

To stay or return? An international graduate dilemma

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## **Abstract**

This study presents a microscopic part of the global migration trend down to a personal experience by focusing on Indonesian graduates' decision either to stay in New Zealand or to return home after graduation from local universities. The main target of this study is to understand the outweighing reasons to make a choice in favour of the study location over the return flight to Indonesia. Drilling down, we will also take look at New Zealand as an educational host country and overall environment to produce and retain its skilled immigrants that might benefit the nation's work force.

With this exploratory study, the researcher's purpose is to uncover the primary factors that pressurise Indonesian graduates in New Zealand to return home. This is done by analysing five Indonesian graduates' migration experiences to study and settle down in New Zealand rather than returning home after accomplishing their international studies. The study implemented a snowballing-sampling technique to recruit these participants as the primary sources of the information. The author conducted semi-structured interviews to gain realistic personal insights for the further analysis. The emphasis was made on these five Indonesian graduates' transitional journey from the international student status through graduation in New Zealand and up to successful employment and settlement. Through an interpretivism method and qualitative thematic analysis of the verbal data, the main factors affecting the decision of graduates were identified.

Namely, these factors are (1) self-identification together with supportive relationships, i.e. family and friends, (2) reconciliation to the host country circumstances, and (3) professional opportunities in New Zealand. These mutually dependent three elements contributed to the success of these five Indonesians to achieve the personal desire of settling abroad. In acknowledgement that this research is based on a small sample size and investigates only successful graduates' experiences, further studies can focus on more diverse set of participants and multilateral reasons to avoid survivorship bias.

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## Attestation of Authorship

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning."

Signed by

Titi Dwijayanti Tandil

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On 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2021

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## 1.0 Introduction

This dissertation is an exploratory study to understand what are the factors that influence an Indonesian student's determination to stay in New Zealand. In response to most international graduates' inclination to return home after graduation, this study aims to explore the transitional phase that could serve as the cause for Indonesian graduates to be hesitant to settle in their host country and return home. These reasons are of particular interest given the fact that these graduates have accomplished what other Indonesian have not: an international degree and an opportunity to settle in overseas. In order to gain a personal insight, this study has obtained five Indonesian graduates' successful migration stories to present as the main findings of this dissertation.

This study will explore the factors by contradicting the popular belief that Indonesian international graduates would return merely for their family. Hence, this study highlights the international graduates' plans after graduation, also referred to as the post-study of internationalisation by researchers (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019); and does this by assuming that the logical post-graduation step is to enter the workforce in the host country. This dissertation aims to show the added challenges an international graduate faces in comparison to a domestic graduate. Ultimately, the goal of this study is to present the factors that contributed five Indonesian graduates settlement experiences in New Zealand after graduation rather than to return home.

This chapter will set as an introductory background to understand the reasons international students participate in internationalisation. Then, the next chapter will discuss the subsequent effect and impact of internationalisation on international students in determining their post study settlement decision. Supplemented by other South East Asian graduates' findings that may correlates to Indonesian graduates reasonings to stay in host country or return home.



## 1.1 Overview of Internationalisation

Popularised by Knight (2012), the term of Internationalisation was defined by the author as the migration journey an individual takes for educational purposes to obtain a global accreditation outside of their home country. This notion that the author used was to emphasise an individual's own travel intentions to study abroad in pursuing of an international education, as its participants would migrate from their home country to another, thus referring the destination as a host country and the individual to be international student.

Internationalisation is advantageous as it allows for international students to experience temporary residency in a host country. This allows for a second life outside of their home country that also presents them with an opportunity of exposure to embrace cultures, social norms and lifestyle outside of their origin. While at the same time, internationalisation allows them a chance to have international qualifications and experiences. In addition, this also allows them to develop their own capability to live and adapt to foreign countries' way of life. That being said, internationalisation is a complex and ambiguous journey, affecting its participant through various challenges that shape them to be a notable international graduate.

This research aims to strip this shallow depiction of internationalisation and lead it to the reality of accomplishing the educational excursion, which is beyond the excitement of travelling overseas. In overall, the experience would expose the individuals to many vulnerable circumstances and situations where the success and failure will be mainly dictated by the subjective perception of the process by her/himself.

### 1.1.1 The Attraction of Internationalisation for Indonesian Students

Since this is a journey that requires international students to be self-sufficient, as well as open to new experiences, which include reaching adulthood and many more confrontations, there is the end goal of getting an international degree. It is apparent then that internationalisation has become an educational phenomenon worldwide. And while the actual process is distinctive for each person and simultaneously influences their experiences, perceptions and general views of their host country, the circumstances forces these individuals to be innovative and different from those who do not experience this first-hand. These experiences undoubtedly change the individual at some level and may contribute to their own decision process on whether to return home or stay after graduation.

Focusing on the core subject group of this research, there are many reasons why Indonesian students pursue internationalisation. Firstly, the research shows that the Indonesian education system itself provides a ground to pursue internationalisation, mostly for privileged individuals, to avoid local competition. Indonesia is amongst one of the world's most populated countries and is still in the era of constant growth, this means that every year students would fight for a seat into a renowned local university by participating in their entrance exams. The issue is that the number of high school graduates are greater than the university admission seats, thus raising the competition for the students to enter these prestigious institutions with quality courses. In fact, the more established a university the more difficult it is to be offered a place in. An example of this scenario is one of the top universities in Indonesia, the University of Indonesia (UI) which is recognised for its low admittance rate, and intense entrance exams (*ITB and UI, state-owned universities with highest acceptance score average*, 2016; *University of Indonesia: ranking & review*, 2020). This automatically has put every high school graduate in position when they have to choose between hardly attainable quality education and any opportunity to enter a university whatsoever.

Hence, internationalisation becomes a promising alternative for the privileged to avoid this enrolment competition and frustration of syllabus quality. The demand for internationalisation then becomes an alternative for developing countries students (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Mosneaga & Winther, 2013; Abbott & Silles, 2016), including Indonesians, which correlates with Beine et al. (2014) findings on South East Asian students' interest in living abroad and links it to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) claims on their curiosity on the westerns lifestyle that drives these students to take part internationalisation.

Besides, being an international graduate opens the door of career opportunities. Therefore, the ultimate motivation for many international students is to gain a competitive edge by being an international graduate (Abbott & Silles, 2016; Nghia, 2019), which induces the students to develop adaptability and flexibility traits that can favour them in ever-changing work environment sought by future employers (Kahanec & Králiková, 2011).

### **1.1.2. The Challenges of Internationalisation**

Khanal and Gaulee (2019) presented that there are three period of internationalisation challenges: pre-departure, post-departure, and - the focus of this

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dissertation - the post-study challenges, which an international student should be aware of before taking part of the journey.

### 1.1.2.1 Pre - Departure Challenges

Even before the physical move takes place, the pre-departure challenges seemingly to be the research process that took place between the students themselves and their parents to entail their parents' opinion on the many aspects of internationalisation. As South East Asian parents are known to hold an autocratic parenting style over their children's livelihood, as it was pinpointed in Kingminghae's et al. (2019) study among Thai's students, Hercog's and van de Laar's (2017) study on the Indian's students, and also (2016) study representing Chinese parenting culture, where children highly respect their parent's positioning and words.

Likewise, this study would presume most South East Asian children are alike to the examples above that would strongly consider their parents' opinions, and also consider it into Khanal and Gaulee (2019) framework of the pre- departure process in selecting a host country for their children. In particular, South East Asian parents will put importance on the concern of the host country level of safety, security, and the universities' reputation that can assures the parents' peace of mind while their children are in a distant place (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Alberts & Hazen, 2005; Kahanec & Králiková, 2011). To the extent of seeking other information, such as the "knowledge and awareness of the location, personal recommendations, cost issues, environment, geographic proximity and social links" (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002, p. 83) into a South East Asian parents evaluation of the best fit "suitable host country" for their children. This also explains the popularity of Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom and their consistent ranking in the top three destinations for internationalisation (OECD, 2019).

Similarly, New Zealand recently has gained this credible reputation and earned some recognition to be among those top countries (Findlay et al., 2006; Kahanec & Králiková, 2011; Abbott & Silles, 2016; King & Sondhi, 2016). To highlight New Zealand's recognition as a rising educational host country, Morrish and Lee (2011) claimed that "New Zealand is an attractive destination for international students because it is English-speaking and perceived as clean, green and safe." (p. 520). Henceforth, this may be start of an internationalisation growth in New Zealand, attracting many more international students to come and study. The country's natural attributes may eventually become a reason to consider as a top study destination by South East Asian students. Eventually, this may also be the reason to consider New Zealand not just as an educational host country, but also as a possible long-term settlement destination.

### 1.1.2.2 Post - Departure Study Challenges

Subsequently, coming to the post- departure phase, as concluded by Khanal and Gaulee (2019), an international student are likely to struggle with new surroundings, such as academic challenges and/or adaptability issues. This topic was studied in details by Smith and Khawaja (2011), who coined the concept of acculturation, which will be explained later in the next chapter using Lin's and Kingminghae's (2017) findings.

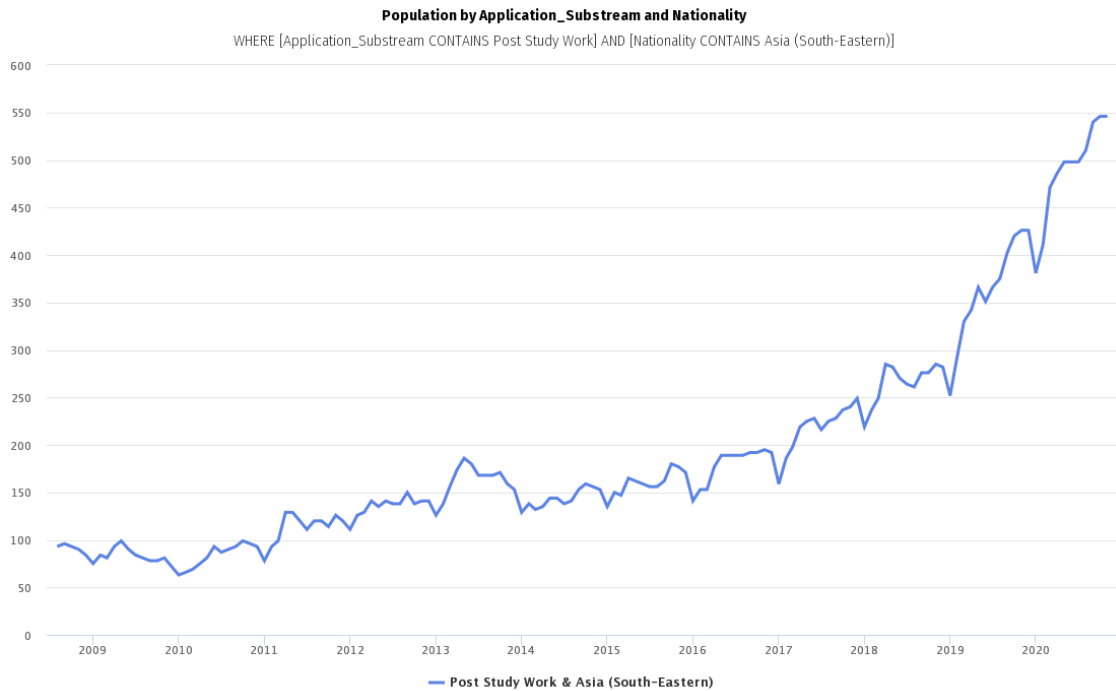
However, as this topic goes out of the scope of this study, this research would assume that adaptability and academic challenges are dependent on the international student's own ability to grow, and, instead, will briefly touch upon their financial stability to sustain their lifestyle abroad. King and Sondhi (2016) believed that a financial security is an important element that promotes international student livelihood longevity in the host country. Further study by Beine et al. (2014), showed that South East Asian parents would provide their children with sufficient funds while they are living abroad. Thus, this gives a sense of financial comfort for most South East Asian student to focus on their studies and fully experience internationalisation purposes. Therefore, this study would move forward to its core part, which is the transitional phase after graduation.

### 1.1.2.3 Post - Study Challenges

Due to the gap knowledge on the specific sample of Indonesian graduates' mobility, this study will make use of other established findings about South East Asian graduates' post-study challenges to supplement this research. Also, linking to New Zealand, this topic is itself seminal to Soon's (2012) research study of the major international graduates demographics post-study experiences, as well as investigating the sample perception of settlement in New Zealand. Simultaneously, this study targets the Indonesian sample because of the researcher's personal background and academic interest in exploring Indonesian graduates outgoing mobility to settle overseas after the graduation. Through these research objectives it reveals additional triggering factors beyond parental control. Besides, this study will reflect on the perception and evaluation of New Zealand by international graduates as a settlement destination. As shown in the data below, there is a significant increase in post-study work visa issuance to South East Asian graduates by New Zealand.

**Figure 1** *South East Asian graduates with Post-Graduate Work Visa in New Zealand.*

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*Note.* The number of South East Asian graduates with post-study visa in New Zealand (Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) (Ministry of Business, 2020).

On the contrary, Trevena's (2019, p. 36) findings shows that "among international graduates whose last student visa ended between July 2006 and June 2012, 5 years later 28% had a resident visa, 3% were still on a (temporary) work visa, and 68% had left New Zealand". Based on these figures, the study will question New Zealand's actual ability to retain international graduates in longer term. According to Sá and Sabzalieva (2018), the most attractive educational host countries such as United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, and Australia are also putting more effort and emphasis to attract and admit students than on student's exit strategies after graduation.

Thus, this study will attempt to elaborate on Trevena's finding (2019) to understand what factors might have influenced the 31% of international graduates to stay New Zealand from this study sample. This is done by collecting the information through in-depth interviews with five successful Indonesian graduates who had settled in New Zealand. This exploratory study is also eager to explore their influences that effect their decision-making process to stay in New Zealand rather than return to Indonesia.

In overall, this dissertation is outlined further using five chapters. The literature review presents the current finding of South East Asian graduates in facing the similar situation that previews the factors that may contributed to Indonesian graduates' settlement decision in New Zealand. Then this followed by the methodology chapter to present the research framework performed to obtain the primary sources and the used analysis

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technique. This proceeds to the next chapter, where major findings answering the research question, such as factors affecting graduates in the post-study phase, will be published. Consequently, the discussion weaves the main findings within the context of the larger literature landscape to establish the positioning of this study in the related research field. Lastly, the conclusion chapter summarises this research and concludes this study by presenting the limitations, implications and future recommendations.

## 2.0 Literature Review

This chapter explores international graduates' post-study plans, by concentrating on the research of South-East Asian students' transition phase of becoming young professionals in their chosen host countries. As noticed, all international graduates will face one similar dilemma whether to stay or return upon their completion of internationalisation. Therefore, the aim of this literature review is to encourage an open discussion in order to find patterns in a graduate's decision-making process which often is triggered by multiple factors.

This literature review is divided into three sections to discuss the factors that may influence international graduates' plans after graduation. Ultimately, this chapter's content serves as a background overview that might reflect Indonesians graduates' implications to settle in New Zealand. The first section presents plausible post-study intentions and considers the people who are directly involved in their own decision-making process. Afterwards, the second section presents the 'push and pull factors' that may likely lead to the decisive reasons for Indonesian graduates that might be similar to South East Asian findings. The third section concludes this literature review by reviewing the international graduate's immigration pathways in New Zealand and Indonesia graduates potential post-study plan.

### 2.1 The General Post-Study Scene of a South East Asian International Graduate

Graduation is often marked as one of a lifetime moments for an international graduate that recognises the attainment of their degree and acknowledges the status of being an international graduate (Findlay et al., 2006; Shumilova & Cai, 2015), alongside with the prestigious qualification/s gained (Findlay, 2010; Leinonen, 2012; Knight, 2013; King & Sondhi, 2016) that allows them to gain work opportunities equal to a domestic graduates.

Here, the study highlights the international graduates' traits such as their adaptability and flexibility, which are favourable in the ever-changing work environment sought by employers (Kahanec & Králiková, 2011). At the same time, domestic graduates may lack those skills due to their being in the homeland's comfort zone. Thus, from this by-product of mobility, international graduates would have enhanced their soft skills in dealings with

many confrontations living abroad. Placed in the working context, international graduates bring the advantages such as being bilinguals and possessing intercultural competence. This alone could affect a new wave of recruitment process in seeking these skilled globe-trotters that may demand the international experience. Therefore, the prospect of gaining all those skills will get more and more young people attracted to participate in internationalisation process (King & Sondhi, 2016). However, the real pitfalls of internationalisation can begin after graduation and despite the advantages outlined above. Therefore, the section below will begin by focusing on two major parties: the parents and graduates themselves, to face this critical decision that will greatly affects their future.

### **2.1.1 South East Asia Parents Impact**

This section will deep dive into the South East Asian cultural aspect, which can contribute to and impact on the international graduates on their next steps post internationalisation. The main focus is on Asian parents who are accustomed to firm control of their children's education and livelihood in contrast to the Western upbringing. This is exhibited through the Chinese parenting style called as Tiger Parenting (Liu et al., 2016), and also found its evidence in South East Asian demographics (i.e. Thai's, Indian's and Chinese's graduate) by influencing young generation in the pre-departure stage.

This can also be attributed to the South East Asian culture conformity to principles of Confucianism, which shapes the relationship between parents and children within a household context (Liu et al., 2016), where parents' success is signified by their intention to raise an exemplary child. This coincides with one of Confucius quotes that can be related to South East Asian parents' views about internationalisation and upbringing values.

*“A youth, when at home, should be filial, and, outside, respectful to his elders. He should be earnest and trustworthy. He should overflow with love for all, and cultivate friendship with those who are benevolent (ren). When he has time and opportunity, after the performance of these things, he may do literary studies.”*

*- (Hung, 2016, pp. 87, cited from The Analects, Xue Er 1:6)*

Through the first sentences, it is apparent that Confucius highly advise children to always uphold the obedience to their parents, even though Hung (2016) argues that the nature of Confucius's principles may not fit into today's society. In a deeper understanding,



these principles find reflection in South East Asian student's respect towards their elders, high regards of their parents' opinions, permissions, and conformity influence in every aspect of their life, including their internationalisation process (Bodycott & Lai, 2012; Choi & Nieminen, 2013; Nghia, 2019).

Considering that internationalisation provides their children a chance of enhancing one's future prospect, such as "gaining permanent residence, financing study, working and settling in the host country following graduation, and program and university selection" (Bodycott & Lai, 2012, p. 260), parents see the reflection of themselves in their children's post-study dilemma. Thus, it is essential for the parents to be decisive and critical about their children's settlement plan; in either staying abroad or returning home. In turn, the children would also need to take into the consideration their parents' voices that may conflict with their own. Hence, this section concludes that the South East Asian international graduate post-study decision does not solely based on their desire alone but also on compromising theirs and their parents' ambitions.

### ***2.1.2 South East Asia International Graduates Settlement Trends***

Nevertheless, some international graduates would want to take advantage of internationalisation and settlement in their host country. As a matter of fact, this is dismissed by current literatures findings which provide the evidence that most of the South East Asian students return home and would miss the opportunity for an international career (Cannon, 2000; Alberts & Hazen, 2005; Inayati et al., 2014; King & Sondhi, 2016; Hercog & van de Laar, 2017). It is also the case that these graduates felt the force to adhere to their parent's tacit intention wanting them to return post-study and making them reluctant to argue and opposed the decisions made by their parents. Similar trend was found in Indian's, Thai's, and Chinese's graduates' returning decisions (Baruch et al., 2007; King & Sondhi, 2016).

Possibly without much consideration, returning graduates would also risk to face acculturation (Lin & Kingminghae, 2017), where stress befalls on international graduates in their inability to cope with cultural changes because of the new environment. This is dissimilar with the gained practices abroad, where returning graduate will have to re-adapt back to their origin country, the phenomenon known as "reverse culture shock", explained later as one of the factors in support to the international graduates' decision to stay.

Hence, the ultimatum the international graduates have to face is either to return home or settle in the host country as there is no definite solution, as both decisions come with their own merits and challenges, that determine the graduate's future and can plausibly be triggered by multiple factors other than the parents' influences. Hence, the following section seeks to explore South East Asian graduates' decision-making process by adopting Lee's (1966) "push and pull" concept.

## 2.2 The Factors Determining International Graduates' Settlement

In contrast to Lee's (1966) focus on the pre-internationalisation phase, this section uses Lee's pull and push term to link towards international graduates migration decision post study. Here it will stipulate the pull factors that form reasons for international graduates to stay, while the push factors backup reasons for them to return. This section focuses on the general challenges international graduates likely face before finalising their decision. And therefore, does not truly justify international graduates reasonings as this an exploratory study that can only cover some crucial factors.

### ***2.2.1 Reasons to Stay in Host Country***

With the potential to have cosmopolitan traits in many studies (King & Sondhi, 2016; Collins et al., 2017; Wu & Wilkes, 2017), this section will present the pull factors that benefits international graduates to stay in host country rather than returning home.

In general, it is a logical first step for graduates to attempt to find job opportunities after graduation, especially for international graduates to utilise and assess their degree worth (Lin & Kingminghae, 2017). Similarly, Soon's (2010) work emphasised that this action is further support the accumulated years they have spent in the host country. Naturally, the international graduate can also be influenced by their friends to find a job opportunity in the host country. This also explains an international graduate's effort and eagerness to actively seek employment in their advantage and to understand the host country recruitment process (Alberts & Hazen, 2005). Henceforth, this might motivate the international graduates to prolong their stay in familiar work culture and lifestyle of the host country and would revive their initial impression that internationalisation promotes employability and success.

The second factor is that international graduates' characteristics developed over time as they continued to live in the host country. Since international graduates are forced to

face acculturation in the post-departure stage, this then allows them to develop as they face with the daily challenges in the host country (Lin & Kingminghae, 2017; Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). Consequently, this leads international graduates to experience what Crossman and Clarke (2010) study called a self-development process, also known as cultural intelligence or knowledge, signifying an international graduates ability to embrace and live in new surroundings. For instance, when put into a working environment, as noted by Findlay et al. (2006) study, international graduates thriving on diversity. An example of this is the ability to perceive others' cultural norms, bringing different perspectives to complement and understand the host country's work ethics and lifestyle. And on the contrary, this exposure to other cohorts would drive international graduates to recognise their self-identity and self-aware from the interactions with other cultures.

As staying in the host country also prevents international graduates from facing the third factor, reverse culture shock. This is done by the international graduate remaining in their host country without the need to re-adapt back to its origin culture if they had returned home (Cannon, 2000; Arthur & Nunes, 2014; Kelly et al., 2018; Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). The reverse culture shock can stress returning graduates because of another change of cultural environments, reverting from the Western back to the Eastern culture. As justified by Di Pietro (2019) study, it would also be futile for international graduates to bring back the skills learnt back home because of the dissimilar work ethics. For example, there will be a resistance between returning graduates' and their social interaction (i.e. coworkers) to fit in with an entire community who have not experienced internationalisation (Di Pietro, 2019). In addition, also getting an international degree does promotes work opportunities back home (Collins et al., 2017), but the reverse culture stresses can be destructive for returning graduates due to the feeling of constant underperformance, as well as their inability to display their gained skillsets from abroad.

In term, the fourth factor suggest that personal life situation can also affect some international graduates' decisions to settle. With regards to the South East Asian cultural expectations, some individuals may be obligated to their parents' demand for marital or family responsibilities. For example, there are strong traditional gender roles within Indian graduates' culture that would affect their settlement abroad (King & Sondhi, 2016; Kelly et al., 2018), and this supposed gender roles can affect both female and male graduates to fulfil ethnic traditions. As concluded by Kelly et al. (2018) study, the women are up to fulfil her marital duty, while the men prioritise of the general family wellbeing, being a male heir. Therefore, this could suggest that some international graduates may see internationalisation as an opportunity to be free from both gender and/or family

responsibilities, and can gradually motivate international graduates to pace through their adulthood and perceive their host country as a second home (Wu & Wilkes, 2017, see Figure 3) where reduced social gender expectations are in place. Nevertheless, most South East Asian graduates perceived family matters at heart into Confucius teachings, and thus, this is one factor that might still be a persistent matter that becomes the push factors for the international graduates to return.

### ***2.2.2 Reasons to Return to Origin Country***

There is a belief that graduates are returning home as a compromise for closely related people. This section explores the international graduates push factors for them to stay in the host country. As an alternative returning home is common and befitting, the stigma of returning graduates to fulfil family obligation is what often stipulates their return (Hercog & van de Laar, 2017; Lin & Kingminghae, 2017; Kelly et al., 2018; Kingminghae et al., 2019). Due to parents' autocratic drive, the children risk being stamped as rebellious and lose their parents' support and resources to stay in the host country. Even though there may be other factors implicating graduates to return home other than their parents' command, this section presents the other three factors that may influence international graduate to return home.

Firstly, there are indeed some international graduates who would voluntarily return in genuine concerns for their parents' wellbeing, as justified by Kingminghae et al. (2019) study. It is also confirmed that the older a graduate is, the greater the chance they will contemplates to return. Having been affected by their self-diligence to settle or look after their parents, it is also in accordance with Confucius sense of duty to parents. Likewise, some would also return for the family business. An example shown in Vietnamese graduates from Nghia's sample (2019), and, interestingly, international graduates with no business attachments are more likely to return compared to that of those who have family business (Kingminghae et al., 2019). This contradicts the general assumption that graduates with business inheritance would return, however they start to deny this opportunity in their homeland.

Aside from family endeavours, living abroad can be a challenge and may not be as welcoming as people perceive. This is especially true for international graduates as being an immigrant would immediately make them vulnerable to discrimination or harassment throughout their time in the host country. This corresponds to Findlay et al. (2006) study that identified the prevalent of xenophobic incidents that international student would encounter in their time abroad.

To clarify, a xenophobe is described as people who dislikes foreigners in their country and, as a result, they can act repulsively to foreigner. As it is one of unkind human behaviour that may cause an individual perception and impression of the local diversity inclusion to be negatively affected. It would be up to international graduates' own impulse to determine whether these encounters severity will change their mind.

The third factor for international graduate to not settle in host country is likely induced by their partnership locality, and in this case, these groups of international graduates are flexible to migrate depending on the couple's migration plan, unrestricted to host or origin country. This finds its justification in Lin and Kingminghae (2017) study, when an international graduate incorporate their settlement decision with their spouse plans to come to a compromise. It is then followed by a groundless debate which would raise the third choice – moving to another foreign country (Wu & Wilkes, 2017), or stay in the host country if their partner would too, or vice versa.

In sum, the returning factors international graduates still rely or impacted by external forces. Kahanec and Králiková (2011) posits that international graduates would eventually analyse from their overall experiences including the country's enticement and restriction to determine their mobility or stay in the host country. These influencing factors involve the graduates experience and maturity post-study. Thus, next section looks at all other unconventional factors that affect graduates' intention to stay or leave host country.

### ***2.2.3 Other Unforeseeable Factors***

Respectively, the push and pull terms have been used differently in other studies (Jackson et al., 2005; Cerdin, 2012), so, for this study, the researcher will use the pull factors to show international students' intentions to stay, while the push factors will show their reasons to leave the host country. It is also possible that some international students might not even get the chance to decide their post-study decision due to external forces. Hence, this section looks at the unexpected factors that could limit an international graduate settlement decision. Particularly, from the international graduates' perspectives of age, availability of employment support, cultural identity and social relations that may drive them to settle in or out of the host country.

The first factor looks at an international graduate aspect of age and education degree, as studies shown that younger graduates are inclined to stay in the host country (Alberts & Hazen, 2005; Bozionelos et al., 2015). This finding is also supported by Chhinzer and

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Russo (2018) study concludes that postgraduates will be more resilient to professional confrontations in comparison to undergraduates as they prepare to enter their work field post-study. Hence, this shows that individuals who had obtained a higher level of education and graduated at a young age would have better sense of maturity to tackle with work challenges and would likely seek to settle in their host country rather than returning home.

While in the second factor, two studies highlighted that it is crucial for related parties, such as employer and university, to provide graduates-to-employee programs and implement those in order to introduce international graduates into their field of expertise, and to take advantages of their obtained skilled that can retain them in the host country (Baruch et al., 2007; Bozionelos et al., 2015). This, however, is subject to the host country policies' strength to support the employability for international graduates. In this case, New Zealand have an immigration helpdesk to assist and secure their future-pathways after their student visa ends. This is partially explained by the fact that international student in New Zealand did pay a much higher tuition fee compared to domestic students (Beine et al., 2014), and so this immigration service would make a worth of their tuition payment. Not to mention, that there are some international students in requirement of further assistance in dealing with language requirements, when English is their second language (Smith & Khawaja, 2011; Kelly et al., 2018; Pham et al., 2019). Therefore, they will need further assistant from the universities to ease their concerns for immigration and/or academic help. After all, the university are in the duty of care for all its enrolling students, and this also includes the international students.

The third factor will investigate the threats that can impact an individual identity. As international student is exposed to their host country culture, the study revealed that this possesses a risk to diminish their own original culture by mixing two cultures together (Knight, 2013; Lin & Kingminghae, 2017). This also identified in Crossman's and Clarke's (2010) study, when cultural intelligence can threaten international students cultural identity, because they would need to break from traditional ideals in order to develop the intercultural identify. Hence, international graduates would gradually do not feel the need of strong affiliation with their original heritage and culture. In a way, losing its cultural legacy while gaining intercultural intelligence, international graduates would feel better suited to adopt the host country way of life, such as different set of age milestone and family patterns and lose their bounds to Confucius's teaching. Therefore, this also potentially refrain them from returning home (Wu & Wilkes, 2017).

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In addition, the fourth factor would present the significance of a distant relatives presence in the host country to support the international graduates abroad, as pointed out by Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), since living abroad alone can be a solitude journey of self-discovery, which requires a sense of familiarity. In this situation, a distant relative would fulfil this need by being a helping hand in times of emergency, mainly by receiving advice from alternative parental figure. Yet, Mosneaga and Winther (2013) study contradicts this conclusion and discover that some graduates deliberately settle down in the host country to escape the influence of authoritative figures. As author argues, this is the way of escaping from the South East Asian intense seniority and authoritative hierarchy, as well as freeing oneself from the traditional social expectations. At some instances, some graduates also see this life occasion as an opportunity to be independent, self-sufficient, capitalise on their degree, and fully reach adulthood (Huang, 2012; Wintre et al., 2015; Moskal, 2020).

## 2.3 The International Graduates Post-Study Pathway in New Zealand

This section will present the immigration pathways an international graduate can take to settle in New Zealand. This is followed by understanding the nature of the transitional phase that they will face as fresh-graduate skilled immigrant, and also provide an overview factors that might implicate their decision to stay in New Zealand. Finally, the chapter will be concluded by categorising Indonesian graduates into the optimal path trajectory and looks at the optional migration path that they might consider after graduating in New Zealand.

### **2.3.1 New Zealand Two-Schemes Visa Pathways**

In reality, there will be some international students who may not even be entitled to decide their post-study migration plan, due to financial concern: some may compromise and make predetermined plans even before coming to the host country. The reason for this behaviour is their view on the internationalisation as a process with pure educational purpose and defined time of departure. For instance, Thomas's (2017) study found that they are international graduates who treat internationalisation as a return on investment, although they do stay further after graduation, but this happens only in order to pay their student debts before going back home. While the others, much more restricted ones, as Moskal (2017) confronted, are bound to an academic contract (i.e. scholarship) that restricts them to return once graduated. Thus, this is also critical to show that not every international graduate is free to choose per se. Nevertheless, if an

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international graduate did decide to stay, they would still need to comply with the host country's immigration pathway. In the focus of this study, the host country, New Zealand, have a two-steps post-study immigration scheme for every international graduate who would like to extend their visa after graduation (Chiou, 2017).

Namely, it is called two-step scheme because an international graduate would have to take on an actual two-timed application process to secure their long-term residency. To achieve this, in the first step, an international graduate must first apply for the post-graduate visa that allows them to stay and seek for a job opportunity lawfully in New Zealand. Even though the first step is straightforward, at the same time, this post-graduate work visa only allows international graduates to be a temporary resident. This means that they must obtain further sponsorships in order to proceed to the second step, where they apply for a permanent residence and face true challenges.

There are two types of sponsorship the international graduates can seek from: (a) an employer sponsorship or (b) the New Zealand "skilled immigrant category", which is case sensitive. In general, through option (a), an employer can grant sponsorship to international graduates, however, most would require graduates to obtain a full-time permanent position that would require the employers to produce the letter of sponsorship, simply because employers would also be responsible for the individual they support.

Option (b) is a route only available for some international graduates, who can fulfil New Zealand requirements for 'skilled immigrants' and have the job from a list of in-demand work fields that the country requires. Since not every international graduate can satisfy requirements for either of the options, by the time his/her work visa expires, these international graduates would then be forced to return. In response, those international graduates, who experienced this, may perceive the whole internationalisation experience as a negative one (Berquis et al., 2019).

Nghia (2019) argues that the quality of the educational system of a given country can be evaluated on the basis of supportiveness shown to the excluded international graduates to gain employment opportunities, congruently with pre-announced policy principles. International graduates can also encounter highly selective recruitment during job-seeking, as found by Blackmore and Rahimi (2019). Having investigated the chances of international graduates within a candidate pool, authors found that the most of them would be eliminated on the early stages because recruiters would assume that they may not be a good fit in the Anglo-Celtic work environment. Therefore, the limitation to take



on option (a) become apparent, as international graduates would even struggle to be considered as a recruitment candidate. Thus, fulfilling New Zealand's two-step international graduate's immigration pathway are not as simple as expected. This is because many would be excluded from the job application process from the beginning, without receiving an opportunity to actually perform on the job (Moskal, 2020; Tran et al., 2020).

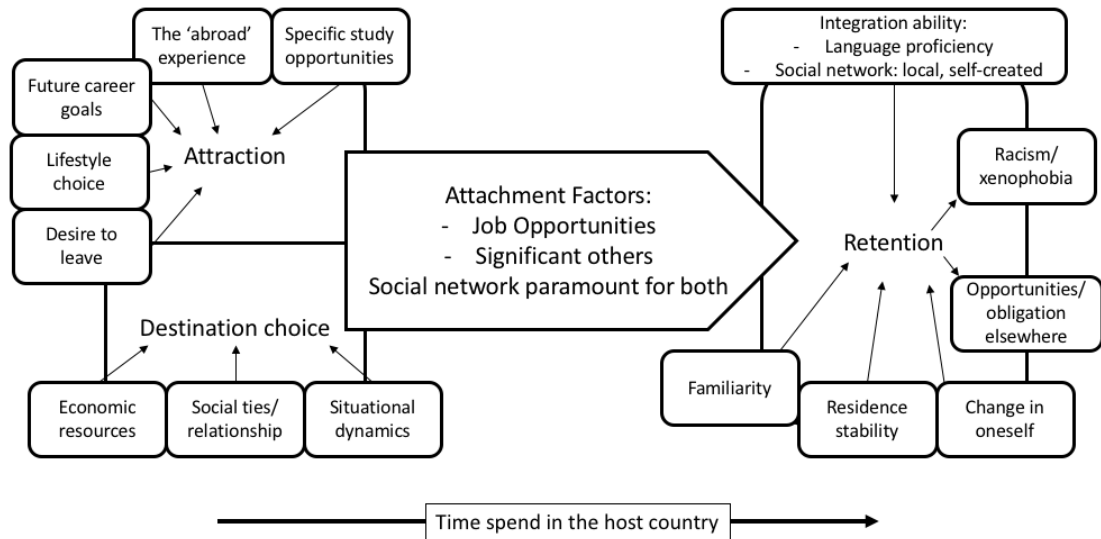
### ***2.3.2 International Graduates Support and Overall Deciding Factors***

Therefore, Coffey et al. (2018) study argues that international graduates' first-employment breakthrough is not easy as generally perceived and also often unfair, which would gradually demotivate them to stay in their host country. This alone would showcase the stress an international graduate has to deal with. Meanwhile, if they succeed, they will become more resilient to challenges, which can be favourable traits to recruiters (Kahanec & Králiková, 2011). Pham et al. (2019) stated persistence are graduates' best attribute for them to settle in host country, the relentless pursuit is worthy of recognition despite immigration and recruitment setback.

Similarly, a change needed from the immigration legislation to keep these skilled graduates in mutual exchange for their skills and labour (Arthur & Nunes, 2014). An exemplary model exist in Finland, when a graduate receives an internship opportunities to expand their professional network and therefore reducing their chance of unemployment (Shimulova et al., 2012). This same idea can be implemented in New Zealand, using Pham's et al. (2019) Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) scheme, where both employers and institutions form a partnership, linking international graduates to their first employment (Findlay et al., 2006).

Desirably, the implementation might encourage more graduates to reconsider their decision and intention to stay in their host country. To summarise, this comprehensive figure made by Mosneaga and Winther (2013) provides an extensive relation from the discussed factors from all the sections, and includes a graduates anxiety and complexity by looking at them from the internationalisation process as the determining factors for them to stay.

**Figure 2** *International graduates' overall decision-making process to stay in host country.*



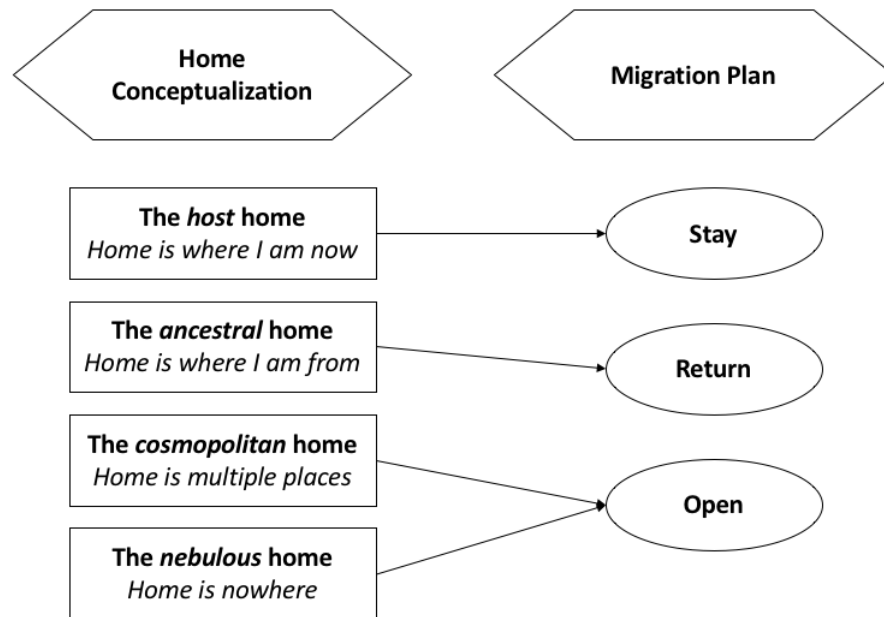
*Note.* The relationship between attraction and retention factors of international students in the host country context. (Mosneaga & Winther, 2013, p. 185).

Note that relationships in each phase are influenced by other ones and have created sequential effects. By the end, it still relies on the graduates' view of themselves and their desire to stay, along with the host country's effort to retain them through obtained immigration pathways.

### 2.3.3 Indonesian Graduates in New Zealand

Despite the lack of research on Indonesian graduates settling decision in New Zealand, the section above has shown a great deal of South East Asia international graduation migration trends, and has allowed for this study to have general view on what Indonesian graduates may have faced in relation to the dilemma of staying or returning home. Drawn from Hercog and van de Laar (2017) study, it illustrated that there are two categories of international graduate: career-oriented and family-oriented. Bozionelos et al. (2015) claims that career-oriented individuals may have greater perseverance and self-initiation to live abroad by making this pivotal decision and breaking traditions.

Wu and Wilkes (2017) visualised the pathway for Indonesian graduates abroad and linked them with their conceptions of home, has consequently determined their possible migration plan after they have graduated from New Zealand.

**Figure 3** *International graduates post-study migration options.*

*Note.* A model of post-graduate migration plans (Wu & Wilkes, 2017, p. 130).

Confronted with many dilemmas, Indonesian graduates in New Zealand are no different to South East Asian international graduates in depicting whether they will stay or return or be career- or family-oriented. There is also the possibility of other unexpected scenarios Indonesian graduates will have to deal with from the interviews. As can be seen from *Figure 3*, there is possibility that Indonesian graduates selected the open migration plan, since they could adapt easily elsewhere with their cosmopolitan personality.

Still, these are mere assumptions about Indonesian graduate's mobility taken from the research of South East Asian international graduates migration trends, simultaneously assuming that Indonesian graduates reflect the same patterns as Indian, Thai, and Chinese graduates, who wanted to stay but must return. What will be the distinguished reasons for Indonesians wanting to leave from New Zealand after internationalisation? Even when New Zealand has been portrayed as an appealing host country with open work opportunities and natural elements that intrigue most international graduates to stay (Arthur & Nunes, 2014).

Hence this study, which explores the factors which encourage Indonesian students to settle in New Zealand rather than returning to Indonesia, is framed and informed by the extant literature discussed in this chapter. The next chapter will discuss the researchers philosophical positioning, the appropriate methodological framework, the sampling

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method and research process, including the gathering and analysis of the participant stories.

## 3.0 Methodology

This methodology chapter ensures the academically credible collection of the five Indonesian graduate's migration experiences in New Zealand, and will begin with the research agenda, which is asserted by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) as a fundamental step in a research. This chapter is the 'how to' section to collect and process information that consist of three major sections: the research methodologies (researcher perspective), data collection (participants and resources) and data analysis (concluding process). This is a reflection to ensure that the researcher is guided by the proper ethics and principles.

This chapter begins by determining the methodology framework that strengthens the research direction of developing a conclusive outcome for the findings and discussion chapters later. This chapter also aims to show the researcher's competency and dedication in choosing an approach from the current variety of methodology sequences. In order to respond to the research question, this section presents the researcher's methodology knowledge by establishing the required sequence that fits the purpose of the study. Also, presenting the steps taken to recruit the right participants as primary data resources. This section then concludes with the analytical methods to compile the information received in order to support and understand Indonesian graduates' transitional phase in New Zealand in the next chapters.

### 3.1 Research Design

This study uses the model based on Bannister-Tyrrell and Meiqari (2020) methodology process as a checklist to establish the research methodology and philosophical paradigm. Here, the researcher identified this study as a qualitative research to be the research methodology in the research title of—"to stay or return? An international graduate dilemma". In response to the research of — "What are the factors which encourage Indonesian students to settle in New Zealand after graduation rather than to return home". Whereas, the philosophical paradigm is much complicated and requires further explanation, it will also present the discussion of research philosophies, such as ontology, epistemology and research paradigm. This chapter will be continued by establishing the data collection process and the researcher's reflexivity for this study.

### **3.1.1 Research Philosophy**

The philosophical paradigm can be both a complex and riveting process for the researcher to set the foundation of their research, as it helps the researchers to track elements, such as the flow of the discussion, perceptions, the subjectivity and objectivity perspective once in contact with the data. This is accomplished by determining the three main research philosophies (ontology, epistemology and paradigm philosophy) and then linking these philosophies together with the purpose and appraisal of each philosophical element.

This study has completed the same philosophical path as drawn by Makombe (2017, p. 3367) in the Table “Illustration of the relationship between paradigm, method and design in research” (see Appendix C), in order to determine the philosophic combination to adopt. This will help to keep track of the researcher’s positioning in using compatible philosophies to build the research structure. Besides, Makombe (2017) presents a broad overview which shows the multiple variations of philosophies the researcher can choose from to incorporate within their intended study.

The philosophy rulings require researchers to have a deep affiliation with each relevant element, meaning that the process is substantial and requires diligent examination to succeed. This process supports the author to pilot the course of thoughts through the research process and assures that the researcher is mindful of their interpretation of knowledge and work consistently throughout the process of the chosen philosophy sequence. The ultimate goal will be to present a logical flow that forms a functional relationship that taken in this study.

#### **3.1.1.1 Ontology**

Ontology is considered to be the basis of a research philosophy, as it is defined as “the nature of reality and its characteristics” by Creswell (2007, p. 16). Ontology helps researcher to question whether the reality is influenced by an infinite variables (relativism) or fixed outcome (realism). The ontology questions whether a study is open to a new or rigid reality as its outcome. In this case, it explores the participants’ experiences in agreement with relativism views, as this research acquired anecdotal experiences from graduates, who settled in New Zealand. This establishes the relativism view in ontology set as its first philosophy sequence.

After ontology, the researcher will then decide which epistemology approached that pushes researcher to question their own positioning towards their research. Classified into two views the subjectivist and objectivist views, epistemology helps researcher to have a clear understanding of their own positioning to their own research, as established by Morgan and Smircich (1980). An approached that has developed much more than ontology. The difference to one another is that the subjectivist view puts importance on the researcher's perception and beliefs, while the objectivist view creates a distance between the researcher and the study. In order to execute this research question, the researcher identifies the subjectivist approach fits better because of the exploration of personal experiences.

The contemporary theory is supplemented with the modern view of Cunliffe (2011), who advanced the epistemology philosophy that combines both subjectivist and objectivist from the originators; Morgan and Smircich (1980) study. This is done through the introduction of the third epistemology called constructivist and was termed and introduced into philosophy by Bleiker et al. (2019). This is categorised into another group called constructionism and constructivism, shown below.

**Table 1** *Constructivism.*

	Constructionism	Constructivism
More commonly applied in	Sociology	Psychology
Outcome of research	Social constructs	Individual perceptions
Unit of study	Relationships: Negotiation Co-operation Conflict Rhetoric Roles	The individual: Perception Attention Beliefs Opinions Memories

*Note.* Distinguishing constructivist; constructionism and constructivism (Bleiker et al., 2019).

Unlike Morgan and Smircich (1980) theory, the constructivism stimulates the researcher of this study to build on the information received from the participants and interpret their stories by giving them a meaning and transforming them to the outcomes. Similarly, the researcher is intrigued by these graduates' decision-making process on their decisions to stay and requires the researcher's interpretation of data to analyse and find themes. Henceforth, we proceed to the last research philosophy, which illustrates the researcher's output perspective when analysing raw data.

### 3.0 Methodology Chapter

#### 3.1.1.3 Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is an approach to establish the manners a researcher used when digesting their findings and finds its origin in Makombe (2017) guidelines (see Appendix C). The paradigm is grouped into four categories and each of them has different purpose. As paradigm selection relies on researchers' conformity with each philosophy, the author identified the interpretivist one as the most compatible selection. This is noteworthy as the interpretivist paradigm is also the basis of the other paradigms as it is an approach that acknowledges the researchers translation of the information collected to produce a profound finding (Goldkuhl, 2017). Hence, this paradigm takes pride in the interpreter's individuality as each researcher perceives and articulates information differently.

Furthermore, the interpretivist paradigm also conforms with this exploratory study on an international graduate's factors to stay, as the process requires a humanitarian approach to understand the rationale behind the decision-making process. This reasons to support the study by adopting the interpretivism paradigm to comprehend the participants' experiences. This has a multilateral influence and will produce significant information that holds value (Creswell, 2007). As Kivunja and Kuyini note, "every effort is made to try to understand the viewpoint of the subject being observed, rather than the viewpoint of the observer." (2017, p. 33).

This sums up the study implemented on the following sequence for its philosophical approach: relativist for ontology, constructivism for epistemology, and interpretivist for research paradigm. In fact this set of philosophies is one of the most common sequence used according to Grant and Giddings (2002), especially when the study requires active engagement with the research participant to build the knowledge. This study also follows Cunliffe's (2011) advice to collect data by using the semi-structured interview process in capturing the study subjects' stories, explained further in the next section.

#### **3.1.2 The Semi-Structured Interview**

An interview is one of the most common data collection methods used by researchers due to its versatility and flexibility in the three different settings of unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). This depends on the researcher's intended way to obtain their primary data and the structure of interviews setting, which can be adjusted to control the data collection process. The appeal behind each type of interview setting is that its features and suitability are tailored for the research context and researcher's data objectives of their studies (Gill et al.,



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2008). Unstructured interviews allow its interviewee to lead the conversation, whereas the structured interviews are conducted with a pre-set and heavily controlled scripts by the interviewer. And in between these two, there is a semi-structured interview that combines both the formal and informal settings. The semi-structured interview allows some flexibility to let the participants dive deeper into the issue that might not even be expected by the researcher. This can be done by proposing a sequence of open-ended questions as identified in Adams (2015) study.

In this nature, the semi-structured interview also appreciates the participant's unique narrative style, as the interviewer subtly guides participants to address the intended research questions (Gill et al., 2008). The semi-structured interview is recommended by Cunliffe (2011) for its compatibility with the research philosophies as it promotes a natural flow within the conversational environment for the participants to voice their stories. However, Kivunja and Kuyini (2017) study warns the researcher to be mindful of the interpretivist bias in order to avoid to entail her/his beliefs in the research and to stand firm on being the listener to the participants stories.

Finally, the study describes the planning decisions, such as preparing interview protocols, and the conduct of research, which includes the brainstorming process to generate these open-ended questions and visualisation of the actual interview. This is recommended by Chenail (2011) that a novice researcher ought to conduct a pilot session to minimise the unexpected obstacles and be vigilant of minor details. The pilot session can enforce the researcher's ability as an interviewer to self-reflect on their performances before the actual interview takes place and helps the researcher to refine their interview skills and reduce potential disruption by going through this pilot interview process. Along with several rehearsals, the practice of pilot sessions helped the researcher to reflect on her ability to recognise such the incoherent elements as long pauses and to prompt participants to speak out more for unprecedented tales. Additionally, through keeping the research diary and constantly revising the delivery of questions, the author improved her ability to lead the conversation. As a result, the researcher had decided upon four major topics to facilitate the semi-structured interviews, as shown below.

The four topics touch on:

- Introduction; ice breaker phase,
- Exploration of their initial plan versus their actual post-study plan,
- The push (drawbacks) and pull (attractions) factors that drove their decisions,
- The challenges they faced after the decisions and what they experienced, i.e. was it a good decision?

Due to the exceptional circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic the researcher also had to present alternative ways of interviewing. These included conducting the interview sessions via Zoom, if needed. For this option, the participants had to complete and returned a signed copy of the consent form before the researcher conducted the semi-structured interview online.

#### ***3.1.3 Snowballing Sampling Technique***

The snowballing sampling technique was implemented in order to recruit five voluntary Indonesian participants. This is a recruitment technique that takes advantage of the researcher's social circle in order to select the required participants for their research (Szolnoki & Hoffmann, 2013). In this case, the researcher reached out to her Indonesian peers by informing them of the research details and the possibility to participate by providing the researcher's contact details and email address. Followed by their interest, potential participants received a formal invitation. Using this technique ensured an indirect approach and guaranteed participants' voluntary action, and that made snowballing an ideal choice. Similarly, the word-of-mouth delivery dissemination of the information to potential participants made sure there was not any pressure on potential participants and eliminated all risk of coercion.

The researcher also made use of Facebook social network to promote the research during the recruitment process. By utilising the researcher's affiliation with the Indonesian-in-Auckland student union group Facebook page called Perhimpunan Pelajar Indonesia Auckland (PPIA), as a means of advertisement to seek potential participants. The researcher informed in the post that the potential participants could directly contact the researcher through email or response to the post, allowing potential participants to initiate the first contact to legitimate snowballing sampling technique. When a participant is recruited, the researcher will then ask he or she to pass on the recruitment information to others with the intention of finding other potential candidates. This snowballing recruitment technique will form a chain of acquaintances to fulfil the required number of participants for this research. There was, nevertheless, a set of criteria that potential participants had to meet for inclusion in the study.

### ***3.1.4 Researcher Reflexivity and Identity***

While establishing the research methodology is fundamental, the role of the researcher in relation to the research and the participants is crucial as well. This transparency is to ensure a clear understanding of the researcher's competency and familiarity to perform this study and to address the potential conflict of interest or bias. To declare, I am an Indonesian student in her early twenties studying overseas in New Zealand. And after graduation, I will be facing similar dilemma of this research question. This question has become the catalyst of this research within this dissertation. During my time studying in many countries outside of Indonesia, I have reflected on my past journey and my interactions with surrounding peers and have become curious as to an Indonesian graduates' ways in New Zealand and how they navigate the tensions regarding their decision to stay or return after completing their study overseas. With this research, I also hope to promote the Indonesian community to the academic world and, perhaps, ignite other researchers to study Indonesian mobility beyond New Zealand.

In theory, the insider researcher is a situation when the researcher has a relatable identity backgrounds with their participants (Greene, 2014). Therefore, this places me as an author to be an insider researcher as I have a familiarity with the subject, culture and background. As I have many similar attributes in common with the participants, this replicates a case of Nguyen (2015), who samples the same home country as the researcher. Despite the advantage of familiarity, Greene (2014), on contrary, expressed that there is vulnerability of being an insider researcher. For instance, the author can be presumptuous about the group characteristics and a hint of ignorance for the reader who is unaccustomed with the community.

With this pitfall in mind, I was cautious of my familiarity with the participants during the analysis process and have done this by looking from an outsider perspective, or as Greene (2014, p. 3) refers it to be an 'Indigenous-Outsider'. There is a proposal that the researchers must re-position themselves into a third perspective to study her/his origin. Knapik (2006) study also claims that a researcher must be conscious to disregard personal input focusing on other people's experiences in order to discover new knowledge. With a research diary and these preventive measures, I am aware of my positioning and perception towards the research in processing the communication with the subjects. However, Holloway and Biley (2011) argued that in reality it is impossible to detach oneself from their study. In sum, this means that being an insider researcher is simultaneously beneficial and yet contradicting.

## 3.2 Research Methods

This qualitative study has collected five Indonesian graduate's settlement experiences in New Zealand as the primary source of information that will be used to analyse and produce the outcome of this study. In this methods section, the researcher will present the recruitment process in adopting the snowballing sampling technique and the procedure taken to conduct five semi-structured interviews.

### **3.2.1 The Recruitment Process**

The research involved five participants who met the predetermined criteria below:

- An Indonesian under or at the aged of 35 years old
- Graduated in New Zealand with a Bachelor, Master or PhD
- Currently working in their field of expertise in New Zealand
- Have a valid working and residency permit in New Zealand
- Have lived in New Zealand for at least 3 Years

The graduate participants criteria include that they must work in the field corresponding to their degree within New Zealand, and that they must have overcome the transition from an international student to the skilled immigrant in the host country. The residence period in New Zealand is set for three years to ensure that participants have comprehensive knowledge of the country and have made an informed decision to stay in New Zealand.

The participants recruitment process has started with the posting an invitation on the PPIA group web page in Facebook. Simultaneously, the researcher disseminated this information to her peers in order to reach out to wider audience. To participate in this research, the potential participants had to be the one to initiate the first contact either through the given email address or direct comment on the Facebook invitation. This was to ensure that there was no coercion, and also to utilise the practices of the snowballing sampling technique. When a response was received from a potential participant, the researcher thanked them for their interest, and provided more information about the study by sending the "Participant Information Sheet" (PIS) and "Consent Form" (see Appendix B for tools) for them to review. Once these documents were sent, the participants were given a two-week interval to respond and re-affirm their contribution to this study. This period allowed the potential participants to fully understand and prepare

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before the actual conduct and gave them a chance to raise any enquiries to the researcher. In between, a follow-up email was sent after a week had passed. If the potential participant remained unresponsive after two weeks, no further contact was made.

At the same time, when a confirmation was received, the researcher requested the participant to schedule the semi-structured interview at their convenient time and venue; either face-to-face at the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) domain or online through Zoom meeting. For the selection of potential participants, the researcher adopted the first-come-first-served basis to ensure no selective bias was involved; hence, once the sample number reached the limit, the recruitment was officially closed by informing her peers and retracting the invitation post on Facebook.

#### **3.2.3 The Interview Agenda**

On average, the semi-structured interview lasted an hour and with the participant's consent, the researcher was able to audiotape and note document throughout all interviews. As a sense of gratitude, the researcher also offered a Koha<sup>1</sup> to participants for contributing to this research. Location-wise, the researcher conducted two interviews within the AUT grounds and three interviews through Zoom meetings, providing security and travel convenience for the participants. This was to avoid the possibility of unforeseen events if interviews were conducted on private property. Zoom meetings also allowed flexibility for the researcher and participants to conduct the interview easily, and not to be delayed by the pandemic lockdown restrictions.

Meanwhile, the researcher was mindful of each participants' convenience, and, therefore, attempted to provide a neutral atmosphere and consistent interview sessions to avoid any prejudice. In the benefit of being an insider researcher, the author was also aware to always be polite and practice the Indonesian social norms in order to show courtesy. For example, there is one common etiquette rule in Indonesia to address older individuals by the traditional salutations, which the researcher always confirmed with the participant before conducting the interview. In fact, all of the participants were comfortable to be called by a first name, signifying no power distance between the researcher and participant. Having established the connection, the researcher proceeded to conduct the systematic semi-structured interview process described below.

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<sup>1</sup> Koha is a Māori gift, present, offering, donation, contribution - especially one maintaining social relationships and has connotations of reciprocity (English-Māori Dictionary and Index, n.d ).

First, the researcher introduced herself, and reaffirmed their understanding of the PIS and Consent Form (see Appendix B for tools). Then, the researcher read the criteria requirements to participants in order to confirm that they did fit into them, which was then confirmed by signing the consent form. The same process was done in both conducts, either through online or face-to-face. Afterwards, the researcher clarified the written message on PIS once more to assure that they truly understand the given information and highlighted their autonomy on refusal to answer, by signalling or vocally dismissing a question/s any time during the interview. Once the administrative process was delivered, the researcher conducted the interview with pre-defined structure (please see Appendix A for interview template).

To outline, the researcher has selected a sequence of methodologies that lays the groundwork to align collection methods to answer the research question. From the indicated philosophies, the researcher also self-identified as an insider researcher on the study about Indonesian graduates' factors to stay in New Zealand. Thus, the researcher utilised both of her cultural identity and academic knowledge to undertake the proposed methods and techniques. This is shown by implementing the snow-balling sampling technique in recruiting fellow Indonesians and did pilot practice to prepare for the actual semi-structured interview. Furthermore, the researcher also learnt how to conduct a proper interview basing on Rabionet's (2011) study, which guides scholars to minimise error on semi-structured interviews, Turner III's (2010) study on interview protocol taking, and Nguyen's (2015) experiences on insider-researcher theories. This concludes that the researcher had completed the research methodology and the data collection stage.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Upon the completion of research methods, the researcher proceeded to execute the data analysis phase by processing the raw transcripts and side notes taken during the interview sessions. The researcher used Google Recorder and Otter.ai. applications to produce the interview transcript and audio-recorded data. Both applications were used because they provide the researcher with the practicality and the efficiency by simultaneously generating real-time transcriptions and audio-recording, word by word throughout each session. Furthermore, they also allowed the researcher to use the recordings both for referencing purposes and to keep them as a back-up data. In the event of a technical issue during the interview such as internet disconnection, Otter.ai may become dysfunctional, while Google Recorder would not. Hence, throughout the interview the researcher has used both applications at all times, using a mobile phone

to operate Google Recorder, and a laptop to run Otter.ai live through official website (Otter.ai, n.d). Due to minor technical errors, all ten recordings and transcriptions did require manual examination by the researcher to maintain accuracy and consistency. Once the transcriptions were produced, the researcher sent these transcriptions back to the participants via email for their approval<sup>2</sup>. With the transcripts and written notes, the researcher continued to analyse the data by performing the thematic analysis in order to search for themes that were later used to identify the research factors.

#### **3.3.1 Thematic Analysis**

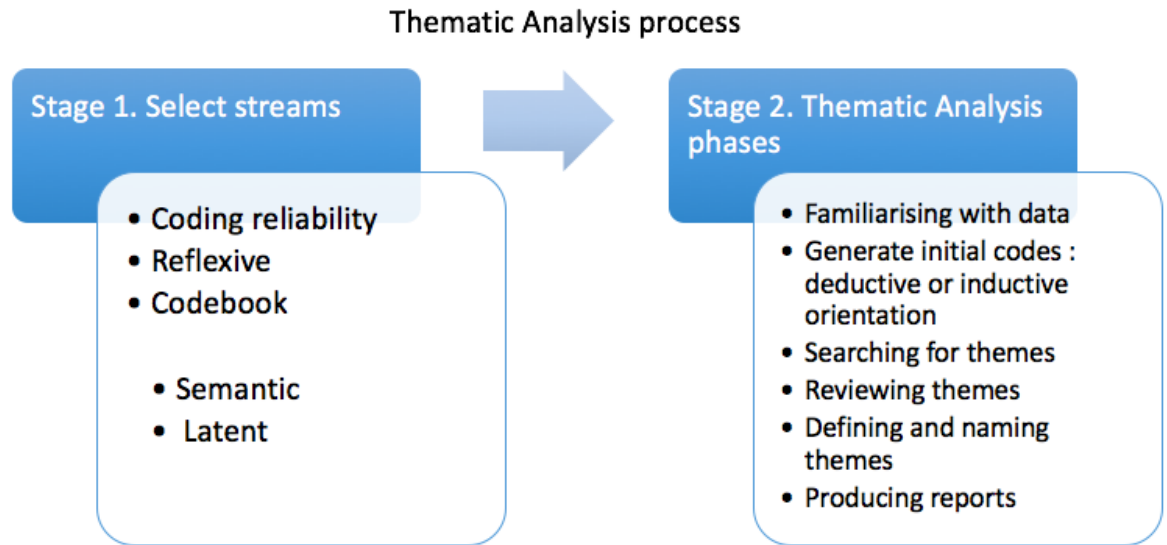
To explore the factors affecting Indonesian graduate's settlement decision, the thematic analysis was chosen to process the collected data. The grounds for selecting this analysis method are its simplicity and the lack of requirement for specific technical knowledge, as expressed by Vaismoradi et al. (2016), Houghton's and Houghton's (2018) supported this view and demonstrated the easiness and good-fit of thematic analysis for a first-time researcher. The only demand for the researcher is to do multiple revisions of the data to find patterns in order to respond to the research question. Thus, the goal of the thematic analysis is to analyse information repetitively to search for commonality from texts in the form of themes (Connelly & Peltzer, 2016). In between, the researcher also experienced the code phase before being able to conclude the major themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). By these means, the thematic analysis tests the researcher's ability to perform the interpretivist paradigm by digesting the complex data from the data collection stage. Smythe and Giddings (2007) also attested that through frequent interaction with the data, it encourages the researchers gets familiar with data patterns in order to uncover themes.

To implement this analysis, the author had referenced to Braun's and Clarke's (2012; 2019) renowned thematic analysis steps that has been a favourite model used by many scholar. Likewise, this research followed their guidelines to practice the six thematic analysis phases, as shown below.

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<sup>2</sup> Clarified at the end of the interview, the researcher would regard permission of transcript if the participants remained unresponsive after three-days sent.

**Figure 4** *Braun's and Clarke's Thematic Analysis process.*



*Note.* Thematic streams (Braun et al., 2019) and phases (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Before the actual process, there are three streams of thematic analysis the researcher can choose from: coding reliability, reflexive, and codebook. Each stream is categorised to suite multiple orientations of the research. For example, the coding reliability involves a coding progress that favours more towards the quantitative research, as its setting would assume the researcher to have a structured code prepared, while the reflexive process is more compatible with a qualitative study that searches for codes from the researcher's perspective to grasp ideas in order to form a storyline. Apart from these, a researcher can opt for code book when neither coding reliability nor reflexive fits their research orientation.

Being correlated with the interpretivist paradigm, reflexive approach was selected because author is trying to search for the similar patterns from the participants' post-study stories that differ from one interview to another. Going further, there are two coding levels to consider other than the three coding streams: the semantic and latent views. The semantic view is when a researcher perceives codes as the truth in its final instance without putting deeper meanings, while the latent view would push the researcher to find a meaning behind each codes he/she selected (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This research undertakes the codes in a latent view, as this allows the researcher to comprehend the codes received from the participant's experiences to make the list of possible factors that would become the thematic analysis themes.

This research will also use Maguire and Delahunt (2017) guidelines to complement Braun and Clarke (2012) thematic analysis steps, to break down the thematic steps into a simpler elements for new researcher to follow. With regards to the six steps from *Figure*



### 3.0 Methodology Chapter

4, the first step of thematic analysis predominantly encourages researchers to be familiar with their data by repetitively reviewing and understanding their transcriptions inside-out. Afterwards, the second step of this process begins with the researcher notes, highlighting or underlining meaningful words in the transcripts.

During this process, a researcher would also need to establish their observational standpoint: deductive and inductive. The deductive approach treats the data with a predetermined attitude, while the inductive one begins from a clean slate and approached the data to generalised ideas (Braun et al., 2019).

The third step then involves the researcher to generate some key words to make a list of codes that can be potential themes. In the next step, we use Maguire's and Delahunt's (2017) framework to test the quality of potential themes by asking the following suggested questions:

- “• *Do the themes make sense?*
- *Does the data support the themes?*
- *Am I trying to fit too much into a theme?*
- *If themes overlap, are they really separate themes?*
- *Are there themes within themes (subthemes)?*
- *Are there other themes within the data?”- (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3358)*

The fifth step will push the researcher further to polish and define the themes from the list of codes. If not confident in finding, researchers can also seek an expert or experienced researcher for an advice. In this case, the researcher of this study had approached her supervisor as a senior and experienced researcher to verify this process. Finally, through lists of codes, the researcher can come to a conclusion to produce not only themes but also subthemes from their data as the product of the thematic analysis.

In a way, the thematic analysis is similar to the research methodology process that requires researchers' deep understanding of each element before performing it. Via frequent check-in with the supervisor, the researcher was able to adopt the thematic analysis smoothly and found three main themes and fifteen subthemes to support the next chapter.

### 3.4 Researcher Identity

This section will present the researcher's autonomy expressed in this study, and her recognition as a researcher under AUT supervision. Therefore, there are some ethical and administrative concerns the researchers must uphold in order to complete this study.

#### ***3.4.1 Ethical Considerations; Trustworthiness and Credibility***

Throughout the research period, the author is compelled to adhere the AUT research policy that subject her to act respectfully, rightfully, responsibly and always ethically to her participants while conducting this study. Similarly, the researcher did not find any signs of implications that may threaten or risk the researcher's, supervisor's or participants' safety and security. This behaviour was in line with the ethical conduct set and approved by the AUT Ethics Committee (AUTEC) even before carrying out this research. Likewise, the researcher has secured and hidden all five participants' identity and therefore advocating and complying to the research confidentiality and anonymity guidelines.

Since this research's focus is participant's experiences, and not their employment details, only certain data, such as the participants' name, age, job title, educational backgrounds and residence status in New Zealand, was collected. This was done to confirm participant's eligibility to contribute to this research, with the information being accessible only by the researcher and her supervisor. The additional security and data means include the whereabouts of storage locations, and destruction of data after six years based on AUTEC protocols, by assuring the participant's identity safety. The researcher has completed the measurements to secure participants' details to her utmost ability to avoid data leak.

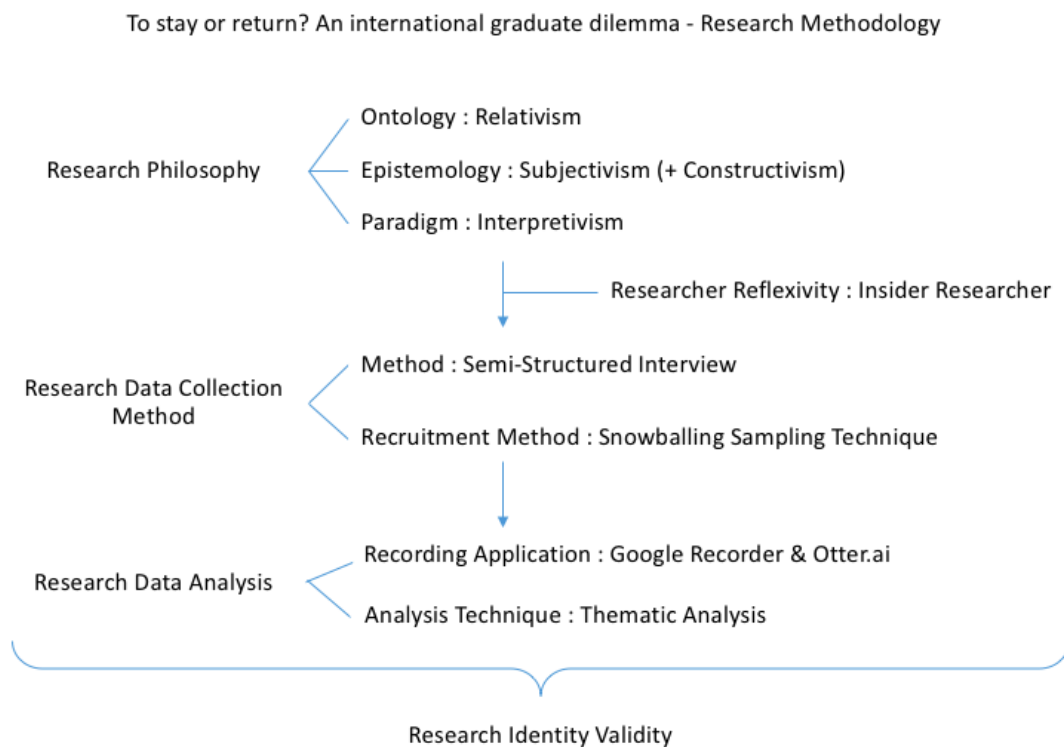
Other than ethical conducts, the researcher would take this chance to highlight her experiences as an insider-researcher and also her relationship with all of the participants. Nguyen (2015) demonstrated that the benefit of being an insider-researcher is higher sense of affiliation by participants that encourage them to express more openly because of the familiar origins. This is further supported by Wolgemuth's et al. (2015) findings, whereas similar background of the researcher and participants resulted in the later to be more enthusiastic in discussing their accomplishments, which would be unlikely to be asked in day-to-day conversation. Due to these reasons, the researcher was able to maintain a positive relationship with all five individuals, which was illustrated by

### 3.0 Methodology Chapter

DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) as a desirable connection that will eventually help researcher to generated quality data. In addition, this also assisted the researcher to ensure the compliance with the following components: ethical conduct, professionalism, open communication and principles of semi-structured interviews.

To summarise, all the information describes in this chapter the visualisation below shows the main choices and methods used.

**Figure 5** *Summary of methodology chapter.*



*Note.* Overall research methodology chapter summary.

## 4.0 Findings

This chapter will present the result of the thematic analysis in the forms of themes and subthemes. With the opportunity to gain personal insights into the factors which encourage Indonesian Students to settle in New Zealand rather than returning to Indonesia, the five successful Indonesian graduates, this study can now show the true experiences of an Indonesian students' transitional phase in New Zealand. The chapter begins by introducing the recruited participants of this study: Agus, Indah, Bambang, Putri and Maya, as well as their profiles in order to satisfy the recruitment criteria. Subsequently, the themes and subthemes will be represented as the identified factors that have affected the participants end decisions to stay in New Zealand rather than returning to Indonesia.

### 4.1 The Participants

All participants met the criteria as outlined in the methodology Chapter, i.e., under 35 years old, graduated from a New Zealand tertiary institution and lived in New Zealand for a minimum of three years. Shown in Table 2 below, each participant is given a pseudonym, and represented by their basic information, such as qualifications, occupation and current visa status to fulfil the ethics criteria. All participants have also signed a consent form in order to prove their voluntary actions by contributing to this research.

**Table 2** *Participant's background information.*

Pseudonym names	Age	Gender	Qualification	Occupation	Years in New Zealand	Visa status
Agus	24	Male	Bachelor of Finance & Accounting	Accountant	6	Work Visa
Indah	27	Female	Master of Science & Business	Associates Project Manager	8	Permanent Residence Visa
Bambang	22	Male	Bachelor of Information Technology	Software Developer	4	Work Visa
Putri	28	Female	Master of Disaster Management	Geospatial Analyst	3	Work Visa
Maya	33	Female	Bachelor of Commerce	Administrator	19	Permanent Residence Visa

*Note.* All participants had fulfilled the criteria set.

The recruited participants have diverse range of age, gender and occupations. While four of the five participants have lived in New Zealand for less than 10 years, one participant out-lived others with a substantial 19 years. This participant came to New Zealand not only to complete an university degree, but also to complete her secondary and tertiary education some time before. With respect to their immigration status, all participants had credible visa status allowing them to stay and work in New Zealand at the time of the study, with two of them having a resident visa, and three possessing an eligible working and staying visa.

## 4.2 Themes Findings

From Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis steps, the researcher identified three broad key themes: circumstances, opportunities and relationships as this chapter's main agenda. Alongside with the subthemes of each themes, this section will present participants experiences that influenced their chances to settle in New Zealand. The section will illustrate the logic behind each theme as perceived by the participants that will contribute towards each factor<sup>3</sup>.

### **4.2.1 Circumstances**

The first key theme, circumstances, looks at the participants reconciliation with the host country situation they encountered after studies in New Zealand. As some participant had subjective opinion before coming to New Zealand, while others, simply chose the country because of their personal interest from previous trips, each participant had different motives to come and study in New Zealand. Nonetheless, all participants do share one common goal: for they all have considered acknowledged the prospects of the country and decided to stay after graduation.

However, before they came to this conclusion, all participants also described their own way of dealing with the dilemma by looking from different perspectives. Thus, in this first themes of circumstances, the researcher will present their decision-making process to also consider other countries before mediating their end decision to stay rather than moving away. The circumstances here will be defined from the participants point of view

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<sup>3</sup> Disclaimer: there might be slang phrases and grammatical errors in the quotations from the interviews to maintain the natural narrative style of the participants themselves.

in their references to evaluate a country attributes that can either drive, influence or avoid them to migrate other than obtaining an international degree.

Within the circumstance themes, there will six subthemes to underline the participants' early migration plans and also impressions of each country's circumstances that can fit their needs. Therewith, subthemes will be related to the circumstances of New Zealand, Indonesia, other potential host countries, future relocation plans and even Covid-19 that have cross thought in the participants mind during the decision-making process. Although most of these participants are firm to stay, the word of circumstances best describes their first challenges in face with the – to stay or returning dilemma.

##### 4.2.1.1 New Zealand

Even if each participant had different reasons to stay, they do agree that the life in New Zealand offers much better environment than in Indonesia. They pointed out such attributes as comfortability, suitability, and possibilities as their main driver to choose New Zealand over Indonesia. A simple statement from Bambang to grasp a general idea of how they have perceived New Zealand can served as a good overview of participant's feelings.

*"Well, generally New Zealand is much more structured in terms of law and taxes... everything is transparent compared to Indonesia. And other than that, most people will probably treat you more equally here." - (Bambang)*

With this, Bambang showed the positive side of living in a developed country comparing to the developing one and proved his (also other's) success in adjusting and gaining familiarity with their host country. Thus, shaping their lifestyle around New Zealand culture and habits while they spend time abroad, has ultimately influenced their desire to stay post-study. This was justified by Indah;

*"I already kind of know how to navigate life here, and I've already built my community and a lot of friends as well... I know Auckland like the back of my hand... even with the work wise. I know a lot of people now with my connection... So, it does feel like a second home." - (Indah)*

Apart of their successful adaptation into New Zealand culture, these participants were also keen to show the practical knowledge they have gained upon completing their studies in New Zealand. This shows the participants' capability to recognise the

advantages they earned by studying in New Zealand, which supported their professional or personal goals in the host country comparing to other states;

*"I've only got my background or experiences in New Zealand all of it... I haven't actually got an experience working in Indonesia before. So, I don't know how different it is working here comparing to Indonesia or any other countries... But I mean one of the targets is getting the certified accountant and, at the same time, getting more experiences in New Zealand so that's kind of like my main objective to stay here anyway."* - (Agus)

*"The friendliness of people here and the laid-back nature of working here, I mean like compared to Singapore or other Asian countries they expect you to work hard. They expect you to have over time but here not so much, so they prefer work life balance here more."* - (Bambang)

Apart from work preferences, one participant was particularly encouraged by her father to stay in the host country, even before coming to New Zealand. As she knew how critical and conscious is her father towards her self-development and the benefits she can received by staying in a prospective country, the daughter made the following statement:

*"... he sees that our way of life is your soft skills, your critical thinking, how you see the world, they think of it if we don't send them to a developed country, they wouldn't learn and they wouldn't go into the pace where the future is."* - (Maya)

Her father's statement definitely influenced Maya wanting to settle in New Zealand irrespective of the qualification gained. Similarly, Putri considered not only her personal future but also for the benefits she can achieved for her future children by settling in New Zealand.

*"... one day I want to have a family, I think that's much better for my future children to stay in a better place rather than Indonesia... It will be nice to just born in here."* - (Putri)

In addition, Indah also contributed her reluctance to return was due to the limitation of work opportunities and financial positioning that she might not have independently achieved in Indonesia:

*"What makes me want to stay? I think it is the field that I am in. I don't think that the field exists in Indonesia back home. So, the field is a*

#### 4.0 Findings Chapter

*combination of science and business. Yeah, so it's more attractive in New Zealand. And then also the salary versus living costs is much more doable here." - (Indah)*

With regards to financial aspect, Bambang also extended his arguments towards the topic of entrepreneurship opportunities and business transparency in New Zealand in case he wants to launch a start-up.

*"At this point, I never thought about having an international career because salary in New Zealand, here is enough to live on your own. I would say and another advantage is that like I purposely mentioned is that their business structure is simple and it's very easy to start a business here. The law regulation and everything. I mean, there are some great areas of course, but it is much clearer sort of speak." - (Bambang)*

Different to others, Putri highlighted that personal growth was one of her critical moments during her residency in New Zealand, especially when she had to move from Auckland to Wellington for a contract job.

*"When I move to Wellington that was the hardest to adapt to the new environment... it's just hard at first but then I feel it's good for me because I can learn more... with this environment, I can know more people and then get mingled more to others than Indonesian." - (Putri)*

To sum, these participants had shown great deal of future vision and considerable thoughts of New Zealand circumstances to support of their long-term goals. In this case, the participants had considered other aspects, such as building one's own family, business opportunities and independence as they slowly thought about reaching adulthood in New Zealand. Furthermore, it shows that these participants are future-oriented and have strong inclination towards New Zealand's circumstantial benefits that made them to stay further.

##### 4.2.1.2 Potential Host Countries

Interestingly, New Zealand was not every participant's first educational host country choice. The majority was considering other places, such as Australia, Singapore, United States of America, and even Switzerland. Yet, all participants organically found their way to New Zealand and decided to stay after graduation. For instance, in Agus's and Bambang's cases -



*"... I actually considered studying in Singapore... but in the end I decided to complete my high school. And then chose to study here in New Zealand... because I find the country quite isolated from the others and I like quiet place. And I also previously compared it with studying in Australia, but I find Australia to be much more expensive than New Zealand." - (Bambang)*

*"It was Australia at first because I've got a family in Australia, but then because of the politics between Indonesia and Australia the regulation and stuff that keeps changing and last time there was a problem between the Australian the embassy and Indonesians." - (Agus)*

The political issue Agus referred to was the Indonesia-Australia spying case between the two countries (Davidson & Weaver, 2013). Therefore, for Agus it was apparent that an external factor did affects his decision, but for others, such as Bambang and Maya, the decision was purely organic and inspired by their personal travel experiences. In this situation, we will look at Maya's discussion with her parents in determining her selection of the host country to come to a conclusion to select New Zealand.

*"... A country where I don't have anybody, so I can adjust and have that life skills because they thought education in Indonesia is not good enough for them, so they thought they choose between Australia, New Zealand, and America, they thought America got too much guns. Australia has too many Indonesian people in Melbourne... So, they sent me here, where the sheeps are." - (Maya)*

Compared to Maya, Indah and Putri was purely attracted to New Zealand because the universities offer the curriculums that they sought to obtain. To the certain extent, it becomes apparent that these participant's decision to come to New Zealand somewhat relates to personal preferences, as some of them deliberately avoided other popular host countries, backfired by their reputations. Thus, for these participants New Zealand become the second-best preferable host country, where they can settle in the long term.

##### 4.2.1.3 New Zealand-Indonesia Setbacks

Clearly, Maya's father was not the only one who was critical about the prospect of Indonesia for future generations. Putri experienced these limitations first-hand; and in her situation, her moved to New Zealand was a way to escape:

*"... my reason to pursue higher studies purely because I want to shift my career... I used to be an engineer before and work for an oil and gas company and just don't feel like that's what I want, so I decided to study Disaster Management... New Zealand is the only one that has Master in Disaster Management... because I want to work in a non-governmental organization and do something for humanity that's the biggest reason and that's definitely why I don't want to go back." - (Putri)*

Although, in reality, graduating from New Zealand does not truly guarantees participants employability as they might have expected, which was shown in Indah's case -

*"...studied here for three years for Bachelor of Science, and I think at the end of that degree I started looking for work, but I feel like, the science industry isn't looking so good. For the job availability... it looks like it's just not possible for a science major, who graduated from a bachelor's degree to get a job, you need minimum like a master degree to get to like a lowest position in a laboratory... the minimum one wants the people to have at least a master... I feel like I don't want to specify or going to research. So, I decided to study two more years and it's a business degree." - (Indah)*

Consequently, participants do face unforeseen setbacks in their progress to work in New Zealand, especially on the employability rate for the graduates of their major. Thus, Maya and Indah demonstrated the need of the support system, particularly for international students.

*".... back then there is nobody, committee or organization that can help international students or graduates can go to, to get advice or consultancy for free. Often when I try to go to international office for example in Auckland University back then, they don't have all the details and everything because everybody's visa's situation is different. So often people in the international office themselves, they don't understand, they can't give you advice. Maybe also they're not legally allowed to give you advice because they're not immigration consultants. So, I can understand, but it's sort of like I don't know what I don't know, and I don't know where to get the help and the information, so I sort navigate all of this myself." - (Indah)*

At the same time, Maya's story shows that the situation has not changed a lot for international graduates. Back to her post-graduation period, there were barrier to enter New Zealand's job market without an intermediary to connect them to local professional network.

*"I don't really actually have that support well, this is back then anyway of what career path I want to choose or some guidance or what I want to do... there's no experiential learning at all, there's no connection with real life, there's no internship or anything like that, you only get internship while you're finishing your degree and then if you happen to know somebody, let's say if I want to work in Company B or C, and stuff the people that gets there are the people that their parents know from somebody there, so you get your internship there for six months to a year, and you would not be paid. And then we as international students, you will never get it because you got no visa." - (Maya)*

Within the professional context, these participants also pointed out the occurrences of discrimination or harassment during their stay in New Zealand. Nevertheless, according to their response, it does not seem to alter these participants' intention in order to settle down after graduation. It shows that these participants are resilience to these incidents and grew stronger to counteract social backlash while they are in New Zealand. Two examples from the incidents happened to two participants are narrated below:

*"There was this one time experience this people (Author's note: a stranger) who's like... trying to seduce me because I'm wearing a hijab... Because I responded in the Arabic language and I know how to answer and like he thought that I was open to talk to him... I guess he's from the Middle East. it's just like not nice but happens after so I was like, it's kind of traumatizing me... So, I was trying to be more open about it, because I cannot change how people think." - (Putri)*

*"... I mean you know here, you encounter racist people, not gonna lie to you. You walk in the supermarket and somebody yells - go back to your own country, you Chinese people. I am like - okay, I am not from China but sure. Things happen like that..." - (Maya)*

Unpleasant at times, but what is more important is participants' maturity to handle the stress and social challenges of being a foreigner abroad.

### 4.2.1.4 Indonesia

Despite these participants are determined to settle in New Zealand, this does not relieve them from the thoughts of returning home at difficult times. Some participants did visualise how their life would be if they returned and what reasons could convince them to do it. Here, the subthemes present the influences of business and family duties that can be the primary push factors for participants to return home. For example, Bambang identified the discrepancy of market sizes between Indonesia and New Zealand:

*"Mostly business opportunity, the size of the market is definitely larger back home, especially in the Asian regions, everything and everyone is there essentially, I mean New Zealand is only like five million people live in it, and my hometown itself has twice the number of it." - (Bambang)*

Indah's conjoint thoughts of business and parents' wellbeing as external factors and the general familiarity with Indonesian status quo could have a big effect on her. As she identified:

*"The fact that my parents are back home. Also, it is sort of like if I go back home, I already can see how my life can turn out... Cheaper living costs. I suppose. Easier to find business. Easy to make new business and the culture as well Asian culture." - (Indah)*

While in the matter of participant's own family plans, Maya expressed an opposite view on child-rearing intentions in comparison to Putri's previous comments. Maya was eager to place her future children in Indonesia for upbringing purpose to let her mother to raise them for her, simultaneously retaining their future residency in New Zealand:

*"If one day we have a kid. I might just send them back to Indonesia, they can get my mom to take care of them. Get them till they're older, tell them - I know this is difficult, it's very hard in Indonesia and very hot. The opposite of me, I'll send them there just to learn it's the language as well... I can just pump them with Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese dialects... Because my mom can teach them Chinese dialects and which I probably wouldn't, I will talk to them in English, in the sense of culture as well that's been lost... That was basically it, just to get the experience. And then things are a lot cheaper, there you go." - (Maya)*

In this case, Maya might temporarily return to Indonesia for her children, because she wants them to have a strong affiliation with Indonesian culture and plausibly lessen the

financial burden. The opposite opinion was found in the words of Bambang and Putri, who did not feel the need to impose their Indonesian identity. Therefore, abstracting away their cultural roots, both of them were determined to stay in New Zealand after all.

*"I think I lost some Indonesian Identity, but for me like personally. I think it's good for me because I learn more about myself." - (Putri)*

*"But to be honest, I don't really have an identity so to speak. Because my hometown is quite an International. I don't really know much about Indonesian culture anyway, so it doesn't really make it any difference." - (Bambang)*

Coincidentally, none of the participants have immediate family-business to run or inherent. Still, Maya stresses about the unstable family responsibility she is confronted with and that might be one of the major factors forcing her to return. The challenge for her was that the father initially wanted her to leave Indonesia, but after he passed away, she become heavily bounded by another person to take care of back home.

*"To be honest if the incident did not happen, I'll be happy, but now that there is this situation back home which is my mom, Which I still must be responsible back home... It makes me wonder why her parents sends her there, where if things go sour, they expect me to come right back. So that's one other thing. I mean now I will never go back if otherwise but now because there's another factor coming in it makes you wonder what was the point of going out and then you sort of try to find that reason - I think it's still better to stay here for the future and everybody is come from different background everybody got their worries and problems, so yeah, I think at this point I'll be here staying here." - (Maya)*

Nevertheless, Maya still try her best to stay and think of options other than to return. In this sense, participants also understand the potential loss they have to face if they return; foremost, their freedom, independence, and autonomy. To illustrate this by using Indah's experience, who nearly had to return home back then:

*"... my visa almost expired and if I had to go back home then it was sort of like disappointing for me because even though it would be okay back home...I will be okay financially as in I could get a job even though it's not related to my field probably. But it's sort of like I have to rely on my parents, stay in their house and everything and I just wanted to try being independent and how to support yourself." - (Indah)*

#### 4.0 Findings Chapter

Aside from personal frustration, Agus and Maya also expressed their reluctance to return because of Indonesia's impractical administration system.

*"...in Indonesia you pay tax, and you don't see anything, like things like health system here, if you're here, they took care of you, but in Indonesia, you get this BPJS (Badan Penyelenggara Jaminan Sosial Kesehatan; Indonesia Social Security Administrator for Health) which you pay but you're still on the queue every time you go there." - (Maya)*

For Agus specifically, the issue was the lack of a social support system in senior care, meaning that he might have to consider a way to take care of his parents later in the future.

*"... we, Indonesian, like the government is good, but we did have a lot of population compared to New Zealand. It's 20 times compare to New Zealand even more and we don't have that privilege where the government will look after your parents when you are old. So that consciousness of having a thought that your parents won't be look after worries me at the same time as well." - (Agus)*

In addition, there is also the socio-political tensions exist in Indonesia.

*"...I'm very proud to be Indonesian, that's where I come from and the only thing that I wasn't really quite proud of I wish that the government would have treated us a bit better. I mean, maybe that we are not like the "Pribumi" (author's note: Indonesian direct descendent) people, but then feel bad. We are as much as Indonesian as those who have been there, if that's the case if they have treated us a bit better. I think my parents would not have sent me here." - (Maya)*

Regardless of the situations, these participants prioritised their goal to build their life in New Zealand for now, even if some still face uncertain future implications that might reflect back to them and leave the topic of the return open.

##### 4.2.1.5 Relocation Abroad

Above all, these participants had managed to secure employment and stayed in New Zealand after graduation. Yet, it also does not rule out their possibility to migrate elsewhere. Four of five participants did see it as an alternative when neither New Zealand

nor Indonesia can meet their needs or growth, mainly due to their professional ambitions. Putri's case was exemplarily story, when moving to New Zealand was the opportunity, she took to change her career and pursue a higher education. While for the rest of the participants, relocation to another host country from New Zealand would only be necessary if they were to face the same professional ambition as Putri.

*"... if I can move to a big country like Australia-USA with really big businesses. Of course, I want to move there because my major is in business and accounting. So, getting my experience in a big business that keep growing and having a better economic factor within the countries like in USA and working in one of the big companies like in Wall Street will be a big achievement for me. So yes, that's kind of one of my factors to go outside of New Zealand." - (Agus)*

*" My backup plan was to apply to Singapore if I didn't get any job here. but due to the circumstances right now, it's quite difficult to move, so I don't really have a choice but to stay for now." - (Bambang)*

##### 4.2.1.6 Covid-19 Impacts

Alike Bambang regards to Covid-19, this also triggered some participants to discuss how it had affected their life choices being locked in New Zealand. For instance, Agus took this chance to seek a master's degree, while Bambang was struggling to get employment in the beginning.

*"... because of Covid-19 as probably harder to get through the visa and immigration with other countries while I'm staying in New Zealand, why not pursuing my mastering in New Zealand as well." - (Agus)*

*"After graduation, the hardest part is actually landing the first job. Especially with Covid, it gets even harder because companies are on hiring freeze, or they are only looking for senior position... Well, the university has some interns program thing that connects you with companies that are looking for interns, but unfortunately that was temporarily shut down due to Covid. So other than Seek (Author's note: Job e-marketplace), I probably just see from LinkedIn or maybe over a referral from my previous mentor." - (Bambang)*

As for Maya and her partner, the pandemic delayed their plans to relocate abroad and forced them to stay in New Zealand for undefined period.

*"But then because of Covid we just stay put, he (Author's note: Maya's husband) always wanted to live in another country ... it was to either Australia or state we were nearly moving to Hawaii... maybe in the future... you never know, okay once Covid has passed. I think we will reassess again what we want to do...I'll probably bring my mom here, it has to be the other way around. I can't go back." - (Maya)*

In this case, Covid-19 induce both positive and negative situations for these participants while they reside in New Zealand. With this, the section concludes the first theme of circumstances that best describe the overall arguments that influenced, drives, forced and determined participants reconciliation and decisions to settle in New Zealand. We can conclude that it is not only about country's location or attribute, but rather very specific, case sensitive, personal, and situational circumstances of each participant that contributes to the final decision-making process in determining their migration plans.

### **4.2.2 Opportunities**

In this second set of themes, the study will further investigate participants' stress towards the various situations once they have made their decision to stay, especially, the ones related to their entry-to-work situations when they confronted with various challenges. In this section, the theme contents following subthemes: resources, career, visa and personal goals. Their stories will narrate about personal commitments and struggle to build their lives in New Zealand, secure a job place and the actions that refrain them from returning home.

#### **4.2.2.1 Resources**

Although resources may not be a big factor, the study would claim that these participants received financial aid from their parents to have the time needed to secure a job during the transitional phase. Consequently, the majority of participants had sufficient funds and for their daily expenses while searching for employment. Nevertheless, some pointed out that they had taken on odd jobs to make ends met before starting to work in their fields of expertise. Thus, most participants did not show much monetary hardship during their job-hunting process, for which they are grateful for their parents' contribution to support their goal in order to pursue residency in New Zealand.



### 4.2.2.2 Career

Employment and visa were two the major components that these participants were struggling with in order to settle in New Zealand post-study. Most of them had to deal with fulfilment of immigration criteria simultaneously finding a job place and maintain their daily life.

*“Well the thing is that in order to get the work visa, then I need to have a permanent full-time job... So, before I can get the visa, then I need to get a job first. But I know once the job is certain, once there is a job offer which is like a permanent full-time and related to what I'm doing. Then, I definitely would be fine with the visa. It's the job. It's the job that is super difficult.” – (Indah)*

This became a key factor to determine the participants success of passing the immigration process once their post-graduate visa expires. Furthermore, each participant also experiences this stage differently and so there is no designated path to guide them in order to secure their second step of New Zealand two-step scheme. The examples below will show each participant's employment stories, as some were more fortunate than others. While for those who did not, this participant will have to resort to other possibilities in order to secure their employment opportunities. Starting from Agus who got his employment early on through his university career fair.

*“...it wasn't that hard to be honest for me, because I got my job... from my internship partly from UNITEC itself. I got this job as an intern for three months as account administrator and then job myself up to group accountant pretty much... I know a lot of people struggling on to get there, while I have that privilege through my university getting the internship and stuff so that's really an achievement ” - (Agus)*

Whereas for Indah and Putri, they were offered a contract and had to move to Wellington. Indah returned back to Auckland in succeeding to get a permanent job, while Putri continued to stay in Wellington at the time of the interview.

*“At that time, I was moving for the opportunity. I don't mind moving into any city in New Zealand, even the small one because I know like there's not many people who want to live in a small city. I didn't mind, I just need to find a job.” - (Putri)*

Therefore, in order to secure their visa extension, these graduates were seeking for any opportunities they can get and showed strong optimistic attitudes, as well as willingness to relocate in order to reside in New Zealand. Being aim-oriented, Putri commented that it was just a matter of time until she gets her desired job:

*"So, at the time I keep applying for a job during my spare time because the casual job requires a lot of time and it's a physical job, so it's tires me a lot. I keep like looking for a better job and then suddenly the company I applied told me - I'm sorry that you failed the process but if you don't mind there's this manager from Company A that is interested in your profile and we would like to refer you to them. And then we get them touch, had interviews and recruitment processes and I got accepted"- (Putri)*

Meanwhile, from her past experience, Indah also learned over time how to improve her employability by constantly learning to adapt and improvising her resume in order to be recruiter's ideal candidate.

*"I think the experience is definitely better because obviously I kind of know what to expect, and then I just know better how to navigate. I guess you know, what the employer is looking for, so that's for example, like once I find something then I can take action immediately, so like start writing the letter and everything, trying to call the company, I guess I knew better on how to what they're looking for. But it's still hard, in terms of securing the decision, of course." - (Indah)*

Similarly, three out of five participants mentioned university career consultants did not provide enough help in securing a job. As a result, some participants utilised an online employment website called Seek. An approach successfully used by Bambang, Putri and Indah to find their current employers. In addition, Maya also emphasised on the importance of a local job experiences that helped her in the past to increase her employment chances after graduation. She confirmed that by doing this it shows recruiter that she has basic knowledge of New Zealand work environment and culture that make her stand out in the job-hunting process.

*"... I feel like once I finish, if I don't have experience working who will sort of hire me, I just did a lot of part time jobs. I only do promo work, because promo work looks good in your CV as if you've done a lot of things. And they pay you quite good because it's one job for promotion,*

*marketing job, so I just did that... So that's something to keep in mind of and in terms of employability try to do little jobs here and there just to build your CV because it's important when you apply for a job CV... where you apply for where you work will show your work experience." - (Maya)*

Hence, from these participants experiences, a job opportunity seems to be scarce for international graduates. When they are attainable, it will be primarily dependent on the individual's own ability and dedication to pursue the target as well as his/her individual own professional background. Luck, perhaps, might also be a contributing factor to describe these participants employment processes, especially when it comes to the right setting and timing of the job market.

##### 4.2.2.3 Visa

New challenges come with the need to secure a sponsorship in order to path their residency status in New Zealand. Normally, it is required to obtain full-time position in order to receive sponsorship document for visa application. The participants were frustrated when an employer did not intend to do so. Furthermore, participants found themselves in a confusing situation to truly understand the visa procedure that supposed to be easy for them to get.

*"... the immigration and the university they don't talk to each other, they just expect you to pay, make sure that your visa is there and I'm not sure whether they still do those your health (Author's note: health examination for visa application) is okay... I mean employability is a big thing, because you promised students, once you get this parchment paper, you'll get a job, a lot of time it doesn't happen. A lot of other people go back. I got friends, not just people from Indonesia but from elsewhere, where they can't get a job ..." - (Maya)*

This proved a significant challenge even for these participants to satisfy both requirements, as they were not given the opportunity or practical support in the first place.

*"... it's like a chicken and egg thing... You have two requirements here, you have to get the job right, you have to beat every other applicant for the job, that's one requirement. The second requirement is for the company that you applied for, they need to want to help you with your*

*paperwork, and often you know, it's often one of the two, if somehow the company is okay with helping you with the paperwork." - (Indah)*

Through her experience, Indah also expresses strong criticism in dealing with the matter:

*"That time, what is really frustrating is that, when I apply for a job in a company, for example, they would have to have helped my paperwork in terms of work visa. And then for some small companies who have never employed a migrant for example, they don't know what kind of paperwork or they don't know how it works, so often they get really scared, they got they get really nervous, they don't want to you know, they don't want to hire them, they don't want to bother with hiring migrants." - (Indah)*

Furthermore, Agus, Maya, and Putri also pointed out forms of selective recruitment when they were applying for jobs. Often, they perceived to be a victim of unfair rejection partly because of their immigration status rather than their incapability to perform the tasks.

*"...it's really hard when you're in an immigrant, to be honest... because I've been through an interview until like final stages. But at the end day, they didn't really go with me or because I'm still on international visa, not resident yet, although they keep mentioned they are okay with the working visa in their job description, but you know when they have another candidate who are resident or citizen of course, they will go to the one compare to mine." - (Agus)*

Besides, the employer can also be ambiguous in providing the sponsorship to the participant even when she is already employed.

*"I'm the only one with the visa, the rest of them are all New Zealand citizens, so yeah. Say I've been having talking about this matter with him and he tried his best to help me because he wants me to stay in the team. But I was supposed to looking for another opportunity like a permanent position in other company because I don't know whether they will have this opportunity for me or not." - (Putri)*

Other than Bambang's case, where his profession is included into New Zealand's demanded skilled immigrants list, other participants felt employer may play favouritism towards domestic graduates because it eliminates their burden to go through sponsorship paperwork, despite them having the same accredited qualifications.

Another interesting point that went unnoticed by others in relates to an international graduate's chance to employment but highlighted by Indah in the following:

*"It's the definitely getting the job, because well most of migrants will usually take and try to take the skilled migrant visa for them to stay here, they need to have a job that is related to their expertise or their education. So, it is getting the job... but I do wonder because you know how like people when they apply for a job, they look at your surname or something right, and the thing that I would never know if back then I was discriminated or not. Based just on my name. But yeah, I do wonder." - (Indah)*

##### 4.2.2.4 Personal goals

Withstanding all these challenges, the participants still strive and managed to settle in New Zealand. Solely in the hope of achieving their goals from self-development to independence, these participants have endured various hardships to invest in their desired futures. This is notable for high achievers like Agus and Indah:

*"... I do have certain objectives that I really wanted to achieve before certain age... that's why I am doing CPA (Author's note: Certified Public Accountant) Australia - New Zealand, because once you get the CPA it's certified accountant basically... the main reason that I'm delaying my master's degrees also because of my residency, I'm waiting for that... I'm comfortable enough with what I've done so far in my decision to stay in New Zealand... I do wanted to actually grow further, especially getting my work experience in another company and more international businesses." - (Agus)*

*"... if I can go back in time, I definitely would want to change several things, for example, like doing more part-time work when we're studying so it's adding to my experience... so it's not so hard when I was searching for a job full time... Another one is that I would make more professional connection. So just like knowing more people and talking to more people... also, maybe had a bit of a gap semester..." - (Indah)*

In turn, for Putri and Maya, they used all means to avoid returning to Indonesia because of the social stamp and perception of a failure:

*"I don't really want to go back and it's another social pressure actually because it's just come from myself like this ego, like I don't want to go back and be told like- oh you go back, because you cannot leave... make a living in New Zealand and then you just go back, people will see me as a failure for something like that, it's just an ego like I don't want to be seen as a failure, so yeah. "- (Putri)*

*"a lot of time, if the kids go back this is back then my time anyway, they see it as a failure... The moment you come back then they talk they're like - oh there must be a failure, they must not have finished their degree and if you come back it's like - you already study for three/four years and then you come back for what? and sometimes whatever they're studying, it's not even related to the business."- (Maya)*

Hence, this conclude the opportunities themes as these participants has shown the extra steps they went through to claim their current success. The ego play its own role by making them to stand up after they fail and supporting to overcome any challenges ahead in order to gain employment.

### **4.2.3 Relationships**

Lastly, the participants stated the relationships as their final push that contributed to their settlement decision. Therefore, this section will look at participants' interaction with others while they live abroad. Namely, this concerns their relationships with their families, friends, partners, relatives and even their affiliation to the host country's population, each of which will become the subthemes.

#### **4.2.3.1 Family**

In South-East Asia, a family is almost the priority of an individual life. Indonesians are not exception. Not only it is important, but the immediate family also acts as a graduate's powerhouse to succeed in their studies. Therefore, the parent's impression about life abroad would also impact a graduate's mobility plan, like in Maya's case with her father. In this study, all of the participants' parents show a positive attitude about their child's decision to stay in New Zealand. The encouragement alone could set up Indonesian participants to stay, in comparison to those who don't have such firm support from their parents.

*".... my dad don't want us to go back, he's like - don't worry about the family business you live your life, do your own thing, because his mind is a bit forward thinking than the rest of my uncles or aunties, as they will send their kids overseas and expect them to come back. But, not him, he's like - don't come back, don't worry about anything else, you just live your life and you know my role as a dad is to send and cultivate you in your own way and that's your own responsibility..." - (Maya)*

Particularly, these participants' parents also understand their children desire to settle abroad and try to match it with their desire, as well as showing concern for their children's wellbeing abroad from time to time.

*"They were very supportive of my decision because in the end they believed that I know what's best not them, so they don't really bother too. They probably just ask whether well just ask critical questions like - Are you sure you want to go there or? What's the prospect there can you find any jobs after finishing the school or how good their education are? More or less those kind of questions, fundamental questions." - (Bambang)*

*"Well, if you're not counting Covid-19 at all, they are totally fine ... I still can actually go to Indonesia any time. I mean, I normally went back to Indonesia for at least once a year, for a month at the fair at least as well ... but I mean, their reaction for me to stay in like forever in New Zealand... They kind of okay, as long as I can maintain myself here, and I know what I'm doing in the future." - (Agus)*

Even then, there are some contradiction in some parents' supportive messages, as in Agus's case:

*"... in Indonesia, especially if you're Chinese-Indonesian and you are a son of the family, they want you to stay in Indonesia, they want you to stay with your family kind of, they want you to be... close with them... I'm supposed they are okay as long as I am able to maintain myself and sufficient to myself, and kind of achieved my goal... They're not really allowing me to stay forever in New Zealand, to be honest. At the fair at least, they are not gonna accept me to take my citizenship here..." - (Agus)*

*"Well I think, deep down in their heart they always want me to back. like in our culture it is common for daughters to stay at home or getting married and then stay close to their parents so we can take care of our parents, but they never actually tell me to go back and respect my decision." - (Putri)*

*"But my mom is different, she's like - oh we got this business, who's gonna take care of it because my brother doesn't want it now. My brother lives in Japan, so the business now is just run by my uncle and my mom's sort of just tap out. So, think of it my uncle's taking over, as a manager or something rather than the owner and my mom still the owner. And yes, I guess, my mom will probably like me to go back but because I've been here for so long. I'm so out of touch when it's become like I'm an Indonesian but not really an Indonesian. You know what I mean, because I wouldn't know how things work at home anymore. I haven't been back and my brother doesn't want to go back. Again, my dad always tells him - no, don't come back." - (Maya)*

Despite the ambiguity in their conversations, some graduates would also return, if needed.

*"...if my parents require assistance or any help from me then I might consider going back." - (Bambang)*

*"It's again family because they still have the business there. I might have to go back because they have houses and their business... it's going to be family, my immediate family, which is my mom, at the moment that's the most important thing but apart from that I'm not going back." - (Maya)*

Aside from their parents' controversial response, one participant extended that their success abroad would also make the parents proud back in Indonesia.

*"... you know in Indonesia is a culture where people like to compare... , I don't know about you because with parents it's like- my kids are in X and Y... whose wallet was the biggest you know, like who does your kids marry and what social life... so if your kids are overseas, they're like - oh my kids are overseas, my kids got to Yale, like it's whatever." - (Maya)*



4.2.3.2 Friends

As vital as family, participants identified the importance of friendships in their time abroad. No matter if the friends is from Indonesian community or local population, all participants regarded friendship as one of the direct supports to rely on or possibly stimulate their decision to stay. From the positive side, the participants mentioned the benefit of companionship, ranging from cultural expansion to support.

*"... since New Zealand is somewhat a migrant country, so friends from different nationalities with different background, different culture and most of them are very friendly and open." - (Bambang)*

*"... I've already built my friends and community over here, they make me want to stay because it's like a second family as well, so I don't feel super sort of here alone." - (Indah)*

On the opposite note, Agus pointed out the difficulty to maintain his friendship with fellow Indonesians in New Zealand.

*"... like the main thing is that you don't have a friend that can actually stay here all the way... there are lots of Indonesian student coming here either like studying master or bachelor, and there is an age gap as well... furthermore because you know the regulation keep changing with immigration and they're all also people are coming to me - I'm going back to Indonesia or other countries at the end so it's really hard to settle..." - (Agus)*

Apart from the inconsistent friendship, Putri expresses the positiveness of meeting other foreign students during her study period, which introduces her to the idea of settling in New Zealand.

*"After I met a lot of people in university, I have become different. Like most of them already work in New Zealand, they study, take masters and they share their experience. It becomes the most common topic for everyone in the university... They say that New Zealand offers a lot of opportunities towards migrant to stay if you want to stay here for good. Then I just start to consider that it might be a good plan B for me, giving in an option to come back if I didn't get a job in Indonesia... so I was like,*

*I might give it a try like that last thing. Going back first was my priority and then if the plans don't work and I'll just come back later." - (Putri)*

Thus, friendships help the participants to be grounded while facing similar situation and challenges by establishing mutual form of an essential support system for one another. Shown from their comments, the relationships they had with others manifest a positive attitude and probability to stay in New Zealand.

#### 4.2.3.4 Partnership

At the time of the interview, only Maya was married, and interestingly there are different opinions about partnership that would determine their decision to settle in New Zealand. Three out of five stated that it was not their priority at the time of the interview, while for Putri and Maya having a partner did matter a lot. Especially, if they were to have an Indonesian partner that would have jeopardise their commitment to settle in New Zealand.

*"... deep down it will be nice to get married to Indonesian so it will be just easier for everyone like for my parents, for my partner's parents if I have partner. Might go back or just be elsewhere... Other than being able to see my friend and family every day. I don't think that I have any. it's just sometimes I think - oh it'll be nice to be there to be able to see them whenever I want but then I just like it's all right. I can get through with this. I can see them once in a while." - (Putri)*

*"... if I met an Indonesian guy let's say or my parents match me with an Indonesian guy... if I marry than it might be different. I might go back because, think of it and I'm not sure about you, but in my Chinese-Indonesian heritage, guys are a lot more important than girls. So, you follow your husband as they go, so if I marry an Indonesian boy, then I will definitely have to go back, and most likely I'll have two-three kids by now, I have become a housewife so whatever that I am studying doesn't matter, it's bizarre but it is true." - (Maya)*

Even though most were unaffected by their spouse presence, but at this time it is clear to Putri and Maya that being married would culturally require them to follow their spouse in these alternative scenarios.

#### 4.2.3.5 Relatives

For some participants having a relative present in New Zealand offered support when they decided to settle in the host country. However, only Putri viewed the contact differently:

*"it's just someone from someone's cousin of someone's cousin and then my parents want me to see them but then I just feel like - no, I prefer to be alone like you doing and it'll be like another bother for me, If I know there's someone that knows my family, when I lived here. Life is so much better now." - (Putri)*

In addition, most of the participants already had siblings or cousins working in other host countries, similarly graduated and reside there. Indirectly these relatives may also play a role to reinforce the position of the participants' parents, likewise the participants may be encouraged to support their children settling in New Zealand.

#### 4.2.3.6 Host country

Other than personal relationships, participants identified several qualities that made New Zealand a desirable place of settlement. For instance, their appeal to and suitability with New Zealand work ethics and way of life that is different to Indonesia.

*"People are more open. And, I would say less rigid than Indonesia, most count most companies that I interview for have a flat structure other than a very tall one. Yeah, the idea power distance is not that great." - (Putri)*

*"... if you compare like let's say America, UK and Australia. New Zealand's a lot more laid-back, and then they're fine, it's a good place to study and to get experience with the locals and because back then there's not much Asian, it's a lot more Maori and Pacifica, as well as Pākehā (Author's note: non-Māori New Zealander) here, so they thought it's good that's why they (parents) sent me here. And it's an English-speaking country, I will be forced to speak English 24/7." - (Maya)*

In contrast, some participants also shown a laissez-faire approach that determined their end decision to settle in New Zealand in comparison to other with specific goals to achieve. The evidence can be seen by the difference between Bambang's and Putri's

remarks in contrast to Indah's initial expectation putting importance on university rankings that lead her to study in New Zealand.

*"I didn't find out anything about New Zealand before that's why I was like quite strange for me as well, at first I never had any interest in this country before just end up like this." - (Putri)*

*"I don't particularly focus on the prestigiousness of a university, but the main reason why New Zealand it's because it's quiet place to study and live in, I visited New Zealand a few years back in... I actually like New Zealand because they are laid back, generally less competitive than Singapore or Australia because mainly it's because of the culture" - (Bambang)*

To conclude, this study has found three key themes as the main factors that contributed to these five Indonesian decisions to settle in New Zealand rather than returning home. Produced by implementing the thematic analysis technique from the semi-structured interviews transcript, there are circumstances, opportunities and relationships, along with several subthemes under each reasonings.

The first theme looked at the participants perception to reconcile with the circumstances they are confronted, which they regard by considering their situation, place and views of New Zealand, Indonesia, and another potential host country. In this part, participants showed maturity and clarity to be future-oriented and determined to consider their settlement in different setting as they are not yet withheld by family obligation or unattainable career prospects. These participants were free to accomplish their personal goals and their life in New Zealand that enhances their commitment to stay.

The second theme focussed on the opportunities available for these participants as they navigate through employment in New Zealand. Overcoming of such tasks as acquiring a full-time permanent position, fulfilling visa sponsorship requirements and, at the same time, achieving their personal goals showed their motivation to succeed their post-study experience. Given by their capability and qualifications, these participants were eager to work hard being a skilled immigrant in New Zealand worthy of recognition.

The third theme explored the positive impact on the relationships that the participants have built on through people around them that contributed to their settlement decision in New Zealand. With support from family, friends, partner, relatives and with the host

#### 4.0 Findings Chapter

country as the subthemes of this themes. The last factor was also their daily drive that pushed them to their current success to achieve their goals in New Zealand rather than in Indonesia.

All these themes and subthemes have contributed to these participant's decision to stay in New Zealand. This was a complex process for the participants, and factors, such as life stage and gender, appeared to have some impact as well. While it was the participants personal intention to settle in New Zealand, it appears that there are external factors, such as other career opportunities and potential marriage expectations, that correlated with their choices. Nonetheless, the frank and full contributions of these participants revealed a mindfulness about their career and future prospects in the chosen country.

The following chapter will discuss the result of themes and subthemes further, along with the findings from the literature review. This is to analyse the disparity between this study participants with other South East Asian graduates who were facing the same dilemma in their chosen host countries.

## 5.0 Discussion

This chapter features five Indonesian graduates' experiences and their three main factors that made them to stay in New Zealand upon their studies. The chapter will also juxtapose and complement existing studies on the South East Asia graduate's migration trends. The discussion will use the same three themes to outline the factors that affected the decision-making process of this study sample upon graduation in New Zealand. As we derived earlier, these themes are relationships, circumstances and opportunities. In this order, the discussion begins by presenting the participants inner circle relationships, which also reflect on their identity, based on their age and gender perspective to determine their migration intention in New Zealand. Secondly, we present the participants' consideration about the host and origin country, referring to it as to the reconciliation to circumstances. Lastly, the chapter would discuss the reality of employment opportunities in New Zealand that these participants went through to earn their current residency.

As a disclaimer, it is worthwhile to mention, that this is an exploratory study; hence, the results do not generalise all Indonesian graduates' study abroad experiences, but touch on fundamental issues about graduates' decisions to stay in New Zealand. Basing on the sample of five individuals, the discussion will extend three themes analysed from their interviews to be the key factors that influenced these Indonesians to reside in New Zealand.

### 5.1 Participants' Self - Identification and Relationships

Each Indonesian graduate is a unique case on its own. Different from one another in each interview, these participants showed thoughtfulness and maturity in dealing with any challenges they faced. This section will emphasise on the participants' personal relationships and identity, and how it all plays a role in their initial evaluation to stay or return, by examining the participants' life stages that mutually aligned with their goals by staying in New Zealand. Furthermore, this section also highlights the participants' relationship with their family and social network they had built in New Zealand to boost their determination. In short, the sections look at the participants' life milestone, parents-children bond, and social interactions to strengthen or weaken their reasons to stay in New Zealand.

### ***5.1.1 Age and Gender***

While age and gender were not a targeted topic in the interview questions, these two elements were recognised from each participants' motives towards the given question, let alone a gap of nine years between the youngest and older participants. To recall, there were two male and three female participants recruited, three participants were in their early to mid-20s, and two in their early 30s. The age disparity does somehow reflect by each participant response, especially in the notion of gender roles and future orientation.

Gender-wise, all participants were equally eager to establish their career and settle in New Zealand. Therefore, none of the participants were focused to satisfy the gender cultural expectations. This finding opposes Kelly's et al. (2018) evidence, where Indian graduates were pressured by traditional gendered roles. However, the two oldest of participants mentioned that future family thought contributed to their determination in exploring the benefits of residing in New Zealand for their future family. The same two female participants stated that partnership status plays a dominating role as they were reflecting on their partners' location, which may have likely impact on their settlement in New Zealand.

In this case, the participants are more sensitive towards their partner's cultural identity and location that will affect their settlement decision. Referring to Maya's words, this emerges from Indonesians' male-dominant culture. Thus, a presence of a partner will trigger different course of action for these two participants. This social impact is supported by Lin and Kingminghae (2017) explanation of a partner influence. Accordingly, these two participants felt bounded to consider their return or moving elsewhere by following their spouse, thereby reassessing their settlement decision in New Zealand. At the same time, the other three younger participants were not interested in fulfilling matrimonial aspects yet, as they were prioritising their career progress and future business success post-study.

Nevertheless, in combining age and gender matter, it has affected one of the male participants to rethink his future settlement in New Zealand, as he was the only male-heir in his family in Indonesia. This attitude can be related to Kingminghae et al. (2019) this conclusion about the correlation between well-being of the parents and graduates' ultimate intention to return. The older were the graduates, the more perceptible was the

proximity of their thoughts to the principles of Confucianism with regards to their family members.

Therefore, age and gender did influence graduates' intention to stay or return to some degree, changing their decision as the time passed while they stay in the host country. This result was apparent from three out of five participants' response, albeit they all were committed to settle in New Zealand. Similarly, this relates to Alberts and Hazen (2005) and Bozionelos et al. (2015) studies that express the matter of one's age that will likely influence the individual commitment to stay in host country because of early exposure to their study migration. Conceivably, this age factor also contributes to these participants' determination to stay in New Zealand post-study, as they migrated from Indonesia in their early 20s. Furthermore, their time spent in New Zealand and exposure to the local culture also shaped their identities as young adults. This gave them the opportunity to develop independence and breakthrough from the traditions of South East Asian children's roles. This goes in line with Crossman's and Clarke's (2010) cultural intelligence and Soon's (2010) effect on time spent in the host country, which promotes these participants' decision to stay further. Thus, over time, international graduates are becoming more inclined towards New Zealand lifestyle, which puts individual's growth the forefront, rather than to Indonesians' one, which promotes collective ideals. Making these participants to be a career and future-oriented individuals, rather than becoming adepts of their homeland traditions. In addition, it also reflects that participants become mindful, open-minded, and unrestricted by gender agenda from their exposure to New Zealander idea of individuality and equality.

### **5.1.2 Family Commitments**

Although these participants have personally developed, this does not mean that they are fully free from some cultural expectations. Still, throughout the interviews, participants were well-aware of their filial duty to family or specifically, their parents. Possibly, more subtle than South East Asian graduates, the participants respond to the considerations of their parents and can follow their opinions or suggestions, which is in line with the Confucius' quote (Hung, 2016). Besides, some of them also seek for the advice from parents during uncertain times, even if they are not obliged to. All participants were dutiful to their parents' guidance and suggestions while pursuing life in New Zealand, similar to other researchers' findings (Bodycott & Lai, 2012; Choi & Nieminen, 2013; Nghia, 2019). In fact, some participants' parents were even encouraging their children to stay in New Zealand instead of returning, pushing them to



gain as much experience as they could in the developed country, and adapt a contemporary view that could distinct them from the mainstream trends.

This idea alone could distinguish these participants in comparison to other South East Asian parents, who were more conservative about their children's settlement abroad. Contrary to Liu's et al. (2016) conception of Tiger parenting, these participants were free to pursue their desired career choices having parents' encouragement along the way. Interestingly, the participants' parents had Western like parenting style by granting their children freedom for individuality abroad. This like mindedness with mutual support towards the settlement in New Zealand in conforms with Confucius's principle of children's filial to their parents (Bodycott & Lai, 2012).

Regardless, family matters still intertwined for these participants, as they understand that, if needed, they would reconsider returning home as they are still culturally bound despite their current independence and freedom. The traditions imposed every South East Asian child to be dutiful to their parents regardless of their mobility. Thus, the participants can only hold strong to their decision to stay in New Zealand unless there is a significant incident in place. This attitude of participants to settle in New Zealand is aligned with Bozionelos's et al. (2015) theory on graduate self-initiation and Pham's et al. (2019) finding about the need of persistency to pursue a better life outside of origin country. These participants were determined and perseverant and had their parent's encouragement in overcoming obstacles to settle in New Zealand until they succeeded.

### ***5.1.3 External Supports***

Participants expressed that support can come from many parties not solely from a tangible source. In fact, it comes from their socialisation with other people in the same life situation, when self-identification and personal growth peaks off. Thus, participants particularly highlight the importance and the joy from the people they are surrounded with in New Zealand. Consisting of the people they meet while studying abroad, such as other international, Indonesians, and domestic students, their friendships and acquaintances has influenced and enhanced these participants' notion of settling in New Zealand. Further, beyond pursuing a degree, their relationship with surrounding people also increase their social networks, communication skills and knowledge with others. For example, in Putri's case, her engagements with other international students induced her to stay further by seriously considering New Zealand career and residency prospects. Therefore, socialisation among international graduates is stimulating and positive, the

interaction can encourage one another to seek job opportunities in the host country after graduation.

However, one participant stated that it was hard for him to have a long-lasting friend, in particularly with another Indonesian peers. They praised the sense of companionship formed to solidify the participants' feeling of a second home in New Zealand, as presented in Wu's and Wilkes's (2017) in *Figure 3*. Apart from this, participants also expressed positive sides of having a cultural proxy in New Zealand, such as a distant relative. This goes in line with Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), who claimed that distant relatives in host country are beneficial for graduates in the face of difficulties. On the other hand, only Putri disagreed with this notion as she viewed that it can also come with a risk for her, as having a distant relative aid might be in conflict with her autonomy that can divert and dominate her intended path or choices. Thus, in Putri's case, Mosneaga's and Winther's (2013) statement on graduate's desire to practise their autonomy instead of living on their parents' or others' words find its justification. Since, it was a part of the internationalisation advantage point that gave participating South East Asian students the liberation to voice and act their autonomy without the need to conform with authorities figure apart of their parents.

Therefore, graduated South East Asian students might find a means of escape live a life they truly desired or intended by staying in host countries after graduation. Possibly, this was the subconscious reasons to the participants way of achieving individual or independent goals that compliment with Lin's and Kingminghae's (2017) discovery on international graduates' inclination to stay in the host country in the post-internationalisation stage in New Zealand. Not to mention, the participants has developed a comprehensive knowledge about the country during their time of studies. Naturally, it also motivated these participants to enter the employability market and test their capabilities once they graduated. This was proved by their natural response in the interview, as the participant directly entered New Zealand labour market rather than seeking employment elsewhere, as well as focused to build their career experiences in the host country.

Moreover, the participants' accomplishments abroad may not only affect themselves, but be well enjoyed by their parents. According to one of the participants, while she benefits from internationalisation employment and citizenship opportunities, the process also gave her parents' to basked on their success, because from the Indonesians perspective, living abroad seems to be a fantasy for the most. Therefore, the participants' completion to obtain international prestigious degree and foreign residency also signify

their parent's accomplishment within their social circle. Correlating this matter with other researchers' claims on South East Asian graduate's obtained status and prestige after study (Findlay et al., 2006; Findlay, 2010; Leinonen, 2012; Knight, 2013; Shumilova & Cai, 2015; King & Sondhi, 2016), not only directly to themselves but also to their parents. This is largely finds its reflection in Liu's et al. (2016) parental satisfactory model of an accomplished children. At the same time, the children find themselves in a beneficial position to avoid living an Indonesian way of life by staying in the host country. Let alone the possibility that they will be regarded as a failure by their Indonesian circle if they return. In a means to escape this, participants established that living in New Zealand will also promote them to lead and establish an independent life away from Indonesian social pressure since, as stated by Mosneaga and Winther (2013), an international graduates aims for retaining back their autonomy over their life.

### 5.2 Reconciliation to the Host Country Circumstances

South East Asian graduates often perceived that studying abroad provides them with not only better education, but also high life quality by staying in host country (Mazzarol & Soutar, 2002; Bodycott & Lai, 2012; Arthur & Nunes, 2014). This finding was supported by participants stories in this study as well. Consequently, it was one of the alternatives paths the participants took to compensate Indonesia's ambiguous educational quality and avoid the fierce enrolment competition (*ITB and UI, state-owned universities with highest acceptance score average*, 2016; *University of Indonesia: ranking & review*, 2020). Furthermore, in acknowledgement of this fact, not only the participants themselves, but also their parents were conscious of international credibility and opportunities the foreign degree may provide to their children's future.

Similarly, with their children and parents' capabilities and resources to do so, these participants had chosen New Zealand over other countries as their preferable educational host country. Regardless of their initial preference of Australia by the majority of participants, New Zealand still prevailed as their best option for these Indonesian graduates at the end. This section will further highlight the circumstantial reasons of their decision to stay in New Zealand rather than going back to Indonesia. Particularly, we will review these participants' decision-making process with regard to reconciliation to different locations, such as Indonesia or other potential host country, when reviewing the viability of New Zealand prospect before coming to their current post-internationalisation path. This section will use Wu's and Wilkes's (2017) study figure on international graduates home conceptualisation (in *Figure 3*) for the structure.

### ***5.2.1. The Host Home – New Zealand***

Indeed, there were many alternatives these participants can choose from before New Zealand. However, it seems that their selection of host countries also correlates with Morrish and Lee (2011) finding that the developed country with appealing natural elements that Indonesia lacks can attract Indonesian students. Impartially, these participants also came because they assessed New Zealand's future potential, as a long-term residence host country. Whereby, New Zealand provides more than their educational needs, but also long-term residency and employment prospect (Arthur & Nunes, 2014; Chiou, 2017). As a result, New Zealand becomes an ideal location to seek the complete package of knowledge, credibility and employability access (Baruch et al., 2007; Bozionelos et al., 2015), giving them an opportunities to gain a qualification that is recognised within the country and overseas. The most significant traits of all is New Zealand's multicultural demographics that is not limited only to Indonesians, but also South East Asian students (Morrish & Lee, 2011; Knight, 2012; Beine et al., 2014).

For instance, New Zealand's cultural approach to work ethics, individuality, power distance, and livelihood perceived by participants matched with their own desire of social and professional lifestyle. Whereas, if they had decided to choose Australia, the participant was well-aware of the popularity among international students would also means the congested competition to obtain residency after graduation. Besides, the large Indonesian community in Australia can restrict the scale of their networking and relationship building with diverse international population, as they would feel need to be friends with people from the same familiar backgrounds. While in the case of New Zealand, the isolation and exclusivity will force the participants to communicate daily in English and also blend them with other cultures instead of their own.

In addition, the exposure to work-life balance also revolutionised these participants' perception of work settings that heightened their motivation to first-handily New Zealand's work culture. Besides that, New Zealand also accommodate these participants' field of expertise that is not available in Indonesia. For example, Indah's conjoint degree in science and business, Putri's master's degree in natural disaster management, and Agus's CPA accreditation to practice in Commonwealth countries. Ultimately, New Zealand won over participants' determination to stay, as the country met their careers and personal goals.

Di Pietro's(2019) study demonstrated that international graduates' familiarity with host country encourages them to seek employment here than their homeland. This

rationalised these participants' actions to build a life, career and finding the immigration pathway to stay in New Zealand. Similarly to other South East Asian graduates researched by other scholars, participants of this study naturally try to seek employment to practice their obtained knowledge, as well as take advantage of understanding the recruitment process that pull them to stay in host country post-study (Soon, 2010; Leinonen, 2012; Lin & Kingminghae, 2017; Kingminghae et al., 2019).

Nonetheless, employability in New Zealand is challenging, as can be seen from the participants experiences to navigate themselves in order to get a job offer in their professional fields. Thus, validating Coffey et al. (2018) claim, there will always be the complexity of obtaining a working permit that makes international graduates to rethink their settlement decision in the host country; the evident, found in this study's participants pool as well. Best described by one participant, the process is similar to 'chicken and egg' dilemma. Hence, the majority of participants needed a sponsorship from their employer, while only one participant's major was on the New Zealand Skilled immigration list. Following the same two-steps immigration process in Chiou (2017) research, the participants illustrate the stressful environment they are positioned to overcome New Zealand visa-schemes. For instance, during the interviews, only two out of five participants had gained a permanent residency, while the rest are still working their way to overcome the second step and seek better employment security as some employers were passive to continue their sponsorship further. As of current date, some participants are still paving their road to gain full-time permanent position with better sponsorship opportunity.

Thus, this also gives the impression that New Zealand's employers sometimes do not look beyond international graduates' immigration status and ignored their strenuous effort in exposure to the many challenges faced while earning their place in New Zealand. Not in vain, most participants also contributed that luck is vital to gain their settlement in New Zealand. Perhaps this is also their way to keep their optimism and a hope for an ease process during the recruitment process that pushes international or Indonesian graduates to secure a sponsorship until their end goal achieved - New Zealand permanent-residency.

### ***5.2.2. The Ancestral Home – Indonesia***

Two participants illustrated that it was a critical and devastating period when they were facing a near-returning situation, due to the tremendous stress of being unable to find employment and sponsorship during the transitional phase. The participants also indicated that the burden can become overwhelming when they also have to reassure their parents' worries, while finding the right job and employers to extend their post-graduates work visa. Generally, they highlighted the following scene often occurred that had led not only Indonesians but also international graduates to return. Firstly, they must be mentally prepared to face a stream of rejection letters, possibly forcing them to face employment burnout and to become pessimistic towards a job application and to experience a frustration when extending their visa status. In consequence, they would seek their parents' comfort or guidance. In turn, parents also provide safety net and potentially advise them to return, thereby, escalating many international and Indonesians graduates to go back despite their eagerness to stay.

Fortunately, it did not happen as these two participants and was able to escape the aforementioned scenario above through hard work and effort. They contributed that having strong goals and commitments help them to cope and overcome employability hardships. Thus, the participants' mind-sets also seem to be one of the dominant factors that boosts their determination to settle in New Zealand. Despite researcher's convincing claims on international graduate's trends to return home for family duties (Hercog & van de Laar, 2017; Lin & Kingminghae, 2017; Kelly et al., 2018; Kingminghae et al., 2019), this study's participants show resilient traits to stay in New Zealand even when facing with family persuasion; the conclusion similarly reached by Bozionelos et al. (2015).

Regarding local challenges, two participants resorted to relocate into different cities and took temporary jobs to stay in New Zealand, as from Putri's and Indah's case. This showed the participants' drive to use all necessary means to extend their visa at any cost, minimising their chance to return. For these career-oriented individuals, returning home was never an option to begin with. Conscious of the life that awaits them if they return, some of them would utilise the sense of failure to help them stay motivated and go through the hurdle. Meanwhile, others reflected on their dissatisfaction with Indonesian social expectations and lifestyle that became their primary driver. It is then apparent that these participants would not settle for anything less than the life they have in New Zealand. Hence, their eagerness to succeed post-study and understanding of the consequences upon returning play a significant factor for these successful Indonesian graduates to stay in New Zealand.

Since they were free from family obligations from the beginning, the study will also touch on the participant unconsciousness of reverse culture shock in the case of return, as found by researchers (Cannon, 2000; Arthur & Nunes, 2014; Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). Even though they did not put it in a working context, but it is apparent that participants are fully aware of the predictable life back home if they return. Particularly, the participants will require their parents support to set up their life in Indonesia, and they could possibly not work in their fields of expertise, and they would not be able to use most of their obtained knowledge from New Zealand, as also supported by Di Pietro (2019) findings. From a professional perspective, their work-life-balance mentality from New Zealand would not be welcomed in Indonesia as it seems to be a controversial work practice. Correspondingly, the skilled immigrant will simultaneously be lost by New Zealand while his/her skills and knowledge might be improperly applied in Indonesia (Alberts & Hazen, 2005; Baruch et al., 2007; Knight, 2012; Beine et al., 2014; Shumilova & Cai, 2015; Tan & Hugo, 2017).

Lastly, some studies also criticised that internationalisation potential threatens one's identity (Knight, 2013; Lin & Kingminghae, 2017). In response, several participants reflected the sentiment stating that they do not feel a strong affinity with their Indonesian cultures because they came from a metropolitan city. For these participants, it is apparent that the consequences they incur by returning home would be more drastic on their morale than redeeming their cultural identity. In this situation, it is easier for them to compensate this issue by frequent visits back home rather than the loss of 'opportunity of a lifetime' to settle abroad. This was also the point in difference between the participants comparison to the general South East Asian demographic, who did not felt any languages barrier (Findlay et al., 2006; Smith & Khawaja, 2011; Kelly et al., 2018; Pham et al., 2019). Even when faced xenophobic events, two participants showed their calmness to overlook such unfortunate events and perceive it to be trivial, which went contrary to other studies' findings (Findlay et al., 2006; Beine et al., 2014). The participants appeared to be very flexible and showed an ability to overcome challenges easily. This persistence they showed to adapt to a foreign environment and culture supported them not to return home much easier.

### ***5.2.3. The Cosmopolitan or Nebulous Home***

This study's sample turn out to be accustomed to the western lifestyle and returning home would not be practical in this sense. Nevertheless, this did not stop participants to consider other countries beside New Zealand. In this study, three of the five participants commented that they will relocate to another country in order to fulfil their career related ambitions.

Instead, they were eager to utilise or gain a postgraduate degree to enhance their employability and ultimately get their immigration application approved. Of the five participants in the study, four had aimed to achieve a master's degree in New Zealand, and, as a result, the graduates expected it would boost their chance of employability and residency. Possibly, they thought that the higher is the qualification they attain, the higher is their chance to pass immigration requirements in New Zealand, but that was not the case. In reality, it still relies on the graduates' own capability to get employment and necessary documents, not their qualification, although it may be beneficial in their immigration application and resume.

Thus, this brings up Kahanec's and Králiková's (2011) study that identified an international graduate settlement chances to be dependent on the host country's immigration policies, actions and resolution to support individual mobility. Noteworthy, that several participants were also critical about New Zealand's labour bureau that lacks the initiatives to keep their international graduates and believed this had led many Indonesian graduates to return. This challenges New Zealand status as an opportunistic host country as well as cause the return brain drain among international graduates to their origin or other countries. Therefore, the primary role in this dilemma is taken by the New Zealand government that needs to balance off their immigration policies with respect to local international graduates, therewith, establishing a fair treatment and exploring the benefits from the international talent pool (Arthur & Nunes, 2014; Tan & Hugo, 2017).



### 5.3 Professional Opportunities

The participants highlighted that employment is one of the biggest components which could determine an international graduate success to stay in the host country. The reality of New Zealand job market is perceptibly harder for an international graduate, as four out of five participants experienced a selection bias when getting a job in New Zealand. Hence, employability is one big complication on its own. This section will contextualise international graduate's pathways to achieve job security and many other challenges to stay in New Zealand. Essentially, the employment is the key component to bind other requirements in ensuring the participants residency in New Zealand.

#### ***5.3.1. Employment in New Zealand***

There are numerous reasons and circumstances for international graduates to stay further in New Zealand after their studies. For instance, the participants stated that their understanding of the recruitment process encouraged them to seek employment in the host country rather than elsewhere. This evident opposes to Collins's et al. (2017) conclusion that higher employability chances in their home country can distract graduates to stay in educational host country. In fact, the participants disregarded home-based advantages, as their responses can be interpreted as though they see a better worth and value of the internationalisation process in accomplishing their goals independently. Returning home would also mean undermining their self-esteem, according to some participants' responds. Thus, going back cannot be a viable option, considering the time, effort and investment put in their degrees in New Zealand. Pham et al. (2019) claims that their persistence strengthens the intention to settle in New Zealand, which is supported by their resilience to the challenges and aim orientation to carve the path and obtain New Zealand residency. Thus, New Zealand becomes the logical destination for these career-oriented individuals, who are reluctant to return, especially in the comprehension that they attained advanced education, gained working knowledge and adopt local lifestyle.

Despite their strong will, these participants acknowledge the presence of challenges and frustration in the employment stage, even with their full family support. In particular, the biggest stress comes from the second step of immigration application which can be prone to selective bias. The participants complained that employers often out-casting international graduates' application because of their immigration status, despite the job advertisement was open towards immigrant candidature. For example, two out of five

participants expressed that their opportunities were slim when being compared to a domestic applicant at the last stage of recruitment. One participant also perceived that employers can be biased when reviewing applicants' names. Since there is no substantial evidence to prove, participants can only hope for the best during their recruitment process, and try to be location indifferent. This brings us back to Blackmore and Rahimi (2019) study on the recruitment reality every international graduates have to face, in acknowledgment that employer may have bias in choosing candidate who are inclusive to their own culture. Furthermore, one participant made highlight on the size of a company matters because it also determines their ability as an employer to provide the immigration paperwork that international graduate requires. From her experiences, she argued that bigger corporates had better leverage and power to extend international graduate post work visa in comparison to smaller entities. In the end, it becomes visible that the stress face by international graduates did not stop from academia challenges in the host country (i.e. Acculturation), but to the extent of recruitment complications post-study, which will determine their visa status.

Therefore, this study as well as many other research paper urge establishments like universities, employers or legal organisations to provide support for international graduates in increasing their chances to settle in New Zealand. For instance, Pham et al. (2019) appraised on Work-Integrated Learning (WIL) implementation to enhance international graduates' job opportunities post-study. Similarly, Shimulova et al. (2012) suggested using internship programs to build on international graduates' work experiences and their professional network. These recommendations proved to be a success from Agus's experience, where he got his current job at a career fair from his university. Seemingly, recruitment through a career fair in the university could reduce employer bias of hiring candidate through their identity or residency status because of the direct interaction with fair dealing between international and domestic students. Findlay et al. (2006) also added that without university and employer engagements these implementations would also be futile. Back up by participants' statements, New Zealand should support programs alike WIL and encourage internships to support and create a bridge between international graduates and employers.

### **5.3.2. The Missing Link**

Therefore, an international or Indonesian graduate eagerness to work may not be sufficient to secure their employment to fulfil immigration application. Other than recruitments setbacks, international graduates also face the inability to keep up with the

ever-changing immigration policy and the lack of practical advice from university employment services. A point that is frequently proposed in studies, yet to be achieved from influential institutions (Baruch et al., 2007; Bozionelos et al., 2015; Kingminghae et al., 2019), these policies show a host country's true face in disengagement and negligence to support international student after they graduated. The reputational setback New Zealand can face is a common view of it as a host country that may have underappreciate international graduates' contribution to the nation's economy and culture aspects. One participant also stressed the importance of job experiences in New Zealand work settings effectively imposed a significant difference to land a job.

The dispute also becomes clear; it is not a matter of one's ability to succeed, but the precariousness of opportunities available for international graduates in their chosen host country. As for the participants' experiences, they aimed to get every employment opportunity they can. Even though, they could not pass through the initial stage, let alone obtaining permanent job, participants were relentlessly hoping for the acknowledgement to come. Thus, Crossman and Clarke (2010) study may have explanation to this situation, as the author illustrates the importance of prior work experience can show candidate familiarity with the host country work culture. A notion agreed by one of the participants, still, there seems to be a vicious cycle expected on international graduates, which requires them to get a job to secure their residence application, let alone limited information and support they had along the way. This all together could explained Trevena's (2019) statistics on high percentage of returning graduates in New Zealand.

While for those who managed through and succeeded, the challenging process also shaped international graduates as an independent individual. Shown from their choices, these participants show great individuality and maturity in approaching any challenges ahead, similarly to other South East Asian graduates who stayed in their host country (Huang, 2012; Wintre et al., 2015; Moskal, 2020). Identified by Kahanec and Králiková (2011) and King and Sondhi (2016), international graduates the life abroad reinforce their ability to be adaptable and flexible. These are other qualities possessed by international graduates that employer might overlook from time to time.

This suggest that recruiters should not dwell on work experiences or immigration status, but instead base recruitment decision on the personality as well. Through this study, these participants also shown their ability to adapt to western work ethics easily, along with their recognised qualifications which serve as a ticket for employability on a global scale. For example, in Agus's profile, his qualifications from New Zealand allowed him to practice accounting in Commonwealth countries, despite being an Indonesian. The

same for other participants' ability to contribute on New Zealand labour in their field of expertise. A mutual relationship between individual and their host countries, as highlighted by Thomas (2017), can be beneficial for both parties. In short, the participants' desire to live abroad matches with New Zealand's need for skilled migrants.

### ***5.3.3. Participant Avoidance to Return***

In this study, all the participants' effort made is to diminish their chance of returning home. Since they had experienced the better life in a developed country, these five graduates stayed in New Zealand after completing their studies. In the period of living abroad, these participants definitely experienced individual growth, described in Alberts's and Hazen's (2005) study on international graduates' maturity, determination, and ability to settle in host country. Besides, one of the major drivers for this participant to remain in New Zealand is also their desire to escape Indonesia's social pressure and way of life. Likewise, staying in New Zealand also allows participants to progress and focus on their career disregarding gender traditions. Foremost, participants gain their individuality through independence living outside of Indonesia. Still, they are aware of their family attachment back home, hence, visits are frequent for some participants, meaning that they do not fully lose their origin identity per se.

Through internationalisation these participants have gained further understanding by living in both cultures, and demonstrating such traits as cultural intelligence and sharp decision-making skills (Crossman & Clarke, 2010). In addition, Indonesian graduates then become hardworking individuals, motivated by pressure to succeed and fulfil their personal goals, as they are aware of the realities expected on them when they return. This contradicts researchers' concerns on international graduates' capability to tap on their potential after internationalisation (Cannon, 2000; Alberts & Hazen, 2005; Inayati et al., 2014; King & Sondhi, 2016). Eventually, it was the fear of returning that kept Indonesian graduates in this sample motivated to find work opportunities when and wherever they can. At the same time, the best options for these participants was to stay in New Zealand, thereby, accomplishing the true purpose of internationalisation, which also coincided with their personal goals.

## 6.0 Conclusion

The section below will conclude the overall findings of “To stay or return? An international graduate dilemma” study. Using thematic analysis and semi-structured interviews, this study have obtained five Indonesian graduates’ post-study stories on their journey to settle in New Zealand. With their voluntary participation, this study was able to get personal insights of the international graduates post-internationalisation challenges particularly in New Zealand. The study’s aim is to answer the research question - What are the factors which encourage Indonesian students to settle in New Zealand after graduation rather than return home?

Since the end purpose of internationalisation is as important as its initiation, international graduates should consider their post-study decision seriously. This exploratory study then serves as an insight for other international graduates’ possible scenarios to their decision if they were to stay in New Zealand rather than returning home from five Indonesian graduates’ experiences. In this way, it prepared soon-to-be international graduate to consider the challenges ahead and weight their own push and pull factors carefully.

In this conclusion, the exploratory study has identified three major themes as the factors that influences Indonesian graduates’ post-study settling decisions in New Zealand. Based on these five participants’ experiences, these are self-identification and relationships, reconciliation to circumstances and work opportunities. While the earlier two factors are important, this study would identify work opportunities as the critical factor can be decisive in the most of scenarios. The reason is that the career opportunities are far more ambiguous than the circumstances and relationships factors, because they are uncontrolled neither by the graduates’ nor their parents’ decisions. Once work opportunities are secured, it is then up to international graduates to persuade reluctant parents or to adapt or use circumstances that can strengthen their commitment to stay. Hence, these three interrelated factors will stipulate Indonesian graduates’ determination to settle in New Zealand.

Furthermore, to complement current research area about South East Asian graduates as well as to fill the research gap from the experiences of Indonesians, this study learns family and cultural expectations are installed in graduates’ mentalities via distant disciples of Confucianism. At the same time, the parenting style of the Indonesian participant’s parents is more lenient than most of South East Asian parents, and partially

relieves or softens the pressure to fulfil gender traditions or family obligations. As most of the parents are naturally concerned about their children's life abroad, the parents will persuade them to return in order to avoid a difficult setback for their child. Similarly to South East Asian graduates, participants of this research were also acutely aware of their family well-being back home as long as they overseas. This represents the parents-graduate's relationship that is built on mutual assurance. From the one hand, parents provide a safety net for the graduates; from the other hand, graduates would also need to return for their parents, in the unforeseeable future, if forced by circumstances. Additionally, the study also found that the disparity between the participants' and South East Asian graduates' parents' outlook of their children settling abroad. The study found that the participants' parents were more open-minded to acknowledge their cosmopolitan traits and desire to pursue life abroad, opposite to the nature of South East Asian parents' authoritative ideals. Consequently, the parents also respected their child's voice and compromised by allowing these participants to settle abroad. Despite the mixed responses, Indonesian parents are pleased to see their children's admirable success and growth by residing overseas.

We can also conclude from the participants' answers that they are against of living the predictable Indonesian way of life upon the return. Instead, by staying in New Zealand, the participants expressed their freedom from Indonesian social norms and functions and deliberate avoidance of social pressure, personal reputational setback, limited job opportunities in their homeland, reverse cultural shock, and a non-suitable lifestyle. Thus, settling in New Zealand becomes a clear choice for these participants with their qualifications and cultural intelligence.

The last challenge will be to find the employment right after graduation. This essential stage will determine whether they will meet the New Zealand two-step immigration process or not. The main challenges are; limited information available for applicants, the self-determination needed to find work and overcome recruitment bias. The latter plays a crucial role as only a supportive employer will be able to extend their working visa and lead their immigration status towards the permanent residence. While the process appears quite simple, the findings of this study show that it is a stressful and challenging process, from the point of view of an entry-level international graduate, to gain employability with subsequent update of immigration status. At the same time, this structure of dealing with graduates' residence status exposes them to employer's whim and the country's disposition to hire, retain or deport, thereby placing them in a vulnerable position.

Thus, this research concludes that international Indonesian graduates' success to stay in New Zealand, rather than returning to the homeland, will require definite self-identification together with supportive relationships, favourable host country circumstances, and professional opportunities. Ultimately, the factors that determine an Indonesian graduate's settlement in New Zealand are partially out of the control and depend on situational circumstances. However, the proper external support from the universities, responsive immigration authorities with streamlined policies, as well as the lack of selection bias by employers can significantly mitigate the systematic risks faced by Indonesian graduates.

### 6.1 Limitations

First of all, the researcher identity as an insider research is both the limitation and the benefit of this study. As an advantage, it has allowed the researcher to fully grasp participants' cultural expression about the Indonesian norms. Nevertheless, it is also the researcher's limitations to move from the bias blind spot when interpreting the data. Thus, being an Indonesian student herself, the author was aware of the challenge to ensure no personal bias or interpretation erroneously permeated the analysis of the data. While there is no one truth in an interpretivist ontology, the need to let the participants' stories emerge is critical. To optimize this, the author often consulted with her supervisor during the data collection and interpretation stages to revise and reduce the risk of personal bias entering the analysis. Also, the author had kept a research journal to enable a more reflexive approach to the data collection, as well as self-monitoring to eliminate bias.

Other constraints to the research were the imposed reality of undertaking a time limited small study. This led to a concentrated exploratory study with a small (only five) sample study size. As a result, this study cannot generalise to the whole Indonesian graduates' community who may also successfully settled in New Zealand with their own unique experiences, uncovered by this research. However, from this study findings, it may act as a suggested common themes which may benefit future larger studies to better understand international students' post-graduation decisions. This study to fill the research gap and support Indonesian students and their plans to settle abroad after their studies.

## 6.2 Implications

To this extent, this exploratory study can only present a small insight based on five Indonesian graduates' experiences to settle in New Zealand. Because of the specific topic, the research resorts to exemplify from established findings about other South East Asian international graduates in their chosen host countries to illustrate their choices and similar dilemmas they may face. With this as an introduction, the study also hopes to encourage more research on Indonesian demographics and contribute to the gap in the limitations of these subjects. As many studies only focus on the pre-departure challenges of internationalisation, this study hopes to shed some light onto the subsequent path upon receiving an international qualification. The study found that international students need more support around understanding immigration processes well in advance of their graduation and professional assistance in employment seeking. The proper preparation for the local job market idiosyncrasies, such as work ethics and organisational culture, as well as applied guidance on how to get desired job position can be beneficial already at the initiation of the studies.

## 6.3 Future study

This research collects insights from successful candidates only and disclose their reasons to stay. Therefore, this small study may inspire others to study the contrary view in exploring the opposite factors that forced Indonesian graduates to return home after studies in New Zealand. Only by studying both circumstances can future scholars obtain a full understanding of an international or Indonesian graduates' dilemma to stay or return post-internationalisation. In addition, this type of research paper can also address possible survivorship bias, which can possibly present in one or another form in this study. Namely, the experiences of those who failed can be more representative and insightful for the target audience of this kind of research (i.e. international graduates) and also for governmental authorities to fix and optimise existing policies using information from the research paper and regard as a direct, yet verified, feedback from past generations of students.



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## 8.0 Appendices

### Appendix A: Ethics Approval

12 October 2020

Julie Douglas  
Faculty of Business Economics and Law

Dear Julie

Re: Ethics Application: **20/273 To stay or return. An international graduate dilemma**

Thank you for your request for approval of amendments to your ethics application. The minor amendment to the inclusion criteria (age range) has been approved. A change to the title has been noted. I remind you of the **Standard Conditions of Approval**.

1. The research is to be undertaken in accordance with the [Auckland University of Technology Code of Conduct for Research](#) and as approved by AUTEK in this application.
2. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using the EA2 form.
3. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using the EA3 form.
4. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTEK prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form.
5. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTEK Secretariat as a matter of priority.
6. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTEK Secretariat as a matter of priority.
7. It is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

AUTEK grants ethical approval only. You are responsible for obtaining management approval for access for your research from any institution or organisation at which your research is being conducted. When the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all ethical, legal, and locality obligations or requirements for those jurisdictions.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

For any enquiries please contact [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz). The forms mentioned above are available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/research/researchethics>

(This is a computer-generated letter for which no signature is required)

The AUTEK Secretariat

**Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee**

Cc: tandil.titi@gmail.com

## Appendix B: Tools

### **a) Interview Template**

Titi Tandil Semi-Structured Interview protocol  
for the research title of  
**“To stay or return? an international graduate dilemma”**

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**Interviewee name:**

**date:**

**The interview questions cover the following topics:**

**Part 1. The graduates post study plans:**

- Academic background in New Zealand?
- How was your first post-study plan in the beginning and compare to the reality?
- What was your family reaction when you decided to stay in New Zealand further?

**Part 2. The push and pull factors:**

- What was your push factors to return?
- What was your pull factors to stay?
- What made you decided that you really wanted to stay here?

**Part 3. The challenges and rewards:**

- What and when was the most difficult thing you had to overcome to stay in New Zealand?
- What and when was the joy you had overcome to stay in New Zealand?
- Are they still happy with their decision?

**Ending of the interview session**

Thank the participant for their interest and contribution of their stories, ask if there any further questions to ask researcher. Then at the end, the researcher will ask the participants to keep in details for the clarifications of transcripts and give a “Koha” for the participants and wish them a safe travel to their destination.

**b) Participant Information Sheet (PIS)**

Date Information Sheet Produced:

17 August 2020

Project Title

To stay or return? an international graduate dilemma.

**The Invitation**

Hi, my fellow Indonesians! My name is Titi Dwijayanti Tandil from Batam, Kepulauan Riau, Indonesia. I am a candidate for Master of Business at Auckland University of Technology, currently in the process of recruitments for my dissertation, and you are right! I really like if you could participate. Your contributions will mean a lot to me to complete my degree on the topic of Indonesian Graduates in New Zealand. If you are willing to be my participants voluntarily then that's great and please keep on reading on the form to understand what you're signing up.

**What is the purpose of this research?**

The reason why I started this dissertation topic is that I was interested in your journey as an Indonesian graduate' to be able to stay and work in New Zealand. The research aim is to explore your "push-and-pull factors" that decided your decision to settle in New Zealand. From your contribution, I could analyse these factors to gain direct insight from Indonesian graduates' perspectives. Furthermore, any results in this research are only for academic purposes, and your identity will remain confidential. Please be assured that your data will be secure, as this research will not expose your name, employer and contact details that will remain unidentifiable.

**How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

As you may have guessed, I am recruiting people through friends and advertisement in Perhimpunan Pelajar Indonesia Auckland (PPIA), luckily I have found you! The reason that you are reading this because you must have fit into my participant criteria, who are:

- An Indonesian who are or under the aged of 35
- Graduated from any Universities in New Zealand with a Bachelor, Master or PhD
- Currently working in your field of expertise in New Zealand
- Have a valid working and residency permit in New Zealand
- Have lived in New Zealand for at least 3 Years
- Sounds like you? Excellent!

**How do I agree to participate in this research?**

To agree on this research, I have sent a Consent Form along with this Participation Information Sheet for your review. On the interview day itself, I will provide two hard copies of the Consent Form for you to sign, one form for each of us. However, in the event of a lockdown, the interview will be done via Zoom, and I would send the Consent Form to you one day before the interview so that you will have time to provide me with a softcopy of your signature on the Consent Form. Next, please read the next paragraph carefully and feel free to contact me if there are any questions about the following information.

Your participation in this research is **voluntary (it is your choice)** and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. **You can withdraw from the study at any time, this includes your decision, not to responses to a question in the interview.** If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, **once the findings have been produced, the removal of your data may not be possible.**

**What will happen in this research?**

## 8.0 Appendices

The process will go on like this: I will arrange an interview with you in the following days once I have confirmed your participation. The interview will be audio-recorded and I will also take notes during the session, which will take approximately 60-90 minutes at the Auckland University of Technology Campus. However, If Auckland is to stay in level 3 lockdown, I would invite you to a Zoom interview sending you the link once I have received your consent form. And before the interview begins I will ask your permission for the session to be recorded. This would be your preference whether this is just audio recording or audio-video recording.

### **What are the discomforts and risks?**

I do not perceive any significant risks or discomforts for you in my research. Nevertheless, as a precaution, if you do find that the experiences are too personal or sensitive to share, you are free to not answer the question/s during the interview. I would also highlight that you may withdraw from the research at any time up until the findings have been produced.

### **How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?**

I do not perceive any discomforts or risks that may arise from this research, as you may not have to answer all of the question/s that's asked and you can have breaks if needed. However, if needed AUT can provide the service below for you:

AUT Health Counselling and Wellbeing is able to offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen directly as a result of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

drop into our centres at WB219 or AS104 or phone 921 9992 City Campus or 921 9998 North Shore campus to make an appointment. Appointments for South Campus can be made by calling 921 9992

let the receptionist know that you are a research participant, and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet  
You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <http://www.aut.ac.nz/being-a-student/current-postgraduates/your-health-and-wellbeing/counselling>.

### **What are the benefits?**

The benefit of this research for you is the chance to express your experiences by giving a voice on Indonesian migration process to New Zealand. An opportunity to share your side of the stories that are not generally questioned by other people. Meanwhile, for the wider community, this research benefits others by gaining an insight into your decisions and choices that determines your current success for the Indonesian community living in New Zealand. Your participation will also mean a lot to me to obtain my Master degree in Business.

### **How will my privacy be protected?**

For the protection of your identity, I will not mention your name and use an alias to represent you as a participant in the findings. Thus, ensuring neither of your real name, your employment background and other contact details will be mentioned, only an alias name, age and your job position. Furthermore, only me and my supervisor will have access to your data, exclusively for this research, not even the university.

### **What are the costs of participating in this research?**

It will probably take to 2 hours to maximum this include the interview and preparatory reading for my research.

**What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?**

There will be a two-week time for you to confirm your participation in this research. Whereby, after three days, I will send you another email as a kind reminder to ask for your update. If still there is no response in the given week, then I would have assumed that you are no longer interested and withdrawn you from the participant list.

**Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

I would be happy to provide you with the findings I have made upon the completion of my research. Please let me know if you would like to receive the feedback on the Consent Form, where there are tick boxes for you to tick on for this option.

**What do I do if I have concerns about this research?**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor,

Dr Julie Douglas

julie.douglas@aut.ac.nz

(+649) 921 9999 ext 5141

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTC, *ethics@aut.ac.nz*, (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

**Whom do I contact for further information about this research?**

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Titi Dwijayanti Tandil

tandil.titi@gmail.com

Project Supervisor Contact Details: Dr Julie Douglas

julie.douglas@aut.ac.nz

(+649) 921 9999 ext 5141

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 9 September 2020, AUTC Reference number 20/273.**



**c) Consent Form**

**Project title: To stay or return? an international graduate dilemma.**

**Project Supervisor: Dr Julie Douglas**

**Researcher: Titi Dwijayanti Tandil**

- ☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 17<sup>th</sup> of August 2020.
- ☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- ☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- ☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
- ☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
- ☐ I agree to take part in this research.
- ☐ I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (please tick one): Yes ☐ No ☐

Participant's signature:

.....

Participant's name:

.....

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Date:

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 9  
September 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/273**

*Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form*

## Appendix C: Research Philosophy Guidelines

**Illustration of the relationship between paradigm, method and design in research (Makombe, 2017, p. 3367).**

Attribute	Paradigm			
	Empirical	Interpretivism: Social constructivism, Criticalism	Normative Pragmatism	Critical theory Participatory (Other components of critical theory, neo-Marxism, feminism and materialism are not included here)
Components	Positivism (Verification) /Postpositivism (Falsification) Anti-positivism			
Ontology	Realism/critical realism Objectivity		Relativism Subjective Historical Constructed reality (Pragmatism has some objectivity)	Relativism. Subjective-Objective Constructed and historical reality
Epistemology	Detached	Transactional Participatory	Mix detached and participatory in predetermined sequence	Transactional. Experiential (PAR-Researcher must share common values with participants)
Approach	Empirical		Normative Advocacy Activism (pragmatism mixes empirical and normative in predetermined sequence)	
Research Method	Quantitative (With statistical representativeness, a necessary condition for generalisation: Scientific method)	Qualitative (Statistical representativeness not always a requirement)	Qualitative and Quantitative (Statistical representativeness not always a requirement)	Qualitative. Cooperative inquiry Collaborative/Democratic dialogue
Research design/s	Experimental Descriptive Case control Case study Causal Cohort Cross-section Exploratory Longitudinal Observational Sequential Grounded theory	Descriptive Narrative Case study (Single/Multiple) Phenomenology Exploratory Historical (life/topical oral) Observational (participant/non participant) Philosophical Dialectic Ethnography Phenomenology Grounded theory (Pragmatism can have components of quantitative research designs)		Action Research. Epistemic/Political participation determines design
Research guide	Research questions and hypotheses Occam's razor Describe, control and predict. Anti-Speculative	Sometimes research questions and hypotheses but mostly research questions only.		Research questions with intended action
Research methodology		Ideals: Caution, clarity and precision		
	Principle	Uncover the universal laws (which exist) governing social events.	Describe, explain, and understand meanings, values and beliefs of social phenomena from (sometimes with) participants (experiential, contextual, historical, local, specific) and researcher's perspectives.	Co-creation of knowledge Subjects are participants and sometimes co-researchers
	Researcher's posture	Objective detachment or value freedom. Bias limitation. Measurement and testing. Reductionist. Deterministic.	Subjective. Can be interactive. Relativism/multiperspectives. Researcher can be immersed. Integration of knowledge and values. Insight and intuition. (Objective detachment not necessary but still a possibility) Research subjects can become researchers/co- researches Blurry distinction between researcher and researched.	Blurry distinction between researcher and researched. Participants are co- researchers
	End result	Generalise from sample to population. Explanation. Prediction (Cause- Effect) . Control.	In-depth description and understanding of problem. Generalisation is not always possible therefore not always sought. Sometimes can generalise or transfer conclusion to different contexts, especially from one setting to another. More than one conclusion can be reached. Empowerment of stakeholders. Social reconstruction.	Critique and transformation of social structures Empowerment of stakeholders. Social reconstruction. Solve practical problems in a community. Shifting balance of power in favour of poor and marginalised groups. Restitution. Emancipation.

Source: Developed based on Giedymin (1975); Piele (1988), Mukherjee (1993); Ferguson (1993), Guba and Lincoln (1994); Heron and Reason (1996); Lincoln (2001); Creswell (2009); Tuli (2010); Betram and Christiansen (2014); Åge, 2010; Reason and Bradbury (2001)