonfati (2014), mobility has both intrinsic and instrumental value, which enriches the well-being of humans. A report 'Overcoming Barriers: Human Mobility and development' by UNDP (2009) also indicates that mobility impacts positively on human development (material and non-material well-being) in terms of education, health, livelihoods and empowerment (civic rights and participation).

Sen has not directly mentioned mobility, the usage of CA within mobility studies or the link between well-being and mobility. This is perhaps not surprising, as one of the critiques of his work is that with CA he does not provide a capability list (Clark, 2005). However, he justifies not providing a fixed list of capabilities, for instance, in the article 'Dialogue, Capabilities, Lists and Public Reason: Continuing the conversation' (2004). According to him, capabilities can be used for various purposes, from human rights to poverty, thus providing a list cannot cater for public reasoning and discussions for all societies around the world at the same time.

Additionally, the weighting and importance of capabilities varies within and across context, which it could be argued makes it inappropriate to establish a formal list. Nevertheless, Nussbaum, who extended CA, did develop a categorisation and included mobility in her 10 core capabilities list (Bonfanti, 2014). Specifically, she provides the link between bodily integrity and mobility as: 'Being able to move freely from place to place...' (Nussbaum, 2003, p41). Paralleling this, a number of studies, for instance de Haas (2014), have defined mobility as an achievement of the ability to become mobile, whilst more recently, Schewel (2015) adopted CA to look at the motivations and characteristics behind the immobility of young adults in Senegal. Another study using CA, conducted by Cenci (2015), involved analysing the drivers of highly qualified mobility from the Southern Euro Zone by using the CA.

The adoption of CA in the investigation of mobility was first introduced by de Haas (2003; 2014), who was inspired by Carling (2001) (Ability of Immobility) and Amartya Sen (1999) (CA). The research by Carling (2001) considers the migration behaviours of native people in the Cape Verde Islands, using what he calls the aspiration/ability model. The model involves two level analysis. First, at the macro level, overall *aspiration* reflects an individual's wish to become mobile or not and *ability* refers to an individual's capacity to realise his/her wish to become mobile. Secondly, the model takes into account the differentiation between individuals in terms of seeking understanding as to why some persons wish to become mobile, whilst others do not. He concluded his research by advancing the notion of 'involuntary immobility' in order to describe people who wish to become mobile, but do not have sufficient ability to do so. In his research, he revealed two important points. First, he highlighted how involuntary immobility differs from voluntary immobility, whereby the latter represents people who do not become mobile because of their lack of their ability, but rather, they have a preference not to move. Later, in order to create a broader term, he preferred to use the term of 'prospective mobility' instead of involuntary immobility, which defines people who wish to become mobile without consideration of their ability. He explains that the reason for this is that, whilst some people have not made any particular effort to become mobile, they might have just decided to do so or may make this decision some time in the near future.

In this study, students return or non-return plans are classified as a plan for returning and non-returning to Turkey, with the means to do so, or a plan for non-returning to Turkey owing to insufficient capability. According to Carling's thinking, those who plan to return to Turkey

from the UK can be defined as opting for 'voluntary immobility', whilst those who plan to not return to Turkey, but have insufficient capability not to do so are present 'involuntary immobile group'. Finally, students who have planned non-return to Turkey and who have both the ability and aspiration to become mobile are said to have mobility. Additionally, if we prefer to use a broader term we can call students who actually do not plan to return Turkey, but have insufficient capability, as having prospective mobility, according to Carling's (2001) classification, if ability is ignored. However, one of the main aims of the current study is to evaluate whether or not the capability of international students' impacts on their mobility. Therefore, prospective mobility does not fit with this study. Additionally, according to Schewel (2015), Carling (2001)'s categorisation fails to include the individuals who are lacking both the ability and wish to become mobile. Thus, she coined the term of acquiescent immobility, to define those who have no ability and no desire to become mobile. Accordingly, students who are both unable to be mobile and have a wish to do so are placed in this study in the category of acquiescent immobility. Furthermore, the term ability does not exactly have the same meaning as that of capability in CA. This fact is also mentioned by Schewel (2015). Whilst she used Capability/Aspiration Model of Carling (2001), she preferred to use the term capability instead of ability, as introduced by Amartya Sen and also adopted by De Haas (2003, 2014) in the first work related to the mobility field.

De Haas (2003) revealed in his PhD thesis that, whilst living conditions had significantly improved, mobility from the Todgha valley to Moroccan cities and Europe was ongoing. This finding went against neo-classical mobility theories and the pull/push model, under which it is assumed that better living conditions would reduce the numbers of mobile people. This evidence also did not fall within the network approach, because many of the mobiles from the Todgha Valley did not have any previous mobility experience. Subsequently, the author discovered that despite living conditions having improved significantly in the valley, mobility aspirations and capabilities of people increased even faster, which resulted in an increasing number of mobiles. Consequently, he adopted Sen's CA in order explain the local development effects on mobility, not in relation to increasing income, but rather in terms of well-being enhancements in the standard of living. According to De Haas (2003), first local development leads to an increase in local opportunities, which then enables individuals to live their lives as they aspire (this reflects the development definition made by Sen), and this appears to impact on the mobility aspirations of individuals. Lastly, the improvement in

standards of living are more likely to increase the mobility capabilities of individuals as a result of declining cost and risk in relation to mobility.

Later on, de Haas (2014) adopted CA together with Berlin's concepts of positive and negative liberty to show how structural changes at the macro level impact on mobility aspirations and capabilities. He defined mobility aspirations as individuals' life aspirations as well as perceived opportunity structures. For him, capabilities consist of positive liberties, which reflect the 'freedom to' and negative liberties in terms of 'freedom from'. According to him, in spite of aspirations having their own distinct concept, they cannot be defined as independent from capabilities. He explains the link between aspirations and capability through an example of education in rural areas. Education not only enhances individuals' knowledge and skills, but also increases their awareness of alternative life styles, for instance an urban lifestyle, which can lead to a growing aspiration for mobility. In addition, better educated individuals' aspirations might be enhanced because they start to believe that they can reach a new life style and material goals due to their education. Thus, growth in capabilities can directly increase individuals' aspirations. Accordingly, de Haas (2014, p4) defines mobility as "people's capability (freedom) to choose where to live, including the option to stay."

De Haas (2014)'s mobility definition is also closely linked with that in the Human Development Report (2009, p15) by UNDP (2009), which reflects CA as it defines mobility as "the ability of individuals, families or groups of people to choose their place of residence". Moreover, the report defines human development as the growth of the individuals' freedom to live their lives as they choose. This means that having an ability to engage in mobility is one of the dimensions of freedom, which comprises both instrumental and intrinsic value (UNDP, 2009). Humans have agency (individual level) and hence the decision to become mobile or not can be seen as an "expression of human development" (de Haas and Rodriquez, 2010, p179).

Drawing on de Haas (2014) and Sen (1985), for the current study, international student mobility is defined as PhD students' capability (freedom) to choose where to live and work after completing a PhD degree, including the option of staying abroad (in the UK or to moving to a third country) or returning to Turkey within a given set of structures that enhance or constrain their capability for mobility. It is further contended that international students'

capability to become mobile is shaped by factors that operate at the macro and micro levels as well as by whether or not education (studying abroad) leads to the enhancement of their capability to become mobile. This is directly related to CA assumptions.

Under CA, emphasis is placed on how personal and external factors, including cultural, economic, institutional and social factors, make possible what individuals want to be and to do (or not to be and not to do) for the achievement of valuable or invaluable outcomes (Otto and Ziegler, 2006). Despite some authors defining CA as an individualistic approach others, for instance Robeyns (2003), argue that it is important to distinguish between ontological individualism and ethical individualism. The author argues that CA is based on ethical individualism, rather than ontological individualism, because it probes how institutions and social relations, together with the opportunities and constraints derived from structural factors, shape individuals' capabilities, instead of looking at society as being created only by individuals and their property. According to her, this happens in two ways, first, through being cognisant of the impact of social-environmental factors in relation to the transformation of objects into functionings, regarding which she provides an example of having a bike in two different societies. Whilst having the same bike, living in a city where the high level of poverty and criminality will increase the probability of it being stolen, whereas living in a city where the rate of criminality is lower will allow him/her to have safe transportation. Hence, the structure of society plays a significant role in that the same object provides functionings at different levels according to the society's nature.

If a PhD qualification is considered as a commodity, its usage, in terms of converting it into a valuable functioning will differ depending on whether the holder is living in Turkey or in the UK as a result of the different social structural characteristics of these two countries. Thus, return or non-return plans of students can be directly affected by the structure of Turkish and British societies. This is supported by evidence provided by Cenci (2015) that suggests that highly qualified people will maintain their mobility until they arrive in a country where the opportunities available match their professional expectations and qualifications.

For Robeyns (2003), a second way of explaining how people's capabilities are shaped by structural factors is that under CA, they differ from functionings, because they include how opportunities and the constraints of structural factors shape individuals' choices. He explains this fact by comparing two people who are the same age, but who come from different

parental backgrounds. Despite both of them having the same capability sets, because one comes from a higher social class, whose parents are intellectuals and value education, whilst the other's parents from a lower social class do not do so, their attitudes towards education are likely to be very different. Hence, the social environment, i.e. a structural factor, can have an impact on preferences in relation to how capabilities are deployed. Accordingly, for the current research, even if it is assumed that all the students have the same capability sets, students' mobility plans will be different according to their funding source. For instance, if a student is pursuing his/her PhD studies through a scholarship as a result of the lack of family financial support, his/her future mobility plans will be different from one who is self-funded. In fact, receiving a scholarship from home country institutions has been shown to be one of the main drivers in attracting students to return (Bouwel, 2010). In sum, the social class of students can influence their plans regarding mobility, even if they all have the same capability sets.

In addition, previous studies have often focused on why individuals are mobile rather than why they are not. There has only been a limited number of studies (e.g. Schewel, 2015) that have investigated the immobility behaviours of individuals. According to Arango (2000), mobility theories should not only focus on why people become mobile, for they should also investigate why they are immobile. De Haas (2014) argues that moving (mobility) or staying (immobility) are the same migratory agency, because human mobility/immobility comprise both instrumental and intrinsic values. CA allows for the uncovering of the resources and factors that enhance or constrain the capabilities of individuals in terms of making the decision whether to stay or to move (Bonfanti, 2014). Consequently, the application of CA proves beneficial for the current research, as the intention is to investigate both students' return and stay plans.

To summarise, considering mobility through neo classical macro-approaches, as has often been the case has resulted in a failure to examine non-economic influential factors and processes of transformation. This is because this perspective is based on passive actors who are lacking the capability of either transforming or negotiating constraining structural factors (Bonfanti, 2014). However, mobility stems not only from economic motivations but also non-economic ones and includes "the plans, dreams, frustrations, hopes of humans" (Alonso, 2011, p1). Moreover, underpinning the current study, is the agent view based on active actors who are knowledgable as well as having the ability to negotiate and transform inhibiting

factors. CA involves investigating individual well-being through capabilities and functionings and it defines the constraining factors that can impact negatively on an individual's wellbeing and exercises (Robeyns, 2003). Thus, the application of CA into mobility studies allows for the inclusion of a number of motivational factors as drivers of mobility, such as education, inequalities (e.g. gender and ethnic) as well as political and personal freedoms. It also facilitates understanding of the agent's negotiation with constraining factors in order to achieve what they perceive to be of value (de Haas, 2011).

2.2.2. Human diversity

Traditional migration theories (e.g. neo-classic) have overlooked human diversity in terms of gender, age and social class. However, these dimensions play a crucial role in the preference to become mobile or non-mobile (Bonfanti, 2014). The reason for this is that the ability to convert resources relies on a personal axis (gender, age, social class) or, in other words, these dimensions affect individuals' ability to acquire capabilities and turn them into actual achievements (functionings) (Walker, 2005). Whilst a number of studies (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Finn, 2012; CPC, 2012) have revealed that the mobility process of students in terms of their willingness to remain in a host country or vice versa differs according to their gender, most extant studies on mobility or on international students have been gender neutral and hence, this aspect has been largely neglected (Docquier et al., 2011; Nejad and Young, 2014).

The current study is tasked with analysing how the return or non-return plans of international students from Turkey vary according to a number of variables, such as gender and age. The reason for this variation is that students' capabilities of becoming mobile can be differentiated according to a number of variables, such as age, gender and ethnicity. Thus, in order to evaluate the impact of diversity on the mobility process, CA, which emphasises human diversity, is deemed an appropriate approach for this work.

Under CA, capabilities indicate individuals' opportunities and their abilities to create valuable outcomes by considering their relevant personal characteristics as well as external factors (Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013). CA places emphasis on diversity by highlighting that the type and amount of input differ according to individuals. For instance, individuals' capabilities for converting inputs into valuable outputs to achieve the same level of well-

being will be different (Robeyns, 2005). In other words, with CA people differ according to personal characteristics (e.g. age and gender), their intersecting external environment (e.g. income level and climate) and inter individual characteristics, which all impact on the ability to convert resources into valuable outcomes (Walker, 2005). Sen also demonstrates the link between resources, opportunities and capabilities by highlighting human diversity. In his view, providing an equal authority over resources does not mean equal opportunities being given to individuals, because their capabilities for converting resources into functionings differ according to their ability. As a result, the role of human diversity in this process should not be ignored (Saito, 2003). Thus, for Sen, "Human diversity is no secondary complication (to be ignored, or to be introduced 'later on'); it is a fundamental aspect of our interest in equality" (Sen, 1995, pxi). The recognition of human diversity under CA is based on three types of conversion factors: personal characteristics (e.g. gender), social characteristics (e.g. power relations) and environmental factors (e.g. institutions) (Nambiar, 2013). The conversion factors allow for explanation of how people's ability to convert resources into functionings differs (Poolman, 2012).

Robeyns (2003) explains how CA considers diversity by highlighting two of its aspects. First, it is based on capabilities and functionings that are part of the evaluative space which is aimed at capturing human well-being and development through the capability to achieve functionings without considering utility (in terms of mental states, e.g. happiness or choice) or resources (understood as material requirements, e.g. income or entitlements) (Clark, 2005). The examination of, say, poverty and inequality amongst diverse people should consider not only income level, but also include non-material and non-financial elements, which is consistent with the aims of the current study. With CA, resources create opportunities through the value ascribed to them by individuals. Consequently, their capabilities play a prominent role in whether desired life goals are achieved or not (Robeyns, 2003). Bearing in mind that mobility requires material (financial), human (knowledge and skills) and social (other people) resources (Schevel, 2015), not only material resources (e.g. funding source -scholarship-) are included in the present work but also non-material (e.g. social integration and social network) ones that influence students' potential mobility. Additionally, for the current research it is assumed that, even if all students have the same resources, their mobility behavior will vary according to their ability to convert resources into functionings as proposed under CA.

According to Robeyns (2003), the second way in which CA emphasises diversity is through emphasising the fact that the conversion factors of the commodities into functionings differ according to personal and socio-environmental factors. For instance, the existence of gender discrimination in many societies does not allow for females to achieve functioning, such as finding an acceptable employee position in the labour market, as their qualifications are not considered as valuable as those of males with the same credentials (Robeyns, 2003). This aspect is supported by the findings from a study by Gungor and Tansel (2003), who revealed that female students showed more willingness to stay abroad after graduation compared to male students. Life style freedom was one of the main reasons provided in their non-return decisions. Consequently, with regard to students' mobility plans, the application of the CA will allow for the inclusion of human diversity on matters such as gender in the current study, thereby providing understanding of how such diversity impacts on students' mobility behaviours.

2.2.3. Applicability to developing nations

Sen's development view is focused on freedoms, in terms of, in his words, "Expansion of freedom both as the primary end and as the principal means of development" (Sen, 1999, pxii). According to him, inequalities, such as gender inequality and poverty, should be dealt with in societies by considering development in the form of expanding human freedom rather than looking at development only at the economic level (Tungodden, 2001). Thus, his development view contrasts with traditional development theories for, in addition to GDP and industrialisation, there should be consideration of political and social freedoms (e.g. liberty political participation, education opportunities) (Sen, 1999).

According to Sen, human well-being and development cannot by measured only by crude notions of opulence, such as GDP (Clark, 2005), because a high income does not necessarily have a positive impact on human well-being (O'Hearn, 2009). Sen does not deny that the growth of GNP or individual income can play an important role in expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy, but he also suggests that a number of determinants, such as political and civil rights as well as economic and social arrangements, are directly linked with the expansion of freedoms (Sen, 1999). Therefore, according to this author, economic growth should not be seen as a goal.

Sen argues against 'the Lee Thesis', which is based on a statement by Lee Kuan Yew (the former prime minister of Singapore), who contended that ignoring basic civil and political rights is acceptable for economic development (Sen, 1999). He identifies different types of freedoms as follows: "economic opportunities, political freedoms, social facilities, transparency guarantees and protective security" (Sen, 1999, pxii). He also shows the relationship between political/civil rights and economic development by highlighting three roles of the former: direct role (within basic capabilities, e.g. social and political participation), instrumental role (it allows to enlarge within claims and expressions of people e.g. regarding the claims of economic needs) and a constructive role (it makes possible the conceptualisation of economic needs) (Sen, 1999). Thus, freedom should be seen as an essential part of development, because it is not independent from the free agency of humans and the assessment of human progress, but is based primarily on the enhancement of human freedoms (O'Hearn, 2009).

Sen's perspective differs from other development theories as it is based on humans first rather than the economy and he defines a good economy as one that provides citizens with an enjoyable healthy and long life, a good education and so on. Additionally, instead of using money for the assessment the currency, it focuses on the things that people can be and do with their lives currently and later on (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). The reason for this, as explained by Saito (2003), are as follows. First, it is not important how rich a person is because commodities are objects that are used by individuals. Second, people are different so their commodity requirements vary. Third, the commodity requirements of people differ according to their cultures and society. Lastly, too many goods might well create insolent and arrogant people (Saito, 2003). Consequently, CA not only covers material well-being, for it also concerns social well-being by taking into account such matters as whether someone is healthy or not, whether or not they can access for instance clean water, whether or not they can receive high quality education or whether or not they can participate in the political life of their country. In other words, the evaluation of well-being and development policies under the lenses of CA rely on the impact of policies on individuals' capabilities (Robeyns, 2003). The relationship between freedom, development and capabilities is described in the Human Development Report (2015) as follows. Human development is based on the expansion of people's choices through their obtaining more capabilities and with the usage of these capabilities, they are able to enjoy more opportunities (UNDP, 2015).

Whilst Sen has been critised by scholars for not providing an index of functionings which makes CA operational, the Human Development Index (HDI) by UNDP (1990) has been inspired mainly by Sen's thinking (Saito, 2013). Accordingly, the HDI is consider to be the first attempt to put the human at the centre of the development argument, with its creator declaring that "Human development is a process of enlarging people's choices" (UNDP, 1990, p1) When highlighting the measure of development in addition to the expansion of economic needs (commodities and wealth), the index includes additional choices, such as human rights and political freedom (UNDP, 1990). Along the same lines, in subsequent years, human development is also defined in The Human Development Report (2009) as the growth of individuals' freedom to live their lives as they choose (UNDP, 2009). Moreover, a later Human Development Report (2015) identifies human development as an abundance of human life, rather than basically an abundance of the economy, by focusing on human choices and opportunities. Since CA was applied by the UNDP for the first time in 1990, some governments around the world showed their interest in it for conceptualisation of their national policy making. For instance, the second national report by Germany, which covered poverty and social exclusion was inspired by CA (Robeyns, 2006).

According to Haymes et al. (2014), in relation to developed countries, these opportunities in terms of freedoms and equality are delivered to individuals more equally, which thus makes CA more applicable to less developed and developing countries. Since this study is seeking to elicit how factors at both the macro (structure) and micro (agency) levels impact on students' mobility plans, CA is deemed to be appropriate as the sample consists of PhD students from Turkey, which is categorised as a developing country. According to the HDI (2018), Turkey is ranked at 64th amongst 188 countries, which is below the average when compared to EU countries (e.g. the UK ranks at 14th) where gender inequality and freedom of speech, particularly in academia, are important issues (UNDP, 2015, 2018; Amnesty International, 2017; World Freedom Index, 2017). In addition, the current research is aimed at discovering the factors that play a role in students' mobility plans in order to provide insights into how countries compete to attract highly qualified human resources, in this case, those with doctorates. Regarding the recommendation of appropriate policies for tackling the loss of qualified people for countries such as Turkey, the application of CA would be beneficial as it would uncover capability-constraining factors that directly limit individuals' choices (Nambiar, 2013).

2.2.4. The link between Education and the Capability Approach

Evidence from previous studies (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2003; Dreher and Pautvaara, 2005; Teichler, 2007; Rosenzweig, 2008; Gribble, 2008) suggests that studying abroad is the first step to remaining abroad. However, how far studying abroad plays a role in students' mobility plans has been little researched (Levatino, 2014). This claim is supported by findings from other studies (e.g. Rizvi, 2005; Findlay et al., 2006, Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011; Jacobone and More, 2015), which show that studying abroad enhances students' capabilities in terms of such matters as improvement in foreign language proficiency, acquiring a cosmopolitan outlook, establishment of a transnational/international network/collaboration and so on. These enhancements are also shown as facilitating factors in their future mobility plans. The current research is based on the relationship between capability and mobility, as well as their association with education.

Under CA, development is defined as people-centred development and human development is seen as expanding human choices in all aspects of human lives. There are two ways of enlarging human choices. First, there is enhancement of human capabilities, which occurs through human resources development. Secondly, opportunities need to be improved in order to use those capabilities. Maximisation of human development is dependent on a balance between these two elements as otherwise a situation of loss of human potential could occur as a result of a mismatch between these two (Jahan, 2015). The role of education in the enhancement of human development is stressed by Sen (1989), for education is a tool that expands the capabilities of individuals. In his view, education assists productivity, provides a better distribution of national income amongst individuals, helps in the transformation of earnings and resources into various functionings and modes of living as well as facilitating rational choice making between the different types of lives that a person can follow. All these points play significant roles in the development of capabilities in the human development process (Sen, 1989). Consequently, education and literacy can be seen as fundamental resources that provide opportunities and, thus, enable people to live their lives in ways they prefer and value (Otto and Ziegler, 2006). Under the theory, it can be ascertained how and whether or not acquiring a PhD in the UK expands students' capabilities and choices regarding their mobility plans.

The relationship between CA and education was also explained by Saito (2003). He proposed that it can contribute to education in two ways. First, as aforementioned, the HDI (Human Development Index) by UNDP (1990) includes educational attainment instead of measuring development from only the expansion of wealth and commodities, which shows the important role of education that is now recognised at the international level. The second contribution of CA is that education includes both instrumental and intrinsic values and thus acquiring it enhances individuals' capabilities. Under CA, the achievement of well-being relies on what individuals are able to do and be rather than what they can buy or use their income for. This does not mean ignoring commodities and income (instrumental value), but it does involve putting more emphasis on intrinsic value by focusing on 'enhancing capabilities' (Saito, 2003, p19). Along the same lines, the UNESCO (2002) Report "Education for all" stresses the link between education and capability by stating that policies towards education should be "judged to be successful if they have enhanced people's capabilities – whether or not they have also affected income, growth, and other important means to this end" (UNESCO, 2002, p32). Moreover, the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2010) by UNESCO points out that being educated is an essential part of human capability, because it has a huge role in the expansion of choices in human life.

Thus, from a CA perspective, education can be regarded as a process that expands the capabilities of individuals as well as one that allows them to decide whether they would like to "remain in or are able to move beyond their -sense of place-" (Otto and Ziegler, 2006, p6). Similarly, the combination of capability, education and mobility is discussed by de Haas (2010; 2011; 2014), who claims that an increase in education and access to an information level that can also be defined as human development leads to increasing aspirations and awareness of opportunities, which are more likely to generate a greater desire mobility. This is consistent with the aims of the current research, in that it will look at how far the capabilities of international students influence their mobility, particularly focusing on whether or not studying abroad develops their capabilities in such a way as to enhance it. Until recently, researchers have failed to examine education from a capabilities point of view (Saito, 2003; Otto and Zeigler, 2006) and hence, the current study's outcomes will contribute to understanding how studying abroad affects international students' capabilities regarding mobility.

2.2.5. Why put Structuration Theory Together with the Capability Approach into One Framework for the Current Research?

A review of the literature has revealed that there are a number of similarities between CA and ST and that both theories compensate for the other's weaknesses. Hence, it was deemed that usage of both perspectives together would be beneficial for this study. The justification is that, first, a link is provided between agency (micro) and structure (macro) one of the biggest issues in social science (Hvinden and Halvorsen, 2014), which is also true for mobility studies (Bakewell, 2010). Thus, it is important to include not only the impact of external, but also internal factors, including people's capabilities, their experiences and networks and so on. In order to give an understanding of how factors at macro and micro levels impact on students' mobility plans and how far the capabilities of students play a role in these, particularly in relation to whether or not studying abroad enhances students' capability towards mobility, a theoretical framework that shows the relationship between structural and agency factors in required. Both CA and ST bring both macro (structure) and micro (agency) factors into one framework.

CA enriches the understanding of the dynamics link between agency and structure by highlighting that people's ability to convert resources and opportunities into valuable functionings does not rely only on the personal characteristics of individuals, but also on structures and relations (Hvinden and Holversen, 2014). Similarly, ST proposes a 'duality of structure', which is based on the notion of structure and agency being entwined with each other and, thus, one cannot be investigated independently of the other (Giddens, 1984). Furthermore, both CA and ST are defined as flexible frameworks (Chisalita 2006; Deneulin and McGregor, 2010), which makes it possible and easy to combine the two theories within one framework. Bearing mind that to understand mobility requires different levels of analysis (Massey et al., 1998), the application of CA together with ST could provide a better understanding of the mobility plans of students than that of either theory in isolation.

Second, as the research involves exploring a number of aspects, including power, agency and freedom, CA and ST, covering similar concepts, were deemed appropriate for combining into the framework for this research, as further justified below.

Power: In ST, Giddens focuses on agent reflexivity and power (Kort and Gharbi, 2013). Accordingly, power is transformative. It is defined as the human capacity to perform upon structures in order to achieve or reach desirable outcomes and also as an agent's "capacity to make a difference" (Giddens, 1984, p14). According to Giddens, all agents have power as being them means having power, but it does not mean that they have power at the same level (Giddens, 1984; Whittington, 2010; Wolfel, 2005), because agents are authorised by structures that are not at the same levels (Kipo, 2014). Under CA, the notion of agency includes two dynamics: effective power and direct control (Deneulin and Shahani, 2009). Since it is based on capabilities and functionings, with the definition of development being an expansion in people's choices through these (Jahan, 2002), power in ST as a capability or transformative capability fits with the development aspect of CA (Gaventa, 2003).

Agency: With ST, agency is defined as the people's capacity to perform independently of structures, while they are making their decisions as well as choices (Kipo, 2014). Under the theory, agents are capable, knowledgeable and purposeful actors who are aware of what they are doing and why. Similarly, CA puts human first (Jahan, 2002) and defines agency as an individual's ability to act on things perceived to be of value to her/him in order to achieve what she/he values, because people have the ability to realise and pursue their goals (Deneulin and Shahani, 2009). Agency plays a central role in both ST and CT with, in both cases, the agent view being based on an active agent rather than a passive one. In both theories, the view of agency is based on an individual who has the ability to make choices (Nielsen et al., 2010), so agency views for both theories can be easily integrated (Briones, 2013).

Freedom: Under ST, "Agency is always able to act otherwise" (Giddens, 1984, p14), which reflects the idea that agency always has some level of freedom (Bakewell, 2010). CA defines capability as an individual's freedom to choose between different ways of living (Sen, 2005). Additionally, both theories highlight factors that limit the freedom of agency and the relationship between agency and structure. Giddens proposes that structural factors or institutions both enable and inhibit human actions (Lamsal, 2012). Similarly, Sen proposes that the freedom of individuals depends on political, social and economic opportunities, since these are those that both constrain and enhance agency freedoms (Nambiar, 2013). Moreover, opportunities and prospects rely on institutions in society (Sen, 2001). While some institutions are capability-constrained, some others are defined as capability-enhancing (Nambiar, 2013). In sum, freedom is at the heart of both ST and CA.

Lastly, there is no doubt that each theory has its own advantages and disadvantages. As an example, ST is based on a link between power and agency as all agents have power in terms of transformative capacity. Action is produced by the agent and structures (Kipo, 2014). Accordingly, ST highlights four dynamics that allow an agent to take action: *1) power (*in the form of transformative power, or in other words an agent's capacity to perform upon structures), *2) knowledgeability* (an agent's knowledge, which is relied on to undertake action), *3) reflexivity* (referring to an agent's consciousness, whereby an agent has transformative capacity as well as capacity for monitoring others' actions) *4) rationality* (an agent's capacity to examine the situation and demonstrate priorities) (Lacroix, 2012). Nevertheless, whilst ST provides an explanation of the agent and power relationship, it does not provide any explanation as to "when actors can be transformative (which involves specification of degrees of freedom)" (Archer, 1982, p461). This is considered one of the main shortcomings of ST. However, according to CA, people's abilities to reach valuable outcomes are affected by both personal and external factors (Otto and Ziegler, 2006; Kumar and Pathinathan, 2013). This allows for the identification of power dynamics/relationships and places emphasis on uncovering the process whereby resources are transformed into valuable capabilities in two respects: as factors that influence individuals' ability to have command over resources and as enabling conversion factors (Bonfanti, 2014). Taking the above discussion into account, the conceptualisation of a framework that incorporates both ST with CA could prove beneficial in identifying when and how the power of agency becomes transformative.

3. Conclusion

This chapter has identified and discussed the key elements of CA and its applicability within mobility studies by referencing international student mobility. Building on arguments from previous studies', it is concluded that traditional mobility theories fail to provide an explanation for the mobility behaviours of individuals. Hence, it is necessary to find a new theoretical approach so as to enrich understanding regarding why some individuals are mobile, whilst others are not. For this, it is contended attention needs to be paid to the role of agency in terms of bringing the capabilities of individuals into any investigation of international mobility. The reason for this neglect of agency in earlier studies is their failure to capture the political, social and cultural aspects behind mobility (Suoglu, 2012) as a result

of paying scant attention to the important link between development and capability and the aspirations of individuals in the mobility process (Anderson and Keith, 2014; de Haas, 2014). Moreover, they have focused mainly on economic factors at the macro level (Suoglu, 2012). A number of researchers (e.g. Anderson and Keith, 2014; Levatino, 2014; de Haas, 2014; Schevel, 2015) have argued that the usage of CA can shed light on the mobility behaviours of individuals and that any investigation seeking to understand such behaviours should include an individual's capabilities and aspirations.

Based on earlier work on mobility, the application of CA as a second theoretical approach for the current study was deemed appropriate for inclusion in the framework for the following reasons. First, the close link between CA and mobility together with its application in mobility studies has been explained. The fundamental argument under CA is based on a social, economic and political analysis of the well-being of people through their capabilities in order to understand the relationship between people and social development (Deneulin and McGregor, 2010). Proponents of CA have contended that mobility is a fundamental part of human development, which comprises both intrinsic and instrumental value (de Haas, 2009). An alternative definition is that, since human development is seen as an expansion of individuals' freedoms in the CA perspective, mobility can be seen as an integral part of human freedom (UNDP, 2009). Accordingly, mobility comprises both intrinsic and instrumental value. The intrinsic value of mobility refers to those capabilities that enable people to achieve mobility as a fundamental element of human development and is thus related to functioning. On the other hand, this mobility also allows people to improve their other capabilities in terms of, for instance, education, self respect and so on. Therefore, this aspect is regarded as the instrumental value of mobility. Consequently, mobility can be seen as the expression of human development (de Haas and Rodriquez, 2010). Secondly, the CA includes a number of aspects, such as human diversity, which are seen as essential dimensions for understanding mobility behaviours. Lastly, this study is aimed at eliciting whether or not studying abroad extends the capabilities of students to become mobile and from, a CA perspective, education is confirmed as a factor that can expand individuals' capabilities (Sen, 1989).

Consequently, in the light of the CA and de Haas (2014), the current study defines mobility as the capability (freedom) to choose where to live and work after completing a PhD degree. Students' mobility plans after graduations are classified as a plan for returning and non-returning to Turkey. The reason why return plans of students are included is that enhancing

mobility does not refer only to the freedom to be mobile but also to the freedom to remain in a preferred location (de Haas and Rodriquez, 2010).

This chapter has also shown that agency, power and freedom dimensions are essentially covered under both ST and CA and, hence, they can both be considered together. By so doing, the weaknesses of each theory can be compensated for by the other. Following this, it was explained how the application of ST and CA into one theoretical framework for the current study would advance understanding of international student mobility. That is, it was concluded that an investigation employing both ST and CA will help to fill the theoretical gap in contemporary mobility studies. This research draws on: 1) *Structuration Theory*, which seeks to bring both structure (macro) and agency (micro) level factors and the relationship between these two into one framework (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; Akcapar, 2006). The application of ST is important, for research based on the examination of agency because it considers the negotiation between agency and structural constraints. Specifically, according to the theory, agents are capable actors who have the ability to transform structures, so that it will provide an understanding how individuals maintain agency in spite of structural constraint factors (Briones, 2013). In terms of the current research, it helps to explain how international students' return or non-return plans to Turkey are shaped by social determinants at the micro and macro levels, as well as giving insights into the nature of the interactions between these two levels of factors.

2) Under the *Capability Approach*, mobility is considered as a function of individuals' aspirations and capabilities within a number of given opportunity structures by underlining how increasing capabilities mean increasing aspirations (de Haas, 2014). This perspective allows for going beyond the neo-classic economic macro level approach (Cenci, 2015). Consequently, the application of ST together with CA extends the debate on international mobility beyond an economic perspective. It provides insights into the political, social and cultural aspects behind mobility behaviour by considering the diversity of individuals (e.g. gender), multiple motivation factors (from instrumental to intrinsic values) and the relationship between agency and structural factors.

PART 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 5: Methodology

This chapter explains the methodological approaches and techniques used in order to achieve objectives of the study and to address the research questions. It starts with a presentation of the conceptual framework. The justification is then given for the methodological position taken, namely, social constructionism, which reflects the notion that reality is socially constructed and determined by people (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). This position is often combined with an interpretivist research philosophy (Creswell, 2014), as is the case here, where the social actor plays a crucial role (Saunders et al., 2012). This approach generally requires the adoption of a qualitative method, which allows the researcher to gain a deep understanding (Kirk et al., 2006). In order to demonstrate why a qualitative method was considered appropriate for exploring students' mobility plans, its advantages and potential limitations are discussed. The rationale behind the sampling methods chosen, namely, purposive and snowball techniques and the selection of the methods applied are then presented. Furthermore, the parameters for the selection of the participants and the methods through which they were recruited are discussed. This is followed by discussion on the pilot study and the data analysis, together with the codes that emerged from NVivo software. The chapter concludes with consideration of the ethical aspects and regulations that were adhered to throughout the current study.

1. Conceptual Framework

This framework for this study derives from the application of structuration theory and the capability approach (Figure 1, p118). (Structure and agency factors are identified, that are based on the main findings of earlier studies). First, in relation to Structuration Theory, it is shown how the return/non return plans of students are affected by ***structure (macro) factors***, namely economic (e.g. economic stability), socio-cultural (e.g. life style), political (e.g. political stability) and professional (e.g. quality of research environment), and by ***agency (micro) factors***, including demographic (e.g. gender and relationship status), educational (e.g. field of the study and degree level) and attachment factors (e.g. adaptation). Secondly, in relation to the CA, how these factors at macro and micro levels have an impact through enhancing and constraining international students' capability and functioning is evaluated.

Consequently, a student's return or non-return plans are classified as revealing a plan for returning and non-returning to Turkey.

Research Objectives and Questions

The main research question addressed in this thesis is: How do social determinants enhance or inhibit the capabilities of students to become mobile? Accordingly, the following research objectives have been set:

1. To identify the structural factors impacting on student mobility;
2. To identify the agency factors impacting on student mobility;
3. To understand how structural and agency factors together enhance or inhibit the capability of students to become mobile;
4. To develop a new framework for understanding international student mobility;
5. To establish a capability list for mobility.

To achieve the research objectives, the following research questions are addressed.

1. What are the structural factors impacting on return or non-return plans to Turkey?
2. What are the agency factors impacting on return or non-return plans to Turkey?
3. How do the factors at the macro and micro levels interplay with each other?
4. How do structural factors enhance or inhibit the capabilities of students to become mobile?
5. How do agency factors enhance or inhibit the capabilities of students to become mobile?
6. What capabilities are important to understanding international student mobility?

Figure 1: Social Determinants Impacting on International Students' Return or Non-return Plans
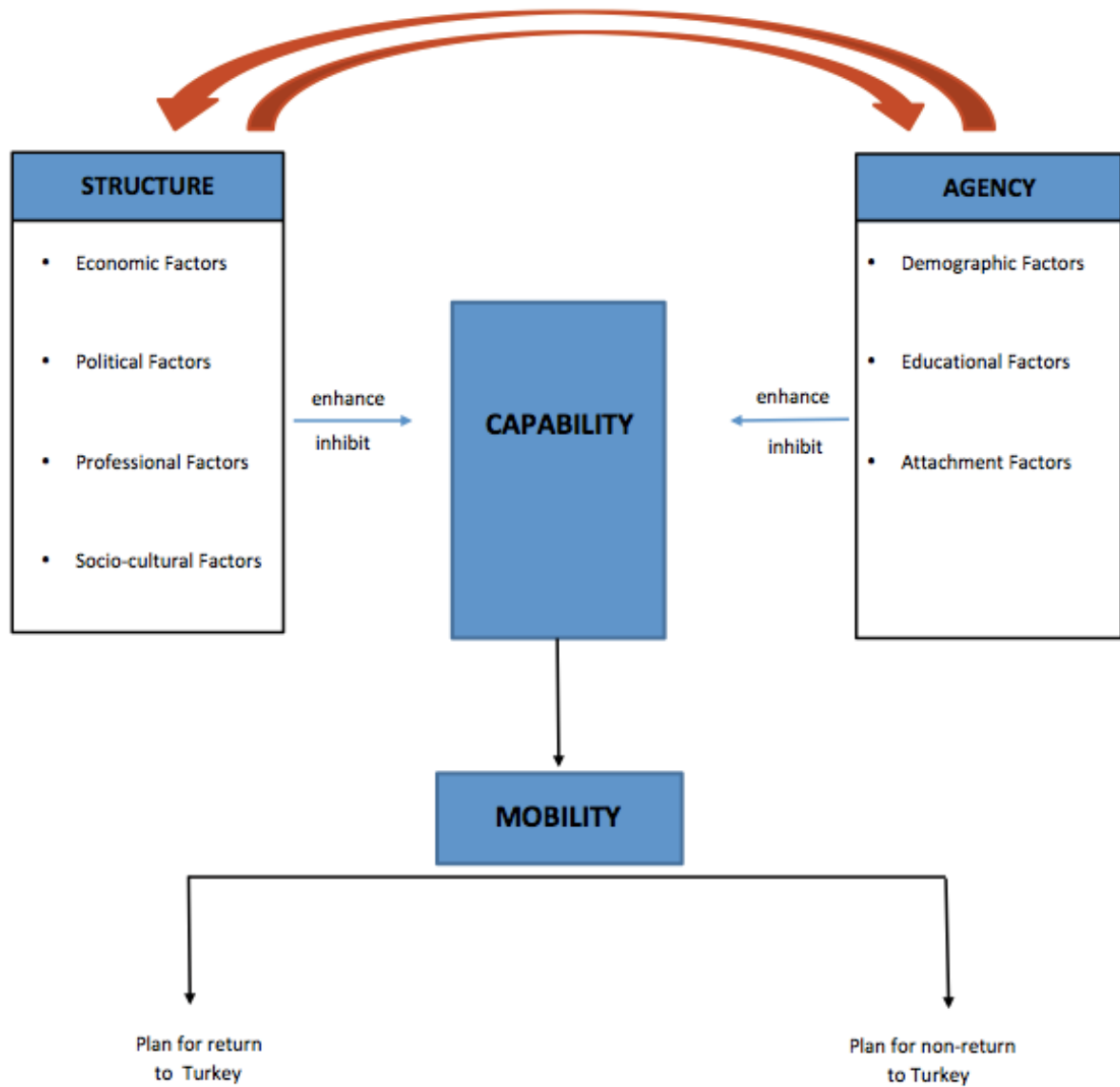
Source: Researcher (2019)

2. Research Philosophy and Methods

2.1. Research Philosophy: Social Constructionism

For the current study, the tenets of social science are needed in order to set a number of research questions that guide the research, thus providing understanding regarding the mobility of students. However, addressing the research questions relies on the identification of an appropriate research strategy (Brannen, 2008). The research philosophy chosen is an essential element of any research, referring as Saunders et al. (2012) explain, to the researcher's way of seeing the world, which in turn, shapes the research strategy and methods. In essence, the research philosophy adopted determines how and why the research is pursued (Carson et al., 2001). In order to deliver secure and good quality research, it is essential to be aware of different methodological approaches in the ongoing debates on research philosophy and methodological developments (Snape and Spencer, 2003).

Castles (2012) stresses that research methodology and methods vary according to discipline. In social science, the debate is often framed in terms of positivism versus interpretivism. The positivist sociologists' assumption is rooted in philosophers such as Descartes, Hume and Comte, being based on the idea that "the world is external and objective" (Carson et al., 2001, p5) and that "there is a single objective truth" (Castles, 2012, p10). Thus, under this paradigm, research must be able to be based on measurement and observation or, in other words, a researcher must be able to explain social phenomena through causality, framed through hypotheses, which enable the testing of variables regardless of a researchers' values (McNabb, 2010). In contrast, the notion of interpretivism, which has its roots in Kant, Weber and Dilthey's writings relies on "no single external reality" (Carson et al., 2001, p6) and its advocates claim that reality is constructed and reconstructed in an individual's mind (Hansen, 2004). Accordingly, in contrast to the positivist approach, interpretivists argue that to understand social phenomena does not depend on observation, but rather, relies on the perceptions and roles of social actors (Grix, 2010). Thus, under this lens, interactive dialogue between participant and researcher is required (Ponterotto, 2005) and the main strength of the interpretivist approach is seen as its ability to identify both the complex structure and the meaning of a present situation (Black, 2006).

The philosophical positioning of this study is social constructionism, which is consistent with

an interpretivist approach (Creswell, 2014), one that relies on the idea that "*reality is constructed through social interaction in which social actors create partially shared meanings and realities*" (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 130). Unlike positivism, which reflects that reality is exterior and objective, under social constructionism, reality is created by people and their attachment of meanings to their experiences (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). As the creation of meaning differs according to individuals in different contexts, including coming from different countries and different times (Saunders et al., 2016), different people create different meanings and different societies. Hence, social constructionism focuses on people's experiences and feelings, with the aim of understanding and explaining the reasons behind them (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002). The current study concerns the mobility of PhD students. Mobility is a complex phenomenon and individuals' intelligence cannot be captured by the application of a single measure as proposed by positivism (Collis and Hussey, 2013). Further, as proposed by Mill (1959) in a book on 'The Social Imagination', the nature of sociology is that it should explain "the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals" (Mill, 1959, 2000, p5). This means social science should be pursued by making a link between personal matters and broader social historical conditions.

This research is based on a belief in the functions of social science, which "needs to analyse the collective behaviour of human beings and how this is linked to social structures and institutions" (Castles, 2012, p8). Mobility is regarded as the capability (freedom) of students to choose where to live and work after graduation within a given set of structures at the micro and macro levels that can enhance and/or constrain their capability for mobility. Mobility is a social action, which, according to Castles (2012), cannot be understood without including the broader context where this action takes place. For this reason, it is important to embed micro level studies in terms of the experiences of individuals without discarding macro level factors, because mobility is shaped by these factors in a historical situation. Under social constructionism, the findings of the study are derived from the knowledge created through meaning given by individuals about their experiences and perceptions as social actors, who in this case are PhD students from Turkey.

2.2. Research Method: Qualitative Method

Regarding the research methods, it is widely accepted that qualitative studies involve an interpretive approach, whereas quantitative ones draw on positivism. Until quite recently, the dominant approach in social science and many other disciplines was to use quantitative methods. However, this has received much criticism from scholars. Mill (1959) advanced the term 'abstracted empiricism', which refers to quantitative research in sociology lacking the provision of sufficient analysis. Along the same lines, Castles (2012) argues that, whilst quantitative methods can provide an explanation about social phenomena, they do little to expand our understanding. Recently, there has been a rising trend of studies in the social sciences adopting qualitative methods. These have been applied in a range of disciplines from feminism to cultural studies (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative research emphasises "understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants" (Bryman and Bell, 2007, p386). The ontological position under this lens is that the nature of reality is not independent of individuals, but rather is derived from ongoing interaction between them (Bryman and Bell, 2007). This means, qualitative research depends on the interpretation of participants' views and experiences by a researcher in contrast to quantitative research, which analyses and understands reality through numbers and statistics (Sukamolson, 2010). Additionally, with a qualitative method process is emphasised in contrast to a quantitative one, which relies on analysing and measuring the relationship between a number of variables (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). There is no doubt that each method has its advantages and disadvantages. For instance, though qualitative research requires strong dedication, resources and engagement in a time-consuming process (Creswell, 2007), it does provide a comprehensive understanding of a research problem [whereas a quantitative method offers general understanding]. Thus, each method provides different perspectives regarding the phenomenon researched (Creswell and Clark, 2011).

It is important that the decision for a particular research method should not be based on the choice of the researcher, but rather, on the questions and objectives of the research. Consequently, after considering the strengths and limits of both research philosophies and methods, the main criterion for choosing the research philosophy and method for this study is whether or not they are suited to the present study's purpose and for addressing the research questions. Given that the aim of this research is to provide in depth understanding of mobility, a qualitative method was deemed most appropriate for this study. This is because the study is

aimed, first, at providing an in depth understanding of social actors, in this case PhD students from Turkey in the UK, in order to reveal factors at the macro and micro levels and their interrelationships, together with their impact on the capabilities of students regarding return or non-return plans. Unlike physical objects, understanding human behaviour depends on eliciting the meanings and purposes of human actors. Hence, it was considered that the application of a qualitative approach could provide a rich understanding of human behaviour of interest (Lincoln and Guba, 1994). Further, the main strength of qualitative research is its ability to provide an understanding of social process and social change together with delivering answers to 'why' and 'how' questions in social contexts (Mason, 2006). Mobility is a social act and students are social actors, whose decisions to become mobile or not are shaped by their surroundings in a social context. Social actors, in this case PhD students, will not be affected by matters at the macro and micro levels in the same way. Hence, to understand mobility requires a research method that involves gathering the narratives of the students' reported experiences and perceptions regarding their surroundings.

Secondly, it is important to consider the reasons why a qualitative approach is an appropriate method for a research endeavour. According to Snape and Spencer (2003), there is not just one-way of conducting research having decided to adopt a qualitative method for its application depends on a number of factors, including the aim of the research, the features of the participants as well as the ontological (researchers' beliefs about the social world as well as what could be known about knowledge) and epistemological (the inherent features of knowledge and how can this knowledge can be gathered) stances. Creswell (2007) proposes that the main reasons for engaging in a qualitative approach are: the existence of an issue or problem that needs to be evaluated; the presence of inadequate theory, thus making it vital to develop new ones; when a researcher requires a detailed understanding; and when the aim of the research is to reveal the participants' voices, which statistical measures cannot. Drawing on Snape and Spencer (2003) and Creswell's (2007) perspectives on qualitative research, it was concluded that the characteristics of the qualitative method could enhance understanding of mobility. Moreover, this method fits with the aim of the study, which is to uncover the factors that determine whether people are mobile or not, rather than to find out how many people intend to be mobile, which would require quantitative investigation. In addition, current theory on mobility is unable to explain the phenomenon with any clarity and, thus, another aim of this research is to develop new theory to address this gap, which, as Cresswell (2007) explains, requires qualitative investigation.

Thirdly, the domination of quantitative studies in social science also applies in relation to mobility studies. That is, research on mobility has often been driven by the application of a quantitative method. Consequently, there has been limited research that has involved applying mixed (e.g. Hazen and Alberts, 2006) or qualitative methods (e.g. Alam and Hogue, 2010). A number of researchers, for instance Castles (2007) in the article 'Twenty-First Century Migration as a Challenge to Sociology', has discussed what kind of research theories and methodologies international mobility studies require. Castles (2007) concluded that understanding the mobility process requires a research method that makes possible the active involvement of the participants in the research process. That is, the researcher should engage with the participants by enabling them to take the role of social actors, which for this study is PhD students. Losifides (2013) contends that realistic qualitative research on mobility needs to be theoretically oriented and the theory chosen will determine the nature of the research questions and how they are addressed. Other researchers, such as Pengelly et al. (2008) and Kim and Locke (2010), also posit that a qualitative method can achieve a far deeper understanding of mobility than a quantitative one.

It is also important to underline that the main criticism of the trustworthiness of qualitative research made by positivists is that concepts of reliability and validity from naturalistic settings cannot be assured for such research (Shenton, 2004). Hence, with the aim of providing the trustworthiness for this study, four criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (2007) were followed by the researcher, which are;

1) Credibility: Since qualitative research is based on the idea of quality rather than quantity, this involves establishing internal validity, which refers to the findings of the research being believable. The current study's credibility was achieved though triangulation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), whereby, mobility was considered through the application of more than one theory - Structuration Theory (ST) and Capability Approach (CA) - as well as from different angles. This has meant collecting data from different sources, including semi-structural interviews at both the micro (international students) and macro (experts and professors) levels. Accordingly, through the application of ST and CA and conducting micro and macro interviews, triangulation was achieved.

2) Transferability: Refers to the applicability of the research findings to other contexts. The

current study is aimed at revealing experiences and perceptions of individuals, rather than providing generalisability. That is, as it is based on PhD students from Turkey in the UK, it is a unique case. However, despite this uniqueness and the researcher's awareness that the weights of the factors influencing mobility are likely to change according to different countries, there are similar drivers across contexts and hence, the findings derived from this study can be utilised to investigate highly educated individuals in other settings.

3) Dependability: Ensures reliability or in other words consistency of the findings in that, if the research were to be repeated within the same context using the same participants, similar narratives would be provided. Dependability has been achieved in this study through the consistency of questions that were asked of the participants. This was achieved by having an interview schedule and a common set of questions to act as prompts for probing different areas of interest. Moreover, the robustness of the questions was tested through a pilot and some were subsequently modified/omitted as result of this.

4) Confirmability: Pertains to objectivity, such that the research is based on participants' responses with minimal impact owing to researcher bias (Shenton, 2004; Lincoln and Guba, 2007). According to Gibbs (2012), qualitative researchers' awareness of objectivity as well as countering it is a way for establishing confirmability in qualitative research. From the beginning to end of the research, the researcher was aware of the necessity of establishing confirmability and did her best to remain as objective and neutral throughout the research process. For instance, during the interviews the researcher avoided leading questions. In sum, the researcher endeavoured to avoid bringing her bias to the inquiry, by continually reflecting on her own stance on the different issues, in particular, she was keenly aware that she herself was a member of the focal population and needed to strive at all time to keep a distance from the emotive subject matter raised by some of the participants.

3. Sampling

Sampling is an important issue, because it requires addressing the question: how much information is needed before it is possible to claim that what has been collected represents the entire phenomenon under investigation? (Bauer and Aarts, 2000). Thus, sampling refers to a number of techniques that are applied in order to achieve representativeness (ibid). Palinkas et al. (2015) also point out that there must be consistency between the sampling method and the

purpose as well as the assumptions of the research.

This researcher took the view that purposive and snowball sampling methods were most appropriate for selecting participants, who could provide insightful data regarding the research topic and purpose of the research. It was also considered that the application of these two methods would increase the efficiency of this study. The rationale behind the methods chosen is as follows. In order to achieve the research objectives and to address the questions of the current research so as to gain an in depth understanding regarding the mobility of students, the primary task was to identify a sample of participants who could provide the appropriate information. Moreover, since one of the objectives of this study was to determine whether or not students' mobility differs according to certain variables, such as gender, then a targeted sample that ensured a sufficient number of people possessing the characteristics of interest was required.

Bryman and Bell (2011) define purposive sampling as a researcher's selection of participants strategically, those who can provide rich information for addressing the research questions of the study. According to Patton (1990, p169), the logic behind purposive sampling is that it is based on "information-rich cases for study in depth", whereby the informants can reveal much that serves the purpose of the research, hence the term purposive sampling. The application of purposive sampling to rich-information cases enables the effective use of limited resources, which is a key reason why it has been widely applied in such cases (Palinkas et al., 2015). Additionally, Bryman and Bell (2011) highlight that purposive sampling, whilst not being a random sample, does not mean it is a convenience one. The reason for this is that the main criterion for selecting participants with the convenience sample technique is the easy accessibility of participants, whereas purposive sampling ensures that those selected can contribute rich information towards the research goals in the researcher's mind. Moreover, Lincoln and Guba (1985, p200) point out that purposive sampling is different from random sampling, which is like "drawing samples from a hat". Sharma (2008) proposes that the main advantages of purposive sampling are as follows: it enables the researcher to access the best available knowledge; it provides better control over specific variables; and it makes it easier to match sample groups. Furthermore, compared to quantitative methods, the collection of data is more time consuming and expensive, hence qualitative studies tend to apply purposive sampling rather than the random form (Mays and Pope, 1995). In sum, it was deemed that features of purposive sampling fit with the characteristics of this study.

Snowball sampling has been chosen as a second sampling method for this study, which is one of the categories within purposive sampling (Srivastava and Rego, 2011). Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) define this as asking participants who have already been selected for the study to recruit other participants. According to Atkinson and Flint (2001), the primary advantages of snowballing are that it enables reaching the target population where the number of respondents is few or where some level of trust is needed to begin contacting them. In addition, according these authors, it has the ability to reach a hidden population, which is difficult to access by using formal research methods. Moreover, it is both an economic and efficient method that can produce in-depth results quickly.

For the current study, snowballing was essential for collecting the data. Mobility is a political issue, which is not only high on the agenda of both the Turkish and the UK governments, but also being discussed by governments all around the world. For certain countries, such as Turkey, for political and social reasons, it can be a sensitive subject and therefore, students might not have been willing to participate in the research. Further, as was mentioned earlier in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, the crackdown on freedom of speech in Turkey could have led to people fearing to share their views or they may have been unwilling to give the reasons behind their return or non-return plans to Turkey and, hence, this would have made it difficult to recruit a sufficient number of participants. In fact, this was one of the main difficulties that the researcher faced during the recruitment of students for the interviews for both the pilot study and main study.

Despite the researcher easily reaching a substantial number of participants through university PhD websites and TUSU (Turkish Students' Union of UK), many refused to participate, particularly those funded by the Turkish Government. Further, regarding some students who agreed to take part in the research, it was still difficult to persuade them about the anonymity of their contribution. For instance, one female student agreed to participate if the researcher allowed her to record the interview as well, so that she could have proof of any changes to her narrative that the researcher might make inadvertently, which showed her level of insecurity. Several times the researcher faced questions such as 'How can you prove that you do not work for the Government?' or 'How can you persuade me you are not a spy of government?'. In fact, during the recruitment of participants, it emerged many were suspicious of the researcher's intentions, which was why it was decided that snowball sampling would the most effective way to gather data. That is, as each subsequent participant was identified by someone who knew

them, there was an element of trust built into the sample selection, which made it easier to bring that person on board and thus, achieve the targeted quota of interviews.

Oakley (1981, p31) equated interviewing individuals with "marriage: everybody knows what it is, an awful lot of people do it, and yet behind each closed front door there is a world of secrets". Because the researcher was a PhD student, who had come to the UK for a language course seven years ago from Turkey and gained a British Passport, this gave her good credentials for uncovering the 'secrets' of the Turkish student and expert interviewees. In particular, when knowing her residential status, this put many of the participants at ease that she was not a representative of the Turkish government, which led to their trusting her and giving rich input.

Regarding the sample size, there is no doubt that determining an adequate one is an important step in any research. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007) highlight that providing a rationale for the number of interviews as well as the length of each is important, but is often not provided by qualitative researchers. According to Sandelowski (1995), a common mistake in qualitative research is the assumption that the number is not a significant element in the achievement of an adequate sample strategy. However, to reach an adequate sample size in qualitative research is important, because it affects the credibility of the research findings. Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2007), who discuss the issue of sampling and sampling size in qualitative research, support Sandelowski's (1995) argument. They point out that sampling has not received the level of attention in qualitative research that it has in quantitative research. This is because the latter usually has the aim of obtaining a large enough sample for generalisation of the findings, whereas this is not the case for the latter, as qualitative research is related to meaning rather than making such generalisations.

Through the application of purposive sampling, the proposed sample size for this study was 40 students in addition to five experts at the micro and macro levels. For the rationale behind the current study's sample size, Mason's (2010) assessment is drawn upon, that in qualitative design this should be sufficiently large to cover all or most aspects of the research, whilst at the same time the researcher should be aware that providing too much data might be repetitive. Whilst there are no specific rules for an adequate sample size in qualitative research (Patton, 1990), the commonly held view is that for such research this should constitute the smallest number of participants that can provide sufficient data to deliver the overall purposes of the research in a robust manner. Mason (2010) suggests sampling should continue until 'data saturation' is

reached, whereas Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend continuing until 'information redundancy' is observed. Both saturation and redundancy refer to terminating sampling, if no new information is coming from new participants (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). From a different perspective, Morse et al. (2002) highlight that it is important to distinguish between data saturation and participant saturation. They state that one of the misconceptions is that studies apply participant saturation (this refers to maintaining the research with the same interviewees until only repetition is received) instead of data saturation (which pertains to involving new interviewees until completion or replication of the data set is achieved). In addition, considering previous studies, the sample size of most of qualitative studies on student mobility has generally varied between 30 and 60 students (e.g. 34 Ghanaian students by Dako-Gyeke (2016) and 55 Slovakian students by Balaz and Williams (2004)). For the current research, after 45 participants had been interviewed the view was taken that the data saturation point had been reached.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

4.1. Interview Question Design and Piloting

The interview questions were formulated by drawing on the findings of earlier studies in the literature and feedback obtained from pilot study. Pilot studies make it possible to see not only the effectiveness of the strategies adopted, but also, help to strengthen both the argument and rationale for the research strategy (Marshall and Rossman, 2016). In addition, to the honing of the research instruments, a pilot also plays a significant role in the identification of research problems and shortfalls in the validity as well as bringing to light matters of ethics (Sampson, 2004).

Accordingly, prior to the implementation of interviewing participants, during Spring 2016, a pilot study was carried out with four students at the micro level and one academic at the macro level in order to test the appropriateness of the interview questions and the chosen research method as well as assess whether the interview questions fully covered the areas towards which the research objectives and questions were addressed. After the interviews, the participants also reflected and provided feedback when asked for their views on the structure and order of the questions, as well as whether they had experienced any difficulty in understanding or answering the questions. The pilot study made three contributions to the main research endeavour.

Language choice of the research: The participants who were involved in the data collection were: at the micro-level, PhD students from Turkey living in the UK; at the macro level, professors from Turkey working and living in the UK; and experts on international student mobility living in Turkey and in the UK. Despite, all of them using English in both their professional and daily life activities, one of the main considerations of the researcher was the decision regarding language. That is, she was interested to ascertain whether any of the participants would prefer to be interviewed in Turkish. Three out of the five stated that they could use both languages and one said that she preferred the English language as it made her feel more secure. The final participant indicated that she would from time to time use the Turkish language, if she felt that she could not express herself accurately, such as when using Turkish idioms. Consequently, the English language was chosen for the current study. However, for the main study, at the beginning of the interviews it was explained to each participant by the researcher that, whilst English was preferable, they were entitled to use Turkish, if they so wished. For two interviews with two experts at the macro level, the use of the Turkish language was preferred and the transcripts were subsequently translated from Turkish into English by the researcher.

Location choice: The pilot study helped the researcher to determine the best locations for interviewing, where she could provide the participants with a relaxed atmosphere and thus, capture high quality data. For the pilot study, in accordance with the participants' date, time and location preferences, three out of five of the interviews were conducted at a coffee shop (local coffee shop, Costa, Starbucks) close to the participants' university or home. The remaining two interviews were conducted at the participants' university PhD offices or university hall of residence at their convenience. However, as the researcher used audio-recording, the voice quality was not good when the interviews took place in a coffee shop, particularly at busy times, which created difficulties when transcribing them. Hence, for the main research, the researcher asked the participants whether they were willing to meet at their university and, if they did not wish to do, the interview was conducted in a coffee shop outside of busy times, such as between 9-12.00 am or 3-5.00 pm, so as to overcome any recording issues. Since they were also PhD students, many were aware of the challenges regarding recording and thus, kindly accepted the researcher's request. Accordingly, for the main research, whilst the majority of interviews were conducted in university PhD offices, university canteens or the British Library, during university and office hours, the remainder were conducted in coffee shops, usually not during the peak hours. The interview sessions varied in length from approximately 40 to 100 minutes.

Reformulating the interview questions and clarification of the research objectives: The pilot study illustrated human complexity as well as the sensitivity of the topic. The aim of the study was to uncover the reasons behind willingness to remain abroad or return to Turkey after graduation. During the interviews, the respondents often provided multiple answers and sometimes unexpected answers came up, which required the researcher to dig deeper. This sometimes could lead to the conversation straying away from the focus of the aim of research. Further, it was, at times, difficult to learn the reasons behind their willingness to return or not-return to Turkey in an initial attempt to garner this information. In this regard, at the end of the interview, when the respondents were asked if they would like to add anything, they often added a new reason behind their willingness to return or not-return to Turkey. In response to the pilot study outcomes, some questions were broken down into several detailed further ones. Moreover, during the pilot study some stated that having a foreign qualification would help them to find better job opportunities in Turkey, whilst others perceived that this would make it easier to stay abroad, with neither responses coming directly from the question schedule. Hence, in the main research, the interview started with the question of what were their reasons for studying abroad.

Secondly, they were asked what were their career plans after graduation. As soon as the researcher learnt that their career plans were based on staying abroad or returning to Turkey, she asked the reasons behind this. Later, they were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of living abroad and returning to Turkey. This question helped the researcher to elicit the reasons behind their return or non-return plans. In addition, at the end of the interview, the students were asked to summarise the reasons behind their return or non-return plans. This format allowed the participants to ponder and elaborate as well as to provide the researcher with more detailed answers. Additionally, some participants' feedback helped the researcher to redesign some interview questions. For example, one student raised her concern regarding a question aimed at eliciting how far family opinion was important in terms of a student deciding to return or not. She suggested that in Turkish culture, as the family is everything, probably all students would say that their family opinion was very important without any hesitation, even if they did not mean it. She suggested that this question should be asked in a different form. Following this, the researcher reviewed the question and changed it to whether or not they shared their plans after graduation with their family and their family would support them in their choice. Moreover, the pilot study also helped the researcher to formulate clearly the final version of the research objectives of the main research.

4.2. Parameters for Participants Selection

For the current study, purposive sampling was applied in order to achieve a balanced selection of participants based on a number of variables. At the beginning of purposive sampling, the establishment of selection criteria is important, because this determines whether the purpose of the study can be fulfilled and also facilitates the identification of information-rich cases (Merriam, 2009).

Accordingly, the first chosen variable was 'visa status'. That is, the current study only involved Turkish passport holders who came to the UK with a student visa. This is because the research took the form of an investigation of the mobility plans of students after graduation. Hence, those with a Turkish passport with a student visa for the UK best represent the research topic and have knowledge about it (Morse et al., 2002), when compared with those with dual citizenship or a different form of visa. In addition to visa status, the chosen variables for the study related to demographic (age, gender, relationship status, ethnicity) and educational factors (field of study, year of study and funding source). The reason behind this, was to evaluate and compare international students' mobility plans in order to elicit whether these varied according to those variables. Accordingly, apart from field of study and year of study, for all the other variables, i.e. gender, visa status, ethnicity, relationship status, age and funding source the sample allowed for comparative analysis. Details regarding the parameters for participant selection and the reasons behind the choice of these are given in the Table 3.

Table 3: Parameters for the Selection of Participants

Parameters for the Selection of Participants
Visa status: This research is based on students holding Turkish passports who came here solely for the purpose of study by holding a student visa. It did not include students, such as those holding business or other types of visa or those who had dual citizenship for both Turkey and the UK. In addition, this did not include students who were pursuing their PhD studies through an exchange programme (for short term study, e.g. 6 months /1 year).
Gender: There has been only a limited number of studies (e.g. Zweig and Changgui, 2013) that have considered gender differences. These studies (e.g. Hercog and van de Laar, 2013) reported that mobility differs according to gender, but with contrasting results. Hence, a sample size consisting of 19 female and 21 male students was deliberately chosen in order to bring forth any gender differences in relation to mobility.
Field of study: The reason for choosing this variable is that earlier studies (e.g. Finn, 2012) looked mainly at science students or one discipline. Furthermore, previous studies have not refuted the idea that the field of study plays a significant role in mobility. In addition, the extant literature (e.g. McGill, 2013) recommends that future studies should be based on a comparison of international students from a number of different disciplines. Despite one aim being to involve an equal number of students from both science (20 students) and the social sciences (20 students), the sample consisted of 29 social science and 11 science students, hence the proposed split was not achieved. However, the interviews included students from a variety disciplines ranging from medicine to economics.
Funding source: Findings from previous studies' (e.g. Bouwel and Carine, 2010) have shown that funding source is an important indicator in relation to mobility, with there being a general consensus that mobile students compromise a large number of self-funding students. Thus, given the worldwide competition to recruit skilled people, the existing literature (e.g. Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) has suggested that funding from the home country can be used as a tool in order to guarantee the return of students. Hence, by including in the sample, those self-funding, those with a scholarship from Turkey (20 students) and those with a scholarship (20 students) from outside, it has been possible to uncover the impact of funding on students' mobility plans and also whether or not funding from a home country can be an effective method to attract students to return home. There were 17 students with funding from UK institutions and for the remaining 23 the situation was as follows: five self-funding students, 17 by the Turkish Government and one student funded by both Turkey and The UK. This meant that meaningful comparisons could be made.

Year of Study: Findings from previous research (e.g. Hazen and Albert, 2006) have suggested that international students' mobility plans change over time during the period of stay within that country. Further, there has not been much research investigating how the year of study influences students' mobility. Accordingly, one of the aims of this study was to ascertain whether or not mobility differs according to year of study and, hence, students near to the beginning of their PhD studies (1st and 2nd years) were compared with those nearing the end (3rd and 4th years). However, there was a substantial difference in sample size between students regarding this variable in that the majority of students (27) fell into the latter category.

Ethnicity: Students can hold Turkish passports, but have different ethnicities. Kurds are the largest minority ethnic group in Turkey. There has always been a tension between Turks and Kurds. However, studies are silent on how ethnic conflict influences academics and students. Consequently, this study's sample also included Kurdish students from Turkey in order to reveal whether or not ethnic conflict impacts on mobility. This did not require having an equal number of Kurdish and Turkish students. In any case, as a consequence of the ethnic conflict between Turkish and Kurdish peoples in Turkey, some students might have preferred not to mention their ethnic origin. However, the decision was taken to identify a sufficient number of Kurdish students so that their narrative could be heard and a total of 10 were recruited for interviewing.

Relationship Status: There are mixed results in the literature, regarding the impact of relationship status on mobility. Some (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2005) have reported that being single allows a student freer mobility choice, while others (e.g. Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) have revealed that relationship status has no impact on mobility. Accordingly, one of the aims of this study was to uncover how, if at all, relationship status influences the mobility of students. This variable could be examined, because 23 students were in a relationship whilst the remainder were not, which meant there were fairly even sub sample sizes.

Age: In the literature, whilst some (e.g. Hercog and van de Laar, 2013) have reported older students as less likely to return to their home countries, others (e.g. Aidis et al., 2005) have found that younger students have a higher propensity to remain abroad. Given this inconsistency, it was considered appropriate to elicit whether or not age is an important indicator of student mobility. Accordingly, the sample consisted of students aged between 25 and 42, who were divided into three categories: 18 students between 25 and 30, 17 between 30 and 35 and five older than 35.

4.3. Selection of Participants

A number of methods were used in relation to the selection of potential participants in order to reach the proposed sample size and structure. These ranged from university websites to attendance by the researcher at international conferences. Details of channels deployed in the selection of participants are given in Table 4, p135. Participants were selected, to start with by using university websites (personal contact details, i.e. email, telephone). Following this, use of social media and the snowball technique were the most applied channels. Regarding the former, a high number of participants were accessed through Facebook (i.e. an announcement of the research was posted to the University of X Turkish Society on Facebook in 28 February 2017 and The London Turkish Meet up Group page on Facebook in 3 March 2017). As mentioned before, the snowball technique was one of the main strategies for finding participants, which helped to increase trust between participants and the researcher. Accordingly, most of the participants were accessed through contacts of other students who were willing to participate in the research. Further, the researcher had an interview at the macro level with the manager of the Turkish Consulate Office for Education in London. Despite the manager showing willingness to provide to the researcher the contact details of PhD students from Turkey in the UK, the researcher did not contact any participants through this channel. This was because it was decided that trustworthiness and anonymity of the research might be compromised. Further, one of the most common questions put by those contacted was how the researcher had obtained their contact details. Given, as mentioned before that, mobility is a sensitive topic and the current politic turbulence in Turkey, this led to almost all students expressing their concern about the anonymity of the research.

Table 4: The Channels in the Selection of Participants

CHANNELS	FEASIBILITY
University websites	It was possible to see the names and contact details (email address and phone numbers) of PhD students who were Turkish on a large number of university web sites.
Linked-in	This allowed for obtaining the full profile and contact details of PhD students. For instance, it was possible to get all the details of the PhD students from London universities.
Non-profit organisations	There are a number of Turkish/ British academic groups, including TUSU (Turkish Students' Union of UK) and the Association of British Turkish Academics (ABTA), which enable PhD students and established academics from Turkey to share their surveys on these group websites. The research announcement for recruiting participants for the current study was published on their website.
Conferences and seminars	Participation at conferences and in seminars, for instance, the International Migration Conference, held in Vienna, in July 2016 and in Athens in August 2017, allowed the researcher to reach a number of PhD students and academics from Turkey. After the researcher explained the research, she exchanged her contact details with two PhD students and also one academic from Turkey, who has been teaching in the UK and who agreed to ask some of his PhD students from Turkey whether they would like to participate.
Social Network of the researcher	The researcher contacted a number of students and academics from Turkey working and living in the UK by using her academic social network. The topic of the study was introduced to their students and if they showed a willingness to participate in this research, the researcher's contact details were given to them.
Social Media	Social media provided a number of students from Turkey through the researcher's posts on social media, such as the Turkish Society groups of London universities, which are non-profit organisational groups on Facebook.
Snowball	The researcher acquired some of the students' contact details by using the snowball technique, as described earlier.

4.4. Profiles of the Participants

Semi-structural interviews with 40 participants at the micro level and five at the macro level were conducted between May and August in 2017. At the micro level, despite the students being from 17 different universities, the majority were attending those in London. At the macro level, the research included two professors from Turkey, who had previously studied for their PhD in the UK and remained in the UK, whilst the remaining three were called as experts, who had deep knowledge of international student mobility, including the Manager of the Turkish Consulate Office for Education. Details of participants at the micro and micro levels are given tables 5, 6 and 7 (Appendix, p297).

Table 5: Summary of the Profiles of Interviewees at the Micro Level

	Relationship status	Gender	Ethnicity	Age
Demographic Factors	Single : 23 Married : 7 Relationship: 6 Engaged:2 Complicated: 2	Female: 19 Male: 21	Turkish:30 Kurdish:9 Mix:1	25-29years: 18 30-35 years: 17 35> years: 5
	Field of study	Funding		Year of Study
Educational Factors	Science: 11 Social Science: 29	scholarship from Turkey: 17 Scholarship From UK: 17 Self funding: 5 Scholarship (Turkey and the UK): 1		1 st year: 5 2 nd year: 8 3 rd year: 11 4 th year: 16

Table 6: The Profiles of the Participants at the Macro Level

Name	Position	Location
Ahsen	Doctor/ International Partnership Coordinator	London
Ismail	Manager of Turkish Consulate Office for Education	London
Seckin	Manager of Foreign Education Agency	Istanbul
Cenk	Professor/ Social Science	London
Taner	Professor/ Social Science	London

4.5. Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis is defined by Corbin and Strauss (2008, p1) as "a process of examining and interpreting data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and developed empirical knowledge". The interviews transcribed were coded into categories according to the data

collected, the research objectives and questions, theoretical background and purpose of the present research. NVivo 10 software was employed to analyse the data. In order to gain an understanding, the researcher attended various workshops offered by the University of Westminster in April 2017 and also two days of workshops run by NCRM (National Centre for Research Methods) in June 2017. Given that the present research was aimed at evaluating international students' mobility plans through each participant's point of view by conducting 45 interviews at the micro and macro levels, the nature of the NVivo technique not only enabled the researcher to save time, but also provided the researcher with greater flexibility during the data analysis process. Given that one of the characteristics of this software is that it allows the researcher to develop many codes, for the current study a number of codes was identified together with a number of sub-codes. NVivo allows the researcher to go back continually, to revise and also remove or add to existing codes when further data have been collected and analysed.

5. Ethical Considerations

Ethics in research can be seen as guidelines that govern the researcher's standard of behaviour throughout the period of the research, from gaining access to participants to analysing the data (Saunders et al., 2012). Creswell and Poth (2017) state that in qualitative research a researcher comes across a number of different ethical issues and they define three principles for ethical research as being " respect for persons (i.e. privacy and consent), concern for welfare (i.e. minimising harm and augmenting reciprocity) and justice (i.e. equitable treatment and enhancing inclusivity)"(Creswell and Poth, 2017, pxi).

This study is based on a sensitive topic. In particular, some of the students' PhD studies were supported by scholarships awarded by the Turkish Government and, hence, it was crucial to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. To this end, a number of steps were followed. First, all the participants became part of the research on a voluntary basis and they were free to refuse to respond to any question they did not want to answer or even withdraw completely from the interview at any time. Secondly, both oral and written informed consent was gathered and none of the participants' names were disclosed during the research, with all interviewees anonymised by using pseudonyms. Thirdly, digital recorders were used with the participants' permission and the data were kept securely. Lastly, the study was granted 'full approval' by the University

of Westminster. The researcher followed the code of practice governing the ethical conduct of research produced by the university. She complied with the ethical conduct for research of this institution when conducting interviews and the research ethics were also approved by her supervisors.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter, the overall the methodology of the research was explained and justified. As the current study's aim was to reveal structural and agency factors behind student mobility drawing on Structuration Theory and the Capability Approach, it has been shown that a qualitative method was the most appropriate method in order to meet the research objectives and address the research questions, underpinned by a social constructionism/interpretivist philosophy. This philosophical standing allowed the researcher, as described by Gillham (2000, p11), to "get under the skin" or in other words, enabled her to gain a deep understanding of mobility, which is a complex social phenomenon.

It has also been explained that the pilot study not only assisted the researcher in structuring the final version of both the interview questions and research objectives of the main study, but also helped to make decisions regarding the language of the interviews and their location. As a result, interviews were conducted in English and most often in the universities' PhD offices; where this was not the case, they took places in coffee shops outside of peak times in order to achieve a better quality of recording. Further, the most used channels (i.e. university websites, social media and snowballing) for recruitment of participants and the criteria (i.e. visa status, gender and ethnicity) regarding the selection of interviewees were explained in detail. Following this, the profiles of 45 participants at the micro and macro levels were provided. Moreover, the chapter also showed how the application of NVivo software facilitated the analysis and coding process, as well as ensuring the quality and efficiency of the data analysis.

Lastly, mobility is a very sensitive topic and the research was based on PhD students' voices. Hence, in order to protect the participants from harm and/or risk, ethical aspects and regulations were taken into consideration, including the consent form and the usage of pseudonyms for anonymity.

PART 4: EMPRIRICAL INVESTIGATION

CHAPTER 6: Identifying the Structural Factors Behind Student Mobility

This chapter focuses on how student mobility is shaped by factors at macro level. In this regard, through the findings derived from the interviews, first, structural factors, namely political, socio-cultural, professional and economic factors influencing students return or non-return plans to Turkey, are identified. Secondly, the impact of these factors at the macro level on the capabilities of students to become mobile is uncovered.

1. Introduction

> *"Basically, if you Google in Turkish, I recently did, with a word like Turkey or from Turkey, you will see like, kind of the most searched suggestions in Google as they propose is how can I leave Turkey?... the ways for leaving Turkey? ... the ways of escaping from Turkey? and so on and so on. So, I can say that like, every citizen in Turkey wants to leave Turkey." (Tolga)*

According to the above, the interviews reveal that the majority of the students (31 out of 40 students) career plans are based on being outside of Turkey, i.e. they are planning not to return after graduation. As discussed in Chapter 2, when the students were asked about the main factors playing a role in their willingness to remain or not remain abroad, several issues were reported. The same question was also asked of the two professors at the macro level, in order to ascertain why they remained in the UK after completing their PhDs.

Despite previous study findings having often indicated that students' mobility plans are shaped by either ***professional factors*** (i.e. better research facilities) (Mahroum, 2000; Ackers, 2005; Hazen and Albert, 2005; Gill and Guth, 2008; Delicado, 2010; Ates et al., 2011; MPG, 2012) or ***economic factors*** (i.e. greater job opportunities) (Song, 1997; Hazen and Albert, 2005; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Vasiljeva, 2015), according to this study's findings ***political factors*** (i.e. political freedoms) are more important, followed by ***socio-cultural factors*** (i.e. life style freedoms). The reasons for the dominant role of political factors in the Turkish context are twofold.

First, as mentioned previously, only a limited number of studies have included students from Turkey (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2005), i.e. previous studies have been mainly based on other countries. Moreover, the weighting of factors influencing international students' mobility decisions differs according to the country of origin (Alberts and Hazen, 2005), which thus makes it inappropriate to compare the findings by using data from, say, the Chinese and Turkish contexts. So, given the lack of scholarship in the Turkish context, it is perhaps not surprising that politics comes to the fore more than other drivers of mobility, which has not been found to be the case regarding many other countries of origin.

Secondly, even when the Turkish context is considered, such as a study by Gungor and Tansel (2005), which is seen as a major work about highly qualified mobile people from Turkey, the conclusion drawn is that economic factors, particularly income level, are major reasons for non-returning students rather than political ones. However, as discussed in Chapter 2, many studies (i.e. Esen and Gumuscu, 2016) and international organisations' reports (e.g. World Press Freedom Index, 2017; Amnesty International, 2017) have highlighted increasing authoritarianism and increasing restrictions on freedom in Turkey, stemming from the Justice and Development Party's (AKP) policies and practices since it came into power in 2002. Gungor and Tansel's (2005) research was based on data for 2002, which means that they did not cover subsequent AKP practices. Further, the findings also suggest that political factors are closely linked with economic, socio-cultural and professional ones. That is, political factors directly impact on life style freedoms and job security. Consequently, permeation of the political across the other drivers towards mobility plays a predominant role.

In the following sections, each factor at the macro level (structural factors) influencing students' return or non-return plans to Turkey is discussed in detail, according to both Structuration Theory and the Capability Approach.

2. Political Factors

Political factors were not just raised by the majority of students as one of the main reasons for non-returning; they are also a main consideration raised by those planning to return. Whilst some students stated that they did not follow what is going on in Turkey, saying it was too depressing or you cannot make any changes, the majority of students, as suggested by Szelrnyi

(2006), were keenly aware of the political situation in Turkey. Many compared political life in Turkey and the UK through the social media and family/friends links. Non-returning students explicitly stated that political factors were the main reason discouraging their going home. As one student put it:

> *"I would choose to be here. It is totally because of the political environment   in Turkey, in this phase." (Meral)*

Many expressed the view that today there is increasing political pressure, including intolerance of political opposition. For instance, one said *"I mean, Turkey is getting really, like, really authoritarian, I mean Erdogan and the AKP government is scary. And like, I, as a person in the-, I mean, thirty four year old person in an early research career, I'm afraid to go back to Turkey. I'm afraid in many senses" (Baran).* Further, the politics in Turkey is now permeating every aspect of life, more than ever, as commented by one interviewee:

> *"In Turkey, political situations are everywhere, like, in your friends – as I told you, in your family, with the friends that you work together… Everywhere. If you wanna apply for a job the first thing they ask you is the political things; your political ideas. Wherever you go, even when you are shopping, people talk about it. Everywhere people talk about it; that you must support the government, if not, you will have some trouble. You could lose your job, or be put in prison, you know what I mean? So, you're not comfortable anywhere." (Eren)*

As referred to in Chapter 2, a number of earlier studies (i.e. Li et al., 1996; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Panahi, 2012; Zweig and Changgui, 2013) underlined political factors as being one of the important drivers in student mobility. According to Arthur and Flynn (2011) and Hazen and Albert (2005), political factors can play a dominant role for those students coming from countries where political tension is high, i.e. where there is conflict and/or restrictive government practices.

Accordingly, based on interview data, political factors were described by the participants in a variety ways, including in terms of freedom of speech, increasing authoritarianism, the attempted military coup, the Syrian conflict, visa restrictions, job security and Brexit. Based on their responses and to consider these from a Structuration Theory perspective, these political

factors are summarised under four categories: (1) *Political Discrimination* (2) *Political Freedom* (3) *Political Instability* and (4) *The UK's Migration Policies*. Secondly, in order to show how those four factors at the macro level (structural) reflect the capability of students at the micro level (agency), four capabilities from the Capability Approach perspective are identified: (1) *Employment capability*, which is about how political discrimination impacts on the job opportunities of individuals; (2) *Academic capability,* which refers to the link between political and academic freedoms, together with academic productivity; (3) *Capability for safety*, which pertains to the impact of domestic and regional instability on the perceived safety of individuals; and (4) *Capability of being an active citizen*, referring to the association between the migration policies of a host country and the acquisition of a permanent residency permit, which allows individuals to participate in the economic and political life of a country.

Figure 2: The Impact of Political Factors on Student Mobility

STRUCTURE

POLITICAL FACTORS

- Political Discrimination
- Political Freedom
- Political Instability
- The UK Migration Policies

CAPABILITY

- Employment Capability
- Academic Capability
- Capability of Safety
- Capability of Being an Active Citizen
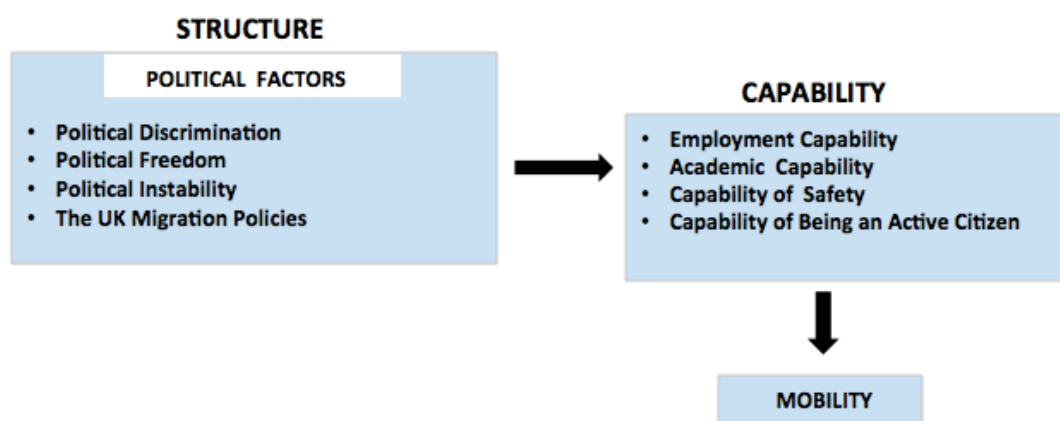
MOBILITY

Source: Researcher (2019)

2.1. Political Discrimination and Employment Capability

> *"If I ask myself am I afraid of losing my job? I mean actually yes I said that I will return…but under these situations I have to make also some other plans… My dream is to go back Turkey, but if the situation is not good enough of course I just cannot go back to Turkey and just stay at home without a job…" (Dilek)*

One anticipated finding was that almost all the participants referred repeatedly to *'the lack of*

job security', ***'want a secure job'*** and ***'fear of finding a job'***, if they returned to Turkey. Given this, one might ask whether employment is related to economic factors, as job prospects in terms of both job security and job opportunities are considered as a part of these in the literature (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014). However, this study has elicited that having a fear of being unemployed is not so much about economic factors, but rather, because of the political atmosphere in Turkey. For instance, Zeliha explained that:

> *"I have seen some other friends who returned back to Turkey and they are just waiting for their jobs or lost their jobs even though they are very well educated...The politics...you're very weak and you can lose your job, maybe not you but your parents and they can go to jail...That's why you always fear of something in Turkey... I love my country but I know that if I go back to my country I will face these problems." (Zeliha)*

Moreover students who were funded by the Turkish Government shared the same fears about being unemployed, although as mentioned in Chapter 2, funding by the home government is seen as 'contractual obligation' (Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) or in other words their contract is based on compulsory service, which means that they have to work for a period of time in universities that have been chosen by the government (Turkish National Education Service, 2015). However, as some students' statements suggested, funding does not diminish the fear of being unemployed/ job insecurity. For instance, Halis was funded by the Turkish Government and he did not want to return to Turkey, because of lack of job security. He stated that:

> *"I used to see myself like you are lucky, because you have a fixed position when you back to Turkey, which is waiting for you...but nowadays I see that there are some operations in universities so people are protestors, researchers and others started losing their jobs and there is no job security in Turkey."(Halis)*

Hence, in contrast to the previous studies (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), the current study's findings suggest that the fear of being unemployed is not related to economic factors, but rather, to the political atmosphere in Turkey, because even the economy has become highly politicised. This implies political discrimination, whereby anyone who did

not support the current governing party has limited job opportunities and thus, job insecurity, which is fostering a fear of unemployment, if they return to Turkey.

To sum up, the interview data provide evidence to support the propositions from Giddens' Structuration Theory (ST) and Sen's Capability Approach (CA), which constitute this study's theoretical framework. Under ST theory, structure (macro) and agency (micro) are interrelated. People are not able to disregard politics in Turkey at the macro level, because it is having a direct impact on many aspects of an individuals' life, such as career prospects (i.e. being employed) at the micro level. As one student put it:

> *"I have obviously, like I mentioned, learnt to ignore the political situation, political weather in Turkey, which is good because I can live with that, but on the other hand, the political situation also affects other things, such as career opportunities, economy - real things tangible things, rather than just words, like people insulting each other." (Deniz).*

Political discrimination negatively impacts on the employment capabilities of students by creating the fear of being unemployed. Under the Capability Approach (CA), functioning is an achievement, in this case being employed, and capability is the ability to achieve functioning (well-being), which can be seen as employment capability. One student expressed the concern that, as a result of political discrimination in Turkey, she would not be able to convert her employability (capabilities) into being employed (functioning). In her words:

> *"I studied political science, but I can't be like part of the government right now, because they wouldn't because they would only hire people who are a hundred per cent similar to themselves and like whenever I disagreed, they wouldn't want me,* [due to political discrimination the student has a lack of employment capability] *I could actually benefit my own country in the future but right now I don't see like any sort of platform I can actually put my knowledge and my experience towards." (Izge)* [lacking employment capability would mean facing being unemployed and hence, there being no possibility of achieving functioning in this regard]

Despite studying abroad being seen as bringing economic advantages in terms of employment

opportunities (Balaz and Williams, 2004 and Li, 2013) - *"I thought just improving academic skills will be enough for having a good job." (Zeliha)* - many of the students believed that the politic discrimination in Turkey was going to be a big obstacle to their being able to exploit employment capabilities back home. Lacking employment capability will mean that they will be unable to participate in economic life, thus failing to engender well-being (functioning) (Robeyns, 2003). Hence, they do not want to return to Turkey as a result of having a fear of being unemployed.

2.2. Political Freedom and Academic Capability

"I see Turkey...I mean I am very pessimistic in terms of freedom, freedom of expression, academic freedom and I am concerned. I think a lot of people are concerned about this... bans... bans... bans on you tube, on twitter" (Cem)

According to the participants' reports, the political climate is restricting general freedoms, including freedom of speech, in and out of academia, thus encouraging academics to leave Turkey, as pointed out by Panahi (2012). Almost all noted that Turkey does not provide a safe environment for them to feel free to express their own views. Freedom of speech was highlighted as a one of major issues, which is discouraging many participants from returning. Many highlighted their deep concerns about freedom of speech, particularly in academia in Turkey. As some students said:

"I think there is no freedom of speech in Turkey at all. So, this is one of the main reasons why I don't want to go back to Turkey"...Right now I can't see my future in Turkey, because there is no, in my opinion, there is no academic freedom."(Ulku)

"It scares me to work in Turkey... I am an academic, I want to be free. I mean I want to have academic freedom and express myself freely. But right now, it's so difficult in Turkey."(Meral)

Nearly all the students reported that academic freedom is one the main advantages of the UK, using the expressions of either *'feeling more free'* or *'feeling safer'* as an academic. Regarding

the advantages of the UK, they also clearly stated that some research topics, especially those concerning Kurdish issues, could not be conducted due to the lack of academic freedom, but this was possible in the UK. Moreover, several participants' statements also contended that the crackdown on academic freedom is seen as being more problematic for social science students than science ones. In addition, students who are funded by the Turkish government are under enormous pressure regarding academic freedom and, thus, they have to be careful in order to keep their scholarship. In relation to this, some students pointed out that the Turkish Government had no clue about their research as they reported a different title and subject for instance; *"I reported on a different title and different subject" (Semih),* whilst others, such as Meral did not include some important aspects of her research in order to keep herself and her participants safe. As she said:

> *"I know, this is not ideal, but when you do research you need to protect all your participants including yourself as well. And if it's going to cause some problem for you, you have a right to eliminate that information."(Meral)*

Overall, the findings suggest that, as put forward in Chapter 2 with reference to other scholars (Chang, 1992; Li et al., 1996; Hazen and Albert, 2005; Panahi, 2012; Riemsdijk and Wang, 2017), political freedom, including freedom of speech, particularly in academia, was one of the main reasons for students' non-return plans. Further, as highlighted by Amnesty International (2017) and the World Freedom Index (2017), following the coup attempt in July 2016 academic freedom deteriorated dramatically and has become a salient security issue, which often ends with criminal investigations followed by dismissal of academics from their positions by the Turkish government. Hence, it is unsurprising that many students precisely described their fears, whereby expressing academic disagreement with the government or criticising it has become sufficient to be labelled as being in opposition, an activist and even a terrorist after the attempted military coup. For instance, as one participant put it:

> *"Right now in Turkey, there's a kind of atmosphere where the government can easily judge any academic who may say something against the government... if they don't like you they can just call you as being in the opposition, activist, terrorist..." (Ulku)*

They also often use peace declaration signatories as examples in order to justify the crackdown on academic freedoms, such as *"then after this peace petition, these courses of action happened. I foresee that there is no future for academic freedom in the foreseeable future in Turkey"* *(Yuksel).* Some of those in this study were also signatories to the peace petition and had either already lost their PhD scholarships or were currently under investigation, which meant that returning to Turkey was no longer an option for them. For instance, Nuriye was one of them, as she put it:

> *"I'm one of the signatories of academics for peace and recently, although I don't have any connection with Turkish institutions, my lawyers advised me not to go to Turkey, if it's not really urgent, because it's not clear whether my passport, might, you know, will be cancelled or not." (Nuriye)*

To summarise, the first implication of the findings in accordance with Structuration Theory and the Capability Approach, as discussed in previous chapters (Chapter 2 and Chapter 3); under the CA, is that education plays a significant role in the enhancement of individuals' capabilities. Our interviews suggested that many of the students' main reasons for studying abroad are to become good academics through the enhancement of their academic capabilities. As suggested by Balaz and Williams (2004), they are the only group who become mobile in order to enhance their human capability. For most of those interviewed, academic freedom is an essential part of being an academic, *"Being an academic is that there should be freedom of speech. It's very... it's essential, it's not a luxury. It's essential for an academic."* (*Esra*) or in other words academic freedom is vital for exploiting academic capabilities, as also suggested under CA: capabilities and freedoms cannot be thought of as two separate aspects. Thus, lack of academic freedom is akin to lacking academic capabilities. Unfortunately, the majority of the students stated that Turkey does not offer any platform to academics for using enhanced capabilities because of the lack of academic freedom. In this regard, for instance, Tolga and Esra's explanations illustrate the link between academic freedom, academic capabilities and non-return plans.

> *"I wanted to do my work in a research environment that can really nourish your ability to do things.... So, I would say academic freedom was my main motivation.... I don't think that my critical approach has a place to be nourished in Turkey at the moment." (Tolga)*

> *"There's huge pressure on academics and being an academic is being independent actually, like, 'cause, being an academic requires thinking, right? And when you have repression you can't be productive."(Esra)*

Secondly, 'freedom' is at the heart of both ST and CA and the limitations on freedoms come from the political structure of a country (Panahi, 2012), which means, as suggested under ST, 'structure and agency' must not be separated such that politics at the macro level restricting academic freedom should be seen as having a negative impact on the academic capabilities of students at micro level. Further, according to ST, being an agent means having power. In relation to which, Wolfel (2005) and Panahi (2012) highlight the link between agent, power and mobility. They suggest that, if an individual loses power, or in other words the capability to have an influence in the society where she/he lives, leaving that country becomes the only option. The interview data are consistent with the implications of ST as well as Wolfel (2005) and Panahi's (2012) perspectives. This view is illustrated by Aykut, who stated that he would return to Turkey on completion of his PhD. However, if he came to realise that he was not able to develop his skills, i.e. exploit his academic capabilities, and that he was unable to have an impact on society, then he would consider leaving again. With his words:

> *"But if I come to the conclusion that this academic arena is not one where you can develop all your skills easily… [academic capability]. If I understand no, these people will not listen me, [influence on society] even though I speak all things very moderately, then I will say 'I have no choice other than going abroad." (Aykut)*

Accordingly, it is concluded that, as a result of lack of political freedom, particularly academic freedom, in Turkey, many students would not be able either to use or enhance their academic freedom or in other words, their academic capabilities (from the CA perspective) and thus, would not be able to influence society (from the ST perspective) if they returned. Hence, they were looking to countries that could offer them these opportunities.

2.3. Political Instability and Capability of Safety (Confidence)

> *"My priority is **being secure**… having that **security in my life**." (Nur)*

As mentioned in Chapter 2, some studies (i.e. Szelrnyi, 2006 and POST, 2008) point to the significant role that political instability can play in student mobility. Further, some other studies, for instance, Arthur and Flynn (2011) have pointed out that either political or social conflict can raise safety issues among individuals and one of the main reasons for the non-return of students after their study is their wish to experience a peaceful life. In the current study, perceived insecurity was also a key driver in relation to adopting this stance.

From the interview data, *'feelings of insecurity', 'feelings of uncertainty' and 'wanting to have a peaceful life'* were often expressed by participants as reasons why they did not want to return to Turkey. According to statements from the participants, 'regional instability', including the Syrian conflict and 'domestic instability' (e.g. attempted military coup and terrorist attacks), were part of the political instability in Turkey, which evoked a sense of insecurity and uncertainty. As commented by one student:

> *"The Politics... Yes, job security and also living insecurity. You don't know what is going to happen... I mean, the country. Recently, over a year... since 2015 Turkey was targeted by the terrorists and also, we saw the coup later on, bombs... it was horrible. Because you feel the sense of insecurity."* (Aydin)

As a result of regional and domestic instability, many were pessimistic about the country's future and thus, negative about their own. Hence, as was clearly evident, these students were seeking opportunities in other countries, which could provide them certainty and security.

> *"There's no future for me in Turkey. I don't know what will happen within the next five or eight years."* (Ulku)

> *"I considered it as a necessity to settle in another country. And I don't know what will happen in the future for Turkey?"* (Tolga)

In addition, as suggested by Studyportals (2017), some participants also admitted that the military coup in July 2016 has increased insecurity and uncertainty in Turkey in such a way that their pessimistic view about the future of Turkey has become more intense. In a few cases, the military coup attempt resulted in their changing their return plans to Turkey, with one saying:

"I was planning to go back to Turkey, but... actually it changed last year, last summer after the attempted the military coup you know that the government and also the state of emergency." (Semih)

This finding is important because, whilst previously scholars such as Hazen and Albert (2006), have attributed the changing intention of students during their stay in a host country according to career and family reasons, in the current study this appears to be primarily driven by political factors in Turkey, which have created an increasing feeling of insecurity and uncertainty especially after the attempted military coup. Further, considering that not much research has been conducted about how the military coup attempt in Turkey has affected student mobility, this finding enriches knowledge about this.

Overall, the findings are evidence of the interrelationship between structure and agency, as positioned under Structuration Theory. Political instability, including regional and domestic instabilities at the macro level in Turkey, create feelings of insecurity and uncertainty amongst participants at the micro level. This can also be interpreted in terms of the Capability Approach, as being incapable of safety or lack of safety/security capability. Under CA, capability and freedoms are taken together as a whole, whilst safety/security is one of five distinct types of freedoms, which is called 'protective security' and is also intimately linked to improving individuals' 'well-being' (functioning). In this regard, participants' responses suggest that political instability in Turkey, by creating a sense of insecurity (the lack of capability of safety/security), was impacting negatively on their well-being (a sense of safety/ functioning) and thus they were looking for countries that could offer them the capability of safety.

2.4. The UK' s Migration Policies and Capability for being an active citizen

"I mean, last year they tried to cancel our, part-time work permit visa. So, it's like, they just want you to come here and pay the fee, get your money and get your diploma and then send you back." (Nuri)

In the interviews, it was clear that, as proposed in MPG (2012), international students are knowledgeable about legal policies and, thus, are keenly aware of what the UK is willing to offer them compared to other countries. For instance, Nuri explained how he had researched other

countries' policies towards PhD students and that he had been put off by what the UK could offer to him compared to them. He gave Canadian policy as an example:

"I searched a lot … in those countries there's no stupid restrictions. Like, you did your masters, but you cannot work here. Come on! I get my masters and at least I should get my experience, right? But in Canada, if you do a PhD, you can get citizenship." (Nuri)

As with Nuri, students often expressed their opinion that work and stay permit legislation in the UK is very strict compared to other countries. When one of the experts for the current study on international student mobility was asked how she viewed UK policies towards international students, she provided an explanation about their features compared to those of Australia. The historical background of the UK was described by Expert Ahsen as another reason for strict policies of the UK. As she put it:

"In the UK, historically, because of things like the commonwealth, because of its colonial background, all these historical links, it's never really had this immigration link with the students' experiences."(Ahsen)

Hence, UK policies toward students were described by participants as unfavourable, including work and stay permit legislation, when compared to, particularly, the USA, Australia and Canada (MPG, 2012 and the UUK, 2014). Further, as mentioned in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2, earlier studies (Butcher, 2004; Yang, 2007; Robertson, 2011; MPG, 2012) highlighted how host countries' policies towards international studies not only impact on their preference of destination country for studying, but they are the main factor impacting on students' willingness to stay or not in a host country after graduation. They were put forward by many participants as one of the main reasons why they were looking for opportunities in countries with advantageous policies for working and obtaining permanent residency permits. As summarised by some students:

"As you know, to get a work permit is a very difficult task here. That's why I may even consider working in the States, in Canada, in Australia. I do not really mind. As long as it's not Turkey."(Ulku)

"The UK is very challenging, because of visas right now. So, that is one of the reasons...I would like to try USA and see how it goes."(Ahmet)

Participants' comments also suggested that, in addition to there being unfavourable policies towards international students, there was a growing feeling of foreigners being unwelcome and a widespread hostility towards immigrants, which they were being identified with. Some students statements' clearly showed this link, for instance:

"In the UK they want you to, like, get out after your PhD, because that's unwelcoming, I have to say, that attitude." (Emel)

From a different perspective, concerning belonging or not, one said: "*So, to me it's important that everyone is sort of welcome here..." (Mine).* Thus, a working permit alone is not sufficient in students' mobility plans; as stated by Expert Ahsen: *"You can't just only think about a job, you know, you also need to think about which country, ...Which one is going to be more hospitable? Which one is going to be more friendly?"(Ahsen).* Hence, the host country's perception of foreigners is one of the concerns in the decision to remain in the UK, as suggested by Boeri et al. (2012). Further, an important finding of this study as described by students, is that they do not feel they are welcome, particularly after the Brexit vote which took place prior to the interviews. According to some participants, Brexit infers that the UK does not want any more foreigners. One student described the situation as: *"They don't even want Europeans." (Koray),* which was why he was not willing to remain in the UK after Brexit, as was the case with others. Further comments in relation to this were:

"So, I started to think right after Brexit that I would definitely try to look for jobs not in the UK." (Mine)

"I'm not planning to live in the UK after Brexit." (Emel)

Further, according to Professor Cenk, non-European and European students will be affected by Brexit in different ways. Whilst it means an increasingly hostile environment, making part time or full time work harder for non-EU students to obtain, it will also make for higher education costs for European students, which will be prohibitive except for the most wealthy. Hence, according to him, this is discouraging people from studying in the UK, thus leading to a decline

in the number of foreign students in the UK, as also pointed out by Cavanagh and Glennie (2012). In his words:

> *"Even though they had a referendum just six, seven months ago, the impact of the referendum has already kicked in... we have already seen a significant drop in overseas students numbers in the UK...the numbers are three thousand something... so there is already a big drop when they decide what we will be with Brexit." (*Professor Cenk)

This is an important finding of current study, for the impact of Brexit on student mobility is a subject much under researched at present.

To summarise, strict migration policies, as well as the perception of the UK attitude towards international students, particularly owing to Brexit, were often brought up by the participants as factors leading them to seek opportunities somewhere else in the world, but not Turkey. It is interesting to note that the unfavourable migration policies of the UK and a negative perception towards foreigners were not leading to the majority of students in the sample choosing to return to Turkey, but rather, pushing them to look for opportunities somewhere else. A relatively small number of students stated that they wanted to return to Turkey because of this.

Overall, the findings can be interpreted in the framework of Giddens' Structuration Theory (ST) and Sen's Capability Approach (CA). According to CA, having freedom (capability) allows individuals to do what they want to do (Robeyns, 2003). Regarding host country migration policies, as stated by Expert Ahsen, the big question for students is: "*What is going to help me to do what I want to do?" or* in other words, which country is going to enable me to use my capabilities in order to do things that I want to do? They want work and residence permits but these rights are constrained by UK policies. Additionally, the participants' responses indicate that strict UK migration policies at the macro level (structural constraints) not only restrict residence and work rights, but also political engagement at micro level, as suggested by ST. For example, Koray stated that he was not allowed to vote or even allowed to participate in any kind of political discussions and thus he did not want to remain in the UK. As he put it:

> *"I want to be somewhere I am valued as well, at least I can participate in discussions." (Koray)*

Thus, lacking political participation or, in other words, a lack of a political participation capability will mean not achieving well-being (functioning) (Robeyns, 2003) as seen from CA perspective. This is also affirmed according to ST: being an agent means having power and if an individual loses power and, hence, lacks any influence on society, in this case with regards to political participation, then he/she can start looking for somewhere it is possible to have power (influence) in society (Wolfel, 2005 and Panahi, 2012). That is, lack of work and residence permits, along with restrictions on political engagement, can be seen to hinder active citizen capability in terms of participation in economic and political life, from a CA perspective. This was described by some of the students as:

> *"We are second class citizens here." (Koray)*

> *"You always know that you are not really part of the country; you are an immigrant or however you name it, like, you are not one of them."(Demet)*

Accordingly, it is concluded that the migration policies of a host country are an important driver in student mobility. The UK migration policies towards international students do not allow for flourishing and fulfilling active citizen capabilities and thus they will look to countries that can offer them these things, such as the United States, Canada and Australia.

2.5. Summary of Political Factors

The interview data have shown that political factors are not just the primary reason for looking for opportunities outside of Turkey but also the main consideration of students who are planning to return. The current political atmosphere in Turkey, described as being increasingly authoritarian, has come about particularly since a series of state of emergency decrees were passed by the Turkish Government after the attempted military coup in July 2016.

An increasing authoritarianism leads to a crackdown on freedoms (Chang 1992; Panahi, 2012) as well as creating a feeling of insecurity (Arthur and Flynn, 2011). Almost all the participants share the view that the political situation in Turkey is creating a sense of fear, which is often linked to concerns about freedom. Based on the interview data, the fear evoked by political discrimination, lack of political freedom and political instability in Turkey is an important driver

of mobility. Moreover, UK migration policies are leading students to look for opportunities in other countries. Nevertheless, the current study differs from earlier ones (i.e. Szelrnyi, 2006; Robertson, 2011; Panahi, 2012; Li, 2013), by considering how four political factors identified, namely political discrimination, political freedom, political insecurity and UK migration policies, impact on student mobility through a theoretical framework combining Structuration Theory (ST) with Sen's Capability Approach (CA). Consequently, it has been possible to show how factors at the macro level influence students' capabilities to become mobile.

First, regarding political discrimination, this has created fear of being unemployed amongst students. Whilst job prospects have been identified in other studies (i.e. Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014) as economic factors regarding mobility, here, political discrimination is a predominant concern and hence, deemed as coming under the category of political factors. Further, the findings also indicate that, in contrast to previous research (i.e. Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012), which has often explained funding as being tied to an obligation for service at a university in the home country, it has emerged that funding by the Turkish Government does not provide any guarantee of being employed when returning.

Secondly, almost all the students expressed their concerns about political freedom, particularly freedom of speech in academia. Interview data show how academic freedom, which many see as an essential part of being an academic, has come under attack in Turkey. It is also revealed that lack of freedom of speech in academia is hindering academic productivity and abilities or, in other words, the academic capabilities (freedoms) of individuals. In addition, one notable finding emerging from this study is that the Turkish government sometimes does not know the research topics of those who are funded by it. The reason for this is that, owing to the fear of losing funding, students give false reports on their field of study to the government. Further, by also including the comments of students who were signatories to the peace petition of 2016, the current study has allowed for their voices to be heard.

Thirdly, political instability, both regional and domestic, is also found to be a salient factor discouraging return to Turkey. In particular, an escalation in uncertainty and insecurity amongst students occurred after the attempted military coup in July 2016. Consequently, many students were pessimistic about the future of Turkey as well as their own. Previous studies have not addressed how academics and PhD students abroad in Turkey have been affected by the Syrian conflict and the attempted military coup in July 2016.

Lastly, it has emerged that the migration policies of countries towards international students play an important role in mobility planning. The UK's migration policies are seen by many as being unfavourable owing to restrictions on work and residence permits. Moreover, a lack of opportunity to participate in the economic and political life in the UK was raised, which results in the majority of non-returners looking for opportunities in other countries, such as in the USA and Canada. The student responses also cover Brexit, which conveys a sense of foreigners, including international students, becoming unwelcome and see this as a reason for seeking opportunities in other countries, something as yet not raised in other research on mobility.

Accordingly, the findings are summarised as follows:

(1) Political discrimination leads to the fear of being unemployed **(employment capability)**

(2) Restrictions on **political freedom** limit academic freedom (**academic capability**) and

(3) Political instability creates a sense of insecurity (**capability of safety**)

Thus, many students clearly state that they look to countries that can offer these three capabilities, but for some that country is not the UK, because of **(4)** strict **UK migration policies,** which would not allow them to become active citizens (**capability of being an active citizen**) and hence, they would be looking for somewhere else, particularly the USA, Australia and Canada, where more favourable migration policies are in place.

In sum, students become mobile because of lack of these four kinds of capabilities. Political factors at the macro level directly and negatively impact on the capabilities of students at the micro level by creating insecurity. Hence, they seek locations that can offer them opportunities for the exploration of their capabilities (freedoms) from a CA perspective, which corresponds with power under ST. Therefore, it would seem reasonable to conclude that student mobility is based on whether or not a country can provide an environment for nourishing their capabilities (freedoms/power) without any insecurity being perceived. Interpreting the findings from the perspective of ST and CA constitutes a significant and novel contribution in the mobility context. Moreover, current events, including Brexit, the attempted Turkish military coup, the peace declaration by academics in Turkey and the Syrian conflict have contextualised the work, including giving a new perspective on the subject of students' mobility.

3. Socio- Cultural Factors

Socio-cultural factors appeared as the second most common influences after political ones in terms of students' mobility plans and their salience has also been asserted in previous quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research (i.e. Alberts and Hazen, 2006; Szelrnyi, 2006; Ho, 2011; Parkins, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014; Chen, 2016). During the interviews, participants commonly referred to their wish to have 'a better quality of life' as one the main reasons behind their mobility plans. Given this, it is necessary here to clarify exactly what is meant by the 'quality of life'.

As previously mentioned in Chapter 2, 'quality of life' can be defined in a variety of ways. For instance, whilst some studies, such as that of Hazen and Albert (2006) interpret this as non-economic and often intangible, which means that this reflects the characteristics of a certain society, by definitions others (e.g. UNESCO, 1993) include economic factors (e.g. GDP) in addition to societal ones. The findings for this thesis are in line with those of Hazen and Albert (2006). That is, despite the notion of quality of life being described in various ways by the current study's participants, a common interpretation was that this related to non-economic factors evoked from socio-cultural norms, rules, environment and policies of society. Student responses illustrated this, such as:

> *"I think, better **life quality**, I mean I have more **rights as a woman**."(Emel)*

> *"First of all the **quality of life**, basically. **The personal time** that I can get for myself." (Deniz)*

> *"There has been such a huge shift in my life, in terms of the **quality of my life**. Like, there's **no traffic** at all here and I have **fresh air**, the environment is so **green**."(Ulku)*

Accordingly, based on the students' statements, regarding socio-cultural factors, three broad themes emerge from a Structuration Theory (ST) perspective: (1) ***Social and Physical Environment*** (i.e. transportation and crime), (2) ***Diversity and Tolerance in Society*** (i.e. polarisation) and (3) ***Socio-Cultural Norms and Policies*** (i.e. family and society pressure) at the macro level. It is shown how these three factors at the macro level impact on the capability of students at the micro level (agency) from a Capability Approach perspective, as: (1)

Capability of perceived safety (confidence), which refers to how the social and physical environment at the macro level impacts on individuals' safety at micro level; (2) *Capability of perceived tolerance*, referring to the relationship between the level of diversity and tolerance in society and perceived tolerance amongst individuals; and *(3) Freedom of life-style choice capability*, which underlines the impact of social-cultural norms and policies on the freedom of life style choices of individuals.

Figure 3: The Impact of Socio-Cultural Factors on Student Mobility
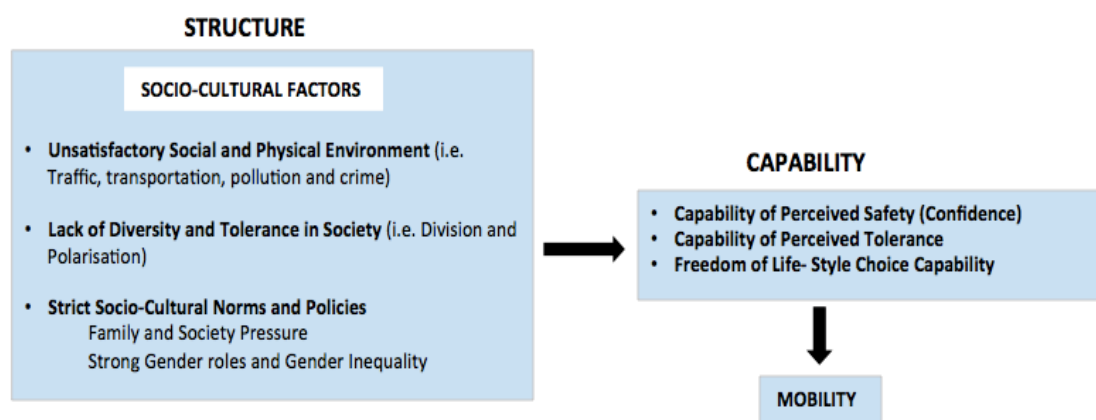
Source: Researcher (2019)

3.1. Social and Physical Environment Impact on the Capability of Perceived Safety (Confidence)

> *"There is also the issue with peace. Like, living in peace. In Turkey there's already struggle with daily life, in daily life. Like, traffic, transportation…" (Gokcen)*

The participants often indicate that their life quality would not be improved if they returned to Turkey. According to their responses, this mainly related to the social and physical environment, which was due to better transportation, less traffic, a cleaner environment and most commonly reported, less crime in the UK when compared to Turkey. As some students put it:

"The life quality, I mean now, I know I had a chance to live in a better city, a cleaner city...because you know I realise in the UK that I can have a more peaceful life for the same work that I would be doing in Istanbul, so why should I go back to a city where I would struggle everyday?" (Ahmet)

"Many other things also, for example, the rate of car accidents, the rate of crimes...lower in the UK compared to Turkey and cities are greener, the weather is cleaner."(Halis)

"I could definitely say that living in the UK is much easier than living in Turkey. Like, in terms of transportation and interaction with people in daily life..." (Demet)

Accordingly, students clearly stated that the social and physical environment in Turkey does not allow people to have stress free and safe lives. They used phrases like 'a feeling of more confidence', 'feeling more secure' in the UK and 'feeling stressful' in Turkey. One student reported that when she moved to Istanbul after she had completed her masters degree in Spain, her mother told her:

"In Spain, I was not that much worried about you, but in Istanbul everyday…harassment, any kind of… rape, any kind of criminal'… and right now again she has the same feeling, in terms of safety, because I'm living here."(Ulku)

As with the statement above, the safety issue associated with crime was often mentioned by the students. In fact, the most common safety issue in relation to Turkey appeared as sexual harassment towards women; hence, wanting to live in a hassle free environment was emphasised by the majority of female students in the sample. Further, several of them also mentioned how sexual harassment in Turkey limited their freedom in terms of how they dressed and going out at night/after dark, thereby failing to foster a better quality of life and hence, they did not want to live in this kind of environment. As commented upon by two female students:

"You are restricted a lot, as a woman…I have to pay attention to what I'm wearing... I have to make sure that I'm safe…I really feel like…comfortable in the UK, right? I don't need to, like, worry about whether I'm late for, you know, going back to the house or, you know, when I'm walking on the street at night." (Mine)

"I still like here because of freedom, I can walk on my own on the street 3.00 am in the morning, I know that I will not be abused or raped...I don't have concerns about physical appearance, because when you are in Turkey you are feeling less secure, because people are very polarised and if you wear a mini skirt or something you can be subject to mistreatment or something." (Serap)

Students' statements indicate that the social and physical environment, as also suggested by Tabor (2015) who found that the host country's environment attraction included a cleaner environment and better transportation, plays a significant role in highly qualified people's mobility decisions. The findings also support the perspective of Arthur and Flynn (2011), who underlined the role of general safety in mobility by stating that wishing to have a peaceful life was an important determinant in students' mobility. Nevertheless, it should be noted that, whilst findings from other quantitative and qualitative studies, such as those of Parkins (2011), Szelrnyi (2006) and Paile and Fatoki (2014), demonstrate that the level of crime and violence are a safety issue impacting negatively on the quality of life and, hence, feature heavily in return or non-return plans, in the current study, sexual harassment towards women, rather than other types of crimes, were of most concern.

Overall, the interview data provide evidence to support the propositions from the current study's framework. From a Structuration Theory (ST) perspective, the findings suggest that the students are seeking a better quality of life, one which is peaceful and secure. Some of their statements reveal that the social and physical environment in Turkey, at the macro level, exhibited by high levels of traffic and crime and particularly sexual harassment towards women, leads to a sense of lack of safety amongst participants at the micro level. This can be seen as having a directly adverse effect on the quality of life, whereby it does not allow individuals a peaceful and safe life at the micro level. This can be also interpreted from the Capability Approach perspective, as there being a paucity of the capability of safety if they return to Turkey, with safety being one type of freedom associated with improving individuals' 'well-being' (functioning). Regarding which, one dialogue between the researcher and a female student reveals the link between willingness to acquire the capability of safety and obtaining a better quality of life and, hence, garnering well-being (functioning).

Researcher: "What do you mean when you say 'better life quality'?"

Emel: "For example, in London I can come back home cycling in my skirt, really short skirt. I cannot do that in Turkey... I want to be, like, quite free without being scared. I want to walk in the streets without being scared. I want to come home, like, 2 am in the morning, without, like, looking behind me 'what's gonna happen?'. That's the first thing."

Accordingly, it is concluded that the social and physical environment in Turkey, by exhibiting a sense of unsafety (the lack of capability of safety) impacts negatively on the quality of life of these students and hence their well-being (functioning). Thus, they are looking for countries that could offer them a peaceful life without this particular threat.

3.2. Diversity and Tolerance in Society: The Impact on Capability of Perceived Tolerance

"Turkey... Right now, people are really...I don't know, kind of categorised...it is black and white... People don't have any tolerance for the either side" (Ahmet)

In order to have a better quality of life, the desire to live in a highly diverse and tolerant society was raised by almost half of the participants. Tolerance of difference was described by them in a variety ways, including ethnicity, religion, sexual preference and political stance. According to their statements, whilst a high level of diversity and tolerance was seen as one of the main advantages of living in the UK, being a significant attractive factor encouraging many to remain here, growing intolerance in Turkish society was also brought up by some participants. According to these students, the reason for increasing intolerance in Turkey was the polarisation and division in society, arising from the political environment. As some put it:

"People are getting more polarised; you are from my side or you are from the other side."(Serap)

"There is no society in Turkey, you know, there is no proper society in Turkey. Turkish society is divided and polarized." (Semih)

"Because, you know, in Turkey, especially because of the political environment, people are so polarized." (Meral)

Despite these students stating that the political environment in Turkey has caused polarisation and division in society, these matters pertain to social-cultural factors, rather than political ones. The reason for this, is that they were reported by the participants as a part of quality of life and not in pure political terms. In particular, they used words, such as intolerance, mistrust, aggressiveness, unhappiness and mistrust amongst individuals in this context. As summarised by one student:

> "*In Turkey, we have a highly politicised and polarised society, and sometimes I feel like everyone is angry in Turkey...here everyone says 'hey' 'thank you' 'sorry'…In Turkey, it's not like that. Like, people here most of the time, they smile at you. Even though they don't know you. But in Turkey this is not really the case.*" (*Demet*)

Based on the students' statements, it is concluded that increasing intolerance as a result of division and polarisation in society in Turkey is creating dissatisfaction with the quality of life available, which is discouraging them from returning. Florida (2003), Chen (2006) and Riemsdijk and Wang (2017), reported that the quality of the environment in terms of a high level of tolerance and diversity attracts highly qualified people, including international students. Hence, it is important to underline what has newly emerged from the current study, being unidentified in prior research (i.e. Chen, 2006), that increasing political polarisation in a country such as Turkey leads to an increasing desire not to return.

Overall, the results produced corroborate with the framework of this study. Accordingly, from a Structuration Theory (ST) perspective, this finding is interpreted as follows: division and polarisation in Turkish society at the macro level is leading to an increasing level of intolerance where diversity is not respected and, hence, this brings dissatisfaction with the quality of life of individuals at the micro level. This can be construed as a lack of capability of perceived tolerance in order to reach well-being (functioning) under the CA perspective, which in this case refers to achievement of a better quality of life through recognition and respecting the existence of differences in others. One student's statement shows how lack of perceived tolerance was discouraging her from to returning to Turkey:

> "*People are so polarised and I ask what if I will have problems with them…People do not tolerate differentiation.* [division and polarisation in society resulted in

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increasing intolerance] *I said, what if I experience some problem with them. It's not only because of my Kurdish identity, I mean I'm a woman as well. And I'm quite independent. I said what if these things will be problematic for me in* Turkey. " *(Meral)* [lack of capability of living in a tolerant society puts off returning]

A low level of tolerance in Turkey has led to the non-return plans of almost half of the sample size, who did not feel comfortable about living in this kind of society. Hence, it is concluded that many students seek places with a high level of tolerance in order to exploit the capability of perceived tolerance.

3.3. Socio-Cultural Norms and Policy Impact on the Freedom of Life-Style Choice Capability

"Life style, yeah it is the freedom that I value most which I don't think that we have in Turkey." (Funda)

Life-style preference appeared, as suggested by Han et al. (2015), an important determinant for student mobility. Obtaining the preferred life style in order to have a better quality life, was one of the major considerations of the sample in the current study. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, a number of studies, such as those of Ho (2011) and Soon (2012), have also pointed out that student mobility is shaped by whether they are more satisfied and happier with their life style at home or in the host country.

According to the interview data, whilst those who were planning to remain abroad clearly stated that they were more satisfied with the life style abroad, particularly in terms restrictions on freedoms in Turkey, two female students intending to return reported how they had encountered many difficulties in the UK, mostly as a result of their religion. For instance, one said:

"I don't eat pork or don't use alcohol, when I go out I have to be careful what I eat and sometimes it is really boring and my friends sometimes complain about it."(Banu)

According to many students' responses, the establishment of a preferred life style was mainly related to whether or not socio-cultural norms and policies in society allowed them to live their lives as they wanted. Participants often expressed how the restrictive socio-cultural norms, rules and policies in Turkey were making it impossible to obtain their preferred life, citing 'lack of life style freedoms'. This was primarily due to: (1) *'family and society pressure'*; and (2) *'strict gender roles and gender inequality'* in Turkey.

Family and society pressure was one of the major factors raised as inhibiting obtaining the preferred life style. This matter was described as a part of Turkish culture and raised by both male and female students in the current study.

> *"I cannot be myself in Turkey...mostly about life style, because I mean, you are living in a society that has a conservative culture." (Seckin, Male)*

> *"I see life is easy here...you know... The social and cultural system also is... its easy, no one cares about what you are doing, but in Turkey things are a little bit dodgy."(Nur, Female)*

According to several students, this kind of culture, bringing family and societal pressure would limit their life style freedoms. It is important to note that the majority of students did not directly face family pressure, such as getting married in order to protect the family reputation. In fact, only one female student stated that her family would force her to get married and that was why she wanted to remain abroad. The issue was mostly about what others would think about him/her rather than the family, such as *"In Turkey, because of the social pressure, I mean, I told you my family is a bit liberal in comparison to there. But still the society's also important" (Meral)*. Hence, societal pressure was what was creating family pressure or, in other words, even though there is no pressure from their family, there was always constant pressure from neighbours to question their life styles. As commented by a student:

> *"The fact that I can live with my boyfriend and no one judges me...because my family doesn't judge me, but there are some people around you in Turkey who can judge. I mean as in like, neighbours, for example..." (Funda)*

Additionally, five participants in the sample described themselves as homosexual, with four of these reporting that pressure from family and society was forcing them to hide their sexual preference. One student stated that *"I have to admit that, I have to confess that, I haven't met any Turkish gay person in Turkey before" (Aydin)* and he added that he met Turkish gay men in the UK, which he held was a big advantage for him of living abroad. Further, these four would not be comfortable in Turkey, explaining how this matter would hinder their preferred life style, whereas living abroad would reverse this situation, *"because here I can have a partner. I can live with him and I can have kids with him" (Yuksel).* That is, they would much value residing somewhere where they could pursue their sexual preference freely. This finding is important because, despite the impact of family and society pressure on mobility identified in earlier studies (i.e. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Kennedy, 2010), they did not consider how this pressure can affect homosexual individuals.

Overall, the participants' statements showed that family and societal pressure was a limiting factor on life style choice or in other words, life style freedoms. A wish to escape from both pressure at home (Kennedy, 2010) and unsatisfactory social norms (Akl et al., 2007) in order to obtain freedom of life style (i.e. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Gungor and Tansel, 2005) emerged as reasons for non-return to Turkey.

Secondly, ***strict gender roles and gender inequality*** were often brought up by female students as major considerations when deciding whether to return to Turkey. As suggested by Hazen and Albert (2006), countries that are dominated by prohibitive cultural practices, including strong gender roles, discourage female international students from returning home. According to some student statements, this factor limits their lifestyle freedoms when they want to be free from those restrictions. As can be seen in the following comments, these two women compared being a woman in Turkey and the UK from the perspective of their role in society and gender inequality:

> *"They are so independent here. Women can go out, they can drink, they can have friends of the opposite sex and they can go on holidays by themselves, they can work until late. If they like to, they don't do cleaning and cooking, whatever, their husbands are not like you have to do... you have to do... they do everything together. Here, everything is more equal. And there is not a distinction between women's and men's jobs."(Asli)*

"It is normal for a woman to stay at home, not work, don't do anything, don't say anything, don't go outside, don't drink you don't get to have fun, just stay with your husband, don't have a boyfriend, don't maybe even go for education…"(Ezgi)

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, strong gender roles and inequality, as important determinants of highly qualified female mobility, have been identified in a number of studies (Hazen and Albert, 2006; Kerr et al., 2016; Beaumont, et al., 2017). The current study's findings have also shown that strict gender roles and gender inequality in Turkey are seen by many female students as factors limiting their independence and life style freedoms and hence act as significant drivers towards their non-return plans. It is important to note that strong gender roles in Turkey and the desire to have a freer lifestyle were reasons for female international students choosing to remain in the USA, according to findings by Gungor and Tansel (2005), which were based on data for the year 2001. This shows that, over the past 17 years, there has been little improvement in terms of rights for women and, according to some of the students' statements, current government policies have aggressively targeted these freedoms through imposing restrictions on their role in society, thus making many feel pressured to be mother and homemaker. As two students put it:

"Quotes from Erdogan's speeches…like, that how women are supposed to be in motherhood. The statement was something like this, 'Of course man and woman are not the same biologically – you know – socially and that a woman's position in society is being the mother'. To me, this is one of the stupidest statements that anyone can make, especially a politician! Right?" (Mine)

"Erdogan recently said that music, novels and poems are pushing young people into smoking and drinking alcohol, so we shouldn't read and listen to music, can you imagine that? Or a few months ago they were trying to establish a new law that woman can be made to marry a guy who has raped her, or they were also saying that, if a woman is pregnant, she shouldn't go out because it's shameful."(Asli)

To summarise, the findings provide evidence supporting the concepts underlying the proposed framework for this study. Regarding the interrelated relationship between structure and agency, they can be interpreted from the perspective of Structuration Theory (ST) as follows. Based on many of the students' statements, one of the reasons for not achieving an acceptable quality of

life, if they returned to Turkey, related to socio-cultural norms and policies, which particularly arose from family and societal pressure as well as strict gender roles and inequality. All these macro level factors impact negatively on the life style freedoms of individuals at the micro level. Under the CA, capability and freedoms are considered inseparable and seen as essential for enabling the agency to live life as desired (Robeyns, 2003). That is, restricted social norms and polices limit life style choice, which thus denies the capability for freedom to be fulfilled. Lack of being able to live a life that they value and desire means they would be fail to foster their well-being. One female student summarized how the freedom capability could become a reality by staying in the UK:

> *"Here, the life style is, I mean I get used to this life style, for sure. It's just, yeah like I like living this kind of environment and lifestyle…. Like no one asks you what are you doing… it's just everyone lives in the way they want and like." (Esra)*

Hence, it can be concluded that many students' mobility plans are based on whether or not a country can offer a better quality life, which thus would fulfill their desires for life style freedom. According to many students' accounts, the socio-cultural features of Turkey would not enhance their freedom of life-style choice capability and hence, they are seeking countries where they can obtain this.

3.4. Summary of Socio-Cultural Factors

Having a higher quality of life was often mentioned as an important driver of students' mobility plans after graduation. Common interpretations of the notion of quality of life related to the socio-cultural features of a country, including crime, diversity and gender roles in society. In fact, these factors emerged as being the second most important determinant on students' return or non-return plans to Turkey.

Participants' statements disclosed that the socio-cultural features of Turkey could not promise a higher quality of life for them. 'Social and physical environment', 'diversity and tolerance' and socio-cultural norms and policies' in Turkey, were the key concerns raised.

First, regarding the social and physical environment, whilst students often expressed the view

that, compared to Turkey, the UK is better in terms of having a greener environment and better transportation, their main concern, particularly for female students, was the lower crime rate in the latter. However, whilst the findings from other scholars (i.e. Szelrnyi, 2006) show crime as being mostly related to factors such as burglary, in the current, sexual harassment towards women was frequently raised as being of concern. That is, many of the participants, particularly the female ones, clearly stated that they would not like to live in the kind of environment where this is rife, as in Turkey.

Secondly, in contrast to earlier studies (i.e. Florida, 2003; Chen, 2006), which have often only emphasised how far diversity and tolerance impact on the mobility of highly qualified individuals, in addition to this, the findings here also reveal that political and socio-cultural factors are correlated. That is, Turkish society is often described by students, as lacking diversity and tolerance. According to them, this increasing polarisation and division in society in Turkey has been caused and is being intensified by the political environment. Further, they often expressed how this kind of polarised society, involving for example disputes and aggressiveness amongst individuals, is drawing them away from their home nation.

Lastly, participants referred repeatedly to their dissatisfaction with 'socio-cultural norms and policies' in Turkey due to 'family and societal pressure' as well as 'strict gender roles and gender inequality'. Two aspects were important. First, the revelation of the impact of 'family and societal pressure' on homosexual individuals is salient in that it would appear that scholars have not considered this dimension previously. Secondly, regarding 'strict gender roles and gender inequality' found in an earlier study (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005) that focused upon students from Turkey, the findings here reveal that over the last decade there has been no improvement in terms of gender equality and women's rights in Turkey. In fact, compared with earlier, a crackdown on these rights since 2002 has led to the situation becoming worse, owing to the current government's policies and practices.

In addition, many previous studies (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Hazen and Albert, 2006; Ho 2011; Soon, 2012; Paile and Fatoki, 2014) were based on a push-pull perspective and concluded that socio-cultural factors, such as higher levels of crime at home discourage students from returning, whilst lower crime rates are mirror determinants of migration, a perspective seen by de Haas (2014) as too simplistic. In the current work, by considering international student mobility through the application of ST and CA, the ways in which socio-

cultural factors enhance or inhibit students' capabilities has been uncovered comprehensively, by explaining the relationship between the capability and mobility plans of students. In sum, this is one of the major contributions of the current study that distinguishes it from previous work (i.e. Hazen and Albert, 2006). Accordingly, it is concluded that:

(1) Unsatisfactory features of the **social and physical environment**, in particular, a high level of crime, create a sense of insecurity (**capability of perceived safety [confidence])**

(2) Lack of **diversity and tolerance** in society hinders and distorts individuals' engagement with it (**capability of perceived tolerance**)

 (3) **Strict socio-cultural norms and policies**, including family and societal pressure as well as strict gender roles and inequality for women, limit life style choice freedoms (**freedom of life-style choice capability**).

Consequently, based on the students' responses, it can be concluded that obtaining a higher life quality, thereby achieving well-being (functioning), depends on being able to make the 'capability of perceived safety (confidence)', 'capability of perceived tolerance' and 'freedom of life-style choice capability' realities. Many clearly stated that Turkey's socio-cultural environment limits the development of these three capabilities, so they are looking for places where the features of the socio-cultural environment could allow them to flourish and thus, obtain a better quality of life.

4. Professional Factors

As mentioned in Chapter 2, earlier studies (i.e. Mahroum, 2000; Ackers, 2005; Szelenyi 2006; Gill and Guth, 2008; Grip et al., 2009; Delicado, 2010; Panahi, 2012) have highlighted the important role of professional factors in student mobility. The data from the interviews have also revealed that, despite the current study's findings providing evidence that political and socio-cultural factors are the key determinants of student mobility, professional factors are also significant, being often raised by the participants, particularly by those who were planning to continue in academia.

During the course of the interviews, professional factors were expressed by the participants in a variety ways, from availability of research materials and sufficient funding to international academic collaboration. All these factors were related to the quality of the research environment and facilities at the macro level, which can broadly be seen as lying behind many students' mobility plans. Further, responses of the students revealed that professional factors at the macro level directly impact on both their academic productivity as well as their career development at the individual level. Those who believed that, if they returned to Turkey, they would not have sufficient academic productivity and poor career development as a result of the unsatisfactory quality of the research environment and limited research facilities, said that they would look for countries where they could fulfill their academic productivity and career development.

Consequently, based on responses from the interviews, professional factors under Structuration Theory (ST) were elicited according to two main themes at the macro level (1) *Research Facilities*, which highlighted tangible aspects of professional factors (i.e. availability of research funding and research materials); and (2) *Features of the Research Environment* that are intangible characteristics of these factors (i.e. existence of an international research environment and satisfactory power relations). Further, from the Capability Approach (CA) perspective, with the aim of showing the impact of these two factors at the macro level (structure) on students capabilities at the micro level (agency), two are identified: (1) *Capability of Academic Productivity*, which refers to how the research facilities, such as availability of materials, impact on academic effectiveness; and (2) *Career Development Capability*, which pertains to the features of the research environment regarding

internationalisation, the institutional autonomy of universities and the impact of any academic hierarchy on the career development of individuals.

Figure 4: The Impact of Professional Factors on Student Mobility
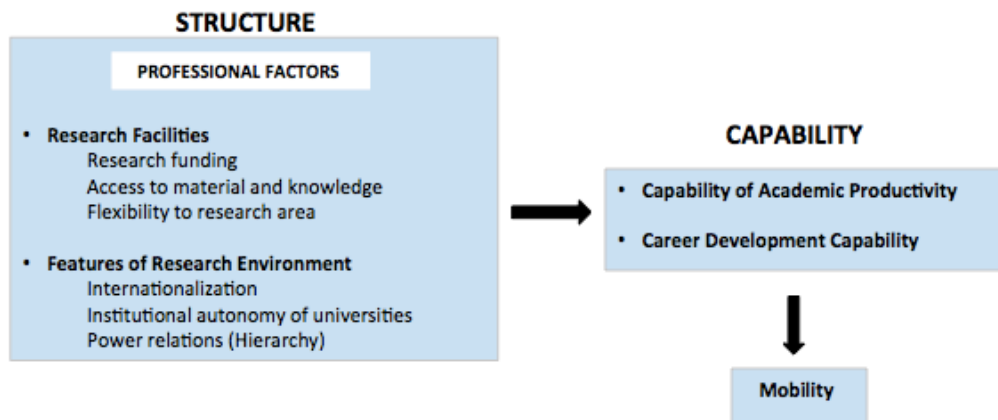
Source: Researcher (2019)

4.1. Research Facilities and Capability of Academic Productivity

> *"You can do more research here, because Turkey does not have the facilities that you need for doing research." (Funda)*

As with the statement above, poor research facilities were often expressed by participants as one of the reasons why they did not want to return to Turkey. According to students' responses, this was mainly due to:

- Insufficient research funding (insufficient investment in research and development (R&D);
- Lack of access to material and knowledge;
- Lack of flexibility regarding the research area (i.e. restrictions on research topic and lack of creativity).

First, students often stated that universities in Turkey lack sufficient funding compared to the UK. As one student commented:

> *"Here there are so many funding opportunities, those funding opportunities in Turkey are quite limited…. So, the research environment is more lively and there are more opportunities in the United Kingdom and Europe than Turkey. I think it will be good for me to stay in this environment more…" (Cem)*

As suggested by Morano-Foadi (2005), poor professional opportunities, such as insufficient funding for research, may turn student mobility from a choice to being inevitable. In fact, it is contended in a large number of studies (i.e. Morano-Foadi, 2005; Grip et al., 2009; Gill and Guth, 2008) that the availability of sufficient funding plays a significant role in student mobility.

Second, difficulty in accessing materials and knowledge in the home country is one of the factors discouraging returning return, according to scholars such as Szelrnyi (2006) and Gungor and Tansel (2005). In the current study, many participants also explained that it could be difficult to access these entities if they were researchers in Turkey, underlining their previous and current experiences in this regard. It is also noteworthy that, whilst science students often pointed to difficulties in obtaining research material, social science students' considerations were mainly related to the obstacles to acquiring knowledge:

> *"Academically, I have found here easier… whenever I order a new chemical, it arrives quickly like let's say two days, three days, one week, two weeks, whereas in Turkey it used to take around six months." (Asli, Science Student)*

> *"At this university I have an online link by which I can reach all journal articles. But in Turkey, for example, some of my friends just call me then say to me 'could you please download this journal article for me because we don't have access to that journal."(Aykut, Social Science)*

Lastly, previously flexibility regarding the research area or, in other words, freedom to research creatively (i.e. Chang 1992), as well as work on stimulating topics (i.e. Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011), has been shown to be driving forces behind student mobility. Freedom to research was

also raised by the current study's participants as a factor inhibiting return, with phrases like 'to feel not free' or 'to feel some pressure'. They also added that limitations in research areas lead to a lack of creativity and originality. Further, particularly for those participants who have been undertaking research on sensitive topics, such as LGBT rights and abortion in the UK, it would be difficult if they were trying to investigate these phenomena in Turkey. Mahroum (2000) described 'scientific curiosity' as a crucial professional factor in academic mobility and quite clearly, from the evidence presented here, this is something that is stifled in today's Turkey. For instance, one student explained why he wanted to remain abroad regarding limited flexibility in the research domain in Turkey. As he put it:

> *"Here, people study literally everything. Because for them everything is interesting. But in Turkey, they just want to study some more acceptable issues. That's why I like to stay here… here, if you have an idea and if you support that idea, with a very argumentative position, and then people will say 'oh, okay'. It sounds interesting."(Ali)*

Overall, the findings corroborate the current study's framework, which has been based on both the application of Structuration Theory (ST), whereby an existing interdependent relationship is posited between structure and agency, as well as the Capability Approach (CT), which explains development through capabilities (freedoms) and functioning. Students held that there were better research prospects, including superior funding opportunities, easier access to materials and knowledge together with freedom to research more widely abroad, when compared to Turkey. According to them, their academic productivity would not be enhanced if they returned to Turkey, due to the lack of research facilities. As one student explained, the UK offers better research facilities, including funding and flexibility in what to research, which meant he could be more productive. His statement clearly shows the link between research facilities and academic productivity. In his words:

> *"Because here, I have a right to do any research and also for funding I can get funding easily,* [research facilities] *the main factors that I wish to stay in the UK… If I stay in the UK, I can be …like contribute more, explore more…"* [academic productivity] *(Aydin)*

In other words, from the CA perspective, they will seek countries where they can fulfill their academic productivity capability in order to achieve their well-being (achievement of academic productivity). Under ST this can also be interpreted as that their mobility depends on whether or not a country offers them the use of their power (capacity), which for the current study refers to academic productivity power (capacity). Further, the findings also suggest that, as a result of insufficient research facilities in Turkey, many of those interviewed stated that they would not be able enhance their academic productivity capability and thus, would not be able to influence society if they returned. As suggested by ST, if agents lose power (capacity), in other words the capability (CA) to have an influence in the society where they live, they will seek countries where they can exert power (Wolfel, 2005 and Panahi, 2012).

In the current case, unsatisfactory research facilities are limiting the academic productivity capability (power/capacity) of the students and hence, they will not be able to have an influence on society if they return, so they want to stay abroad. This finding is important because previously, in a study by Gungor and Tansel (2003), it was found that one of the reasons for non-return of students from Turkey was the fear of working in an unproductive research environment. They explained this as being due to the rapid expansion of universities in Turkey, which failed to meet research environment standards. In contrast, regardless whether new or old established universities, it emerged in this work that this could mostly be attributed to insufficient funding, difficulty in gaining access to materials and knowledge and, particularly, restrictions on research topics, as in many cases the government did not agree with them. This shows that the research environment in Turkey would appear not to have changed over the last decade or might even have deteriorated further. Regarding this latter point, given that many students' main concern was the lack of freedom to choose a research topic and that this was not mentioned in the earlier study by Gungor and Tansel (2003), this could indicate that there has been increasing erosion of academic freedom over the last decade.

To sum up, as pointed out by one student: *"more opportunities here in terms of academic opportunities, let's say library or funding when you go to conferences, you can find here more which can make me more productive." (Serap)*. Hence, lack of research facilities in Turkey at the macro level was one of factors discouraging returning, which was seen as having a directly adverse effect on the academic productive capability of students at micro level. As a result, many were looking for countries that could provide sufficient research facilities in order to be secure in terms of their academic productivity.

4.2. Features of the Research Environment and Career Development Capability

"I have always been very career oriented, so I knew that if I wanna do something good …The UK or the States or Europe has a much better environment for research than Turkey."(Mine)

In accordance with the above, the desire to work in a better quality of research environment was noted constantly throughout the interviews. The notion of having a better research environment was often related to: **(1)** *Internationalisation;* **(2)** *Institutional autonomy of universities;* and **(3)** *Power relations (Hierarchy).* Based on the responses from the interviews, students, particularly those who intended to continue in academia after graduation, were clearly of the opinion that Turkey does not offer a satisfactory research environment. Accordingly, other scholars (i.e. Chang, 1992; Thorn and Nielsen, 2006; Ackers et al., 2007) have suggested that the quality of the research environment plays a crucial role in academic mobility.

First, with regard to the quality of the research environment, students, particularly those planning to continue in academia, often stated that internationalisation in higher education is significant for an academic, but, unfortunately, Turkish institutions lack such an environment. According to participants, the main benefits of working in an international environment are ongoing connections with the international research community, which means that there are opportunities for international academic collaboration. The following two statements clearly show the link between internationalisation and its benefits in terms of enhancement of international networking and collaboration.

"To Turkish conferences only Turkish academics come. But…when you're in Europe, it's from everywhere including US. So, I think here I have more opportunity to build up the network."(Esra)

"Connections… and easier to find people to collaborate with. Because, you know, in the UK there are these, for example, research institutes, centres, universities that are much more connected with other countries."(Mine)

As mentioned in Chapter 2, previous studies (i.e. Millard 2005; Ivancheva and Gourova, 2011; MPG, 2012; Chen, 2016) have suggested that internationalisation of the research environment

in home countries can contribute to reducing the number of non-return students, as working in this kind of environment can enhance their research network and collaboration. Further, as pointed out in Chapter 1, one of the advantages of studying abroad is international networking and collaboration (Jonkers and Tijssen, 2008). Regarding which, as reported in research by MORE (2013), Turkey has less international research collaboration compared with any country in Europe. Hence, unsurprisingly, students considered that, if they returned to Turkey, they would not have access to an international research environment for building networks and collaboration, which is why many wanted to remain abroad.

Secondly, participants' statements suggested that independence of universities, or in other words their freedom from government control, is a key attribute for a better quality of research environment. They affirmed that universities in Turkey are under the control of the government by highlighting the lack of institutional autonomy. Given this, one might ask whether political involvement in universities should rather be regarded under political factors and, thus, discussed alongside other political factors. However, this consideration was reported by the participants as a part of the quality of research environment, namely its impact on recognition and reward for academic achievements rather than purely politics. According to many of the students, the crackdown on the institutional autonomy of universities in Turkey has led to the value of academic achievements being debased, with inappropriate people on the receiving end of any rewards. Further, they also added that, since the military coup in July 2016, the universities have become increasingly controlled by the government. This finding is important, because little research has been undertaken to elicit how the attempted military coup has affected the quality of the research environment in Turkey.

The link between the crackdown on the institutional autonomy of universities and its adverse impact on recognition of achievements and rewards was summarised by one student as follows:

> *"Because in Turkey, the universities…they're really a threat politically…universities have a close link between the government and the administration of the universities. The people, they don't look at what you have written... People look at what you are saying in terms of government. They don't look at you academically, they don't assess your work academically." (Ali)*

Accordingly, it was considered that universities are not filling positions based on academic

achievements. For instance, *"I don't think they deserve these positions, so I think they somehow managed to get it maybe because of political connections…" (Ahmet)*

To sum up, as suggested by Panahi (2012), political involvement in universities or in other words, lack of institutional autonomy, has a negative impact on the quality of the research environment. It leads to unfairness in the professional rewards system and insufficient value being afforded to academic achievements and, hence, discourages students from returning (Chang, 1992; Thorn and Nielsen, 2006; Ackers et al., 2007).

Lastly, regarding power relations, the hierarchical structure of universities in Turkey was raised by participants as one of the issues having a negative impact on the quality of the research environment. According to some students, this kind of structure leads to unsatisfactory power relations between researchers and professors, leaving the former feeling undervalued and dissatisfied with the working environment. As put by some students:

> *"You feel that you are really academic and I never felt that when I was in Turkey. Even if you produce very good things, even if you are a very good academic or researcher, the hierarchy between professors and associate professors, you know, they are always on the top of the stairs hierarchy pyramid."(Muzeffer)*

> *"In the UK…You are feeling that your works are valued by people, they consider you, they appreciate you, they respect you." (Serap)*

According to many of the students' statements, the hierarchical structure of universities in Turkey is one of the factors discouraging return, as also raised by Hazen and Albert (2006). Further, these findings highlight the importance of valuing educated people (Panahi, 2012), as well as corroborating the views of Bonfati and Landoni (2010) who stated that professional aspiration factors, including prestige and recognition, influence students' remaining in or leaving their country of study.

To sum up, the interview data provide evidence to support this study's theoretical framework, generated through the application of Structuration Theory (ST) and the Capability Approach (CA). Accordingly, as one student put it: *"I do my work in a research environment that can really nourish your ability"(Tolga).* Hence, the quality of the research environment plays a

significant role in improving the academic abilities of students, thereby supporting an association between structure and agency, from the ST perspective. The features of the research environment in Turkey were defined as lacking both an international perspective and the institutional autonomy of the universities, together with a hierarchical structure.

Consequently, many of the students decided that, if they returned, they would not be able to develop their skills and abilities or, in other words, this kind of research environment would not contribute to developing their career capabilities under a CA stance. Further, lack of career development capabilities (capability: to ability to achieve) means the absence of promising (enhanced) career development, which is directly linked to future career prospects (functioning: achievement/well-being). As one student put it: "*The first priority, the first thing, point is the career. If I stay in the UK, I can be more fruitful in my career" (Aydin),* in order to reach well-being (functioning) through better career fulfillment. In sum, many students were seeking countries that could provide a better quality of research environment in order to obtain secure career development.

4.3. Summary of Professional Factors

Based on interview data, it can be seen that professional factors were found to be one of the important determinants in students' willingness to return or not return to Turkey. Specifically, the quality of the research environment and research facilities in Turkey were described by the participants as unfavourable compared to the UK.

In contrast to, other scholars (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2003; Morano-Foadi, 2005; Hazen and Albert, 2006; Grip et al., 2009; MORE, 2013), who simply state that professional factors at the macro level, such as better funding opportunities abroad, entice students to remain there, by drawing on both Structuration Theory (ST) and the Capability Approach (CA), the evidence presented here clearly shows how professional factors at the macro level impact on students' capability to become mobile at the micro level. That is, whilst **research facilities**, including insufficient research funding, difficulty in accessing material and knowledge along with inflexibility regarding the research area, hinder the academic productivity of students, **the characteristics of the research environment**, in terms of lack of internationalisation and institutional autonomy of the universities, as well as the hierarchical structure, limit career

development in Turkey. Hence, many of the participants, particularly those aiming to continue in academia, clearly stated that they would look for ways to remain abroad.

In other words, the poor quality of the research environment and facilities in Turkey at the macro level have an adverse impact on these two capabilities, namely, those of academic productivity and career development. Expressions such as 'feeling uncomfortable' regarding their potential academic productivity and career development at the micro level, were made by several participants if they returned to Turkey. As a result, many of those interviewed clearly stated that they would seek countries where they could obtain secure enhancement in these two capabilities.

Accordingly, the link between professional factors at the macro level and capabilities of students at the micro level is summarised as follows:

(1) **Insufficient research facilities** limit academic productivity (**capability of academic productivity**)

(2) **Poor features of the research environment** restrict enhancement in career development (**career development capability**).

Overall, it is concluded that student mobility occurs if a student considers that he or she will face discomfort regarding his or her ability to flourish with respect to these two capabilities from Sen's CA perspective, which corresponds with power (capacity) under Gidden's ST. This new perspective of the current study not only distinguishes it from earlier ones (i.e. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Grip et al., 2009), but also provides an exciting opportunity to advance our knowledge by showing the link between professional factors and capabilities as well as mobility. Further, as also suggested by Gungor and Tansel (2003, 2005), the unsatisfactory research environment and facilities in Turkey have been identified as important drivers for students remaining abroad. This not only shows that there has not been much improvement in the research environment in Turkey over the last decade, but also, over and above the findings by Gungor and Tansel (2003, 2005), indicates increasing pressure on academics, including restrictions on such matters as their freedom in choosing a research topic. This clamp down became particularly intense after the attempted military coup in July 2016. Uncovering the

impact of the military coup on the research environment in Turkey is valuable in that this has received scant attention in prior research.

5. Economic Factors

One of the clearest findings to emerge from this study is that economic factors are the least important reason underpinning participants' mobility plans. That is, economic considerations, as a reason for returning or non-returning to Turkey, are reported by only a small number of those interviewed, particularly those planning to continue their career in industry. Further, none of these gave economic considerations as a primary reason, but just as one of the important determinants in their mobility plans. This finding supports the suggestion that those involved in academic mobility should be defined as knowledge rather than economic mobiles (King, 2002; Ackers, 2005) or, as suggested by Mahroum (2000) and Baruffaldi and Landoni (2010), academic mobility is primarily shaped by non-economic determinants. As summarised by one student:

> *"I do not really care about what degrees can bring me in terms of money…I really don't think about these things I am just looking at it as a means for me to develop myself further and maybe produce something that is helpful for humanity in the future and my understanding of the universe and existence."(Kivanc)*

Based on the interview data, amongst the small number of participants who raised economic concerns, the issues raised included level of income and the availability of job opportunities, as suggested by some earlier studies, such as those of Chang (1992), Hazen and Alberts (2006), Pengelly et al. (2008), Paile and Fatoki, (2014), Vasiljeva (2014), which underlined the important role of economic factors in student mobility.

Accordingly, based on the students' statements and considering these from a Structuration Theory (ST) perspective, economic factors can be summarised under two categories: (1) *Higher Standard of Living* (income and quality and affordability of housing); and (2) *Employment Opportunities***.** Further, reflecting on these two economic factors at the macro level (structural) regarding the capability of students at the micro level (agency) under the Capability Approach (CA), led to the identification of two capabilities, namely: (1) *Financial*

Comfort Capability; which refers to the impact of standard of living on the financial comfort capability of individuals and (2) *Capability of Transferability of Skills and Knowledge*, pertaining to the association between the availability of job opportunities in specialised fields and the deployment of individuals' skills and knowledge.

Figure 5: The Impact of Economic Factors on Student Mobility
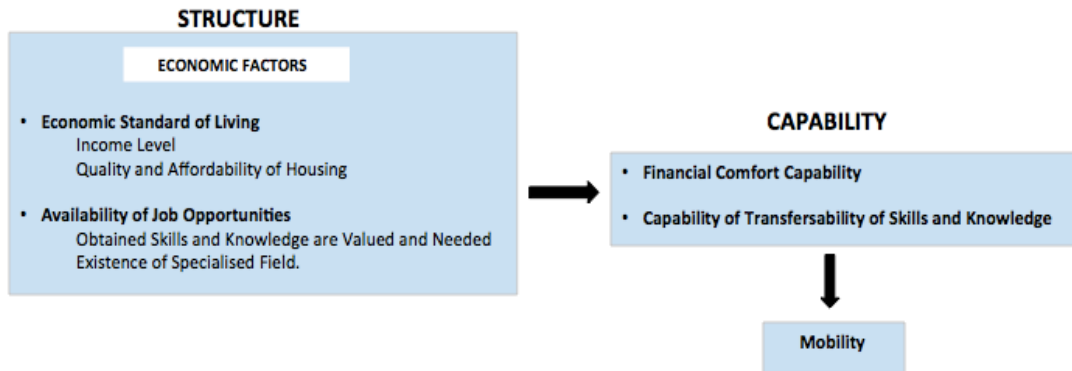
Source: Researcher (2019)

5.1. Higher Standard of Living and Financial Comfort Capability

> *"Your money in UK is much more valuable than Turkey...First advantage is, to live in the UK, is that is economically speaking, you can have a better life."(Ali)*

Participants' responses suggested that they were seeking 'to have a better life'. The notion of having a better life was related to an improved standard of living. According to participants, achieving a better standard of life seems much easier, if they stay abroad. Given this, one might ask, whether this is about obtaining a better standard of living through increasing material (economic) or non-material (non-economic) goods. Students' answers showed that a better standard of living was related to the notion of economic improvement (material goods), using expressions such as 'better salaries', 'better value for money' and 'cost of housing'. As summarised by one student:

*"Because your **life standard**, because your **salary,** probably even slightly, it's still better so **general life standard is higher** - that's a positive thing."(Selim)*

Accordingly, for the current study the term 'standard of living' refers particularly to 'income' and 'quality and affordability of housing'. As mentioned in chapter 2, some earlier scholars have contended that a lower standard of living (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), including lower wages (i.e. Chang, 1992; Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Pengelly et al., 2008; Vasiljeva, 2014) in the home country, encourages students not to return. However, what is different from earlier works (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005), emerging from this study is that, despite participants expressing the view that compared to Turkey the UK could offer more economic prosperity in terms of a better economic standard of living, including higher wages, the participants, particularly those studying in London, often pointed out that both in academia and industry, people do not earn as much as they deserve and that living expenses are high (e.g. accommodation). As put by one student*: "the UK also doesn't give what academics deserve, but it's much better than Turkey. I don't think wages are enough for academics... And the rents are very high first of all..."(Serap).* This, they said, makes it hard to reach the high economic standard of living in the UK that can be achieved in places such as Switzerland, Norway and the USA. In fact, some participants reported that they had already applied for jobs in these countries or that they intended to do so.

Previous scholars (e.g. Paile and Fatoki, 2014) have compared the difference between home and host country regarding standard of living, concluding that a better economic standard of living in a host country encourages students not to return home. In contrast, in the current study, it has been revealed that, whilst students considered that, compared to Turkey, the UK could offer a better economic standard of living, for many the UK still could not provide a satisfactory one and hence they were looking to third countries where this could be fulfilled.

Overall, the findings corroborate the propositions from the current study's framework. Accordingly, under the Giddens' Structuration Theory (ST) and Sen's Capability Approach, (CA) these outcomes can be interpreted as follows. First, corresponding to the link between structure and agency under ST, economic factors at the macro level, which in this case refer to a lower economic standard of living in Turkey, mean that by returning their needs and desires in terms of their financial comfort at the micro level cannot be fulfilled. Secondly, since the CA focus is on human well-being, through the recognition of the capability of individuals, the

economic factors in Turkey, in particular, the poor economic standard of living, would not allow them to have 'financial comfort capability' and, hence, they would not be able to achieve their well-being (functioning: achievement). As one student explained, the higher economic standard of living in the UK allows her to fulfil her needs, which for her was having vacations:

> *"If I live in the UK, for example, money is worth more. Even if I earn the lowest*
> *wage, I can still go on vacations in the places and across the world. But in Turkey,*
> *even if you get a decent salary, it's difficult."(Gokcen)*

Further, being an agent means having power (capacity) under ST, which is equivalent to capability in the CA, allowing individuals to create their lives as they want (Robeyns, 2003). That is, a lack of financial comfort capability will become an obstacle to achieving the life they want and value, thereby failing to foster their well-being. As summarised by one student:

> *"I don't feel like if I go back to Turkey I will find a similar kind of a job that they*
> *can pay me as much as I deserve, I don't think so, I don't feel that I will be able*
> *to live in a way that I deserve after doing a PhD here, if I go to Turkey."(Asli)*

To summarise, the students who raised economic issues considered that their entitlement to a better life could be achieved through an improved economic standard of living, particularly emphasising 'better salaries' and 'better value for money', as suggested by earlier scholars (i.e. Arthur and Flynn, 2011). Accordingly, their statements showed that, if they considered that they would face insecurity in terms of failing to reach 'financial comfort capability' as a result of the lower economic standard of living in their home country, they would look to countries that could offer them this capability, so as to meet their needs and fulfil their desires. Having this kind of capability would allow them to have lives that they valued. However, it should be noted that for many students that country was not the UK as it does not offer an improved economic standard of living when compared to third countries, such as Switzerland and Norway. Moreover, in contrast to previous studies (Hazen and Albert, 2005; Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Arthur and Flynn, 2011) that have explained the impact of economic factors by focusing particularly on the 'economic standard of living' from a push and pull perspective, here it is has been shown how this standard of living at the macro level reflects the capabilities of students at the micro level and, hence, explaining this through the level of acquired 'financial comfort capability' brings a new lens to the mobility field.

5.2. Availability of Job Opportunities and Capability of Transferability of Skills and Knowledge

> *"I want to work in renewable energy, sustainable energy, which doesn't exist in Turkey." (Emel)*

As apparent from the above, the availability of job opportunities played a significant role in students' mobility plans after graduation. Those who believed that job opportunities in Turkey were limited had already applied for jobs abroad or were intending to do so.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, some scholars (i.e. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014) contend that promising job opportunities abroad is one of the factors encouraging non-return to home countries. Moreover, it should be noted that previous studies often report limited job opportunities as a result of economic recession. For instance, the study by Gungor and Tansel (2005) pointed out that economic recession (economic crisis) in Turkey was the main concern of PhD students remaining abroad. However, the current study's participant statements suggest that limited job opportunities in Turkey are due to a specialised field not existing or being relatively new and, thus, not providing many employment opportunities, rather than being down to economic recession. As reported by one student, who wanted to work as a political consultant, Turkey does not offer anywhere or any way for her to put her political knowledge into practice. In her words:

> *"I am looking for something like political consultancy, something actually like that combines my knowledge in politics...In Turkey they don't have like any political consultants, like consultancy agencies, but in Dubai and London, especially, they have a couple of like international ones and they are quite professional."(Izge)*

Accordingly, some participants stated that, as a result of the non-existence of their specialised field in Turkey, they would not be able to transfer the skills learnt and the knowledge gained through their PhD studies to work if they returned to Turkey or, in other words, the country could not offer any place where their skills and knowledge were valued. Hence, as proposed by Dustmann et al. (2009) and Paile and Fatoki (2014), highly qualified mobility is shaped by

whether the skills and knowledge obtained are more needed and valued at home or in the host country. Students wishing to return appeared to take the view that the country needed their skills and knowledge, being themselves keen to contribute to the improvement of Turkey's lot. That is, whilst those who were planning to remain abroad considered their skills would be more valuable outside of Turkey, in particular because there was a lack of many specialised fields there, return-PhD students perceived that their talents would be cherished back home. As summarised by one student:

> *"In the UK there are many, like, educated people and they have, I think, of course it's not like they have enough but still, I like, we need more educated people...I wanna do something good in my country."(Demet)*

Overall, the findings are in line with the propositions from the current study's framework created by drawing on Structuration Theory (ST) and the Capability Approach (CA). First, from the ST perspective, regarding the (interrelated) relationship between agency and structure, some of the students' statements held that they would not be able to transfer their skills and knowledge to practice in Turkey. This can be interpreted, as that, due to the lack of job opportunities in their specialised fields at the macro level, they would not be able to deploy their skills and knowledge at micro level if they returned. Hence, they showed concern about which country was going to enable them to transfer (use) their skills and knowledge or, in other words, they wanted to be where their skills and knowledge were valued and needed. This can be defined under CA, as being whether or not a country offers the opportunity to nourish their capability of transferability of skills and knowledge in order to do the things that they want to do. Thus, the lack of job opportunities in a specialised field can be seen as hindering the capability of transferability of skills and knowledge, in terms of participation in economic life from a CA perspective and, hence, failing to foster well-being.

Accordingly, it is possible to say that capability of transferability of skills and knowledge is directly linked to capability of employability, which was shown previously under of the politic factors as being a result of political discrimination. Further, capability in CA is equivalent to power (capacity) under ST and, accordingly, mobility occurs when an agent loses power or, in other words, his or her influence on society (Wolfel, 2005; Panahi, 2012). In the current case, as summarised by one student, due to the lack of job opportunities in a specialised field in

Turkey, he would not be able to transfer his skills and knowledge, and thus be unable to make an impact on society. In his words:

> *"This might be because of my field... I want to do some research, but if I go back there're not so many firms there in my field that I'm working in. But in the UK, there are more...There are more opportunities...*[lacking of capability of transferability skills and knowledge due to lack of job opportunities in Turkey] *I want to do something valuable for-, in the sense of public policy...you know, I want to see the effect of what I do on the public ...This is quite new in Turkey."* [lacking of power-influencing society-] (*Nuri)*

Hence, it is concluded that, if students are of the view that they will be faced with insecurity in terms of the transferability of skills and knowledge to practice due to limited job opportunities at home, then they will look to countries that can offer the chance to exploit their capability of transferability of skills and knowledge. Explaining how the availability of job opportunities as an economic factor at the macro level, enhances or inhibits students' 'capability of transferability of skills and knowledge' at the micro level is one of the major contributions of the current study that distinguishes it from previous work (i.e. Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014). Further, and again different from earlier studies (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005), it has been shown that limited job opportunities are not only the result of economic recession, but also due to whether or not a country provides the appropriate specialised fields to individuals to which they can transfer their knowledge and skills.

5.3. Summary of Economic Factors

Regarding structural factors, despite economic factors being less prominent as compared to political, socio-cultural and professional ones, some students confirmed that a 'lower economic standard of living' and 'limited job opportunities' in Turkey were their concerns, which were encouraging them to look for ways of remaining abroad. Further, despite the extant literature (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2005) usually showing limited job opportunities as part of economic recession in a country, here this lack has also been found to be because of the absence of many specialised fields in Turkey to which students can transfer their learnt skills and knowledge. Moreover, regarding the economic standard of living, previous scholars' findings (i.e. Arthur

and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014) have often explained how, when this is higher in the host country, this attracts students away from their home one. According to the majority of the current study's participants, the UK, as a host country, does not offer attractiveness in this regard and, hence, they did not want to stay either here or return to Turkey but rather were looking for opportunities in third countries.

In addition, in contrast to previous scholars (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Arthur and Flynn, 2011) who only explain student mobility at the macro level, by applying Structuration Theory (ST) and the Capability Approach (CA) it has been shown how these factors, namely 'standard of living' and 'job opportunities' in a country at the macro level, enhance or inhibit the capability of students at the micro level. This distinguishes this study from previous work (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), thus providing a further major contribution. Accordingly, the impact of economic factors on capabilities for mobility is summarised as follows.

1) **A lower standard of living** restricts enhancement in financial well-being (**financial comfort capability**).

(2) **Limited job opportunities** related to specialised fields inhibit the transferability of skills and knowledge (**capability of transferability of skills and knowledge**).

A lower standard of living and limited job opportunities in specialised fields at the macro level encourage students to become mobile. The reason for this is that the former does not allow students to achieve financial well-being, thereby restricting their 'financial comfort capability', whilst the latter hinders the transferability of obtained skills and knowledge to practice or in other words 'capability of transferability of skills and knowledge'. Hence, it would seem reasonable to conclude that, if students consider that they cannot enhance these two kind of capabilities, namely 'financial comfort capability' and 'capability of transferability of skills and knowledge' in their home countries, they will start seeking places where they can do so in order to obtain economic security and, hence, their economic well-being. Nevertheless, this country, which in the current case is the UK, is not always going to be the host for other factors, such as high cost of living, can work against remaining.

6. Conclusion

At the macro level, economic and professional factors emerged as being the least important factors, whereas political and socio-cultural factors were found to be important macro ones influencing student mobility. Regarding political factors, political discrimination and political instability together with a lack of political freedoms in Turkey were major concerns of non-return students. They were of the view that, if they returned to Turkey, they would most likely lack job security from political discrimination and academic freedom, given the lack of political freedom, with these issues being mentioned by almost all the participants in the sample. Even being funded by the Turkish Government, which requires compulsory service of working at a chosen university by the government on return, would not provide job security, according to the students.

Job security and job opportunities as a part of employment prospects have often been discussed in association with economic factors by scholars (e.g. Hazen and Alberts, 2006; Arthur and Flynn, 2011; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), but the main concern in the current study was political factors stimulating mobility, such as discrimination, rather than economic ones. Further, after an attempted military coup in July 2016, the Erdogan government became increasingly authoritarian and there was a crackdown in freedom, both inside and outside academia, which was most commonly raised by participants as a discouraging factor to returning to Turkey. This is amongst the first pieces research that has considered the impact of the failed coup in Turkey on international student mobility or that of academics. Most studies regarding UK migration policies since the Brexit vote have focused on EU students and academics. The findings relating to those from Turkey resonate with those from these studies, whereby it is generally perceived that the UK has become less tolerant of foreigners since the vote and hence do not wish to remain here.

Socio-cultural factors, which appear closely linked with the achievement of a better quality of life, are shown as the second most important determinant regarding the mobility of students. Unsatisfactory social and physical environments, restrictive socio-cultural norms and policies together with a lack of diversity and tolerance in Turkey were stressed by the participants in the study. One of the important findings to emerge is that, in contrast to earlier scholars (i.e. Parkins, 2011; Szelrnyi, 2006; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), which reported that crimes such as burglary were significant, in the current study, sexual harassment towards women was the

biggest threat. For the majority of female students covered in this current study, sexual harassment was cited as one of the main reasons for remaining abroad followed by strict gender roles and women's inequality in Turkish society.

The impact of structural factors, namely political, socio-cultural, professional and economic factors on capabilities, are as follows:

(1) *Political discrimination* creates the fear of being unemployed *(Employment Capability)*

(2) Limitations on *political freedom* diminish academic freedoms *(Academic Capability)*

(3) *Political instability* (i.e. military coup) leads to a sense of insecurity *(Capability of Safety)*

(4) Strict *UK migration policies* hinder becoming an active citizen *(Capability of Being an Active Citizen)*

(5) Unsatisfactory features of the *social and physical environment* (e.g. a high level of crime) lead to a sense of insecurity *(Capability of Perceived Safety)*

(6) A high level of polarisation and social division, by reducing *diversity and tolerance* in society, inhibits and distorts individuals' engagement with it *(Capability of Perceived Tolerance)*

(7) Strict *socio-cultural norms and policies* (i.e. family and societal pressure and strict gender roles) limit life style choice freedoms *(Freedom of Life-style Choice Capability)*

(8) Insufficient *research facilities* (i.e. research funding) restrict academic productivity *(Capability of Academic Productivity)*

(9) Unsatisfactory *characteristics of the research environment* (i.e. Hierarchy) limit career development *(Career Development Capability)*

(10) A lower *standard of living* (i.e. income level) restricts enhancement in financial well-being *(Financial Comfort Capability)*

(11) Limited *job opportunities* related to specialised fields hinder the transferability of knowledge and skills of individuals *(Capability of Transferability of Skills and Knowledge).*

Consequently, at the macro level, it is concluded that student mobility occurs if students consider that they will face discomfort regarding their ability to flourish with respect to these capabilities.

CHAPTER 7: Identifying the Agency Factors Behind Student Mobility

The main focus of this chapter is to reveal the role of agency factors, which has been largely neglected in the literature on student mobility. Drawing on the participants' statements, the factors at the micro level influencing their mobility plans together with their impact on capabilities for becoming mobile are explained in detail.

1. Introduction

The Capability Approach (CA) emphasises human diversity in individuals' ability to obtain capabilities (freedom/ability to achieve) and convert them into functionings (opportunities/ achievement). That is, this conversion of capabilities changes for each individual (Walker, 2005) and is dependent on agency factors, which in this study refer to demographic, educational and attachment ones. Through investigating the impact of agency factors on capabilities, it is possible to determine how the mobility of students differs to agency.

Despite demographic, educational and attachment factors often being disregarded in much of the previous literature (Mitra and Bang, 2010; Docquier et al., 2011), in the current research these emerged as important influencing factors in the mobility plans of students. In the following sections, each factor at the micro level (agency factors) influencing students' return or non-return plans to Turkey is discussed in detail, from both the Structuration Theory and Capability Approach perspectives.

2. Demographic Factors

Demographic factors relating to age, gender, relationship status, and ethnicity are other themes/sub-themes that emerge in the mobility literature and that can be described as factors affecting student plans to remain abroad or not. Nevertheless, in contrast to much of previous scholarship (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013; Bijwaard and Wang, 2014), the current study does not just aim to seek an answer regarding whether or not mobility differs according to demographic factors, for one of key purposes is to investigate the impact of these factors on the capabilities of students to become mobile. That is, based on the participants' responses, the Capability Approach (CA) is drawn upon, which focuses on human

diversity by holding the view that individuals' ability to obtain capabilities and convert them into opportunities differs according to personal attributes including gender and age (Walker, 2005).

In this context of demographic factors, four capabilities playing a role in the enhancement or inhibition of student mobility were identified: (1) *Psychological and Physical Capabilities*, which underline how 'age' impacts on the psychological and physical strengths of individuals; (2) *Capability of Independence,* referring to how the level of independence obtained differs according to gender; (3) *Freedom of Choice Capability*, which pertains to the association between freedom of choice and relationship status; and (4) *Capability of Expression of Identity*, which refers to impact of the ethnicity on the expression of identity. Demographic variables for 40 students are given in Table 7 (p297).

Figure 6: The Impact of Demographic Factors on Student Mobility
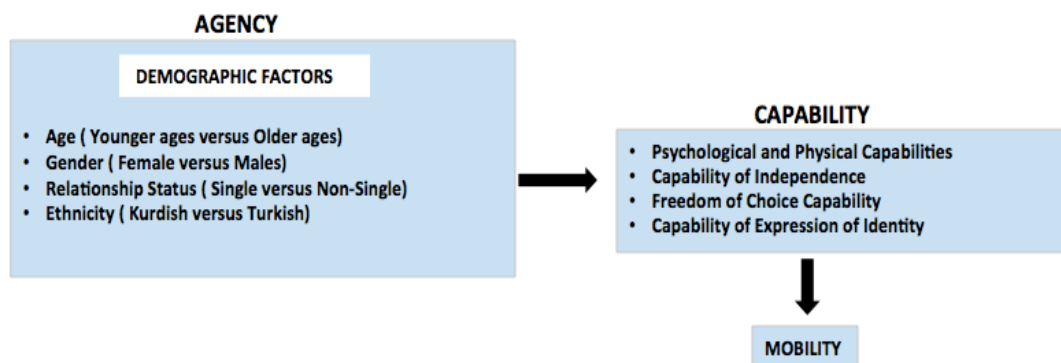
Source: Researcher (2019)

2.1. The Impact of Age on Psychological and Physical Capabilities

> *"The worst scenario; what is the worst scenario? If you can't do it, you can go back; that's it. So, I mean, come one, you are young, I mean, it's not a big problem." (Nuri)*

Regarding **'age'**, as mentioned in Chapter 2, whilst demographic factors that impact on

mobility have been neglected by most previous studies, some have discovered a link between age and mobility. Accordingly, despite some studies (e.g. the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, 2010 and Hercog and van de Laar, 2013) having indicated that older students are more likely to remain abroad, the commonly held opinion (i.e. Aidis et al., 2005; MPG, 2012b; Shehaj, 2015) is that younger students are more likely to become mobile. Further, some studies have also concluded (e.g. Soon, 2010 and Vasiljeva, 2014) that there is no link between age and mobility.

For the current study, students' mobility plans according to their age reveal that, whilst 13 out 18 students between 25 and 30 years of age state that they would like to remain abroad, this rate was 14 out 17 for those between 30 and 35 years of age and 4 out of 5 for those older than 35. Consequently, in the current study older students appear to be more mobile.

In spite of this finding, that mobility is higher amongst the older students when it comes to the link between age and capability, several students' statements clearly show that being young provides opportunities to become mobile. However, the concept of being young is subjective and, as becomes apparent in two students from different age groups' accounts, it is difficult to pin down what this actually means, i.e. perspectives vary. One of these students was 27, and thus categorised in the current study as in a group between 25 and 30 years of age, and the other was 33, so in the group between 30 and 35 years of age, yet both of them identified themselves as young and stressed how being so enhanced their capability for mobility.

> *"I am still young, I'm twenty-seven, so… I think, like, in life preferences, needs and wants; I haven't fulfilled my expectations yet. I think that's the second reason. To me this is a challenge, like, living abroad is a challenge and I really enjoy it."(Mine, 27 years of age, single)*

> *"So, my idea is that while I am still young, do whatever I can… so stay abroad in the UK or Switzerland. After, like 10 years or 15 years, I probably won't be this active, that time I am not going to be physically quite active probably and mentally. So, I can return to Turkey and probably maybe transfer my experiences at that time to Turkish people and Turkey." (Selim, 33 years of age, married)*

These statements show how they have aspirations (desires) to design their lives as they want

and mobility was seen as a way to achieve this. Further, these statements also show that a younger age is associated with both psychological and physical strengths or, in other words, enhances the psychological and physical capabilities of students. Increasing capabilities mean increasing aspirations for mobility (de Haas, 2014). Therefore, it would appear that the self perception of being young will allow for enhancement of these two capabilities of students, thus making their mobility more likely to be fulfilled. Gungor and Tansel (2005) explain that the reason for increasing mobility with the younger ages is the increasing psychic cost with increasing age. Aidis et al. (2005) claim that this is because the labour market opportunities are greater for them than for older cohorts. However, here psychological and physical strength have been identified as capabilities (freedoms) available to those who perceive themselves as young, which can be converted into being mobile. Hence, this is one of the major contributions of the current study that distinguishes it from much of the previous work (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Aidis et al., 2005; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013; Shehaj, 2015).

2.2. The Impact of Gender on Capability of Independence

> *"As a woman as well, it is much freer." (Funda)*

The second demographic factor identified for the current study was **'gender'**. In contrast to the limitation of much of the extant literature in ignoring the gender impact on mobility (Docquier et al., 2011; Waters and Brooks, 2011; Nejad and Young, 2014), almost equal numbers of female (19) and male (21) students were interviewed for the current work in order to examine this. Whilst 14 out of 19 female students stated that they would remain abroad, this figure was 17 out of 21 amongst the male students. This indicates that whilst there was not a great difference between the two groups of students regarding their intentions whether to embrace mobility or not, this was slightly higher amongst the males. As mentioned in Chapter 2, despite the commonly held view in quantitative, qualitative and mixed studies (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Finn, 2012; Zweig, D. and Changgui, 2013; CPC, 2015; O'Neil et al., 2016) that higher qualified females are more mobile than higher qualified males, there are a few studies (i.e. Aidis et al., 2005; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013; Akman, 2014) in which the reverse has been found.

When it comes to the impact of gender on the capabilities of students, this appeared as an

important determinant that enhances or inhibits their capabilities. Under the Capability Approach (CA), capabilities and freedoms cannot be considered separately. Students' responses indicated that female students, unlike males, were not able to flourish by exploiting their capabilities (freedoms) in Turkey, given restrictions on women's freedoms in Turkey. In fact, almost half the female students expressed the feeling of being much freer as a woman abroad as their first or second reason for remaining abroad. For instance:

> *"I feel much more liberated here in the UK." (Mine, female)*
> *"As a woman you are freer here." (Meral, female)*

Accordingly, it is concluded that gender has an impact on students' capability of independence or, in other words, the level of acquired capability of independence changes according to gender. Male students have a higher capability of independence compared to female students and, hence, mobility appears that much higher amongst males. Moreover, one of the main reasons for becoming mobile for female participants was reported as being able to access freedoms, which would mean they could exploit the capability of independence. This is different from many previous studies (i.e. Hazen and Albert, 2005 and Gungor and Tansel, 2005) that have explained the link between gender and student mobility from a push and pull perspective as a result of the impact of the structure of society, in particular, the nature of gender roles at the macro level. Explaining the gender impact on mobility through the level of acquired capability of independence brings a new perspective to the mobility field.

2.3. The Impact of Relationship Status on Freedom of Choice Capability

> *"I am lucky because my wife is also like me, we can live anywhere." (Semih)*

With regards to their relationship status, the majority of students were single (23), while the rest were in relationships, as follows: married (7), engaged (2), with a boy/girlfriend (6) and complicated (2). According to the students' answers, whilst 18 out of 23 students who were single expressed how they would like to remain abroad, this rate was 13 out of 17 for non-single students.

Despite previous studies, for instance Gungor and Tansel (2005), having claimed that being

single increases freedom of mobility, this was just 2% higher amongst single students than non-single students, thus illustrating that there was no great difference across these two groups of students. The reason why being non-single does not much affect the mobility plans of students in the current study might be related to the fact that the majority (12 out of 17 students) stated that their partners/spouses were currently living with them in the UK. Further, the researcher also asked these 17 students whether or not their partners/spouse supported their mobility or non-mobility plans. The students' answers revealed that five out of six married students were currently living in the UK with their partner/spouse and plans to remain abroad were supported by him/her. Similar findings came from students with a fiancé or a boy/girlfriend, for only one out of six students confirmed the reason for non-mobility or in other words returning to Turkey was to be with her boyfriend. Further, despite the majority of students' partners/spouses being Turkish, five students confirmed that having foreign partner was one of the reasons for remaining abroad, as suggested by such as Szelrnyi (2006), Bijwaard and Wang (2014) and Mosnega and Winther (2013).

Accordingly, it is concluded that being single or non-single is not a significant factor in any mobility decision (i.e. Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012 and Vasiljeva 2014) as long as people are able to be together with their partners/spouses abroad and have their support regarding mobility. This finding also demonstrates a link between relationship status and capability as well as mobility. That is, whilst single students' statements indicated that they had a higher freedom of choice and flexibility in their mobility plans, for instance: *"I am a single so I don't have a very straight correct plan in my life." (Izge, single/mobile),* non-single students tended to reveal how their mobility plans were constructed together with their partners/spouses. That is, the latter's mobility was a joint decision, which could limited freedom of choice. One married student who wished to remain abroad revealed in his account how his wife's opinion matters:

> *"I think she wanted to go back to Turkey when she arrived and when she lived in the UK, after I think one and half years she adapted…and I think she realised the opportunities…how it would be like for education and the research environment provide opportunities. I think she understood the opportunities so she wants to get a PhD or find a research position in the United Kingdom as well." (Cem, married/mobile)*

Another, also talked about joint decision making:

"He wants me to go back. This is also his plan."(Dilek, having a partner/ immobile)

These statements suggest that, with regard to mobility, there is a relationship status impact on freedom of choice, whereby the level of freedom of choice capability differs according to whether one is single or not. Single students have a higher level of freedom of choice capability compared to non-single students since the latter's mobility requires approval of their partners/spouses. Hence, mobility for non-single students occurs if they have obtained the freedom of choice capability. This claim can also be supported by the findings of the current study. For, in contrast to many previous studies (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005), which show being single increases mobility propensity, the findings did not show relationship status as having an important impact on mobility plans. In particular, most non-single students living with a partner in the UK said their plans to remain abroad were supported by him or her. From a capability perspective, this finding can be interpreted as the majority of non-single students holding freedom of choice capability through their partners/spouses' support, for this allowed them to be mobile. The reason for this is that an increasing capability means increasing freedom as well as increasing aspirations for mobility (de Haas, 2014). That is, an increasing freedom of choice capability leads to increasing mobility.

Much of the extant literature (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Szelrnyi, 2006; Mosnega and Winther 2013; Bijwaard and Wang, 2014) considered the relationship status impact on mobility simply by stating that being single allows for greater freedom of choice and, hence, increased mobility. Nevertheless, the current study's findings have brought a new idea by also showing that for single students, particularly female ones, mobility or immobility plans are shaped by the approval of future partners. As some female students put it:

"But if, like, I need to go to the country of my husband, I might consider that as well, but I would rather, like, first gather some sort of experiences." (Izge, Single/Female/mobile)

"You know it also depends… like… married."(Tulin, Single/Female/Immobile)

This finding shows that single female students were not completely free in their mobility. Hence, instead of just looking at whether or not they are single as much of the previous scholarship (i.e. Lu et al., 2009; Bijwaard and Wang, 2014) has involved, if the link between relationship status and mobility is considered from a capability perspective or, in other words, through investigating how far being single or not enhances the freedom of choice capability for mobility, a better understanding about the relationship impact is acquired.

2.4. The Impact of Ethnicity on the Capability of Expression of Identity

> *"I have no future, as being a Kurd … it was very clear to me it wasn't possible,*
> *so I always tried, I always aimed to go to abroad." (Kivanc)*

In terms of ethnic minority status, the current study's sample size consisted of 10 Kurdish and 30 Turkish students. Based on their responses, the findings revealed that 31 out 40 students clearly stated that they would like to remain abroad and of these nine out of ten the Kurdish students expressed a wish to do so. Further, of these, five said that being Kurdish was one of major reasons for non-returning. They explained that this was due to insecurity and discrimination issues, in particular discrimination in terms of their career path, which they would face as a result of their Kurdish identity. As put by two students:

> *"My Kurdish background, my Kurdish identity, plays a very important role in me*
> *making the decision to stay abroad, obviously. Because, as I have the example*
> *from my mom, like these military operations that were undertaken in the Kurdish*
> *cities, it is just like-, it's so scary, I mean, it's so unbearable for me as I*
> *person."(Baran)*

> *"As a Kurd, you always experience those biases, stigmatisation, discrimination in*
> *academia and I knew as a Kurd, I wouldn't have a lot of chances in the Turkish*
> *academic environment to, basically, get promotion, get a higher degree."(Tolga)*

The rest of the Kurdish students (4) took the view that being a minority was not germane to their non-returning plans, because for them discrimination and abuses of human rights in Turkey concerned all those who opposed government policy. Two put this as follows: "*I didn't have*

any of these situations, freedom problems, because I'm Kurdish" (Eren) and *"People do not tolerate differentiation. I said, what if I experience some problem with them. It's not only because of my Kurdish identity."(Meral)*

One of the interesting findings was that the students' responses displayed two different kinds of Kurdish identity, secular and conservative, claiming that being the former and left wing would mean facing more problems than the latter.

> *"So, I'm not Turkish, I'm not Muslim ...Being a Kurdish with a critical mind and a leftist...I mean, really difficult and it will be challenging... If I was like a religious Kurd probably I would have more space, but I'm not religious."(Sercan)*

> *"If it was found out I'm not Muslim officially, I can be even, like, you know, I would say my life would be in danger. And on top of this, if it was found out that I'm a supporter of, let's say, the HDP or other progressive political parties...if you are, let's say, leftist, Marxist, socialist, Leninist, whatever. You are leftist and on top you are Kurdish...This is s double negative. I mean, you are gonna suffer more, honestly." (Baran)*

Further, one student, in line with the two statements above also added that after the attempted coup being a practising Muslim was not as risky as being secular Kurdish. Threats towards the latter and other Turkish secularists have become much more pernicious whilst Islamic supporters are regarded general irrespective of their race. In his words:

> *"My Kurdish identity would allow me more criticising the government in that sense then I would be less classified as a Gulenist, if you are Turk and if you are conservative and criticising you are in trouble."(Kivanc)*

In conclusion, the findings have revealed that apart from one, all the Kurdish students' plans after graduation were based on remaining abroad, which was a higher number than for the Turkish student cohort. Further, even though less than half of the Kurdish students did not put being a minority in Turkey as the reason for non-returning, they did not deny there was discrimination against the Kurdish people. Hence, it is concluded that ethnicity or in other

words, being a minority affects mobility plans, which in this case, meant that Kurdish students were more mobile when compared to Turkish ones.

This finding can be interpreted from the CA perspective, as a capability of expression of identity. As discussed previously, capabilities and freedoms are inseparable. Being a minority would appear to restrict enhancement of the capability (freedom) of expression of identity and, thus, most of the Kurdish students were looking for locations where they could freely express their identity without facing any discrimination and/or threats. The students' statements below, show the link between ethnicity and capability of expression of identity.

> *"I can't say I come from Kurdistan, the historical Kurdish land in the east part of Turkey when I am in Turkey. I would be jailed, for it I can't talk about this kind of thing in Turkey. I can't call this area Kurdistan in Turkey but here I can. Kurds normally don't talk about this." (Kivanc)*

> *"Particularly regarding the Kurdish people, for me is a level that you cannot even bear. It's unbearable right now to live in Turkey. That you don't have any space through which your voice can be heard. You are totally isolated."(Baran)*

As discussed previously in Chapter 2, the ethnicity impact on highly qualified mobility has been neglected by previous studies. Only a few (i.e. Bang and Mitra, 2013 and Christensen et al., 2016) have considered it, in particular in the context of civil war. However, those studies did not involve probing the link between ethnicity and the capability to become mobile. The participants' responses revealed discrimination against and threats towards Kurdish people rather than all out civil war in the context of probing whether ethnicity enhances or inhibits the mobility of students. Accordingly, this is a different perspective from previous research (i.e. Bang and Mitra, 2013) and, hence, is another contribution of this study. Further the findings have revealed how perceived threats towards and discrimination against an ethnic minority group can differ depending on whether a person is secular, religious and/or left wing. This suggests that ethnicity, rather than being treated as homogenous concept, should be studied as being multifaceted.

2.5. Summary of Demographic Factors

In this section, the role of demographic factors has been scrutinised, pertaining to age, gender, relationship status and ethnicity regarding students' mobility plans. Accordingly, the results from interviews showed that first, with regard to age, in contrast to many existing studies (Aidis et al., 2005; MPG, 2012b; Shehaj, 2015) older students emerged as being more mobile in the current study. With regard to the impact of age on the capabilities of students, it has been shown that the psychological and physical strength of individuals differs according to age. Being young is seen in the literature (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005) as advantageous in enhancing mobility. However, what has emerged is that these capabilities and their effective exploitation are dependent on the perception of the age, rather than a person's actual age. That is, if someone sees him or herself as young, he or she is more likely to grasp mobility opportunities, and this is an important contribution of the current work.

Secondly, despite existing studies (i.e. Finn 2012; Zweig and Changgui, 2013; O'Neil et al., 2016) having often claimed that higher qualified females are more mobile than males, in the sample the opposite appeared as the case. When considered from a capability perspective, it could be seen that this was related to the level of independence, which differs according to gender. Whilst male students level of independence was higher, which made them more mobile than female students, the latter were choosing to become mobile in order to obtain their independence in the belief that, if they returned to Turkey, this would not be possible given the current status of women there.

Thirdly, with regard to relationship status, in contrast to the majority of studies (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Mosnega and Winther, 2013; Bijwaard and Wang, 2014), which have held that being single means increased mobility, the findings did not reveal any significant difference between single and non-single students. This was because most of the partners/ spouses of non-single mobile students were in the UK and supported their plans to remain abroad. This also showed that there was link between relationship status and capabilities, whereby non-single students have less freedom of choice to become mobile or immobile than single ones since this was a joint decision for them. However, in the majority of cases, the interviewees reported that their partners/ spouses agreed with their mobility decision and, thus, they had as much freedom of choice as those who were single. Further, some single female

students expressed the view that their mobility was dependent on their future partners/spouses' locations, which introduced a new perspective to the relationship status context.

Lastly, the ethnicity impact on mobility was investigated. Covering this was important, because only a few studies (i.e. Bang and Mitra, 2013) have considered this dimension, in particular those focusing on civil war, which was not the focus here. The findings showed that mobility was greater amongst Kurdish students compared to Turkish ones, with all but one in the sample having career plans that were based on being abroad. These Kurdish students' responses showed that their decision to be mobile was owing to the limited freedom to express identity in Turkey, which was possible if they stayed away.

Accordingly, the impact of demographic factors on capabilities is summarised as follows.

(1) Being of a younger *age* enhances the psychological and physical strength of individuals and, hence, their mobility. *(Psychological and Physical Capabilities)*

(2) Regarding *gender,* males become mobile because they have a higher level of liberty, whilst females do so in pursuit of this. *(Capability of Independence)*

(3) When it comes *to relationship status,* being a single student leads to greater freedom in terms of mobility choice when compared to non-single ones. *(Freedom of Choice Capability)*

(4) *Ethnicity* or in other words being a minority restricts freedom of expression of identity, hence these groups seek locations where they can obtain this freedom. *(Capability of Expression of Identity)*

Overall, in the extant literature, demographic factors have received little attention. However, the findings have revealed that demographic factors are important regarding student mobility and thus need to be included in such scholarship. In contrast to previous studies (i.e. Lu et al. 2009; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013; Bijwaard and Wang, 2014), this study has not involved just seeking an answer to 'whether or not mobility differs according to demographic features of individuals', for it has also engendered a capability perspective showing how far these factors enhance or inhibit the capabilities of students to become mobile. Hence, this distinguishes this work from existing studies (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2005; MPG, 2012b;

Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012; Zweig and Changgui, 2013) and is thus one of its novel contributions.

3. Educational Factors' Impact on Mobility

Educational factors, including year of study, field of study and funding have commonly been identified in existing studies (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; de Grip et al., 2009; Soon, 2012; Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) as the factors most likely to influence students' mobility plans. Accordingly, first, the impact of educational factors on student mobility was investigated, whether or not students' return or non-return plans to Turkey change owing to these factors. Secondly, unlike previous studies (Rindicate 2008; Bouwel and Carine; 2010; Finn, 2012), by taking a Capability Approach (CA) perspective, it is possible to evaluate how far these educational factors enhance or inhibit the capabilities of students to become mobile.

Based on the student responses and considering these under the CA lens, three broad themes emerg: (1) *Knowledge Capability,* which shows how the year of study impacts on the level of knowledge of individuals, for instance, knowledge about visa and work permits; (2) *Occupational Capability*, referring to the link between the field of study and availability of job opportunities; and (3) *Autonomy of Will Capability*, underlining how far the funding source enhances or inhibits student authority over the free choice of whether or not to return to Turkey. Educational variables for 40 students are given in Table 7 (p297).

Figure 7: The Impact of Educational Factors on Student Mobility
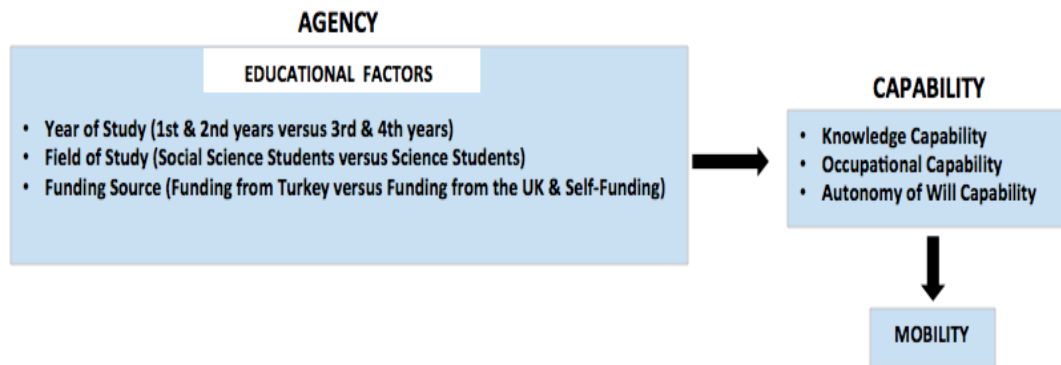
Source: Researcher (2019)

3.1. The Impact of Year of PhD Study on Knowledge Capability

"At the beginning…I was happy after I completed my PhD…to go back. But after 4 years ...now it's like when I think about it, it's like torture for me the idea of going back." (Hakan)

One of the aims of the current study was to determine whether or not mobility differs according to year of study, involving a comparison of the mobility plans of those towards the beginning of their PhD journey (1st and 2nd years) with those nearing the end (3rd and 4th years). Of the sample, the majority of students (27 students) were in their third (11 students) and fourth years (16 students), whilst of the remaining 13 students, five were in their first year and the rest in their second. According to the students' responses, whilst eight out of 13 students who are in their first or second year state that they would like to remain abroad, this registered as 23 out of 27 for those in their third or fourth year.

Consequently, regarding the impact of year of study on mobility, there is not a substantial difference between those who had been studying for PhDs for a short period of time and those doing so for much longer. Further, the interview data also show that focusing on year of study fails to provide any conclusive evidence regarding any difference amongst the students regarding their mobility intentions. The reason for this is that the majority of them had already had previous experience abroad through language, bachelor and/or masters courses before

starting their PhDs and, hence, being in, say, the second year of their studies did not mean that they had been away from Turkey for just two years. As one student put it, despite having just completed the third year of his PhD, he had already been in the UK for two years prior to commencing his doctorate. In his words:

> *"I came to the UK in 2010. I did a one-year English course at X University in London. And then I did my MA." (Baran)*

Hence, in addition to year of study, the link between length of stay and the mobility plans of the students is also considered in the current study, as suggested by McGill (2013). As discussed in Chapter 2, only a limited number of studies (e.g. Hazen and Albert, 2006; Soon, 2012) have focused on how duration of stay abroad affects student mobility, in particular, comparing bachelor, masters and PhD students rather than year of study. According to these studies, increased length of stay enhances mobility owing to the loosening of ties with the home country and growing familiarity with the host one (Card, 1982; Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Soon, 2012).

Accordingly, regarding the impact of length of stay on mobility, students' responses revealed that almost half had been outside of Turkey from five to nine years owing to their engagement with language courses, Erasmus, bachelor degree and/or masters degree. Further, the majority of students who were willing to return to Turkey had been away for around four years and many of these were in their first or second year of their studies. Moreover, in some cases, whilst some students who had been living abroad longer expressed their immediate willingness to return, this was not case for some of those who had a shorter living abroad experience. Hence, no strong link between length of stay and mobility emerged from the data, as has been claimed to be the case in previous studies (i.e. Soon, 2012), whereby increasing duration of stay leads to increasing familiarity with a host country, which consequently fosters the decision to remain abroad.

However, one notable finding emerging from the current study is with regard to the nature of mobility between those at the beginning of their studies and those nearing completion. This difference, rather than being about their length of stay away from the home country, is specifically about how close to the end of their study they were. That is, those approaching completion have much more concrete ideas about mobility, which is not case for those in their

initial years of PhD study. The latter often expressed how they are torn between staying abroad and returning to Turkey, because the decision of whether or not to do so is not yet required. A number of these students stated that their return or non-return choice could change in the future, as suggested by Hazen and Albert (2006), who underlined the changing intentions of international students over time:

"I think the ideas and plans can change so I don't know so I can't say that, OK, 100% I will go back to Turkey. Of course, something may change, for example, maybe in four to five years" (Dilek, 1st year student).

This is also supported by the fact that many students, who are now in their third or fourth year of study state that they had either been planning to return to Turkey or to stay abroad in their first and second year, but these plans had subsequently changed.

"I was planning to go back to Turkey, but actually, this changed last year" (Semih, 3rd student).

It should be noted that, whilst Hazen and Albert (2006) explain the changing intentions of international students during the stay abroad as a result of career or for family reasons, many of the students in the current study also raised the current political situation in Turkey as the reason why they are reluctant to return. As discussed under Political Factors, owing to political instability (i.e. the attempted military coup in July 2016), lack of political freedom (i.e. crackdown on academic freedom) and political discrimination (e.g. job insecurity), many students are pessimistic about the future for Turkey and thus, about their own future. Accordingly, those coming towards the end of their studies attribute their changing intentions to the current political atmosphere in Turkey, whilst those near the beginning, couch their mobility plans in terms of whether this situation will improve in the near future. For instance, one student who was nearing the end of his third year of PhD study explained how his mobility plans had changed as a result of the political circumstances:

"At the beginning, the scholarship and this opportunity were very promising for me and …I was happy after I completed my PhD…to go back. But after 4 years, Turkey has changed a lot, and now it's like when I think about it it's like torture for me, the idea of going back. Because of many things, the political

situation…there is no peace, because of terrorists attacks and there is no job security."(Halis)

This finding can be interpreted as different from early years students, in that those near the end of studies do not have much hope that the political situation in Turkey will change in the short term. Hence, they try to make their mobility a reality or in other words, they are making concrete plans to make sure that mobility will become a reality. Accordingly, they are investigating the ways to remain abroad and, hence, becoming knowledgeable about how they can overcome such issues as obtaining a work permit. They realise that as they are nearing the end of their PhD study, they have to make the decision as to where they want to be after graduation, because their period of staying in the UK from being PhD students is coming to an end. Hence, they proactively seek ways to be able to continue to remain abroad in terms of understanding both visa and work permit requirements, both for the UK and third countries. For instance, Selim was in the last year of his studies and he wanted to move to Geneva after completion. His statement clearly shows that he was knowledgeable about legislation and solutions for obtaining work with a permit, not only for the UK, but also for Switzerland.

"The Swiss Law doesn't allow employers to employ a non-EU non-Swiss person directly. So, they have to go through a lot of checks for a non-EU and Non-Swiss person, if the government decides that this position can be filled by another person from an EU country or Switzerland… My wife is from Belgium, so I have a Belgium permit, let's say residence permit, so that with this permit…" (Selim)

Further, the interviews also revealed how some students in their final year have already applied either for post doc positions or jobs, both in the UK and third party countries. Some have even gained a position in one of those countries, for instance:

"I've got a postgraduate offer from the US in November, so I can continue my career as a researcher in the USA. It is initially for 2 years, but subject to permanent contract so, based on your overall performance within two years, then it many become a permanent position. So, it is an open-ended contract basically." (Ahmet, 4[th]year student)

Overall, the conclusion can be drawn that focusing on the year of study of students is misleading since this does not reflect the duration of stay. Further, despite length of stay being considered as well as year of PhD study, no link between this and mobility have been found. Hence, there is no concurrence with the claim from earlier studies (Soon, 2012; Card, 1982; Gungor and Tansel, 2005) that an increasing length of stay leads to increasing familiarity with a country and, hence, increasing willingness to remain abroad. According to findings from the current study, the issue is not about how long students have been abroad, but instead, how near they are to the end of their studies. That is, compared to first and second year students, those near to completion have already made up their mind about their location after graduation as a result of, first, their permission to stay in the UK potentially coming to an end and, second, not having any more faith in expecting Turkey to become a better place to live. Accordingly, those in their last year need to think about what they will do next year and, for many, this meant turning their mobility into reality. Hence, compared to first year students, finally year ones are more knowledgeable about both the constraints and opportunities, as well as how constraints can be overcome in order to be able to remain abroad. That is, for students nearing the end of their studies, being knowledgeable, in particular, about the relevant legislation as well as visas and work permits, helps them to see how to move forward in terms of operationalising their future mobility.

This finding also demonstrates a link between year of study and capability as well as mobility. From a capability perspective, it can be interpreted as knowledge capability, whereby the year of study has an impact on its level. That is, students nearing completion have a higher knowledge capability compared to those who have just started their PhD studies. Moreover, increasing capabilities leads to increasing aspirations for mobility as well as actual mobility (de Haas, 2014), with final year students being more focused on this, thus availing themselves of greater knowledge capability when compared to those near the start of their PhD journey.

In sum, regarding mobility plans, whilst scholars (Soon, 2012; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013) have previously compared the degree level, such as bachelor and postgraduate students by particularly focusing on the length of stay, what has been examined here is whether mobility plans differ according to the year of study as well as length of stay. In prior studies (Card, 1982; Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Soon, 2012), it is proposed that mobility increases with increasing length of stay owing to the loosening of ties with a home country. In contrast, the current study's findings have revealed that it is not so much about how long the participants have been

away from Turkey but, rather, how near they are to graduation. That is, compared to first year students, those who were near to the completion of their PhD had more concrete plans, being more knowledgeable about legislation regarding such matters as work permits and, hence, can be taken as having higher knowledge capability. This finding is important and is not mentioned in other work on mobility.

3.2. The Impact of Field of Study on Occupational Capability

"It has never been valuable studying social sciences in Turkey… Social science is much more appreciated by Europeans." (Serap)

As discussed in Chapter 2, a commonly held opinion (de Grip et al., 2009; SVR, 2012; MPG, 2012) is that science students are more mobile than social science ones. Consequently, much of the extant literature (Finn, 2012 and de Grip et al., 2009) has tended to ignore the latter, mainly focusing on the former. For the current study, both social science (29) and science (11) students were interviewed, to determine whether or not student mobility differs according to field of study. It emerged that 23 out of the 29 social science students wanted to remain abroad, whilst this was so for eight out of the 11 science students.

Based on interview data, participants' statements suggest that there is a close link between field of study and job opportunities. That is, considering that the first condition of remaining abroad is finding a job, science students seem to be in a more advantageous position regarding job prospects owing to the nature of the field and hence, they appear to be more mobile than social science students. This gives an insight into why previous studies (e.g. Finn, 2012) have tended to focus on science students rather than social science ones. Nevertheless, according to this study's findings, social science students show less willingness to return to Turkey than their science counterparts. In previous chapters, the dominant role of political factors in Turkey across almost every aspect of the life is revealed. Academia, in particular for those studying social science disciplines, has increasingly come under threat from the regime, which highlights the distinct nature of these students in the mobility context, as evidenced further below.

Some science students' statements show how their career plans are not limited to academia as there are promising job opportunities available to them elsewhere, such as in industry. *"Basically, I can find a job in industry it can be related to my field or it can be anything or teaching something and staying in academia" (Asli, Science Student)*. This is generally not the case for social science students: *"My education is in economics…you know, there's not so many opportunities…because of my field. I mean…if I go back there're not so many firms in my field, but in the UK, there are more. So, there are more opportunities. But in Turkey, this is new." (Nuri, Social Science Student).* In other words, social science students' job opportunities were restricted to academic jobs, if they return to Turkey. As discussed under the title of political factors, lack of academic freedom in Turkey is one of the major discouraging factors to returning, particularly for those who studying social sciences. This is also supported by science students' statements, holding that if they do decide to return Turkey and continue their career in academia, they will not be affected by this issue as much as social science students.

> *"I'm in the science field…it is very objective; it's not like a subjective field, like the other people, so…I don't think I am in the same place as them to talk about freedom in academia, it does not affect me." (Funda)*

> *"Because, like, if you see in Iran, for example, they did close the social science departments of the universities. But the engineering, that is still there. So, I don't think it will affect science very much." (Emel)*

This finding also reveals not only a link between field of study and capability, but also, with regard to mobility. That is, compared to social science students, science students appear to be more likely to find a position outside of academia or, in other words, their job opportunities are not restricted to having to seek academic jobs. Working outside of academia (e.g. in industry) in Turkey is often described by students as exerting less pressure in political terms. As one student put it:

> *"If I have to go back to Turkey, I don't have the same concerns about working in the private sector…If you work in an international company, like Unilever, I think you're gonna have a more stable life."(Mine)*

Secondly, for those science students choosing to continue their careers in academia, the current erosion of academic freedom in Turkey does not become such a threat for them as for the social science students owing to the objective nature of the field of science. This finding can be interpreted from a Capability Approach (CA) perspective, as an occupational capability. That is, field of study impacts on job opportunities or, in other words, these opportunities differ depending on whether they are social science or science students. That is, science students have options outside of academia, which can be defined as being enhanced occupational capabilities. Even in academia, the level of pressure on them is lower when compared to social science ones in the context of academic freedom and, thus, the former are less concerned about returning to Turkey than the latter. Or in other words, social science students, unlike science students, are not able to flourish by exploiting their occupational capabilities in Turkey in terms of both freedoms and taking advantage of alternatives, such as working in industry. Hence, they seek locations where they can operationalise their occupational capabilities, which in many cases needs to be outside Turkey.

Overall, first, and different from previous studies (de Grip et al., 2009 and Vasiljeva, 2014), the research findings show how mobility may differ according to field of study and that this also has an impact on the capabilities of students to become mobile. Secondly, in contrast to the limitation of much of the extant literature either in ignoring social science students (i.e. Finn, 2012) or focusing on only one discipline (Pengelly et al., 2008), the current study has revealed the mobility plans of both science and social science students from a number of disciplines, including material science, economics, marketing and education. These two aspects of this study distinguish this work from previous scholarship (Baruch, et al., 2007; Soon, 2010; Vasiljeva, 2014) and, thus, constitute original contributions of the study.

3.3. The Impact of Funding on the Autonomy of Will Capability

> *"The thing is, I have a scholarship and…when I finish my studies I have to go*
> *back to Turkey and work for the government."(Demet)*

The last educational factor identified for the current study is funding. As mentioned in Chapter 2, this is one of the major barriers to remaining abroad, as also reported on in several quantitative, qualitative and mixed studies (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Rindicate 2008; Bouwel,

2010; Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012). In particular, those funded by a home country who would like to become mobile can find restrictions on their movement, whereby they have to return to comply with the conditions under which they received the money.

As regards how far the funding source enhances or inhibits student mobility, the breakdown of the samples in terms of the sources of finance is as follows. There were five self-funding students and the remaining 35 were supported as follows: 17 by the Turkish Government, 17 by UK institutions and one from both sources. Students' mobility plans according to their funding status reveal that, apart from one student, all the return students are funded by the Turkish Government. Further, students funded by UK institutions and self-funded clearly express how not being funded by the Turkish government provides them with freedom in their mobility: *"I don't have to go back to Turkey hopefully- insallah- because I don't have a scholarship from the Turkish government now I am kind of more free" (Kivanc, funded by a UK institution).* Those funded by the Turkish Government stated that this was limiting their freedom of choice with regards to becoming mobile, phrasing this such as 'have to' 'must to' 'need to' return to Turkey.

> *"The biggest issue, actually...I have to go back to Turkey after my PhD and work for the government for twice the years I spent abroad.... Or I have to pay the money back."(Eren)*

> *"I have a scholarship from Turkey...when I finish my PhD and must go back to Turkey." (Ali)*

Hence, based on student statements, it is concluded that having funding from the Turkish government shifts returning to Turkey from being a choice to being inevitable. Nevertheless, whilst 17 students are funded by the Turkish Government, only eight of them state they will return, and this is mainly because they are obliged to in their contracts. Regarding the other nine students, whilst they acknowledge their indebtedness to the state and are aware that they will have to pay back pay a significant amount of money if they chose to remain abroad, they still see this path as the most preferable. Given this situation, the issue becomes whether or not the desire to remain abroad can be fulfilled, rather than the focus being on the obligation to return to the home country and complete a previously agreed contract. The issue is how can these nine students succeed in remaining abroad? The reason for this enquiry is first, that

international students' plans change over time during their stay in the host country (Hazen and Albert, 2006) and the current study aims to capture the processes rather than the outcomes or, in other words, to investigate what leads to these students becoming mobile. Hence, the interest lies in how far funding inhibits student mobility. Secondly, the application of Structuration Theory (ST) and a Capability Approach (CT) allows for investigation of how exercising agency challenges inhibiting factors (Briones, 2013), thus revealing how some students are able to develop their capabilities despite the challenges they face. Accordingly, the aforementioned nine students were asked how they intended to remain abroad in spite of their being expected to return to Turkey to meet the contractual arrangements.

Students' responses suggest that they believe that they will be able to find a way to achieve this. *"When I signed this contract with the Turkish government I was thinking that okay, we're just signing the agreement, but I'm gonna find a way not to go back to Turkey" (Baran).* However, their ways show differences, with some stating that they will pay the scholarship back through financial support from the family: *"I think my boyfriend is willing to help me a little. My father is willing to help me and I have a little money. So, like, three of us, I think we can manage" (Gokcen).* Others mention applying for a business visa: "*I can apply for a specific agreement, which is called an Ankara Agreement. You can establish a business here" (Asli).* More than half the students express the view that their scholarship will be cancelled if they reveal any political involvement, such as singing a peace declaration and, hence, will not have to undertake compulsory service or pay back the money they have already received.

> *"I am on the blacklist and I expect that the government will fire me and cancel my scholarship. So, if it happens like that, I don't have to pay anything and I don't have to go back to Turkey for the compulsory work, so I will get free." (Semih)*

> *"If they fire me, then my obligation to pay the money back will be completely eliminated …if they fire me I will be …that would be a gift. I hope they will fire me..." (Koray)*

Further, one student stated that many of the funded students have been sharing their experiences and showing what kind of steps should be followed through social media:

> *"There's even like a Facebook page for who has the same scholarship and who refuse to go back and paying back... it's called '...'. I'm not alone! There are many people. We have even, like, a social network in this regard..." (Baran)*

Overall, students' statements show that funding from the home country is a significant issue. Students who were funded by Turkey, unlike those from the UK and those self-funding, do not have authority over their choice of whether to return or stay. As one student put it, funding from Turkey blocks her from being able to choose. In her words:

> *"Because of this scholarship I have to turn back to Turkey and I have to serve the country, but if I had a chance to choose..." (Zeliha, funding by Turkey).*

Under ST, being an agent means having power (capacity), which corresponds to capability with the Capability Approach (CA), whereby individuals are able to design their lives as they desire (Robeyns, 2003). From the CA perspective, which holds that freedoms and capability are inseparable, the impact of funding can be interpreted as an 'autonomy of will capability'. That is, the level of autonomy of will capability changes, according to whether or not a student is funded by the home country. Those funded by the UK government or self-funded have a higher 'autonomy of will capability' compared to those funded by Turkey and, hence, apart from one, all the return students in this study state that funding is their major reason for returning home.

To summarise, much of the extant literature (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Rindicate 2008; Bouwel and Carine; 2010) that has considered the funding impact on mobility, has reported how financing from the home country restricts students in becoming mobile. The current research differs from these works (Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) in that it involves not just probing 'whether or not mobility differs according to the funding source' but also investigates the funding impact on mobility through a capability perspective, bringing new knowledge to the field. Further, the ways of exercising agency (e.g. Ankara Agreement and social media platforms) adopted by students when faced with factors constraining their remaining abroad are uncovered, despite their having funding from Turkish authorities. These insights distinguish this work from that of previous scholars (i.e. Gungor and Tansel, 2005 and Bouwel, 2010) and, hence, contribute new knowledge to the field.

3.4. Summary of Educational Factors

This section has ascertained whether or not the participants' return/ non-return plans are affected by educational factors, which were identified as year of study, field of study and funding source. Further, unlike previous studies (Card, 1982; Soon, 2012; Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012), the link between educational factors and the capabilities of students to become mobile has also been probed.

First, regarding the year of study, it has been explained how this can be misleading when taken in isolation. For, as the interviews reveal, the majority of the participants have previous UK educational experience (i.e. language, bachelor and/or masters degree) before taking up their PhD studies. Further, regardless of the year of study, despite the current study also involving examination of the impact of length of stay on mobility, no link has been found between the two. What does emerge and can be considered as one of the novel contributions of the current study is that, the nature of mobility is different when comparing those near the start of their PhD journey with those nearing the end. That is, whilst students nearing completion come with concrete plans regarding their mobility, those in their early years of study are uncertain as to how their aspirations for mobility can be turned into reality. Specifically, those in the former cohort who were opting to remain abroad had sought information regarding such matters as visas, work permits etc., that will increase the likelihood of their fulfilling their wishes, whilst for the latter, this has not yet become a matter of urgency. From a CA perspective, this is interpreted as 'knowledge capability', the level of appears change according the year of study. That is, students nearing the end of their courses have a higher knowledge capability when compared to those just starting out. In sum, under the CA perspective, an increasing knowledge capability leads to more opportunities for those who wish to do so to covert this into their valued outcome, namely, mobility.

Secondly, in contrast to many existing studies (de Grip et al., 2009 and MPG, 2012), social science students emerge as being more mobile in the current study. Covering both science and social science students from wide range disciplines is significant, because previous studies (Finn, 2012) have tended to look at science students' mobility rather than comparing these two cohorts of students. Students' responses suggest that there is a link between field of study and job opportunities. That is, compared to science students, social science students' job opportunities are limited to academic jobs in Turkey. Given the current political pressure and

lack of freedom in academia, these emerge as being important discouraging factors for returning to Turkey. Further, the participants also explain how science students are not as affected by the issue of freedom as much as social science ones. Under the CA perspective, which refers occupational capability (freedom), social science students are found to be unable to flourish by exploiting capability in Turkey, given the limitations on academic freedom as well as the paucity of working opportunities outside of academia. Hence, they seek locations that would offer them opportunities to exercise this capability. This leads to their valuing mobility as much as science students, who have been identified in several studies as having this desire, this has not been identified for social science students under the circumstances described.

Lastly, how funding source impacts on student mobility has been investigated. Funding from the home country has often been shown by scholars (Rindicate 2008) as a major factor inhibiting mobility. In the current study, the participants' responses indicate that students funded by the Turkish Government are less mobile than those funded by the UK institutions or self-funding. Whilst previous studies (Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012) have identified funding by the home country as factor a restricting mobility, in this study, through a CA perspective, the link between the two has been elucidated by coining the term 'autonomy of will capability'. That is, it has emerged that the level of autonomy of will capability is related to funding source. This capability is least available for those students funded by the Turkish Government and, hence, they are less mobile. Further, by revealing the strategies that they engage with in order to overcome the funding issue so as to be able to remain abroad, it has been shown how exercising agency leads to challenges to the constraints imposed. These insights represent further original contributions to the scholarship on mobility.

Accordingly, the impact of educational factors on capabilities is summarised as follows.

(1) Being **in the final years of study** not only makes students purposeful but also enhances their awareness and knowledge, in particular about such matters as working and leave to stay permits, and hence enhances their capacity for mobility. (**Knowledge Capability**)

(2) Regarding **field of study**, social science students are just as active as science in seeking to enhance their work prospects when facing threats to their freedom, if they decide to return. (**Occupational Capabilities**)

(3) Not being **funded** by the home country provides greater freedom in terms of mobility choice than for those funded by the Turkish Government. (**Autonomy of Will Capability**)

Overall, the current study concerns not only how the mobility of students changes according to educational factors, but also the impact on the capability of students to become mobile through the application of CA. Hence, the findings in this study have brought new perspectives to the mobility field, which can be seen as keys contributions that are distinct from those of previous works (de Grip et al., 2009; Vasiljeva, 2014; Bouwel and Veugelers, 2012).

4. Attachment Factors Impact on Mobility

As discussed in Chapter 2, adaptation is a significant factor in the mobility decisions of students, which has also been shown in previous studies (Baruch et al., 2007), whereby its increase leads to enhanced mobility and vice versa. The challenges to adaptation revealed in earlier studies (Furnham, 2004; Poyrazli and Lopez, 2007; Yuan, 2010) and discussed in Chapter 1 include language barriers, lack of support and/or discrimination.

According to our findings, only a few students confirmed that the main challenge was language efficiency. As some students put it:

 "At the beginning it was, I mean, first couple of months it was hard in the sense of the language."(Nuri)

"At the beginning, the first problem that I encountered was the language, even though you feel that you know English very well." (Aydin)

Students' responses suggest that a lack of language efficiency leads to a sense of being a foreigner, which makes it difficult to interact with people and, hence, hard to adapt. As one student put it:

"Sometimes you feel like you are foreigner, but it is because of your language skills. For example, at the beginning of my studies I used to be more silent and I hesitated to ask questions or continue further conversation with my supervisor or

the colleagues around me, because of the language thing, but recently I have become much more comfortable in terms of this." (Halis)

However, it is worth noting, as can be seen from the students' statements above, that language was only an issue at the beginning of their studies. The reason for this could relate to the fact that undertaking a PhD in the UK requires a sufficient level of language ability and, hence, students strive to address this in as short a time period as possible so as to not hinder their work progress.

Apart from the language efficiency issue, the majority of students clearly stated that they had not encountered any adaptation problems. *"I was expecting something quite similar to what I got. And, so, I didn't really have any integration problems or any kind of problems in that sense" (Cem).* This was the case mainly because many of them had previous foreign education experience and, hence, living in a foreign environment was not new to them. This can be clearly seen from dialogue between the researcher and a participant.

Researcher: "…but you haven't had any problem about adjustment…?"

Mine: "No, I have lived in foreign countries before. This is my third time living in another country."

Further, one of the interesting findings was that several female students stated that they had not encountered any difficulties regarding adaptation to the UK because of their physical appearance. As some female students put it:

"Because I don't really look so much foreign, they always consider me either as if I'm Spanish or Italian so… they don't approach me with prejudice." (Nuriye, Female)

"The funny thing is that the majority of people wherever I am think that I am Spanish, other than I'm Turkish…In terms of this aspect, I don't feel I'm being discriminated against in public."(Ulku, Female)

So, these Turkish women, despite not being Western European, were not experiencing any challenges regarding their appearance because they looked western. This finding is important because little prior research has included the link between physical appearance and adaptation to a foreign country.

The last reason for easier adaptation to the UK was the multicultural structure in the UK, especially in a big conurbation like London. In this regard, those studying in London often described it like it being a melting pot. According to participants, this kind of environment allows students to meet people from different cultures, which helps to acquire a multi-cultural perspective. For instance: *"I made lots of international friends that helped me not just to understand the British culture, but also to understand the other cultures, other countries cultures"(Aydin).* Moreover, students often pointed out how multiculturalism brings increasing tolerance in society. That is, as discussed earlier under socio-cultural factors, tolerance and diversity in the UK is seen one of biggest advantages of living here. This tolerance makes adaptation to the UK environment easier. For instance, the statement from a student shows the link between multiculturalism and tolerance as well as easier adaptation, in her words:

> *"Here it is very multicultural, it's made easier...the people who are living in London tolerate other people." (Tulin)*

As mentioned in Chapter 2, according to some scholars (i.e. Wang and Hannes, 2014), stimulation or inhibition of the adaptation process of students depends on various factors and some of them are closely linked to those of agency. Those factors can be seen as attachment factors, which emphasise an individuals' affinity with people as well as their attachment to locations, or in other words, individuals' family and friendship ties (Hazen and Alberts, 2006), as well as their sentiment towards both the home and host country (Chen, 2016).

Accordingly, for the current study whether or not students' mobility plans change owing to attachment factors, including their ties with family and friendships as well as their sense of belonging to a location was investigated. In contrast to earlier studies (Zong et al., 2009; Soon, 2010; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), through the application of the Capability Approach (CA), it is revealed how these attachment factors impact on the capabilities of students to become mobile. In this context, based on the participants' responses, two capabilities emerged that influence student mobility: (1) *Capability of Emotional Wellbeing*, which refers to the impact of family

and friendship ties on the emotional strength of students; and (2) *Capability of Fitting In*, which pertains to the link between a sense of belonging and fitting in a certain location. Further, the interview data also reveal that many participants have a sense of belonging everywhere. These individuals often defined themselves as cosmopolitan and/or world citizens, emphasising how they acquired this kind of identity after studying abroad and, hence, the association between doing so and acquisition of a cosmopolitan outlook, termed the (3) *Capability of Becoming Cosmopolitan Citizen.*

Figure 8: The Impact of Attachment Factors on Student Mobility
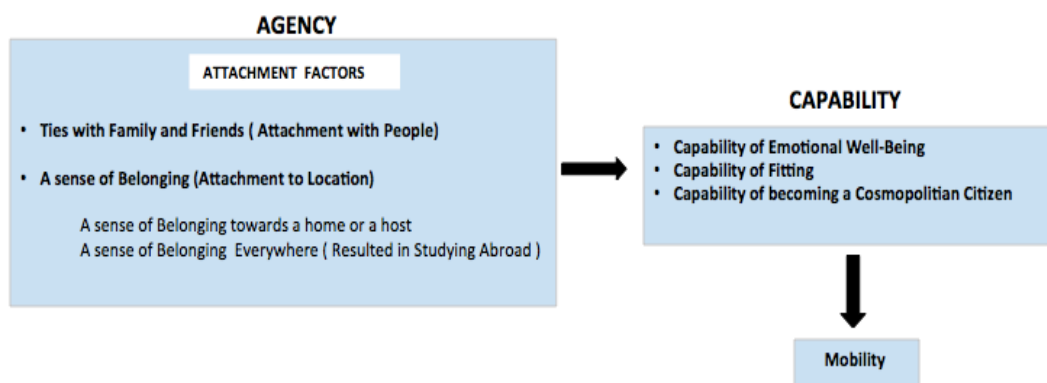
Source: Researcher (2019)

4.1. The Impact of Family and Friendship Ties on the Capability of Emotional Well-being

> *"I am always thinking about my family... I always feel myself responsible to my family... The first thing that makes me happy in this life ...my family..." (Tulin)*

According to students' responses, the majority were maintaining regular contact, almost every day, with their families. Many explained how Turkey is a family-oriented country, with strong family ties being a part of Turkish culture:

> *"To be honest, normally Turkish people have very core family, which means that they always care about you and think about your life."(Seckin)*

Being closer to family was seen as a main advantage of living in Turkey by almost all the participants and, hence, for many, being away from loved ones emerged as the main hardship when living in the UK.

Regarding the family impact on mobility, students, particularly female ones, explained that their main reason for returning to Turkey was their desire to be closer to their family, with phrases like 'missing family' being alone' and 'feeling lonely' in the UK, being widely expressed.

> *"I really miss my family...the only reason to go back is my family..."* (*Zeliha, female*)

> *"If I had some family members here, I could consider staying, but, I'm alone and the thing is, like, it's not just about family, like..." (Demet, female)*

> *"Difficult for me to just be living alone and being away from all the family members." (Ezgi, female)*

It should be noted that previous studies, such as the extensive quantitative piece of research by Gungor and Tansel (2005) based on Turkish students in the USA, have highlighted that students' return or non-return to their home country substantially depends on whether their family supports their decision. However, in the current study, apart form five of the participants, all stated that their return or non-return decision was not being imposed on them by their families. As some put it:

> *"Very free in terms of that they are very... they have never tried to impose their ideas, choices." (Izge)*

> *"They tell me to do whatever you like, if you want to stay there, stay. If you want to come, come."(Ezgi)*

Further, despite the majority of students reporting that being away was difficult both for them and their families, they also stated that they had the complete support of the latter, especially given the unclear future and insecurity issues in Turkey. For instance one said, *"They are aware*

of the situation in Turkey. So, they find my decision reasonable. They know that returning is no longer an option" (Serap) and another put it as, *"My mum, even though she was the emotional one, she is the first one to say whenever bad things happen in Turkey... she is the first one to say to me not to come"(Deniz).* Moreover, several students stated that it was their family who encouraged them to remain abroad, such as:

> *"I say I will come back somehow. And they say 'no no, stay there because you're LGBT, you're in political spheres so, it might be easier for you to live there" (Yuksel).*

In sum, regarding family ties, it has been revealed that the desire to be closer to the family is a significant driver in student mobility, particularly for female ones. In fact, only female return students gave the need to be with their families as the main reason for their decision. Chen (2016) also discovered gender differences of this form with regard to family influence on mobility.

In this friendship ties, the majority of students confirmed that they had contact with their friends in Turkey, but not on a regular basis, such as one who said:

> *"It used to be a little bit more frequent when I first came, it became a little bit less frequent as I kind of settled here."(Deniz)*

Only a few students stated that they had stopped keeping in touch with their friends in Turkey. This was either because of the political situation not trusting them, *"I can't share my ideas with my friends ...That's why I told you that I lost connection, contact with them."(Eren)* or their world-view no longer matching: *"my life perception changed... I still...feeling that I have a lack of communication... I find them a bit superficial and judgmental and conservative." (Meral)*

When it comes to friends in the UK, the majority of the students' friends are international, rather than British or Turkish. Several reported how they preferred not having friends from Turkey because of the trust issue: *"It is just because of the non-stable politic environment in Turkey, which may affect my future. I can't share my opinions." (Serap).* Further, the reason why they had more international friends was explained as owing to the international nature of

UK institutions or, in other words, they were more likely to see international students at their university. Moreover, according to some, interactions with international people were easier than with the British, because they shared a common identity in being non-British and, hence, they felt more confidence in their capacity to build friendships. As summarised by two students:

> *"Being foreigners, because the fact that they are in the UK, they also have the same problem and you become friends." (Aydin)*

> *"As long as we don't talk to British people, we don't feel like foreigners."(Gokcen)*

Despite the majority of students stating that they were happy with their friendships in the UK, those females wanting to return to Turkey stated that, in addition to wanting to be with their family, missing their Turkish friends was also a reason for going back. Comments made were such as:

> *"Because I was happy in Turkey with my friends" (Dilek, Female)*

> *"I miss my friends." (Zeliha, Female)*

> *"I'm alone. I mean, I only have friends here…I have many friends there." (Demet, Female)*

Overall, as covered in Chapter 2, family (Szelrnyi, 2006; Hazen and Albert, 2006; Lu et al., 2009; Soon, 2010; Paile and Fatoki, 2014; Han et al., 2015) and friendship (MPG, 2012; MPG, 2012; Lindberg et al., 2014) ties emerged as being major determinants of the mobility decision process. For the current study, it has also been revealed that the desire to be closer to family and friends in Turkey was a major reason for returning, but just for female students. This gender difference can be interpreted as that, when compared to male students, the mobility decisions of female students are more likely to be driven by emotional feelings, as underlined in some other studies (Chen, 2016). Further, the findings also indicate that, in contrast to the study about the mobility of students from Turkey by Gungor and Tansel (2005), the participants' mobility decisions did not require family approval. This finding could be interpreted as that there have been changes in Turkish culture over the last decade since their study, whereby there is now

less family involvement in decisions as well as an increasing independence amongst young people.

From the Capability Approach (CA) perspective adopted for this study, this issue concerns the 'capability of emotional well-being'. Students who wanted to return to Turkey explained that being away from family and friends was emotionally difficult for them and, hence, was negatively impacting on their emotional strength or, in other words, their capability of emotional well-being. Accordingly, it would seem reasonable to conclude that immobility occurs when being away from family and friends diminishes the emotional strength of students, restricting their ability to fulfill their emotional well-being. The link between capability of emotional well-being and mobility can be seen through one student's statement.

> *"This is my fourth year fourth and half year abroad and I am fed up with being alone and without family. I am struggling with emotional problems and it's very hard to stay stable emotionally.* [being away from family means lack of emotional well-being or in other words lack of capability of emotional well-being] *I can't handle it, so if I return to my country even if I have many issues with the political people…but emotionally I will be strong.* [Returning to Turkey would bring emotional well-being or in other words enhancement in the capability of emotional wellbeing would be obtained] *I am getting weaker and weaker here."* (Zeliha)

This is different from many previous studies (Soon, 2010; Gibson and McKenzie, 2009; MPG, 2012; Paile and Fatoki, 2014) in which it is contended that mobility depends on whether or not a student has stronger informal links. The current study's findings suggest that it is difficult to define those links as weak or strong or, in other words it cannot be assumed that non-return students do not have just as strong ties with their family and friends as the return ones. This claim is supported by the comments of the students who would like to remain abroad, in which they often expressed how they missed their families and friends. Hence, according to the findings, the impact of family and friendship ties on mobility can be explained through how well students cope with being away from these people. That is, if staying away from loved ones is hindering the fulfilment of their capability of emotional well-being, then returning home becomes a priority in order to achieve this.

In summary, the findings of this study have brought a new perspective to the mobility field by explaining how family and friendship ties impact on mobility through the capability of emotional well-being. Also, it has been demonstrated how the current political atmosphere in Turkey has been contributing to the loosening of friendship ties amongst Turkish people due to growing levels of mistrust. Further, it has also been revealed that the increasing independence of young people with less family involvement in decision making has manifested itself as an important change in the structure of Turkish society over the last decade or so.

4.2. The Impact of a Sense of Belonging on the Capability of Fitting In

"If you don't have a house… if you don't have any belonginess in your own country, it means that all the world, you know, all countries are your home."(Semih)

The study has revealed that students' level of attachment to a country or, in other words, a sense of belonging to a country, was also quite important in students' mobility plans, particularly regarding those who wanted to return to Turkey.

As discussed in Chapter 2, a sense of belonging has been shown by a number of scholars to be an important determinant of student mobility (Hazen and Albert, 2006; Zong et al., 2009; Chen, 2016). According to some scholars (Hazen and Albert, 2006), students' return propensity increases with a growing feeling of belonging towards home or, in other words, mobility is shaped according to whether attachments are stronger in the host or home country. Nevertheless, in contrast to earlier studies (Zong et al., 2009; Chen, 2016), findings indicate that a sense of belonging is not just about comparisons between the home and host countries; almost a quarter of the participants expressed the view that they had a sense of belonging everywhere. Hence, the impact on mobility of students' attachments to a location was found to cover three contexts: belonging to Turkey, to the UK, or everywhere.

4.2.1. A sense of Belonging towards a Home or a Host

Almost all participants who wanted to return to Turkey expressed their strong sentiment towards that country and at the same time their lack of belonging to the UK. For instance, *"I don't feel*

I belong to this country. The only reason to go my family, my belonging, feeling, the culture" (Zeliha) and *"The UK is a really nice country and I have so many opportunities here but I don't know…it's not my country and I don't think… I can't live here forever … Because I really miss my country, I really miss my country's traditions" (Banu)*. Further, except for three students, all the return students repeatedly stated how they were keen to assist in the development of Turkey. This was highlighted by Chen (2016), who underlined the link between a strong sentiment towards the home country and willingness to contribute to its improvement. As two students put it:

> *"I mean, I wanna serve my country. It's not about being nationalistic or like making Turkey great. It's not like that… I mean, I wanna do something good in my country." (Demet)*

> *"I just want to serve the country, because I know that escaping is nothing if …even if… if I serve other countries, it will not change anything in my country."(Zeliha)*

Nevertheless, it is important to note that this does not mean that students who would not like to return to Turkey are not keen to assist in its development. Basically, they believe that, as a result of the current political atmosphere in Turkey, they would not be allowed to contribute to the improvement of their country. As summarised by one student:

> *"When I think about political issues in Turkey… if I go there and work there…. Will I be helpful to the people of my country? Will I be able to contribute?" (Aydin)*

Further, whilst a sense of belonging was rarely mentioned by those not planning to return to Turkey, those who were intending to do so described it in terms of a lack of belonging to that nation or feeling more that they belonged to the UK. As two students commented, *"I felt that I have no sense of belonginess in Turkey. No, I am not part of the society, part of the community." (Semih) and "I feel to belong myself to the United Kingdom."(Seckin)*. These students also added that, during their period of stay in the UK, their life perceptions had changed and, hence, they did not want to return to Turkey, in particular, because they feared an adaptation problem if they did. As the students put it:

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"I have concerns about being accepted, if I ever go back." (Ezgi)

"It has been long time that I'm not in Turkey, I might have difficulties in living with those people." (Meral)

"You don't belong to your country. Because you know that when you go back to your country, then how can you click with people? Because you are a different person now." (Aydin)

Regarding the sense of belonging towards the home country or elsewhere, the findings from the Capability Approach (CT) perspective can be interpreted as the capability of fitting in. Students' responses suggest that a sense of belonging toward a certain location changes according to whether or not they are able to operate effectively there or, in other words, exploit their capability of fitting in. Specifically, students who had a sense of belonging to Turkey stated that they would like to return because they could only function well in their home country. In other words, they saw it as a country where they could utilise their capability of fitting in and, hence, achieve well-being (functioning). When it comes to those students who had no sense of belonging to Turkey, they clearly expressed the view that, if they returned, they were worried about being accepted by society. That is, Turkey could not enable them to enhance their capability of fitting in, thereby failing to foster their well-being (functioning) so that they were reluctant to return. One student's contribution clearly shows the association between capability of fitting in and mobility.

"Obviously, I don't feel that I am a part of this culture anymore [a sense of not belonging to Turkey] *If I go to Turkey, I don't think that I will be able to make new friends, because my mentality has changed."(Asli)* [Student believes that she will not thrive in her homeland anymore or, in other words, Turkey will not enable her to exploit her capability of fitting in and, hence, she does not want to return. She will look for countries where she can fit in, where she can enhance her capability of fitting in.]

4.2.2. A sense of Belonging to Everywhere

One of the significant finding of the current study, as mentioned above, is that almost a quarter of the participants stated that they had a feeling of belonging not to a specific location but to everywhere. These participants preferred to define themselves as being beyond boundaries, with terms such as: global citizen, world citizen, cosmopolitan and international person. This was apparent in comments like:

"I am an international person." (Seckin)

"I describe myself close to a world citizen." (Asli)

"I became a global citizen." (Tolga)

Participants often explained how this kind of identity allowed them to interact with different cultures more easily as it made them more open-minded: *"If you become a world citizen, it makes it easier to understand the different approaches" (Ali).* Further, this identity also encouraged them to work abroad so as *"to be a world citizen" (Asli)* and also, fostered their willingness to become mobile between countries, thereby eschewing permanently staying in any one in particular. As two students put it:

"I never identified as a Turkish nationalist for example. Like, I always knew that I would rather be called a global citizen...So I feel quite comfortable living abroad...I really enjoy living abroad...and it was something I still wanna do, I still wanna go to other places. I don't wanna go back to Turkey."(Mine)

"I'm a cosmopolitan person. All countries, all regions of the world, I can stay there easily. That's not a problem for me... For example, Spain two years, then one year in Poland, then two years in the Czech Republic, three years in the United Kingdom."(Aykut)

When it comes to a sense of belonging everywhere, this impacts on the capabilities of students to become mobile. Those students who clearly stated that they could fit in any country were confident that they could become highly mobile between countries. From the CA perspective,

this group of students can be described as wanting to become mobile between countries without staying permanently in one location because they can operationalise their capability of fitting in any country and, hence, are able to achieve their well-being (functioning) anywhere in the world. One student's statement clearly showed the link between a sense of belonging everywhere and the capability of fitting in, together with mobility.

> *"I don't have a problem of moving and living somewhere else. I don't have really, like, strong ties to national ties or-, or, like, this is my motherland kind of tie.* [she has a sense of belonging everywhere] *So, anywhere that I can see myself living, basically, can be my home* [she is able to operationalise the capability of fitting in in any country]*"* (*Nuriye)*

Overall, based on interview data regarding a sense of belonging to a home or the host UK, it would seem reasonable to conclude that students' return or non-return plans to Turkey are shaped by whether or not they consider these enhance their capability of fitting in. If their return plans are seen to offer this, then they would like to return to Turkey, but if not, they would seek countries where they can operationalise this capability. Also, it has emerged from the current study that some individuals have a sense of belonging everywhere. That is, there are a substantial number of individuals who feel they can fit in anywhere in the world, they have acquired the capability of fitting in everywhere, which allows them to become mobile across the globe. This is different from findings from earlier studies (Hazen and Albert, 2006; Chen, 2016), which explain student mobility through the strength of feeling of belonging to the homeland. Only considering the level of connectedness of a person with their homeland, as found in the extant literature, means overlooking the group of people who have a sense of belonging everywhere, which is a novel finding of this study.

It is also important to underline that what has newly emerged from our study is that there appears to be a link between studying abroad and a cosmopolitan outlook. Of those students who described themselves as either of the world or a cosmopolitan citizen, a few reported that they had always possessed this kind of cosmopolitan outlook, with comments like, *"I always like, you know, was trying to be international and trying to mingle with people from other cultures" (Guzide)*, whilst the majority confirmed that they had become this kind person after studying abroad. They often explained that they had come to consider that this view on life was one of the main advantages of studying abroad, as raised previously in Chapter 1 (e.g. Rizvi,

2005; Singh et al., 2007; Mellors-Bourne et al., 2013). However, in addition to a link between the role of studying abroad and the establishment of a cosmopolitan identity being in accordance with other scholars' claims (e.g. Rizvi, 2005), it also emerged that there is an association between a cosmopolitan outlook and mobility. The majority of those students who stated that they had gained a cosmopolitan outlook after studying abroad also confirmed that their plans to remain started taking shape once they acquired this disposition. The link between the acquisition of a cosmopolitan outlook with studying abroad and willingness to become mobile between countries can be seen from two students' statements:

> *"It made me realise that actually I can live anywhere in the world, because if you spend 8 years in a country that you never lived before and kind of managed to survive, which makes you feel like " maybe I can go to Denmark', I can go to Japan, I can go to US. It opens your horizons about the possibilities or the things that you want to achieve."(Ahmet)*

> *"7 years ago, I was just living in a small world... but now I just have a feeling that I can do much more than that. I have met a lot of people who did that, you know, during this time and I have seen a lot of people just like me doing great things in life in general, not for Turkey not for the UK but for the whole world and so I have a broader perspective."(Selim)*

This link between studying abroad and a cosmopolitan outlook was also backed up by the expert Ahsen's statement when saying that:

> *"You can't just be cosmopolitan... I think you cannot really understand how open-minded you are, until you go to another country and you meet with difference. That's the main way you will realise, actually am I cosmopolitan?" (Ahsen)*

This finding can also be interpreted as demonstrating the impact of studying abroad on enhancing students' decision to become mobile. Hence, evidence has been provided for addressing the important question raised by Levatino, (2014), whether or not studying abroad stimulates the non-return of students? According to the outcomes of this study, studying abroad enhances mobility, whereby these two aspects are mediated through the development of a cosmopolitan outlook for PhD students in the UK. That is, foreign education enhances mobility

aspirations and, hence, mobility, as suggested by de Haas (2010; 2011; 2014), who explored the role of education in human development from the CA perspective. Specifically, studying abroad enhances the capability of becoming a cosmopolitan citizen, hence fostering mobility and this kind of identity, leading to a sense of belonging everywhere and thus resulting in a willingness to become mobile across many countries.

4.3. Summary of Attachment Factors

In this section the impact of attachments factors on student mobility plans has been discussed. Based on interview data, family and friendship ties as well as a sense of belonging have been shown to play significant roles for the students, in particular, for those who want to return to Turkey.

Regarding family and friendship bonds, first, it is revealed that being away from family and friends has a negative impact on the emotional well-being of female students and hence, for almost all the female return students, being closer to family and friends is a major reason for their decision to return. That is, gender appears as an important dimension, as suggested by Chen (2016), whereby, compared to male students, female students' mobility is more often driven by emotional feelings.

Secondly, the majority of studies (Soon, 2010; Paile and Fatoki, 2014; MPG, 2012) explain student mobility by looking at whether ties with family and friends at home are strong or weak. However, this overlooks the fact that family and friendship ties may be strong but students still choose to remain abroad, as revealed through the application of a CA approach. From the CA perspective, the attitude to family and friendship ties has been coined as the 'capability of emotional-well-being'. That is, for some students, particularly female ones, emotional well-being can only be achieved if they are close to loved ones. In other words, enhancement of the capability of emotional well-being can only occur if they are with their loved ones and, hence, being with family and friends is the main reason for returning to Turkey.

It should be stressed that in the current study, the decision to return or non-return to Turkey is related to emotional well-being, and is not affected by family wishes. This is in contrast to the study by Gungor and Tansel (2005), in which it is contended that, for highly qualified Turkish

individuals, including PhD students, return or non–return to Turkey are shaped by the approval of families. This contradictory finding can be attributed to an increasing individualism amongst young highly qualified individuals over the past 10 years. Further, it has also been revealed that the current political situation in Turkey has led to an untrusting environment, which has in some cases resulted in the breakdown of friendships.

When it comes the link between a sense of belonging and mobility, in contrast to previous scholars' work (Hazen and Albert, 2006 and Zong et al., 2009), which has explained mobility in terms of whether a student's sense of belonging is greater towards a home or host country, evidence has been provided that any sense of belonging is not just related to these two domains. A new group of students has emerged, who identify themselves as having a sense of belonging everywhere by emphasising that they are cosmopolitan and/or global citizens. Accordingly, they would like to be mobile between countries, staying in each for limited time periods. Further, the majority of student state that this kind of cosmopolitan outlook has been acquired after studying abroad. In other words, the idea of becoming mobile first came into their minds as a result of the impact of having an overseas education. Previously, King (2002) stated that the mobility of those who are highly qualified is particularly shaped by such things as a quest for adventure and willingness to seeing the world so as to fulfill the dream of self-realisation, that is, according to this scholar, mobility is no longer shaped by purely economic factors. Whilst King (2002) explained this in terms of the impact of western-images through global media, in the current work, studying abroad is associated with developing a cosmopolitan outlook, which is also linked with mobility. In other words, studying abroad enhances the capability of becoming a cosmopolitan citizen and, hence, being more mobile.

Regarding the association between mobility and a sense of belonging to a home or a host country, it has been revealed that students' return or non-return plans to Turkey depend on whether or not they are able to enhance their 'capability of fitting in'. For students who have no sense of belonging or, in other words, those who have enhanced their capability of becoming a cosmopolitan citizen, this is interpreted as their being able to exploit their 'capability of fitting in' in any country and, hence, their willingness to become mobile across several countries.

Overall, based on students' responses the impact of attachments factors on mobility can be summarised as follows.

(1) **Family and friendship ties** impact on the emotional well-being of individuals, whereby becoming mobile or immobile depends on how much being away from loved ones affects their emotional strength (**Capability of Emotional Well-being**).

(2) **A sense of belonging** towards a certain location depends on whether or not individuals are able to fit in with the place and hence, seek to base themselves where they feel most connected (**Capability of Fitting In**).

In conclusion, previous studies (i.e. Furnham, 2004) have often been focused on international students' adaptation from a psychological rather than a sociological viewpoint. Whilst it is generally recognised that international students' adaptation influences their mobility plans and that these are also shaped by attachment factors, including family and friendship ties as well as a sense of belonging, only a limited number of studies (Hazen and Albert, 2006; Soon, 2010; Chen, 2016) have highlighted how those attachment factors influence the return or non-return plans of students to the home country. Hence, by explaining how these attachment factors impact on student mobility plans, as well as, and in contrast to previous scholars (Gungor and Tansel, 2005; Zong et al., 2009; Paile and Fatoki, 2014), considering these under a CA perspective, significant contributions are provided by our study. Further, unlike earlier studies (i.e. Chen, 2016), the impact of a sense of belonging on mobility for this particular group, who identify themselves as cosmopolitan citizens, has been uncovered, which is attributed to applying the CA approach. In terms of the debate concerning how far studying abroad enhances mobility, revealing the links between acquiring a cosmopolitan outlook through studying abroad and mobility enriches knowledge and represents a further novel contribution of this research.

5. Conclusion

Regarding demographic factors, the key findings are as follows. In contrast to previous studies (i.e. Aidis et al., 2005; Zweig and Changgui, 2013; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013), it is concluded here that, whilst the mobility level for female and male students is similar, its determinants are significantly different. Female students' mobility is often related to where they can experience a liberal society. Further, whilst a limited number of studies (Aidis et al., 2005; Hercog and van de Laar, 2013; Shehaj, 2015) have focused on the link between age and mobility, the current study has revealed that the perception of age differs between individuals. Another important finding relates to ethnicity. Whilst a limited number of studies (e.g. Bang and Mitra, 2013) have examined the impact of ethnicity on mobility, this has been shown in the context of civil war. In contrast, this study investigated ethnicity with respect to mobility through including Kurdish students as a minority group. It was revealed that the majority of Kurdish students have no plans to return to Turkey, due to discrimination and security issues. The findings have revealed how perceived threats and discrimination against an ethnic minority group can differ depending on whether a person is secular, religious and/or left wing. This suggests that ethnicity, rather than being treated as a homogenous concept, should be studied as being multifaceted.

Second, educational factors, in terms of year of study and funding source were also found to be salient in influencing student mobility. Some previous studies (Gungor and Tansel, 2006; Soon, 2012) have stated that increased duration in a host country leads to an increase in mobility, because of lost attachments with a home country or acquired familiarity with a host. The impact of year of study in the current research was related to how near individuals are to the end of their studies, rather than their length of duration abroad and, hence, would appear not to have been about familiarity. Compared to early years students, those in their last years were more knowledgeable about legislation regarding such matters as work permits and, hence, they had more concrete plans about where they would like to be after graduation. The funding source also plays a significant role in mobility decisions. Bouwel and Veugelers (2012) contend that, if students are funded by the state in the home country, this makes returning compulsory. However, in the current study it emerged that some state funded students were striving to take advantage of international agreements, such as the Ankara agreement, to avoid having to fulfil their obligations back home.

Lastly, regarding attachment factors, wanting to be close to family and friends at home is the most important reason for female returnees. It is also important to highlight that in earlier studies, such as Gungor and Tansel (2005), it was found that the mobility of highly qualified individuals from Turkey requires the approval of families, with this being one of its significant determinant. However, the findings suggest instead that student mobility is not affected by what the family desires and is rather evidence of increasing individualism over the last 15 years in Turkey. Further, a sense of belonging has been discussed previously in terms of the home and host countries (Hazen and Alberts, 2006). Nevertheless, a sense of belonging is not limited to the home and host country. Many participants defined themselves as being beyond boundaries. In other words, these cosmopolitan individuals stated that they were world citizens, international or global citizens, who would like to become mobile in different countries for short periods of time resulting in having a sense of belonging to everywhere. Moreover, for many of them, this kind of identity was acquired after studying abroad. By providing the link between having a cosmopolitan outlook from studying abroad and mobility new knowledge has been contributed to the field.

At the micro level, it is revealed that agency factors impacting on the capabilities of students to become mobile operate as follows.

(1) The psychological and physical strength of individuals' changes according to *age,* whereby this is greater for those of a younger age, which stimulates mobility *(Psychological and Physical Capabilities)*

(2) The level of acquired liberty differs according to *gender.* That is, mobility is higher amongst male students owing to their having greater liberty than females, whilst the latter seek mobility so as to acquire this liberty *(Capability of Independence)*

(3) Regarding *relationship status*, being single allows for greater freedom in location choice since being in relationship includes the partner's wishes (joint-decision)*(Freedom of Choice Capability)*

(4) *Ethnicity* (being a minority) restricts freedom of expression of identity, and hence minorities look for places where they can express their identity freely *(Capability of Expression of Identity)*

(5) Awareness and knowledge about legal issues, such as working and leave to stay permits, differs according to *year of study*. It is higher amongst students who are nearing the end of their studies and, hence, they are more mobile than those who have just started (*Knowledge Capability*)

(6) Regarding *field of study*, in contrast to social science students, science students' job prospects are not limited to academia, which means that there is less political pressure. Further, even in academia, as a result of the nature of the science field, the level of pressure on these students is lower when compared to social science ones regarding academic freedoms. Thus, mobility amongst PhD science students is not as high as that of their counterpart social science students, whose work prospects are often restricted to academia. However, in the context of Turkey, many expressed their concern about threats to academic freedom, which could end up with them losing their jobs (*Occupational Capabilities*)

(7) Being *funded* by the home country limits freedom in terms of mobility choices more than for those students who are self-funded or funded by a host country. Despite this, the majority of students funded from home were hoping that they could still figure out a way of paying the money back, so as to become mobile (*Autonomy of Will Capability*)

(8) Emotional well-being of individuals is affected by *Family and friendship ties*. Mobility depends on how much being away from loved ones affects their emotional strength (*Capability of Emotional Well-being*)

(9) *A sense of belonging* a certain location changes according to whether or not individuals are able to operate effectively there or, in other words, they are able to fit in with the place. An increasing sense of belonging towards a location means an increasing fit with that location, and hence there is increasing mobility towards a place where they are able to achieve a feeling of well-being or fitting in (*Capability of Fitting In*)

(10) *Studying abroad* can lead to the establishment of a cosmopolitan identity, whereby people have a sense of belonging everywhere and that they could fit in anywhere in the world. Hence, rather than settling down in a certain location for a long time, they have the desire to try out many locations across the world (*Capability of Becoming a Cosmopolitan Citizen*).

Accordingly, at the micro level, student mobility changes according to agency factors since their capabilities are affected by them. Some agency factors impact on capabilities. For example, being of a younger age and being single enhances 'Psychological and Physical Capabilities' as well as 'Freedom of Choice Capability', thereby increasing mobility. Some other agency factors restrict the capabilities of students, and hence mobility occurs in order to enhance those restricted capabilities. For example, regarding attachment factors in terms of having a sense of belonging, individuals are looking for countries that can enable them to enhance their 'Capability of Fitting In'. It is concluded that some agency factors increase the capabilities of students and hence increase their capacity to exercise their mobility. This could imply that increasing capability means increasing freedom and aspirations for mobility (de Haas, 2014). Some other agency factors limit the capabilities of students and, hence, they are looking for countries where they can enhance those limited capabilities.

IMPLICATIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND REFLECTIONS

"Basically, it's not necessary to live in another country, if your country is somehow providing like the basic security and freedom."(Tolga)

Overall, the findings derived from this study can be summed up in one student's statement above. The majority of students would not like to return to Turkey, expressing their concerns about insecurity as result of a lack of freedom in many aspects of life, particularly regarding academic and life style freedoms. Freedom is a core concept in both the Capability Approach (CA) and Structuration Theory (ST). Under CA, freedoms and capabilities cannot be thought of as two separated aspects. Capability corresponds with power (capacity) under ST, where it is proposed that having agency means having power and, when an agent has lost his/her power, (ability to influence society) then he/ she looks to countries where they he/she can acquire power.

Accordingly, it is concluded that student mobility depends on whether or not a country can provide the opportunity for capabilities (freedoms) to flourish without any perceived insecurity, from a CA perspective. Under the ST lens, this can be defined as student mobility occurring when he/she has lost his/her power (capacity) to influence society. In the current study, for many participants neither Turkey nor the UK was the country where they felt they could exploit their capabilities (freedoms/power), in the former owing to the lack of freedom in many aspects of life, whilst in the latter, because of the strict migration policies. Hence, they were looking for opportunities in third countries.

Figure 9: Extended Framework: Social Determinants Influencing Student Mobility

STRUCTURE

POLITICAL FACTORS
- Political Discrimination
- Political Freedom
- Political Instability
- The UK Migration Policies

SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS
- Social and Physical Environment
- Diversity and Tolerance
- Socio-Cultural Norms and Policies

PROFESSIONAL FACTORS
- Research Facilities
  Research funding
  Access to material and knowledge
  Flexibility to research area
- Features of Research Environment
  Internationalisation
  Institutional autonomy of universities
  Power Relations (Hierarchy)

ECONOMIC FACTORS
- Economic Standard of Living
  Income level
  Quality and affordability of housing
- Availability of Job Opportunities
  Obtained skills and knowledge valued and needed
  Existence of specialised field

CAPABILITY
- Employment Capability
- Academic Capability
- Capability of Safety
- Capability of Being an Active Citizen

- Psychological and Physical Capability
- Capability of Independence
- Freedom of Choice Capability
- Capability of Expression of Identity

- Knowledge Capability
- Occupational Capability
- Autonomy of Will Capability

- Capability of Perceived Safety
- Capability of Perceived Tolerance
- Freedom of Life-Style Choice Capability

- Capability of Emotional Well-Being
- Capability of Fitting
- Capability of Becoming a Cosmopolitan Citizen

- Capability of Academic Productivity
- Career Development Capability

- Financial Comfort Capability
- Capability of Transferability of Skills and Knowledge

AGENCY

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS
- Age (Younger v Older)
- Gender (Female v Males)
- Relationship Status (Single v Non-Single)
- Ethnicity (Kurdish v Turkish)

EDUCATIONAL FACTORS
- Year of Study (1st and 2nd v 3rd and 4th)
- Field of Study (Social Science v Science)
- Funding Source (Turkey v the UK & Self Funding)

ATTACHMENT FACTORS
- Ties with Family and Friends
- A sense of Belonging
  A sense of belonging towards a home or a host
  A sense of belonging everywhere

MOBILITY

IMPO-MOBILE | **VOLUNTARILY MOBILE** | **HYPER-MOBILE** | **CONSTANT IMMOBILE** | **INCONSTANT IMMOBILE**

Source: Researcher (2019)

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It should be noted that the impact of some factors on mobility is greater than for others. Political factors in the current study were most salient for the participants. Further, as suggested by Structuration Theory, which stresses the interaction between structural and agency factors, political factors are not only dominant, but they also impact both directly and indirectly on almost all the mobility factors identified at the macro and micro levels. For example, macro level political factors lead to increasing division and polarisation in society, thus limiting diversity and tolerance (***Socio-Cultural factors***) and an increasing political involvement in universities, thereby demolishing universities' institutional autonomy (***Professional Factors),*** at the micro level. At the micro level, the political practices of the current government towards women limit their freedoms (gender) as well as create discrimination and insecurity amongst Kurdish (ethnicity) individuals (***Demographic Factors)***. The same policies threaten individuals who work and study in social sciences, hence encouraging them to remain abroad (***Educational Factors***).

Having applied a qualitative research method, the current study's contributions are set out below.

Regarding the ***knowledge contribution***, first, in the mobility field, international student mobility, particularly that of doctoral researchers is an unexplored area (MPG, 2012; Lindberg et al., 2014; Czaika and Toma, 2015). In addition, whilst a few studies (e.g. Gungor and Tansel, 2003) have investigated the mobility of either students or highly qualified professionals from Turkey, destination countries in these studies were either the USA (Oguzkan, 1975; Gungor and Tansel, 2003) or Germany (Sunata, 2011; Suoglu, 2012; Aydin, 2014). Clearly, the factors affecting student mobility are differentiated according to each destination country, given their varied systems of education, migration etc. Moreover, none of these studies considered the capability impact on mobility. The current study's original contributions to knowledge are its investigation of international student mobility and its focus on PhD students from Turkey, together with its recognition of the impact of capability on this mobility. Secondly, there has not been much research conducted covering the attempted military coup in 2016 in Turkey and Brexit in the UK - as discussed here - and thus, showing the impact of those events on student mobility is one of the significant contributions. Thirdly, the impact of ethnicity (being a minority) on student mobility has been rarely discussed previously and, hence, including 10 Kurdish students in the sample brought another knowledge contribution. Moreover, when delving deeper into the ethnicity aspect of mobility, it emerged that this should not be

considered in a homogenous way. The mobility of Kurdish students was found to vary depending on whether they were secular, religious and/or left wing. Lastly, the findings have revealed that studying abroad plays a significant role in the acquisition of a 'Cosmopolitian Outlook', which leads to an increasing willingness to become mobile across the globe. Thus, a link has been identified between studying abroad and mobility, with the mediator being the acquisition of such a global outlook, thereby also making a useful contribution to the extant literature.

From a ***theoretical perspective***; as outlined in Part 2 of the thesis, migration studies are defined as an "under-theorised research field" (de Haas, 2014, p4). Earlier scholars (Caruso and De Wit, 2015) tended to discuss mobility through the application of the Push-Pull Model, focusing the analysis on either the micro or macro level. However, it has been argued that the complexity of mobility makes it essential that there are at least two level of analysis (Goss and Linguist, 1995; Wolfel, 2005; de Haas, 2014). Additionally, other studies, such as those of Anderson and Keith (2014); de Haas (2014) and Schevel (2015), highlight the impact of social and economic change on people's mobility, thus proposing that further work should include the capabilities and aspirations of individuals.

The current study provides an extended framework from a new theoretical perspective by applying both Structuration Theory (ST) and the Capability Approach. Macro and micro factors together with the capabilities of individuals were brought into one framework. The proposed expanded framework for social determinants influencing international student mobility (Figure 9) serves as the main theoretical contribution of the current research as some studies have applied ST (e.g. Richmond, 1993; Healey, 2010), whilst others have adopted the CA (e.g. de Haas, 2014; Cenci, 2015; Schevel, 2015), but with the exception of Briones (2013), none have applied the two together. Neither of these, approaches has applied either to highly qualified individuals' mobility or international student mobility, instead focusing on low-qualified mobility. Further, the current study goes beyond a number of other works, including that of de Haas (2014), who applied CA to low qualified mobility, in that a capability list for the mobility of highly qualified people has been established.

Further*,* as referred to Chapter 1, one of the major debates in the field (Tremblay, 2004; Findlay et al., 2006; Bilecen, 2009; King et al., 2010; Beine et al., 2013) is whether international students represent mobiles or migrants. To start with, the researcher agreed with the argument put forward

by, for instance, Castle (2008) and Murphy-Lejeune (2002), who proposed that, in contrast to the past, today the more frequents movements of people across countries can be attributed to improvements in transportation and technology and, hence, cannot be explained through viewing migration as a one-way movement. The findings from this study transcend the current debates on the distinction between mobility and migration, by revealing that the definition of the former cannot alone explain the complexity of PhD students' movements. Previously Carling (2001), who investigated the mobility of native people in the Cape Verde Islands, advanced the term 'involuntary immobility' in order to define individuals who, despite their mobility wishes, lacked the ability to do so. Our research, based on the findings, leads to the extension of Carling's (2001) work by classifying mobility into five different groups. The proposed classification for non-return students is *Impo-Mobile*, *Voluntarily Mobile* or *Hyper Mobile*, whilst return students are deemed *Constant Immobile* or *Inconstant Immobile*.

1) Impo-mobile (Imposed): This refers to those students who have no capability (freedom) of choosing to return to Turkey after graduation. Their willingness to become mobile was the result of the imposition placed upon them by the government, hence the moniker attributed to them. Their mobility plans include travelling to countries within Europe and to the USA. All the students in this group were signatories to a petition titled 'We Will Not Be Party to This Crime', referring to the regime of the current government. They are unable to return to Turkey because of ongoing investigation into their activities against the regime. If they did return, they might face the risk of having their passports seized by the Turkish Government or even being sent to prison. Hence, Impo-mobility occurs when the return is no longer an option for individuals.

2) Voluntarily Mobile: This group includes students who have the capability (freedom) of choosing to return to a home, which in this case means choosing Turkey as their destination country, but have chosen not to do so after graduation. Whilst some of these students only want to stay abroad for a temporary period, ranging from three to 15 years, with the main purpose of getting international experience before returning to Turkey, for the majority, mobility plans are based on settling in countries in Europe or the USA and do not include going back home.

3) Hyper-mobile: This refers to students who are planning to become mobile across different countries, staying in each country for a short time period, rather than settling down in one. These students defines themselves as having a cosmopolitan outlook, referring to themselves with terms such as global citizen, world citizen, cosmopolitan and international person. Moreover, the

majority in this group reports that they have adopted this kind of outlook after studying abroad. Among these students, only a few include Turkey in this pattern of mobility.

4) Constant Immobile: This pertains to students who would like to return home and have no plan to move to other countries. These students want to return to Turkey immediately after graduation, because they either believe that their home country offers better career opportunities compared to others or they want to work to overcome the challenging factors found in Turkey at present.

5) Inconstant Immobile: These are the students whose return plans could change later on and, hence, they might well become mobile in the future. This group contains mainly students who are in the first two years of their studies, who report that they are torn between return or non-return, but their current preference is to take the former course of action. Basically, they hope that the situation in Turkey in three years would improve. At the same time, the majority of those in this group, despite wanting to return home, feel that, if the current situation does not allow them to become productive or to contribute to the development of Turkey, they might go abroad for a period of time.

To sum up, mobility has been explained under a new lens by including factors both at macro and micro levels with regards to the enhancement or inhibition of students' capabilities (freedoms/power) to become mobile. When students have a lack of enhancement of capabilities in a certain country, they seek locations that can offer them opportunities for the exploration of their capabilities. Therefore, it is concluded that student mobility is based on whether or not a certain country provides an environment for capabilities to flourish, or, in other words, freedoms without a fear of insecurity. Further, applying the labels of mobile or immobile is not sufficient when seeking to explain student mobility, as, according to this study these concepts involve a number of subcategories. Accordingly, the current research has led to the development of a new theoretical framework of five such subcategories (Figure 9) for highly qualified international student mobility under the ST and CA lenses.

Lastly, it is important to underline the ***methodological*** application of the thesis. The dominance of quantitative studies in much social science research is also true for studies concerning international mobility. The researcher holds that, in order to arrive at a better understanding of mobility, the words of Gillham (2000, p11) requiring scholars to "get under the skin" of the

topic, should be followed. Hence a qualitative methodology was deemed essential for this study and, as such, it adds to the small body of literature pursuing this route in the mobility field. Further, one of the research aims was to evaluate and compare student mobility plans by identifying whether these vary according to demographic and educational factors. Demographic factors such as gender, age and ethnicity have often been neglected in earlier mobility research. Moreover, other studies (Baruch, et al., 2007) have included only science students as their focus or students from only one discipline. The current study, by including all these aspects, has brought forward a novel methodological contribution. Moreover, earlier studies have probed the mobility of international students (Hazen and Alberts, 2006) or international students and highly qualified mobility (Gungor and Tansel, 2005). In addition to interviewing international students, the research methodology involved experts on international student mobility and academics who had previously completed their PhD in the UK and subsequently remained in the UK. Therefore, the study has developed a novel lens, as the analysis has involved data gathered from a range of participants to investigate the micro (students) and macro (experts and doctors) levels.

1. Suggestions for Future Research

Today the successful development of a country relies on nurturing highly qualified individuals, as they are essential for building a knowledge-based economy. Hence, mobility is one of the key aspects of national political debates and it is reasonable to predict that it will remain so for the foreseeable future, which makes international student mobility worthy of research. In the light of this, this thesis offers a significant contribution to addressing the current lack of knowledge in the field. The findings from this work could prove useful as guidelines for further research by academia and policy makers at both the national (e.g. the Home Office) and international (i.e. OECD and the World Bank) levels.

National governments can learn lessons from Turkey and the UK for attracting highly educated people, depending on their status as home or host country. With regards to the findings of this study, it can be argued that freedom is an essential part of being an academic, for lack of freedom inhibits not only individuals' academic development but also, their scholarly productions. Moreover, in the context of Turkey, it emerges that PhD students' major concerns relate to the level of freedom rather than their economic prospects. Developing countries like

Turkey will not stop losing highly educated individuals unless the country makes the academic environment appealing by expanding freedoms in every aspect of life through democracy.

Further, in contrast to the common idea of either students remaining in a host country or returning to a home country, the research has revealed that a host country may not always be an attractive location for mobility. For instance, it appears that unwelcoming strict UK migration policies and the hostile environment created by BREXIT are encouraging students to look for opportunities in third countries rather than remain in the UK. Many students pointed out that they are not allowed to work in order to get international experience after graduation. The UK policies towards students in the long term may lead to a significant decline in international student numbers. Therefore, if the UK wants to maintain its role as a global player in international higher education and increase the proportion of highly qualified individuals in the workforce, it should reconsider institutional and national migration policies pertaining to international students.

The study has indicated that there are a number of factors both at macro and micro levels influencing student mobility plans. Further, the impacts differ according to the demographic, educational and attachment characteristics of individuals. Hence, it is not appropriate to consider micro factors in isolation when seeking explanations for mobility. Investigating this topic with regard to micro and macro factors allows for a more robust understanding of ways that the capabilities of individuals to become mobile are enhanced or inhibited. In this respect, the existing theories in isolation cannot identify the links between macro and micro factors together with capabilities and, hence, applying multiple theories, such as a CA and ST for this thesis is beneficial for future research. Moreover, the framework proposed could be deployed as a starting point for understand mobility in future investigations and be applied not only to other highly qualified groups, but also to low qualified mobility.

Despite the abovementioned contributions of the study, as with every study this one has a number of limitations. Given the nature of a qualitative design, the sample comprised a small number of participants and hence is far from being representative of the larger population. Mobility is a sensitive topic and, in particular, the crackdown on freedom of speech in Turkey, made it difficult for the researcher to recruit participants. Despite this, through building trust sufficient numbers were persuaded to join the research to achieve the proposed sample size, however participants, especially those funded from the Turkish Government, may not have

shared their real views regarding their mobility plans openly and, hence, this can also be seen as a limitation of the current study. With these limitations and contributions in mind, it is suggested that, even though there has been increasing interest in international student mobility, there is a significant research agenda still to be addressed. This thesis has focused on PhD students from Turkey, so one avenue for future research would be to include more than one country in order to show how factors at macro and micro levels may differ according to different states. The study examined current PhD students' mobility plans and revealed that there is a significant difference between first year and last year PhD students, indicating that the mobility decision is a dynamic process, which can change over time. In future, extended qualitative research needs to be undertaken in the form of longitudinal studies that examine students' plans during their studies, as well as after completing them.

2. Reflections

Overall, I would like to conclude this research with a reflection on my PhD journey, which I can summarise in one sentence *'I suffered a lot but I learnt and changed as much as I suffered'*.

At the beginning of PhD, I simply thought that the only condition for completing a PhD successfully is working hard. However, later on, I realised that psychologically having increasing strength is as important as working hard. As with many other PhD students, I had ups and downs on this journey and even, at times, asked myself 'am I clever enough to complete my research?'. However, today I am at the end of the research endeavour and I can truly say that one of the most important contributions of the PhD to my life is that it has increased my strength and transformed me into a fighter. Additionally, it has also increased my procedural knowledge. That is, I have started applying the Structuration Theory and Capability Approach, which I used in my research into my daily life. Before the PhD, when something went wrong, I would blame either factors that were out of my control, in other words, macro factors or only myself, a micro one. However, what I have learnt is that whatever happens in my life both factors, pertaining to me and external ones, have an impact on my capabilities. Accordingly, I started to look at a life from a new perspective.

Further, compared to my life before studying for the PhD, today I have become a person who accepts a fact not because of one well known author having suggested it, but rather one who has the analytical tools to apply critical thinking to verify whether it is likely to be true or not.

Moreover, I have learnt that the chosen research topic for a PhD should be one that enthuses the candidate. At the beginning, this research was mainly driven by self-interest. I am myself also a mobile who came to this country eight years ago to study and have remained in the UK. I wanted to learn whether or not students like me were planning to return to Turkey or not and, if so, what their reasons were for this life changing process. However, during my studies, my eagerness to find out more about mobility increased significantly and, hence, my plan is to undertake post-doctoral research on academic mobility, as a part of highly qualified mobility. Lastly, I have never shared this with anyone before, not even having explicitly acknowledged it previously, to myself. Before studying for the PhD, I always thought that I was a very open-minded person, willing to accept the diversity of individuals. However, during my interviews I realised that I was not actually that person, because people with different mindsets to me and my kith and kin, came across as perfectly rational with a completely different take on life, who previously, I would have avoided engaging with. For instance, I noticed that I did not have any friend who was a practising Muslim because I never thought that we would have things common and thus could enjoy spending time together or that they would be interested in being friends with me. However, today some of those who I met during the interviews have become my friends and I really love spending time with them. Hence, I can truly say that, during the last four years, I not only struggled and learn, but also changed as a person, thus demonstrating that the PhD has been a transformative journey for me.

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APPENDIX

Table 7: The Profiles of Participants at Micro Level

Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Relation Status	Funding Source	Year of study	Field of study
Nuri	Male	26	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ UK	2nd year	Social Science
Koray	Male	30	Turkish	Relationship	Scholarship/ Turkey	4th year	Social Science
Seckin	Male	41	Turkish	Single	Self-Funding	2nd year	Social Science
Izge	Female	31	Mixed	Single	Scholarship/ UK	4th year	Social Science
Cem	Male	32	Turkish	Married	Scholarship/UK	3rd year	Social Science
Muzaffer	Male	35	Kurdish	Married	Scholarship/UK	3rd year	Social Science
Nuriye	Female	31	Turkish	Relationship/complicated	Self-Funding	4th year	Social Science

Esra	Female	28	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/UK	4th year	Social Science
Serap	Female	32	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/UK	3rd year	Social Science
Semih	Male	32	Turkish	Married	Scholarship/ Turkey	3rd year	Social Science
Ahmet	Male	27	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/UK	4th year	Science
Zeliha	Female	29	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ Turkey	2nd year	Science
Banu	Female	27	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ Turkey	3rd year	Social Science
Meral	Female	32	Kurdish	Single	Scholarship Turkey	4th year	Social Science
Halis	Male	30	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ Turkey	3rd year	Science
Yuksel	Male	31	Kurdish	Single	Scholarship/ UK	1st year	Social Science
Aykut	Male	27	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ Turkey	4th year	Social Science
Tulin	Female	28	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ Turkey	1st year	Science

Aydin	Male	30	Turkish	Single	Self-Funding	4th year	Social Science
Emel	Female	28	Turkish	Relationship	Scholarship/ UK	4th year	Social Science
Asli	Female	25	Turkish	Relationship	Scholarship/ Turkey & UK	2nd year	Science
Selim	Male	33	Turkish	Married	Scholarship/ UK	4th year	Science
Tolga	Male	35	Kurdish	Relationship/complicated	Scholarship / Turkey	4th year	Social Science
Guzide	Female	29	Turkish	Married	Scholarship/UK	3rd year	Social Science
Eren	Male	26	Kurdish	Single	Scholarship/Turkey	1st year	Science
Nur	Female	31	Turkish	Single	Self- funding	2nd year	Social Science
Funda	Female	28	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ UK	4th year	Science
Ezgi	Female	30	Turkish	Single	Self funding	4th year	Social Science

Taylan	Male	27	Kurdish	Married	Scholarship/ Turkey	3rd year	Social Science
Ulku	Female	26	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/UK	1st year	Social Science
Mine	Female	27	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/UK	3rd year	Social Science
Kivanc	Male	30	Kurdish	Single	Scholarship/UK	4th year	Science
Dilek	Female	27	Turkish	Relationship	Scholarship/UK	1st year	Science
Ali	Male	28	Turkish	Relationship	Scholarship/Turkey	2nd year	Social Science
Baran	Male	31	Kurdish	Engaged	Scholarship/ Turkey	4th year	Social Science
Ilhan	Male	38	Turkish	Married	Scholarship/ Turkey	2nd year	Social Science
Gokcen	Female	35	Turkish	Relationship	Scholarship/Turkey	4th year	Social Science
Demet	Female	30	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/Turkey	3rd year	Social Science
Deniz	Male	27	Turkish	Single	Scholarship/ UK	3rd year	Science

Sercan	Male	30	Kurdish	Engaged	Scholarship/Turkey	3rd year	Social Science

2. SOCIO- CULTURAL FACTORS
Quality of Life
Physical and social environment
Transportation facilities
Cleaner environment
Pollution
Green landscape (trees.)
Level of crime
Burglary
Violence
Hassle free environment
Sexual harassment
Rate of car accidents
Traffic congestion
Amenities
Food
Weather
Diversity and tolerance
Lack of diversity and tolerance in Turkey
Increasing division and polarisation in Turkey
Mistrust
Aggressiveness
Unhappiness
Diversity and tolerance in the UK
Lifestyle
Freedom of travel
Cost of tickets and visa
Work-life balance
Leisure activities
Lifestyle freedoms
Restrictive social and cultural norms and policies
Government intervention in social life
Strict gender roles
Gender inequality
LGBT rights
Family pressure
Neighbours' pressure
Fewer social obligations
Marriage pressure