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# The University, through the migration industry lens.

A qualitative study on the practices of the university which affect the wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students at Radboud University.

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*By*

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## Abstract

Due to the restrictive migration policies in Europe, most European countries see international education as a convenient channel for both the students and the government, which thus supports the emergence of the education-migration industry to thrive and grow. The education-migration industry in the Netherlands is fast growing as more universities are devising ways to make their universities attractive to potential international students. However, the wellbeing of these students is rarely discussed. This study revealed that non-EU/EEA students need to have some capitals such as the economic, social and cultural, to be able to gain access to international education in the Netherlands. By using Bourdieu's theory of capital (1983) to examine how these capitals can enable non-EU/EEA students to achieve their international education in the Netherlands, this thesis further revealed how these capitals could either enable or hinder non-EU/EEA students from achieving their set goal which is to graduate. Besides, these study findings support the notion that the migration industry has indeed taken over international education because the migration policies influence the daily practices at Radboud University which affect the wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students in the Netherlands.

**Keywords:** Education-migration industry, migration industry, wellbeing, Non-EU/EEA students, Capitals.

## Preface

This master thesis is the final product of my Human Geography specialisation in Globalization, Migration and development at Radboud University Nijmegen. Even though it was a combination of both sweet and challenging process while writing this, however, I am very proud of my final achievement, and I hope you enjoy reading it.

Before I started my study at Radboud University, I never for once imagined I would face any challenge(s) due to my previous life experiences and also due to my temperament. However, I faced so many challenges, for instance, with the Dutch language and how to establish a new network to survive my new academic environment. However, this study made me value all the experiences, both positive and negative, as they have contributed to the richness of this thesis. Although the entire past 23 months have been a journey, however, the past ten months have been the most emotional months for me. I have had to combine study, family life, house search and emergency surgery and also a journey to finish my thesis that you are about to read. During this journey, family and friends stood by me, and I also met some very important people that I would like to express my gratitude.

First of all, my profound gratitude goes to all the lovely people that partook in my research. From the education professionals at Nijmegen School of Management, International office central desk and study advisors whose insights contributed to the richness of my thesis. I am very grateful to you all for your willingness and the referrals you gave me. Am also grateful to all the student participants that partook in this project, am thankful for trusting me and sharing your stories and challenges with me. Not only did your stories contribute to this research, but I learned a great deal from every one of you.

Secondly, I would like to appreciate my wonderful and patient supervisor, Joris Schapendonk. Am so grateful for your support, your positive energy and understanding, without your understanding and support my journey would have been tougher than it turned out to be. Your ideas, your patience and enthusiasm about this research have been a great motivation for me anytime I feel like giving up. You challenged me to see my capabilities and believed in it. Am so grateful Dr.Joris.

Last but not least, I want to thank my family and friends sincerely, especially my husband and kids, for their patience and support. Without your understanding and patience, I would not have been where I am now. Adeoluwa Asolo, thanks for staying with me all through the nights while I researched and wrote non-stop, thanks for coping with me throughout this period, thank you. My dearest sister, Mrs Johnson who never fails to encourage me whenever I feel like giving up, my mom, who prays non-stop for me anytime she calls, am so grateful for your love. My brothers and their family who have refused to give up on me even if I do not reach out or call them, thank you. My newfound family in the Netherland Jan Dick Bruijne and his family, am so grateful for your care and support. Friends in and outside of the Netherlands, that had no other choice but to cope with the fact that I was always unavailable, thanks for your patience. I am so grateful to everyone, and I cannot wait to delve to the next chapter of my life.

*Oluwafunmilayo Asolo*

*Arnhem, The Netherlands.*

*August 2019.*

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## List of acronyms

EU - European Union

HR – Human resources department

IND- Immigratie-en Naturalisatiedienst

NSM- Nijmegen School of Management

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

This research seeks to understand the relationship between international education, the daily activities of the university international office and the migration industry in the Netherlands through the experiential perspectives of educational professionals in the university and the international students.

### 1.1 Background to this thesis

This research concept was developed at Radboud University, where I enrolled as an international student between 2017 and 2019. I got admitted for a pre-master program for one year afterwards; I studied for my master program for another year. From my experience and personal interaction with other international students, I noticed that many international students, mostly non-EU/EEA students, experienced several challenges while studying and living in Nijmegen. I also discovered that despite these challenges, more non-EU/EEA students were still applying to study in the Netherlands or Europe in general due to the opportunities available to them. This observation coupled with my personal experience as an international student, and my review of the Radboud University websites promotion and brochure where the University lures more potential international students, all contributed to my establishing the perception that a close connection existed between university, international students and the migration industry. In 2005, Hernandez-Leon proposed using migration industry to describe the '*ensemble of entrepreneurs*' who provide a variety of services which is motivated by the pursuit of financial gain in order to facilitate human mobility across borders. For instance, in the area of international education, this field is characterised by various public and private agencies and actors who provide information, products and services relating to international student migration, thereby promoting, facilitating and organising the process of migration (Beech 2018).

Following the challenges I faced while trying to complete my master program due to the institutional policies at the university which influenced my living conditions in Nijmegen, I was able to discover the relationship that existed between the daily activities at the international office and the migration industry in the Netherlands. Also, a large number of non-EU students I encountered had experienced one form of challenge or difficulties with the university while trying to complete their studies at Radboud University. I also observed how the daily activities of the international office change in conformity with the Dutch migration law with the establishment of policies that linked the international student and the migration industry. This revelation deepened my commitment to pursue this particular research topic.

### 1.2 Aim and scope

This research seeks to understand how international student migration, the daily activities of the international office and the migration industry interrelate, by examining the practices at the university that affect the wellbeing of the international students at Radboud University. The knowledge gained from this research will be useful for both the Dutch government for future policies which relate to non-EU/EEA student mobility. Also, it will be beneficial to

Radboud University to understand how the practices at the university affect the wellbeing of these students and what practices they need to adjust or change to make the study experiences of non-EU/EEA students' pleasant. The main question this research seeks to answer is

*“How do the “institutional” practices of the university international office affect the different aspects of the life of international students at Radboud University?”*

This primary research question is to explore the effect of the institutional practices on international students. Drawing on Bourdieu's notion of field, the social world is divided into different areas or fields of practice, and each area or field as its own unique rules, practices and forms of capital. This research conceptualises the migration industry and international student mobility as being shaped by the intersections of multiple fields which includes institutional practices; i.e. the Dutch government's international migration policies and the policy field related to the internationalisation and commercialisation of Dutch Universities. Moreover, to better understand the main research question, it will further be divided into sub-questions. Answering the different sub-questions will help to find an answer to the main research question. The sub-questions are as follows:

1. *How does the field of international migration policies and skilled mobility influence the institutional policies at the Radboud University Nijmegen?*

For this study, the field of international migration is the environment in which competition takes place between the different social actors involved in the field (Marquis & Tilcsik, 2016). The social actors which include migrants (international students), the host countries and the 'ensemble of entrepreneurs' who facilitate mobility are all playing in the field, in order to achieve the standard set by the host countries to move to the next level, which is to get more international student to get admitted at the University. The activities of these actors shape the institutional policies at the University, which determines who comes into the Netherlands and vice versa based on the various capitals these migrants have.

2. *How can we understand the daily practices of the international office in Radboud University in Nijmegen through the lens of the migration industry?*

Migration industry facilitates human mobility for financial gain, can be framed through the daily activities at Radboud University International office, where different marketing strategies are implemented to encourage the mobility of international students (non-EU/EEA) who tend to pay more than the European students. In order to understand this, this thesis will structure the daily activities at the International office through the migration industry.

3. *How do the daily practices at the International office of Radboud University influence the overall wellbeing of the International students?*

The migration laws in the Netherlands structure the daily practices at the International office. These practices might affect the wellbeing of international students positively and negatively depending on how they view and handle them. To explore the wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students, I will explore the challenges the students faced that affected them during this period.

To develop a comprehensive understanding of the development of policies that linked international student migration and migration industry, it was necessary to collect and analyse documents that gave a contextual account of this phenomenon. Statistics and documents analysis are needed to position Radboud University in an international field( from Bourdieu's perspective) of knowledge and competition(industry). Besides, to understand the daily practices of the international office, this was achieved through my internship at the NSM international office coupled with the interviews with education professionals. Finally, to explore wellbeing, non-EU/EEA students were interviewed coupled with my personal experience, to be able to capture their feelings and thoughts in their own words.

## The relevance of this thesis

### 1.3 Scientific Relevance

The considerable growth in the volume of international students worldwide in the recent times, where the number of international students has been rising almost four times more quickly than the total; international migration (IOM, 2008), has made the international migration field an industry to research more. With several countries marketing themselves as study-abroad destinations, it is clear that international student migration has become an essential theme within migration studies itself. Nevertheless, what has lacked attention is what can be conceptualised as an emerging industry, assumed as shorthand for all those in the business who promote international student migration at a profit (Baas, 2019). International students are sought after as 'desirable' or 'wanted' migrants because of the capital(economic, social and cultural) they bring them and then subsequently develop in the countries into which they migrate to (King& Raghuram, 2013). Notably, due to the recent increase in irregular migration in Europe, migration policies have been implemented to regulate the inflow of migrants both irregular migrants and "wanted migrants", and these policies also influence the policies and practices of the receiving universities that seek to regulate the intake of international students (Baas, 2019). As a result, it is crucial to show the relationship between the migration industry and international student mobility in the Netherlands.

Additionally, with this emerging industry, very few studies have been conducted in respect of the international migration of students as part of the migration industry, where the competition for international students is fierce, and the use of entrepreneurs such as agents are used to grow the students' enrolment numbers(Beech, 2018). Also, the few studies conducted have not covered the influence this industry might have on the wellbeing of international students, most especially non-EU students<sup>1</sup>, who are constrained by the immigration policies of the study destination. So, this study seeks to fill a gap in the existing scientific knowledge, especially as it relates to non-EU/EEA students well-being.

Apart from the earlier point noted, while researching this topic, while there exists some literature on student mobility to major Anglophone destinations, such as the UK, the USA ,Canada, and Australia, research focusing on The Netherlands is scarce, which is due to the

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<sup>1</sup> Note: international student mobility for this research means the mobility of mainly non-EU .

fact that these countries are the most popular exporters of international student migration (Mazzarol, Norman Soutar & Sim Yaw Seng, 2003). Not much as being researched in line with this study in the Netherlands, which is essential with the growing number of international students enrolling in the Netherlands. According to a study conducted by Study in Holland, during the academic year 2017-2018 alone, the number of international students who studied in a Dutch higher institution was over 122,000 students, where the students from non-EU/EEA countries were twice as high as the students from other EEA countries (Huberts, 2017). This research seeks to enrich scientific theory relating to migration industry in Europe, how it influences the universities' institutional practices and affects the international students, and to review new insights on policy measures when dealing with this phenomenon in a globalising world.

#### 1.4 Societal relevance

International student mobility has, of course, always been an essential feature of higher education, and the Netherlands is not an exception. The Dutch government is keen to attract international students and also highly skilled migrants by putting several immigration policies in place. For instance, recently graduated international students are entitled to orientation year, which is one year to search for a job (zoekjaar), in order to fill up the declining labour force (IND, 2019). Therefore, more international students are choosing the Netherlands as a study destination, which makes it essential to research more on this topic.

Furthermore, the growing number of international students admitted at the Radboud University shows that there is a need for them to 'feel at home' in their new environment, as this will help with their study at school, and also encourage more international students to apply to the University. As Riaño & Piguet (2016) argued that Universities are concerned about the attractiveness of their university systems to international students, the Radboud University is not an exception, as policies such as internationalisation policy were implemented, which is aimed at stimulating international student mobility by coordinating collaboration with international networks (Radboud University, 2019). As a result of the thriving migration industry in the Netherlands, the question that seeks an answer is, whether the actors involved in this migration industry are aware of the effect of their daily activities on the international student. Because several scholars, such as Baas, have written extensively on the migration industry, but there is limited research on the effect of these activities on the international students themselves. Whereas, several independent newspapers in Europe such as The Independent and The Guardian have reported a high rate of depression, suicide and attempted suicide amongst international students as a result of academic and financial pressure (Independent, 2017). In order to understand how the daily practices at the university affect the total wellbeing of the international students, this research will explore how the practices of the university which is influenced by the migration industry affect the international students. This research will explore the daily practices at the international office of the university, which includes the admission decision (i.e. the criteria used to admit student) and other activities that pertain to the international student right from admission till graduation.

#### 1.5 Structure of the thesis

This chapter further proceeds to outline this research into five sections. The first section (section 1.1) explores the background to this research, and how I was captivated with

this particular study. Section 1.2 explains the aim of this research and outlines the scope and limits of the investigation. Section 1.3 describes the theoretical framework used in this thesis. Section 1.4 presents the relevance of this research, where it identifies a gap in the existing literature and highlights the importance of carrying out this research. The last section 1.5 gives an overview of the structure of this thesis.

# Chapter 2: Framing the university through a migration industry lens

## 2.1 Introduction

*“it is highly competitive yes, in the Netherlands and outside the Netherlands. We are a very small country if you look at the UK, they really have a lot of international students, and it is big business over there. I know in Australia it is even bigger.”*  
(Education expert 2, Radboud University, April 2019)

This chapter combines the theoretical foundations of this study with some contextual information about the institutional landscape. The migration industry and Bourdieu’s capital established the foundations for this research to explore the concepts of international education and the wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students. The international students’ wellbeing will be examined through Bourdieu’s theory of capital in order to assess how their capital(resources) counters challenges which could influence their wellbeing.

This chapter is divided into four sections. Section 2.1 provides background information about the migration industry in the Netherlands. This section describes the development of education migration and also recapitulate on the critical features of this industry. This section also discusses how the migration industry plays a vital role in determining the supply of international students to their receiving universities. (Baas, 2019). Also, I will recapitulate on how the migration industry as influenced the university policies in the day-to-day practices with regards to the admission till the graduation of the international students. Section 2.2 discussed how the university in the Netherlands acts as agents in the migration<sup>2</sup> industry, by luring international students to the university with the intention of achieving monetary gains and to facilitating human mobility across international borders. This session also discusses the role of IND, Nuffic, Neso. Section 2.2.1 discusses the immigration laws with regards to international student mobility in the Netherlands, the rights non-EU students have while studying, Section 2.2.2 focused on Radboud university and the activities of the international office of the university that are aimed to attract and retain international students at the university. This section covered the application procedure, visa, scholarship. Section 2.3 introduces the international student by highlighting the difference between EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA students in the Netherlands, and the rights non-EU/EEA students have while studying. It also illustrates the wellbeing of international students and their capital (which includes economic, social and cultural).

## 2.2 The migration industry

Migration has developed into a big business, due to the business opportunities that have emerged as a result of migrant’s desire to migrate and the struggle the receiving government

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<sup>2</sup> Robin Cohen introduced the concept of the migration industry, which he defined as” ensemble of private lawyers, travel agents, recruiters, and fixers and brokers who sustain links with origin and destination countries”. (Salt & Stein ,1997).

face in order to manage international migration (Hansen & Sorensen, 2013). As a result of restrictive policies aimed at potential migrants in order to manage international migration, a “migration industry”<sup>1</sup> has emerged (Menz, 2013). Earlier studies on the migration industry tend to focus on labour migration mainly temporary contract labour (Liu-Farrer & Tran, 2019), but recent scholars such as Cranston (2018), Baas (2007), Schapendonk (2018), Beech (2018) have written extensively on how the migration industry described as the infrastructures that facilitate mobility, in accordance to Hernandez-Leon’s (2005) definition.

The different actors in the migration industry span from small migrant entrepreneurs facilitating the movement and transportation of migrants, to multinational companies carrying out deportations, to individual migrants helping others make the journey to fulfil their dreams (Hansen & Sorensen, 2013). One of the reasons for the success of these entrepreneurial activities is the ability to cross ethnic boundaries and at the same time to actively participate in the economic niche (Garapich, 2008). Because migrants have long depended on others not only to help them across international borders but also to adjust to life in the new destination, and this can be achieved through transactional business connections and the structuring influence of corporate capital to engage external assistance to facilitate the mobility of expertise (Salt & Wood, 2011; Hedberg et al., 2014). McDowell, Batnitzky, and Dyer (2008) claimed that the dynamic of the migration industry is not only adapting to changing economic circumstances but also to tailor their role relative to shifting cultural norms about ‘*the good migrants*’. These knowledge practices are of great importance because they shape the migration policies in the receiving countries, especially with the emergence of the education-migration industry and expatriate migration, where international students and highly skilled migrants (expatriates) are categorised as ‘the good and wanted migrants’ (Cranston, 2018).

For instance, in the area of international education, this field is characterised by ‘various public and private agencies and actors who provide information, products and services relating to international student migration, thereby promoting, facilitating and organising the process of migration’ (Beech, 2018). The movements of international students portray the growing component of contemporary human mobility, which takes place through a complex group of actors and networks which includes the educational institutions, families, friends and community members, country of origin and destination countries and also the international students themselves (Collins, 2012). The desire for international students to acquire more significant social and cultural capital are some of the factors that Brooks & Water (2011) identified as the reason for the increase in the mobility of international students. They also argued that the acquisition of these two capitals would lead to the acquisition of economic capital once they enter into the global job market. Another reason for the increase in the mobility of international students is due to the reluctance of countries in the global North to open their doors for immigrants by the restrictive visa policies put in place to control migration (Açıkgöz, 2015). As a result, there is a constant flow of prospective international students who are eager to study abroad due to these structural and socio-economic factors (Beech, 2018). Because of this, the education-migration industry

emerged, thereby creating opportunities for international education to become a thriving migration industry.

It is necessary to apply the migration industry lens to international student mobility because universities are transforming from social institutions into an industry (Gumport, 2000), where international education has become billion-dollar export industry whose commercial interests are reliant on the mobility of people, i.e. international students.

### 2.2.1 The Education-migration industry in the Netherlands

International student mobility is not a new fact in Europe, especially in the Netherlands. The Dutch education system provides study programmes to attract international students by providing high-quality education and research (Overmars& Hendriks-Cinque, 2012). In the academic year 2017-2018, at least 122,000 international students study in Dutch universities, and this increase is because the Dutch government recognises the admission of talented international students as an opportunity for international students to contribute positively to the development of their countries of origin<sup>3</sup>. However, international students who decide to remain in the Netherlands and work after their studies will contribute to the reduction of the skilled labour shortage as well as to the growth of the Dutch economy (Pegge, 2007). Moreover, NUFFIC, a Dutch organisation for the internationalisation of education in the Netherlands, is responsible for helping students to acquire international education and skills by the marketing of the education system in the Netherlands.

*“Together with our national and international partners, we strive to promote the development of our pupils and students, as well as the growth of teachers, professionals and organisations. This is how we are securing the Netherlands’ reputation as a leading knowledge economy(Nuffic,2019).*

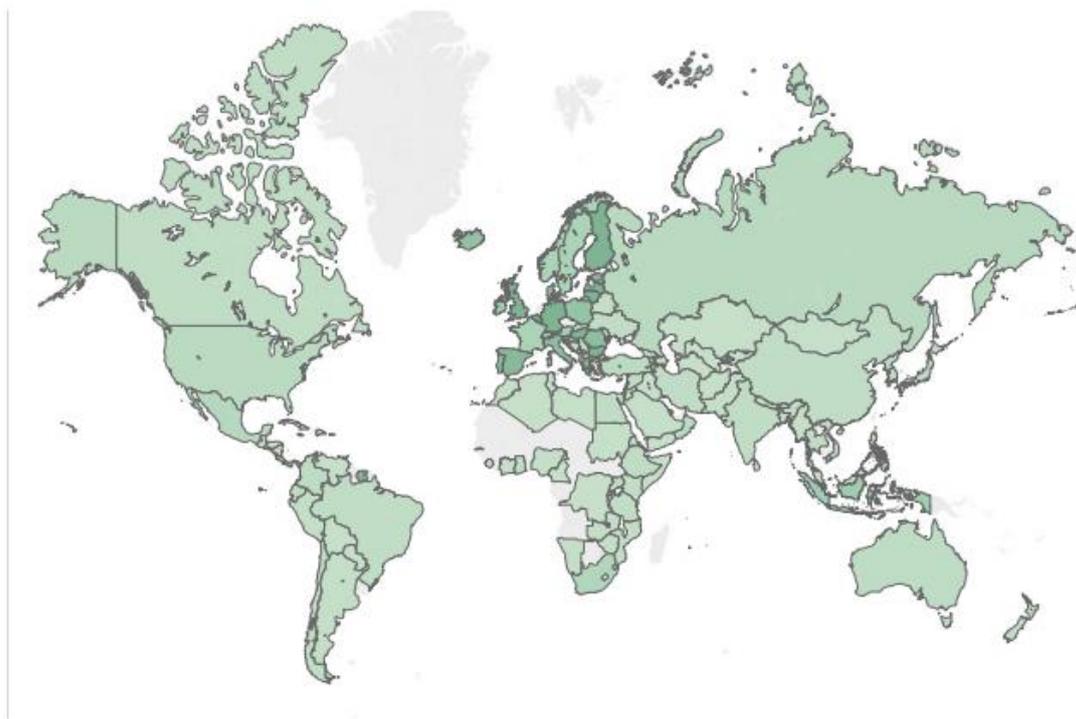
According to a 2017-2018 report by NUFFIC<sup>4</sup>, in a decade the Netherlands has a relatively high allocation of international students in its higher education system with an increase from 1.5% to 2% of international students worldwide. The Netherlands came in the 6th position in the top 10 most international student population with New Zealand, the UK, Switzerland, Austria and Australia in the top 5<sup>5</sup>. This position is due to teaching quality, general availability of English-taught programmes in the Netherlands, which makes it a favourable study destination for potential international students, especially from Commonwealth countries and the United States. Between 2006–07 and 2016–17, the number of international students has increased with 164 different nationalities studying in the Netherlands.

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<sup>3</sup> See [https://www.unodc.org/res/cld/document/aliens-act-2000\\_html/Aliens\\_Act.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/res/cld/document/aliens-act-2000_html/Aliens_Act.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> The Dutch organisation for internationalisation in education. From primary and secondary education to vocational and higher education and research.

<sup>5</sup> OECD (2017), Education at a glance – OECD indicators, Chapter 4, Indicator C 4 p. 286



Visual 18: the Netherlands market share in specific countries of origin (2015), according to UNESCO.

*Figure 1: The Netherlands market share in specific countries of origin*

*Source: Nuffic*

To many who are new to the education migration industry, the emergence of the Netherlands as one of the top 10 most international student populations might be surprising. However, the Dutch government recognises the need to attract more international students. To the Dutch government, international students are regarded to have a positive effect on the quality of education, international collaboration and scientific achievement (Hong et al. 2017). A study by CBS, 2012 (Centraal Bureau Voor de Statistiek) revealed that the net-inflow of international students to the Netherlands has a positive effect on the GDP<sup>6</sup>, and this is through the tax revenues of those students that decide to stay and work in the Dutch labour market after study.

As a result of the increasing number of international students and their direct cost-benefit relationship to the Netherlands and host universities, a substantial effort and dedication to attract them has emerged, where most universities in the Netherlands are concerned about the attractiveness of their university systems to international students and wish to increase the recognition of their degrees abroad (Riaño & Piguet, 2016). Apart from the demand for overseas education by both students seeking opportunities abroad and universities desire for them, a network of international education has also been established. Agents are employed by private companies who have links and contacts of universities worldwide. These agents are

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<sup>6</sup> "Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a broad measurement of a nation's overall economic activity. GDP is the monetary value of all the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period".

paid a commission based on every international student they successfully recruit to their universities. Also, due to governmental regulations with regards to migration, it is creating a new source of power and revenues for the universities, who benefit from the higher tuition fees from international students. The restrictive governmental policies to manage the inflow of migrants have enriched the players in the migration industry because the education-migration industry is a derivative of Europe's immigration regime (Cranston, 2018). Beech 2018, also referred to the works of Gribble (2008); Madge et al. (2009) where they claimed that migration policies are often formulated to lure international students into staying after study to fill particular skills shortages such as science and engineering sector, or those sectors less popular amongst home graduates.

However, higher education in the Netherlands is subject to governance and policy systems which either promote or limit opportunities for international study, as agents can help students to broker these hurdles (Beech, 2017). However, due to the benefits international students bring to the Netherlands, these agents have become essential to international student recruitment, where they are viewed by students as the gatekeepers to higher education opportunities. (Beech, 2018). Schapendonk, (2018) argued, migration trajectory cannot be explained by only looking at the migrant's agency (in this case, the international students) as a form of autonomous power. This is because international students' migration decisions depend so much on the social network both home and abroad, policy interventions and helping hands such as the agents in the home country and the international officials of the university. Creating and sustaining international student mobility is a complex task that requires agents and international officials of the Dutch universities to bridge the gap between a solely profit-oriented education industry and the social lives of international students and their families. Similar to Collins (2012) arguments that education agents help bridge the worlds of international students and the migration industry, by utilising their connections into students' social networks as part of their contribution to the emergence and maintenance of the export education industry.

Because international students depend on others not only to help them across international borders but also to adjust to life in the new destination, it is crucial to apply the migration lens to international student mobility to explore the social actors involved in this industry. Baas (2007), argued that the migration industry has 'hijacked' the education industry. Also, because of the growing mobility of international students, the education industry has developed into a big business just like the migration industry, where all the social actors are dependent on the money international students pay which is higher than local students (Baas, 2007).

To understand the education-migration in the Netherlands, the identified actors involved in this industry are:

### i. IND

The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (IND) implements the migration policy in the Netherlands. The IND evaluates all residency applications of people who intend to live in the Netherlands or want to become Dutch citizens. The applicants vary from refugees, people who want to work in the Netherlands, students coming to the Netherlands to study, or people who come to the Netherlands for family reunification or formation (IND, 2019). Also, the IND handles naturalisation applications and evaluates each application individually against the rules and regulations of the policy on foreign nationals<sup>7</sup>.

The policy by the EU to establish a framework for legal migration, which covers entry and residence of specific categories of immigrants such as highly skilled workers such as ‘EU Blue Card Directive’ and students and researchers<sup>8</sup>, has made it possible for the Netherlands to implement laws to encourage these group of people. For instance, IND works closely with educational institutions in the Netherlands to optimally help international students in arranging their residence permit to study, and this procedure is quick and straightforward which makes it attractive to international students to apply. Also, due to the introduction of the Modern Migration Policy Act, study visa applications are usually processed faster within a few weeks (Steehouder& Donselaar, 2018). Also, the IND works closely with universities in the Netherlands to monitor whether international students make sufficient progress in your studies; this is called study progress monitoring ( IND,2019). The IND issues residence permit which is valid for the duration of the students’ education, and the international students need to obtain at least 50% of the required credits for each academic year. The university reports all the study progress of each international student and reports to the IND in case the student is unable to meet the study progress. In the migration industry in the Netherlands, the IND is also part of the industry, because they are there from the beginning providing entry visa to come to the Netherlands till the end of the study of the international student.

The Dutch immigration policies and the daily activities at the various higher institutions in the Netherlands contributes to the mobility of migrants both international students by providing a legal path to encourage them to come to the Netherlands in order to ‘curb’ the inflow of irregular migration into Europe (European Commission, 2019).

### ii. Nuffic

*“Together with our national and international partners, we strive to promote the development of our pupils and students, as well as the growth of teachers, professionals and organisations. This is how we are securing the Netherlands’ reputation as a leading knowledge economy”*(Nuffic,2019, Para 2).

Nuffic together with its partners seeks to ensure that all students learn to cope with internationalisation and globalisation by presenting them with the knowledge and skills they need to live, study and work in an internationalising society (Huberts, 2017). In 2017, Nuffic

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<sup>7</sup> For more information see [www.ind.nl](http://www.ind.nl) accessed on 13/06/2019.

<sup>8</sup>See [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration_en) accessed on 11/06/2019.

introduced Internationalisation for all, an agenda for education-wide internationalisation, thereby everyone in the Netherlands must have an education that is ‘*internationally competent*’ so that they can live and work now and in the future in a society that is becoming increasingly intercultural and international (Nuffic, 2017). International student mobility is one of the main features of internationalisation, because of the demographic decline of students, international students have become essential to establish student inflow and funding (Hong, Pieke, Steehouder & van Veldhuizen, 2017). International students are beneficial for both Dutch universities and the Dutch society as a whole because the inflow of international students is expected to have a positive effect on the position of the Netherlands as a centre of knowledge and technology.

The inflow of international students has been the main topic of public debate in the last couple of years in the Netherlands. According to Nuffic, the Dutch Ministry of Education (OCW) and the Dutch universities’ association (VH and VSNU) established in 2018, new plans for the future development of the internationalisation of education, where they agreed that internationalisation adds to the quality of education and generally to the Dutch society. The Netherlands is recognised as one of the most powerful countries in the field of internationalisation, where more than 1,500 study programs are English taught courses (Nuffic, 2013). The growth of English as a dominant academic language can be understood as part of this internationalisation process in the Netherlands because the availability of English programmes will attract more international students and also the international outlook of the study programme is beneficial for the Dutch students<sup>9</sup>.

The increase in the inflow of international students to the Netherlands includes both EU/EEA<sup>10</sup> and non-EU/EEA. In the 2018-2019 academic session, the share of non-EU/EEA students increased from 24.8% in 2016 to 26.9% in 2018-2019, which represented a total of 170 different nationalities studying in the Netherlands. The increase in the number of non-EEA might be attributed to the presence of Nuffic Nesos<sup>11</sup> in some non-EEA countries, which are essential for Dutch higher education (Huberts & Coningh, 2018). The Nuffic Neso offices abroad are set up with funding from the Dutch Ministry of Education, culture and science in order to promote Dutch higher education in these countries<sup>12</sup>

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9 Bouma, K. (2016). “Meer dan de helft van de studies volledig in het Engels” (More than half of degree programmes in the Netherlands in English). Volkskrant 26 August 2016, <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/meer-dan-de-helft-van-de-studiesvolledig-in-het-engels~a4364526/>

<sup>10</sup> Countries in the EEA include all 28 countries in the European Union, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland

<sup>11</sup> The Netherlands Education Support Offices (Nuffic Nesos) are located in countries that are strategically important for Dutch higher education

<sup>12</sup> International offices <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/subjects/international-offices/> accessed on 25/05/2019.

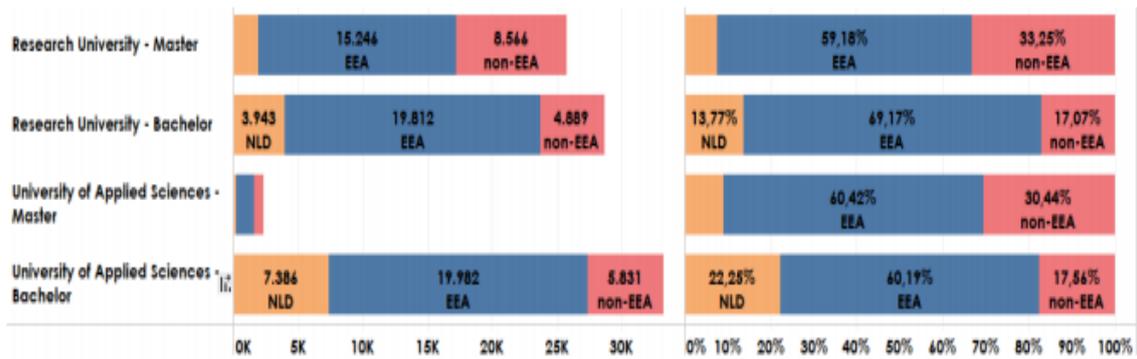


Figure 2: International students divided by RU/UAS, bachelor's/master's, Dutch (NLD, i.e. homecoming)/ EEA nationalities/non-EEA nationalities, 2017-2018. In total numbers and as a share.

Source: Nuffic

### iii. Neso

*“The main strategic goal of the Nuffic Netherlands Education Support Offices (Nesos) is to position and brand Dutch Higher Education. For the past decade, a significant 40 percentage points difference in enrolments of international degree students has been achieved. Considering the Netherlands relatively low share of (self-paying) non-EEA nationalities among international students, the activities of the Nuffic Nesos add to the increasing diversity in the international classroom” (Neso, 2019).*

The Neso offices are the international office of the Dutch government strategically located in some non-EU/EEA countries which are essential to the government in order to promote Dutch higher education in these countries. The Neso offices are located in Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey and Vietnam. For instance, Chinese students are one of the largest groups of international students studying in the Netherlands, as at the year 2000, there were 185 students enrolled in a Dutch university compared to the academic year 2018-2019 were 4547 Chinese students were enrolled in a Dutch university (Steehouder & Donselaar, 2018). This high enrolment could be linked to the presence of Neso office in China and the growing importance of China as a global power, where universities now contend for students, researcher and prestige on a global scale (Hong, Pieke, Steehouder, & Veldhuizen, 2017). According to Nuffic (2018), countries with Neso offices had 13,439 of their citizens enrolled as international students in government-financed Dutch higher education institutions in the 2018-2019 academic year.

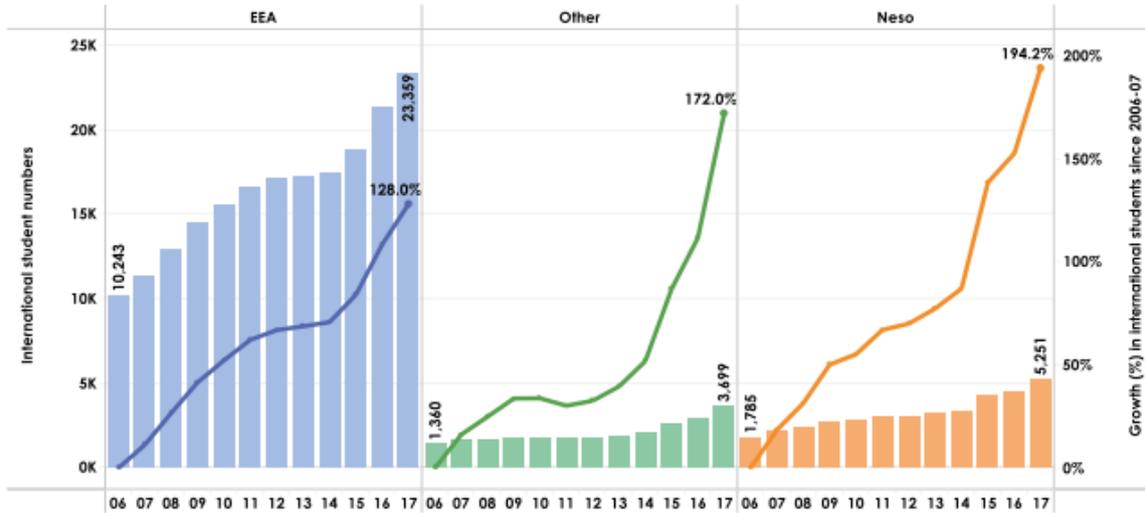


Figure 3: New enrolments of international students in the Netherlands, EEA-, non-EEA/non-Neso, and Neso countries, from 2006-2007 to 2017-2018. Absolute number (bar) and relative growth (line).

Source: Nuffic

The activities<sup>13</sup> of Neso in various countries include:

1. Promoting Dutch higher education
2. Quality of the international classroom
3. Holland Alumni activities
4. Promoting outbound mobility
5. Vocational education
6. Specific services

Apart from these they also offer information to potential international students to study in the Netherlands and organise pre-departure briefings for international students who are preparing to study in the Netherlands.

Apart from the Neso offices, the Dutch scientific institutes abroad (NWIB)<sup>14</sup> all around the world make available information about studying in the Netherlands, and also function as the contact points for potential students and scholars from around the world, who are seeking contact with research universities and universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands (Nuffic,2019).

### 2.3 The university as an agent in the migration industry

In one of the publications by Baas(2007), where he explained how international students in Australia described some colleges and universities in Australia as ‘PR factories’(i.e. permanent residency) because they knew these institutions were mainly in business of

<sup>13</sup> For more information go to <https://www.nuffic.nl/onderwerpen/kantoren-het-buitenland/> accessed on 09/06/2019.

<sup>14</sup> These NWIB's are jointly administered by a six Dutch universities: University of Amsterdam; VU University of Amsterdam; Utrecht University; Leiden University; University of Groningen; Radboud University Nijmegen

migration and not education. This queries if truly higher institutions are for knowledge acquisition or money-making purpose or ‘PR factories’.

Many universities in the Netherlands can be classified as migration entrepreneurs as they supply opportunities for international student mobility and regularly invest considerable financial capital in outreach activities to access potential international students (Beech, 2018). Apart from this, due to the increasing demand of international education by students and also universities looking for ways to lure them to their universities, a network of international education agents has been formed, where Beech, (2018) explained that these agents are paid a commission by the universities for every student recruited. Beech (2018) further referred to the works of Deem 2001& Harvey 2005 to explain how the neoliberal reforms in the education sector have allowed universities to assume free-market principles to generate their funding to increase efficiency through competition and streamlining. As a result of these changes, universities in the Netherlands have to compete for international students all over the world. And in order to achieve this, universities in the Netherlands offer more English taught programmes, for instance as at the academic year 2018-2019, of the 702 master’s programmes offered at research universities, only 14% was offered in Dutch while the majority of 76% was offered in English (Huberts & Coningh, 2018).

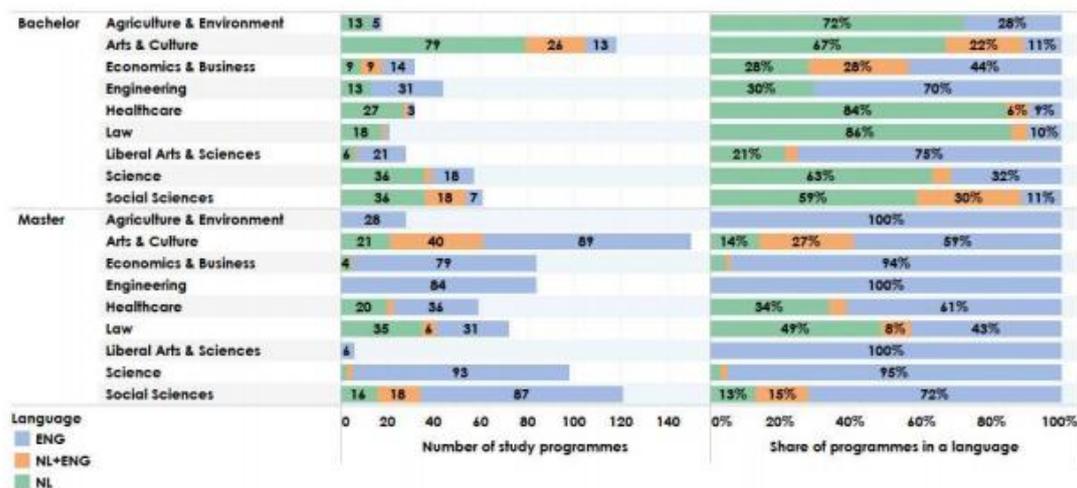


Figure 4: Number and share of study programmes offered in English, Dutch and multiple languages, per type of education and field of study in 2018-2019

Source: Nuffic

Apart from more English taught programmes, the universities in the Netherlands offers a broad range of scholarship to target and lure exceptional bright students to the Netherlands to study. There is a large pool of scholarships aimed at both EU/EEA students and non-EU/EEA students to allow them to come to the Netherlands to study, examples of such scholarships are orange knowledge programme, MENA scholarship programme, Holland scholarship (Studyinhollandnl., 2019), thereby the ‘brightest and best’ students thus gain competitive advantage in the knowledge economy (Raghuram, 2013). As claimed by King et al., (2012),

geographies of international student mobility have been explored demographically as stocks and flows, institutionally through the role that universities play in forming migration and conceptually through the human, economic, social and cultural they require for, as well as gain through migration (Baláz& Williams, 2004; Waters, 2006). The capital migrants (international students) bring with them has become the basis for their selection in many universities (Williams, 2007).

### 2.3.1 Radboud University

#### i. The academic field

*“Radboud University aspires to quality. Internationalisation plays a major role in the quality of our teaching, research and service provision. These are the three pillars on which we are building towards a leading position in the international academia”*<sup>15</sup>(Radboud University, 2019, Para 1).

From a Bourdiean perspective, a field is a relatively autonomous domain of activity which relies on the rules and practices of institutions that are specific to it and also determines the relations among the agents (Hilgers& Mangez, 2015).

Radboud University Nijmegen was established on 17 October 1923 under the name Catholic University Nijmegen. With their university, Dutch Catholics sought to promote the emancipation of Roman Catholics in the Netherlands, who at that time were strongly underrepresented in public administration, the legal profession, medicine and other sectors<sup>16</sup>. According to the Dutch university information guide Keuzegids Universiteiten 2019 (for Bachelor's programmes), Radboud University is the best traditional<sup>17</sup>, general university in the Netherlands. Five programmes have received a Top Programme designation; thirteen programmes are deemed the best in their field by the Keuzegids<sup>18</sup>.

Radboud university aims to attract more international students and staff to their academic community. Additionally, the international office of the university is responsible for organising all initiatives concerning international cooperation and exchange. As a result of these activities, more international students are coming to Radboud university; for instance, the proportion of international students as of 2018 was 10.6 % (RU, Annual report 2018). With more English-taught Bachelor's programmes introduced, Radboud University has now extended the marketing and recruitment to a selected number of focus countries. Furthermore, the university provides presentations at international schools in the Netherlands. A VR tour has been developed for use abroad, enabling potential international students to get an idea of

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<sup>15</sup>See <https://www.ru.nl/english/about-us/our-university/internationalisation/> accessed on 15/06/2019

<sup>16</sup> See Radboud University - Nijmegen - Netherlands ...  
<https://www.mastersportal.com/universities/82/radboud-university.html> accessed on 15/06/2019.

<sup>17</sup> The Netherlands has fourteen universities (united under the flag of the VSNU). Of these, six are referred to as "traditional, general universities" because here the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences (including medical sciences) are represented. Besides Radboud University, these universities are those of Groningen, Leiden, Utrecht and Amsterdam (VU and UvA).

<sup>18</sup> Culled from <https://www.ru.nl/english/about-us/our-university/history/radboudhistory/> accessed on 13/05/2019

the Radboud University campus (Radboud University). Also, online campaigns are used for the Master’s open day and the Master’s programme to the attention of the target students.

Total (October 2018)	22,142
Bachelor*	14,201
Master**	7,941
International students (exchange students not included)	10,6 %
Exchange students (incoming)	949
First year students ***	5,596
International first year students	15,3 %
Participants Radboud Summer School 2017	685

Figure 5: students enrolment at Radboud University as of 2018

Source: Radboud university website

## ii. Rules of the games

*“Radboud University only enrolls foreign students if they fully comply with the relevant legislation and regulations”*(Radboud University Nijmegen Annual report, 2018).

To get into the academic field of Radboud University, international students must first fulfil certain conditions and have the required capitals. According to Bourdieu (1986), capital is the accumulation of labour (in the form of material or embodied form), used productively.

Bourdieu(1983) also distinguished between the several forms of capital and the concepts of economic, social and cultural capital, which are especially crucial for this study.

The rules to get into the field of Radboud University can be categorised as pre-departure requirements and post-departure requirements.

For the pre-departure requirements, international students must have the necessary capital such as cultural capital(previous academic achievement. English language skills), economic capital<sup>19</sup> (you have to prove that you can take care of your tuition and living expenses) to get into this field.

Once they meet these requirements, they can get into the field, but they also need to meet some set of requirements to maintain their residence in the Netherlands. For the post-departure requirements, the students need to meet 50% of the academic assessment in order to maintain their residence permit in the Netherlands; this is called study progress monitoring<sup>20</sup>(IND, 2019). This rule determines if international students will enter the field of Radboud University or not.

<sup>19</sup> See <https://ind.nl/Paginas/Inkomenseisen-studie.aspx> accessed on 10/06/2019

<sup>20</sup> See <https://ind.nl/Paginas/Studievoortgangmonitoring.aspx> accessed on 13/06/2019

### iii. Internationalisation

*“Radboud University aspires to quality. Internationalisation plays a major role in the quality of our teaching, research and service provision. These are the three pillars on which we are building towards a leading position in the international academia”*(Radboud University, 2019).

In 2018, Radboud University established its aim for internationalisation in a new internationalisation strategy: ‘Radboud International 2025: Quality first!’(Radboud University, 2019). By 2025, the university wants to be an internationally-oriented, intercultural, and multilingual knowledge organisation with quality at its core; an open academic community that recruits both talented researchers and students from across the globe and from all backgrounds<sup>21</sup>. The strategy’s aims are additionally defined in a seven-year action plan. In 2019, the implementation of the formulated measures will begin, in such areas as language policy, the international classroom, and the international mobility of students and staff, to create an inclusive academic community(RU,2019). For instance, A remarkable reduction of the processing time for international student applications was achieved by enforcing a new harmonised admissions process and also by expanding the capacity of the Admissions Office.

### iv. International Office; Radboud University

*“We are the first point of entry. So we organise our registration day we organise the orientation for exchange pre-master, master students, we help the bachelor students with a special workshop during their orientation”*(Education professional 4, central desk international office Radboud University, April 2019).

According to Collins(2012), student mobility takes place through a group of actors and networks, which includes universities, families and friends and origin and the students themselves. Moreover, in the case of the universities, the international offices are in charge of coordinating the activities that relate to international student mobility. The international office at Radboud university is in charge of coordinating all strategies relating to international cooperation and exchange, which includes students, researchers, visiting professors and members of staff. The international office at Radboud works closely with Nuffic and Neso offices, to attract international students to study at Radboud University.

The daily internationalisation activities of the international focus on institutional cooperation with international partners, program management, international student mobility and the arrangement of housing for both international students and staff<sup>22</sup>. They are also the ‘first point of entry’ for international students where they bridge the gap between the international students and the IND during visa processing and study progress monitoring. The central international office is further divided into international faculty offices where they handle international students related to their faculty. Furthermore, the international faculty offices at Radboud university are divided into:

- Faculty of Medical Sciences
- Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies

<sup>21</sup> See 2019 Annual report of Radboud University.

<sup>22</sup> For more information see <https://www.ru.nl/io/internationaal/int-samenwerking/> accessed on 13/06/2019.

- Faculty of Arts
  - Faculty of Management Sciences
  - Faculty of Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Computer Science
  - Faculty of Social Sciences
  - Faculty of Law
- The international faculty offices work hand in hand with the central office, agents all over the world and organise fairs and events abroad to lure international students into studying at Radboud University. The activities of the international office include:  
Application procedure
  - Visa application
  - Scholarship
  - Housing

## 2.4 International students experiences and wellbeing

### Who is an international student?

*“An internationally mobile student is an individual who has physically crossed an international border between the two countries with the objective to participate in educational activities in a destination country, where the destination country is different from his or her country of origin”*(UNESCO, 2015)<sup>23</sup>.

International students are generally defined as having left their country of origin and moved to another country for study and are divided into two groups: Those who move abroad to complete a degree (degree mobility) those who move for a short-term study exchange (credit mobility). (Riaño& Piguet, 2016). For this study, I will focus on students who have moved abroad to complete a degree, who are non-citizens of the Netherlands, for instance, in the Netherlands, an international student is an individual that holds a Dutch passport. Besides, international students are further divided into EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA students. Students from EU/EEA country does not require a residence permit for the purpose of study (visa), on the other hand, a non-EU/EEA individual needs to get a visa to enter the Netherlands and also need to apply for an MVV for a stay longer than 90 days (Nuffic,2019). For non-EU/EEA students, a recognised sponsor such as a higher education institution will apply for a student visa on behalf of the non-EU/EEA students at the IND office. Once IND approves the application of the non-EU students, the student will have to submit an Authorization for Provisional Residence Application (MVV), which is part of the student visa, and this will have to be done at the non-EU students' home country. The MVV (which is a temporary visa valid for 90 days) enables the non-EU student to enter the Netherlands, and once the student gets to the Netherlands, he/ she receives the Regular residence Permit(VVR) (Nuffic, 2019).

The non-EU/EEA students are the focus for this study because of the immigration laws which restricts them and also the challenges they face while studying in the Netherlands due to their status as non-EU/EEA students. Also, more non-EU/EEA students are coming to the Netherlands to study, for instance over two years, the share of non-EU students has increased from 24.8% in 2016 to 26.9 in 2018, which makes it necessary to research this group.

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<sup>23</sup>See <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/international-students> accessed on 15/06/2019.



Figure 6: International students in by institution type, degree and nationality (EEA or non-EEA), 2018-2019. In total numbers and in percentage  
Source: Nuffic

According to the report by Nuffic, non-EU/EEA students are enrolled more often directly in master's programmes, while the percentage of non-EU/EEA is much smaller in Bachelor's programmes.

There are several legal conditions non-EU/EEA students need to meet before they are granted a permit to come to the Netherlands to study.

Firstly, the non-EU student must prove an independent sufficient and sustainable income<sup>24</sup>.

Secondly, to travel to the Netherlands, the student needs a provisional residence permit (MVV) and only recognised educational institutions can apply on behalf of the students.

Thirdly, the non-EU student is only allowed to work a maximum of 16 hours a week; or full-time during the summer months of June, July and August and may only work in paid employment if an employer has a TWV<sup>25</sup> for the student.

Fourthly, the non-EU student must meet at least 50% of the required credits for each academic year, which is the study progress monitoring,

Also, the residence permit for study is valid for the duration of the study plus three months. However, there is an extra year for preparatory education or transition year.

Finally, non-EU/EEA students need to pay higher tuition compared to Dutch students and EU/EEA students. Because students from countries in the EEA have the same economic rights as Dutch students and therefore pay the same tuition fees as Dutch students.

Most of these legal conditions also influence the institutional policies at the University, and this might affect the wellbeing of international students either negatively or positively while studying in the Netherlands.

#### 2.4.1 The wellbeing of international students

Cdcgov. (2019) described wellbeing as the presence of positive emotions and moods, such as being content with life and expressing happiness, and the absence of negative emotions such

<sup>24</sup>As at 2019, the student must show monthly amount of € 882.47, for higher professional education (hbo) or university

<sup>25</sup> TWV is a work permit that allows a non-EU resident to work legally in the Netherlands.

as anxiety and depression. Besides, Kloep, Hendry and Saunders (2009), also described wellbeing as,

*“When an individual meets a challenge(s), the system of challenges and resources comes into a state of imbalance, as the individual is forced to adapt his or her resources to meet this particular challenge.”*

(p. 337)



*Figure 7: Definition of wellbeing*

*Source: Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders (2012).*

According to Dodge, Daly, Huyton & Sanders (2012), for individuals to have stable wellbeing, their psychological, social and physical resources need to meet a particular psychological, social and physical challenge, but when individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips along with their wellbeing and vice. Most international students especially non-EU/EEA arriving in the Netherlands to start the higher education encounter more difficulties and challenges than the average Dutch students commencing a tertiary course, especially if the international student's first language is not English and also when the cultural composition is different from the Dutch culture (Rosenthal, Russell, & Thomson, 2008). Furthermore, Psychologytoday.com. (2019) claims that wellbeing is the experience of health, prosperity and happiness, which includes good mental health, a sense of meaning to life and high life satisfaction. So for this study, to explore their wellbeing, the feelings non-EU/EEA students felt due to the challenges they faced will be uncovered to understand their wellbeing.

In the academic year 2017-2018, at least 122,000 international students study in Dutch universities, complementing this growth has been an increase in awareness of the range of student needs that must be met, the development of strategies to meet those needs. According to Lee et al. (2004) & Mori (2000), they made claims that international students have more diverse university adjustment problems than domestic students, and these experiences by international students commonly challenge their sense of wellbeing. Concerning this research, international student wellbeing means how these students cope with changes in their everyday activities and how their levels of wellbeing are affected. Using Bourdieu's theory of capital (1986) to conceptualise the international students as people who use the different capitals they have received from different sources such as from family, church, previous schools, community. To achieve their degree in the Netherlands (see section 2.3). So the resources here will be the capitals the students have, while the challenges are the

pre-departure and post-departure challenges they face while trying to come to the Netherlands.

### i. Challenges

Studying in a new environment across international border presents international students with exciting opportunities and also with some challenges. Due to the increasing number of international students studying in the Netherlands, the benefits these students bring to the host institutions and host countries have attracted much attention. Nevertheless, little attention has been paid to challenges non-EU/EEA students face while studying in the Netherlands. To explore the challenges international students face, this concept will be divided into;

#### Pre-departure challenges

According to Durkin (2008), the pre-departure period of international student mobility as the stage for “entry points” of study abroad. This period includes; the decision to choose the university to go to, meeting the requirements set by the university( academic and English proficiency test), documentation requirements, financial obligation(tuition and scholarships), application deadlines and enrolment.<sup>26</sup> These activities might come as a challenge to international students, especially non-EU/EEA students whose previous educational system might be different compared to the Dutch educational system. Apart from this different education system, non-EU/EEA students face challenges in preparing visa documents required to enter the Netherlands, and this can be quite a tedious task for them(Khanal& Gaulee, 2019). Besides, due to the unstable exchange rate of non-EU countries currency, for instance, the Indian Rupee can make financial issues a challenge to non-EU/EEA students (Clark, 2013).

#### Post-departure challenges

These challenges include the challenges they face once they arrive at their host country. Most times, international students might feel prepared before arriving in the Netherlands but might be surprised that their expectation does not match reality. According to Burdett& Crossman (2012), an international student might experience the feelings of alienation or separation as a result of their new surroundings. For instance, Lee& Wright, (2015), recognised that non-EU/EEA students were likely to face at least some form of discrimination, while EU/EEA students might not experience any form of discrimination.

Also, the financial obligations of non-EU students might cause some form of anxiety, especially since non-EU/EEA students pay higher tuition and are only allowed to work for 16 hours/week. As a result of the inconsistent payment schedules for non-EU/EEA students, many students struggle to attend lectures and even comprehend if they attend (Maringe & Carter, 2007).

The language of instruction in most master’s programme is in the English language in the Netherlands. However, non-EU students might encounter language difficulties which are caused by loss of confidence in the linguistic skills and also by the negative societal attitude towards students with foreign accents (Park, 2016). Also, the English language proficiency

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<sup>26</sup> This information was culled from the RU website on 13/06/2019.

and the teaching styles are some challenges the non-EU students face, which could be barriers to academic success for students (Andrade, 2009; Leong, 2015).

Also, non-EU/EEA students might also encounter bad experiences with accommodation, which might produce negative feelings in them, which could affect them psychologically and physically too (Duangpracha, 2012). Moreover, last but not least, many student participants are at some point in time, confronted with post-study challenges. I also took this into account while conducting this research.

#### 2.4.2 Capitals and Resources: A Bourdieuan perspective on student well-being.

Bourdieu (1983) defined capital as

*...accumulated labour (in its materialised form or its 'incorporated', 'embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour (p. 241).*

Bourdieu's theory of capital established the basis for this research to help fragment the non-EU/EEA students' well-being into different concepts in order to deeply explore this research. Bourdieu (1989), argued that each class or group has its cultural structure, sets of norms, ideals and values, and he calls this the habitus. In the field of international education, international students are one set of actors in the game whose goal is to achieve the standard implemented by the university. Also, one way of entering the field of international education is for the students to use the different capitals they have acquired over time from the different institutions they have interacted with such as family, church, schools. Once in the field, these students are expected to conform to institutional norms by using the different capitals they have such as cultural, social and economical to engage in the practices and meet the expectations of the university (Sheridan, 2011).

However, international students might find it difficult to conform to the norms and culture of the universities, as there might be a difference between academics expectations and international students' capabilities (Sheridan, 2011). Hence, non-EU/EEA students must frequently adjust their values, ideas and practices in order to remain in the university. The level of academic performance of international students does not depend on their level of intelligence, but it has to do more with the capital (economic, social and cultural) they brought with them to the university and also their knowledge and ability to play by the rules and regulations of the university (Inglis & Thorpe, 2012). Moreover, because of differences in the capitals the non-EU/EEA students have in comparison to host country students, this difference might affect them negatively. For instance, Inglis & Thorpe (2012) argued that international students would internalise the opinions and views made by the teacher, which can have a negative influence on the self-confidence of these students, especially if the teachers feel that the capital (cultural, social and economic) is insufficient or below expectations. Fulmer et al. (2010), also examined how foreign residents such as international students can find themselves in a different 'cultural milieu' that is different from their

societies of origin and how the interaction of individual and cultural-level personality affects the self-esteem and well-being of these foreign residents. As a result, when the international students do not feel confident in their abilities or capital (Cultural, economic and social), other mental health issues may start to come into play such as anxiety and depression (Wesorg, 2019).

The educational performance and achievement of non-EU/EEA students are determined by the composition of different types of capital they possess and the extent to which they satisfy the symbolic requisites of the dominant culture legitimated by the education system (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977). International students use the different capitals they have acquired from the different sources they have interacted with such as family, church, previous schools. The efficient use of these capitals mostly leads to success from the teachers and help enhance the confidence of international students (Gaddis, 2013; Inglis & Thorpe, 2012).

#### i. Economic capital

Economic capital is defined as the control students have over economic resources such as income and assets easily converted into cash (Caro, Hernández & Lüdtke, 2014). Also, parental education and occupational status can be regarded as resources as they can be transformed into income, because the more significant the economic capital in a family, the higher their educational attainment<sup>27</sup> (Caro, Hernández & Lüdtke, 2014).

As a result, non-EU/EEA students with adequate economic capital (in the form of family support) might have the edge over students that need to look for part-time jobs to finance their studies and their living expenses. Thus economic capital plays an essential role in determining access to international education for non-EU/EEA students (Bourdieu, 1993).

#### ii. Social capital

*“the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition”* (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p.p. 14).

According to Bourdieu (1986), the capacity of social capital possessed by an individual depends on the size of the connections that the individual can effectively mobilise. For instance, such social capital is instituted between individuals in emotionally close relationships such as family members and close friends. Social capitals enable individuals to gain in a variety of ways, such as their participation in social networks enables such as an individual to draw on resources from other members of the network and leverage connections from multiple social contexts (Siisiainen, 2003). The resources gained through social capital can include vital information about employment opportunities, personal relationships, academic grades or the capacity to organise groups (Paxton, 1999).

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<sup>27</sup> According to Caro, Hernández & Lüdtke (2014), they assumed that greater economic capital, can lead to better physical conditions which supports the cognitive development of family members and therefore lead to higher educational attainment.

The level to which non-EU/EEA students establish social relations with other students has an impact on how students cope with the complex demands of University (Hendrickson et al. 2011; Nanclares et al., 2012). However, most non-EU/EEA students arrive in the Netherlands generally deprived of social capital and are challenged by unfamiliar cultural and educational institutions. Because of this, most friendships non-EU/EEA students have are mostly from the same country or continent (i.e. Africans-African, Asian-Asian friendship). However, as Kim (2001) argued, this kind of friendship provide short-term support for non-EU/EEA students through social interactions with students who are facing similar challenges, but in the long run constraints adaptation processes for these group of students. Hendrickson et al. (2011) further argued that students who maintain this kind of friendship were less satisfied with their lives, but claimed that more relations with host-national students positively led to satisfaction and connectivity.

Nevertheless, establishing friendships with the host-national students such as the Dutch students are difficult because of the language barrier, perceived discrimination and the fact that most of the Dutch students already have well-established friendship network (Hendrickson et al. 2011). For example, a recent survey of 1,002 international students conducted by the National Student Union (LSVb) and the Erasmus Student Network in the Netherlands discovered that three-quarters (75.2%) would like to interact more with Dutch students because they claim they lack contact with their Dutch peers<sup>28</sup> (The pie news, 2019).

### iii. Cultural capital

Cultural capital shows the long-lasting cultural dispositions immersed in the human mind and body, also in cultural goods and educational credentials. Bourdieu (1983) recognised how cultural capital could appear in three states, which are; objectified, institutionalised, and embodied. In the objectified state, it consists of cultural objects such as pictures, books, materials or even access to the Internet (Caro, Hernández & Lüdtke, 2014). In its institutional state, cultural capital comprises of educational credentials such as academic degrees parents possess. While in its embodied state, cultural capital consist of permanent dispositions inherited through the value placed on education (time spent reading for pleasure or academic aspiration), the creation of legitimate signals (e.g., a specific linguistic code/ linguistic competence) and the cultural practices legitimated by the dominant culture ( e.g., theatre, museum exhibitions, music concert) (Caro, Hernández & Lüdtke, 2014).

However, Atherton (2011), explained that the linguistic code is essential because students with elaborated code or competence are more capable of performing better in the education system than students with restrictive codes ( for instance, students from disadvantaged background). For the non-EU/EEA students, their cultural capital comprises of their linguistic and cultural competence, degrees and credentials, computer competence to mention a few.

According to Leontopoulou (2006), international students are among the brightest and best from their country of origin who are presumed to have inner resources demonstrated in the

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<sup>28</sup> <https://thepienews.com/news/international-students-netherlands-have-great-difficulty-finding-their-way/> accessed on 11/06/2019.

face of complexity by most of the domestic students. Because Waters & Leung, (2013), argued that the more capital non-EU/EEA students own and can acquire, the higher their chance of social ‘success’ because all the three forms of capital work together to shape social outcomes.

## 2.5. Conceptual framework

The basis for conceptualising the daily activities and the institutional practices of Radboud University (international office) and how these activities influence the international student is to provide an insight into how these concepts are influenced by the migration industry. Figure 8 is a schematic representation of the study’s main pillars. The field of migration industry represents the environment in which the social actors engage in their competitive activities, which involves international student migration and highly skilled migration. Also in the migration industry field is the field of Radboud University international office. The migration industry influences the activities of the RU international office. In the field of Radboud University are the different activities the university engages in to stay competitive in the education industry by attracting more international students to the University.

While international students are desired to be part of the field due to the capitals they embody, and this benefits the University, but the activities that take place in the field of the migration industry and the field of the University affects the wellbeing of the students and also influences their capital too. This shows how interrelated the concepts are, and how the different concepts mutually influence one another, as the arrows are represented in two-way directions.

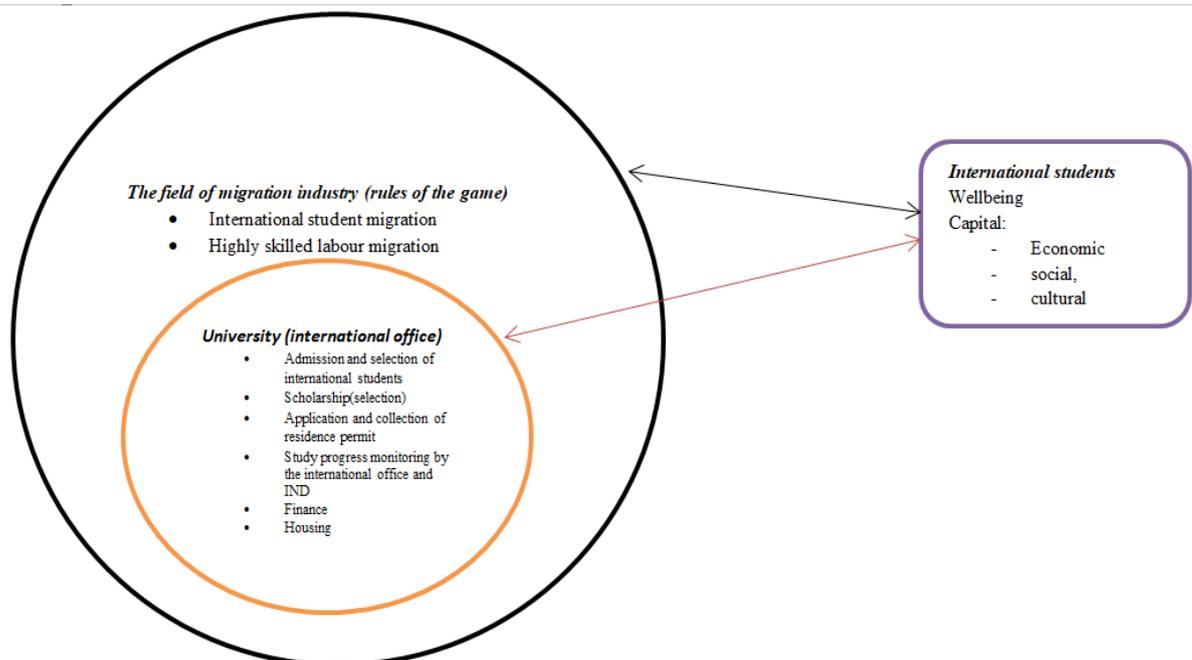


Figure 8: The interconnected of education migration industry and its effect on international students in the Netherlands.  
Author’s own creation.

## Chapter 3: Methodology- Diving into daily practices at the university through qualitative research

### 3.1 Introduction

The previous chapters provided a comprehensive framework for this research, thereby showing the relationship between the migration industry<sup>29</sup>, the university<sup>30</sup> and the international students in the Netherlands. This framework thereby structured the general direction of this research, which is to contribute to the existing knowledge by taking an interpretive approach to this phenomenon from the non-EU students and education professional perspectives.

This chapter aims to outline the research methods used to examine the practices at Radboud University, which affects the well-being of the non-EU students at Radboud University Nijmegen. This chapter also documents each step involved in researching this phenomenon, and the approach used to collect and analyse data in this research.

This chapter is divided into four sections. Section 3.1 presents the research philosophy; Section 3.2 discusses the focus of the inquiry and the research questions. Section 3.3 explores each research method and procedure and explains how this research adopted a multi-actor perspective to produce detailed information of the connection of the migration industry and the daily activities at the university<sup>3</sup>. Section 3.4 explains the dilemma and challenges faced during this data collection and Section 3.5 provides a brief conclusion to the chapter.

### 3.2 Research philosophy: An Interpretive approach

According to Thornhill, A., Saunders, M., & Lewis, P. (2009) research philosophy contains relevant assumptions about the way people view the world. The philosophical commitments the researcher constructs through the choice of research strategy used has a significant impact on the way the researcher understands and investigates the phenomenon (Johnson & Clark, 2006). For this study, I will be adopting the interpretive approach because it is necessary for me as a researcher to understand the differences between the researcher participants in their role as social actors, which is to understand the way the researcher participants interpret their everyday social roles in accordance with the meaning they give to these roles (Thornhill, Saunders & Lewis, 2009). My concern for this study is to capture the feelings and attitudes of the student participants and myself and to adopt an empathetic stance to understand the world from the view of the respondents and also my viewpoint, which the interpretive approach advocates.

The focus of this research is on non-EU students studying at Radboud University and the daily activities of the education professionals working at the university. More specifically,

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<sup>29</sup> The education-migration industry and the migration industry were used interchangeable in different contexts to explain the different situation this phenomenon was used.

<sup>30</sup> The university here comprises of workers at the international office and the study advisors.

this study examines how the migration industry influences the institutional practices at the university, which affect the well-being of non-EU students.

### 3.3 Research methods and procedures

The qualitative approach seeks to holistically understand human experiences in a specific setting, just as this study seeks to understand the experiences of the non-EU students at the Radboud University Nijmegen (Rahman, 2017). So given the nature of this research, a qualitative approach is more suitable to understand the migration industry from the perspective of the stakeholders involved such as Radboud University and non-EU students. According to Creswell (2003), the qualitative approach needs the researcher to maintain an intense, personal and continuous relationship with respondents, which will allow the researcher to explore carefully the information obtained from the respondents and are willing to share with the researcher. An interpretive approach seeks to understand the subjective meaning and social phenomenon, thereby focusing on the details of the situation, and the subjective meanings motivating actions, which this study seeks to explore (Thornhill, Saunders & Lewis, 2009).

To gain a comprehensive grasp of the research subject, this research used document analysis to gather data and develop significant understandings of the migration industry and international student mobility. While the document analysis provided a detailed perspective of the migration policies about international student mobility, also the university website analysis provided detailed information about the activities at Radboud university. The primary research method of conducting face-to-face interviews reveal the respondents' experiences ( i.e. both the education professional and the non-EU students) with regards to the migration industry in the Netherlands. Also, an observation was part of the method of data collection. However, there were challenges during this period, which will be discussed thoroughly in the challenges section.

Furthermore, I felt to be able to capture the perspective of the participants and also explain this research in an in-depth manner; the multi-actor perspective will be the best option. All the social actors in the migration industry have a unique perspective and are dependent on each other. Because of these dependencies, no single social actor can solve or work autonomously (Feenstra, Janssen & Wagenaar, 2007). For instance, without the international students, the education-migration industry will be incomplete due to the industry's dependence on them. Besides, all the actors in the education-migration industry will need to cooperate to a certain level to gain their common goals, which are to facilitate international student mobility.

#### 3.3.1 Document analysis

For this study, documents are a very vital source of data for understanding the migration industry and its influence on the daily activities of the university and the non-EU students. The documents collected for this study were used for the following purpose

- i.* To evaluate and assess new or previously unknown data (Scott & Morrison, 2006, p.75)

- ii. To develop dominant understandings about the research subject and identify gaps in previous literature
- iii. To initiate the research, including the formation of the research concept, design and direction.

The scope of the document collection spanned from the year 2000s when several researchers recognised the link between the migration industry and international student mobility worldwide till 2019. Also, I analysed the Radboud University website and external websites such as Master portal, to review the content on the website to explore how it appeals to potential students. To ensure an exhaustive collection of documents and also to remove any potential bias in their selection, documents that relate to the research subject were widely collected. Most of the documents used are readily available, and they include documents from the Netherlands immigration website, i.e. IND, documents from NUFFIC, organisational and institutional reports from Radboud University, journals and newspaper articles. The format of the documents vary and composed of media releases from the IND, NUFFIC and electronic-based material (internet).

The collected documents were read thoroughly to have a better understanding of the phenomenon and also to give a solid background for this study. Information derived from the document analysis assisted with exploring the development of the education-migration industry in the Netherland and to generate interview questions and to provide a basis for making a subsequent comparison.

### 3.3.2 Participant observation

Saunders et al. (2009, p.288) explains that observation is a somewhat neglected aspect of research but,

*“It can be rewarding and enlightening to pursue and, what is more, add considerably to the richness of your research data”.*

Because participant observation enables researchers to share their experiences not just through observing alone but also feel and experience the phenomenon understudied.

During this study, I worked as an intern at Nijmegen school of management Radboud University Nijmegen, to observe how the typical day at the office looks like with regards to communicating with potential students abroad. During the period of my internship, I observed how current international students were recruited to work with the primary education professionals to respond to emails from potential students who wanted to find out more about the university. These students were also in charge of running the school social media and post updates there. Also, during this period, I noticed the constant communication with other departments about the application and admission of the potential students whose applications were being reviewed by the different departments at the university. Also, the recruitment team discussed amongst themselves with regards to how to handle potential students application, especially the very persistent ones who were difficult to communicate the admission decision too.

I also observed that one of the education professionals just returned from a study abroad fair to market and recruited international students to the university, which confirms that the education migration industry is growing in the Netherlands. The field notes I collected during this period gave me a better understanding of the phenomenon and also proffered a solid background for this study. The information I derived from this method assisted with exploring the development of the education-migration industry in the Netherlands and with generating interview questions.

### 3.3.3 Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview is one of the most commonly used research methods; the interview format allows research participants to discover viewpoints in an open environment and is particularly beneficial in establishing rapport between a researcher and the respondents (Bryman, 2004). Because of the sensitivity of this study, many students may have felt some trepidation in discussing it with an unfamiliar face, so due to this, the semi-structured interview format was used to create flexibility and enable me as a researcher to examine the respondents' responses by probing for further clarification when the need arises (Barriball & While, 1994). Additionally, the semi-structured interview allows the interviewer to be prepared to digress from the planned itinerary during the interview because this can be productive as they follow the participant's interest and knowledge (Johnson, 2002).

All respondents took part in the interviews willingly and agreed that the conversation should be recorded and used for this study. All research participants were also offered access to the research findings once the research was completed, which they were all happy to receive.

### 3.3.4 Autoethnography

*By writing themselves into their work as major characters, auto-ethnographers have challenged accepted views about silent authorship, where the researcher's voice is not included in the presentation of findings. (Holt, 2003: p.p.2).*

According to Sparkes (2000), autoethnographic writing can be 'highly personal accounts' of the author or researcher experiences for extending sociological understanding. Authors or researchers of these accounts seek to confront social questions of difference that may enable previously silenced voices to speak back and also to make the authors 'accountable and vulnerable to the public' (Denzin, 2003).

As explained earlier, my personal experiences while studying at Radboud University motivated this study. At first, I imagined I was the only one going through these challenges. However, I discovered that the challenges I faced were peculiar to non-EU/EEA students living in Nijmegen. This motivated me to research this topic since I was already embedded in the theory and practice due to my status as a non-EU/EEA student studying in the Netherlands. Also, due to my experiences, I wanted to represent through 'evocation' the relationship between myself, non-EU/EEA students' collective experience and appeals for social justice (McIlveen, 2008). So while analysing the collected data, my personal

experiences were included in chapter 5 of this thesis, to establish '*trustworthiness*' and '*authenticity*' (McIlveen, 2008). I started keeping an e-journal of my personal experiences because I knew it was going to be useful in the future, so I decided to include some of my experiences in this research to give it a bit of a personal touch.

### 3.3.5 Research participants

This research used purposive sampling technique, including snowball sampling, to recruit participants. As Devers & Frankel(2000) argued, this type of sampling research establishes the strength of the correspondence between research questions and the participants. To explore the daily activities at Radboud University, and also examine how these practices influence the well-being of non-EU students, this research recruited a range of non-EU students and former students of Radboud University, and the education professional working at Radboud university to participate in the interviews. Due to their particular roles at Radboud university, they are considered vital informants able to offer experiential insights into the relationship between the migration industry and the international student mobility in the Netherlands and how it influences the wellbeing of the non-EU students.

#### i. Student participants

In the Netherlands, international students are grouped into EU students and non-EU students. The EU students are students whose countries are in the European Union, and they enjoy almost the same benefits with the local students, i.e. the same tuition fees, free access to travel the EU countries and unlimited part-time job without the need for a work permit. While the non-EU students need a visa to come to the Netherlands to study, they pay almost 500% difference in tuition compared to EU and Dutch students and they are only allowed to work for only 16hour/week if the employer is willing to get a work permit for them. Therefore, the student participants were deliberately restricted to non-EU students to explore how the combination of these different elements affects their wellbeing while studying at Radboud University.

Overall, the target participants in the student group were non-EU students who had previously studied or were studying at Radboud University Nijmegen. The student participants recruited were through my contacts (including friends, education professional and my supervisor), and contact with participants and individuals whom themselves had contacts with other non-EU students. Eventually, I was able to interview a total of 8, which includes; former and current enrolled non-EU students of Radboud University. To provide descriptive information about the student participants, background information was requested during the face-to-face interview with the non-EU students which asked for their age, country of origin, educational background, and visa status at the time of the interview. Examples of the background questions are available in the Appendix, and a summary of student participant characteristic can be found in Appendix

The student participants were compared according to the following characteristics (i) age (ii) gender (iii) country of origin (iv) educational background (v) current visa status

### Age

The majority of the students who participated in this study were between the ages of 20-40 years old,

*Table 1: student participant at Radboud university by age*

Age	Current students	Former students
20-30	6	0
30-40	0	2

### Gender

Six male and two females participated in this interview, and there was no particular reason for this difference.

*Table 2: student participant at Radboud university by gender*

Gender	Current students	Former students
Female	2	0
Male	4	2

### Country of origin

There was apparent heterogeneity in the student participants' country of origin (as seen in table 3.3). While student participants from African countries formed the largest group of the student participants in this research, students from the Middle East and Latin America also were recruited for this research.

*Table 3: student participants at Radboud University by country of origin*

Country of origin	Current students	Former students
Afghanistan	1	0
Chile	1	0
Cameroun	1	1
Ethiopia /Botswana	1	0

Ghana	1	0
Mexico	0	1
Zimbabwe	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

#### Educational background

The student participants included one current bachelor's student, four pre-masters student and one master's students, while the former students were both Master study graduates.

*Table 4: student participants at Radboud University by education background*

<b>Educational qualification</b>	<b>Current students</b>	<b>Former students</b>
Masters graduate	0	2
Current Master	1	0
Bachelors & Premaster	5	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

#### Visa status

Two of the student participants had transitioned to orientation year visa at the time of the interview, while the other six student participants were still on the student visa.

*Table 5: student participants at Radboud University by visa status*

<b>Visa status</b>	<b>Current students</b>	<b>Former students</b>
Orientation year visa	0	2
Student visa	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>

#### ii. Education professionals

For this research, the education experts are described as people who are involved in the marketing and recruitment, follow up with study progress of the non-EU students at Radboud University. Their experiences are framed within the context of their close working relationship with both the potential non-EU students overseas and the current students enrolled at Radboud University. Some educational professionals were recruited through

contacts of the participants or through the relationship I have established with them as with the case of the study advisor.

I was able to interview a total of 6 education professionals working at Radboud University. A summary of the education professionals background is shown in Table 3.6, and more description can be found in the Appendix.

Table 3.6: Profile of education professionals

<b>Area of specialisation</b>	<b>Radboud University</b>
Marketing and recruitment	2
Central International office	2
Study advisor	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

### 3.3.6 Designing interview guidelines

In order to lead the direction of the interviews and capture the insights of each participant appropriately, I designed five sets of interview guidelines for the two groups of participants. The guidelines included a list of open-ended questions developed from the knowledge gained from the extensive review of the existing literature on the research subject. Questions in the areas to be covered were generated before the pilot interviews and continuously reviewed and adjusted for relevance. Examples of the interview guidelines are in the Appendices.

To establish rapport with the participants such as the education professionals, introductory questions were asked such as

*Please explain the role of the marketing officer to with regards to the recruitment, admission and the wellbeing of the international student?*

For the education professional, the interviews were divided into three parts. The first explored the admission criteria at Radboud university, and this is mainly focused on the pre-departure stage, the second part explores the interrelated of the migration industry and its influence on the daily activities at the university, while the last examined how these practices influence the well-being of non-EU students.

1. Admission criteria
2. The influence of the Dutch migration law on daily activities at the university
3. The wellbeing of non-EU students

While for the student participants, in order to establish rapport with them, introductory questions were asked such as

*Could You tell me about yourself?*

This question is to make the student participants feel at ease to respond to the interview questions. The interview was divided into four parts, and the questions were focused on the pre-departure stage and post-departure stage and also covered the following :

1. Motivation to study here in the Netherlands,
2. The role of the international office and the student advisor.
3. Questions concerning wellbeing were asked, and this included the capital(resources) the students brought with them or have acquired while in the Netherlands and the challenges the students were facing while studying.
4. Recommendations.

### 3.3.7 Conducting interviews

Potential participants were first approached via email and WhatsApp messages following referrals. In the email, I introduced myself and provided some preliminary information about my research. When the respondents had agreed to participate, location and times of interviews were agreed. Locations and times of interviews were based primarily on the availability and preferences of the participants. Most interviews were arranged and conducted according, with only a few participants rescheduling the interview due to unexpected circumstances, and we had the interview through WhatsApp call. On the interview day, since some communication was exchanged with participants before the interviews, most of them were well informed of the content of the interview, so rapport was quickly established.

All the participants were interested in the research subject due to the university desire to help non-EU students maintain good well-being at the university and from the student participants' point to express the challenges they are facing. All the interviews were conducted in English, and no interpreter was used in these interviews. Each interview was between 33 minutes to 68 minutes in duration. A couple of interviews were shorter than others due to the participants' time limitation, while other interviews were longer due to the rich information and the keen desire of the participants to share it. After each interview, a follow-up and appreciation email was sent to each participant to express gratitude for their time and participation.

For the student participants' interview, most of the interviews were conducted either at the participants' home, the university library or their office. While for education professionals, the interview took place in their offices.

### 3.3.8 Transcribing and coding interviews

Following the interviews, all recordings were transcribed precisely into a word document by me. The process of transcribing all the interviews was lengthy but helped me develop familiarity with their content, which helped me achieve an in-depth analysis of the data.

The names of the research participants were replaced with a pseudonym to protect the identity of the participants. Before coding began, each interview was read several times to develop familiarity with the experiences and the perspectives of each of the participants

shared with me. To analyse the interviews, Atlas.ti<sup>31</sup> was used to create codes and arrange the codes into group code names. The data from the interviews were coded into relevant patterns and categories and then grouped into different themes, respectively<sup>32</sup>.

Coding phrases are the main words that I used to extract related patterns and categories from the interview transcript, as illustrated in the following examples. If a student participant said that he chose to study in the Netherlands for international exposure, I coded this as 'international exposure', and put it under 'international student' and also under 'education-migration industry'. This coding practice was repeated throughout the data analysis process.

### 3.4 Dilemmas and challenges

Initially, I planned on using ethnography as a strategy to collect my data. I got an opportunity to intern at the Nijmegen School of management while also conducting my research.

However, along the line, due to some challenges, I decided to take the qualitative approach and also use a mix of different methods to collect my data. Some of the challenges I faced were; Firstly, the time spent with the research participant( education professionals) was concise, which made it difficult to make significant observations during this study. At first, I planned to spend three months to intern at the office. Unfortunately, the HR was unable to make a contract for me due to the limited hours the NSM office offered me to work with them. This made me feel unhappy because I felt I could work 40hrs/week to be able to observe the typical day at the office, but this was impossible as I only worked 3hrs/week. Also, during this period I worked at the office, the language barrier was an issue for me as at times some of the team members spoke in Dutch and also conversed over the phone with other employees in Dutch which was a bit uncomfortable for me. Although, I was able to observe some of the marketing and recruiting activities at the Nijmegen School of management international office, which included replying emails from potential students and receiving calls and also the team members were helpful whenever I needed help this was not sufficient enough for ethnographic research.

Secondly, another significant challenge was the time pressure to finish and hand in my thesis. Because I wanted to avoid re-enrolling for the new academic year and paying the tuition, so I was under pressure to complete and hand in my thesis. This is one of the significant challenges I faced and which most non-EU/EEA students face due to the immigration policies in the Netherlands and the institutional policies at Radboud University.

This I will highlight as a challenge while I was conducting this study

### 3.5 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the design of this research. It established the argument I made for my choice of using the qualitative approach as a suitable approach for this research. While an increasing amount of literature on migration industry is evident, in-depth and qualitative investigations of the research subjects are limited, and the perspective of non-EU students

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<sup>31</sup> Atlas.ti is one of the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.

<sup>32</sup> The codebook is included in the Appendix

concerning wellbeing and the education professional remains underrepresented. Consequently, this research is vital for its incorporation of the findings, gathered from the fieldwork that underlies this research, into understanding the knowledge gained from the existing literature, making the knowledge of the relationship between the migration industry and international student mobility more comprehensive.

The subsequent two chapters provide the interview findings, which will respectively address how the education professionals perceived the education-migration industry in the Netherlands and how the daily activities at the university were perceived by the non-EU students in the Netherlands.

## Chapter 4: Findings; Experts interviews

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the face-to-face semi-structured interviews conducted at Radboud University between March 2019 and May 2019.

This chapter is divided into several sections. Section 4.1 briefly discusses the function of Radboud University international office. Section 4.2 explores the selection and admission of international students and how the admission criteria are influenced by the need to recruit *'high-value international students'*. Section 4.2 is further divided into 4.2.1, which discusses the activities the international office use to market and recruit international students which are shaped by the migration industry and also influenced by the IND policies. 4.2.2 discusses the application and admission procedure at Radboud University and how the IND policy influences the institutional requirements. Section 4.3 explores the process of applying for a residence permit in the Netherlands and how the agreement between Dutch Universities and the IND eases the process. Section 4.4 discusses the study progress monitoring by the University and IND to monitor if the recruited non-EU/EEA students are still able to maintain sufficient grades for them to maintain their permit. Section 4.5 provides a summary of the chapter.

### 4.2 International office

International student mobility is made possible through a group of actors and networks, which includes universities, families and friends and origin and the students themselves (Collins, 2012). Also, in the case of the universities, the international offices are in charge of coordinating the activities that relate to international student mobility. According to one of the education professionals, they described their office as the *'first point of contact'* for all students, including non-EU students. Besides, one of the education professionals also stated that the students come to them first to report problems before they are referred to other departments for further help, so they serve as middlemen between the University and the non-EU/EEA students. Also, the international office is vital as they have close contact with the IND due to the agreement between IND and universities in the Netherlands, so they are the middlemen between the non-EU students and the IND with regards to the mobility of students. One of the education professionals described the activities at the international office which includes; visa application, arranging the students' housing and also collaborate with another education professionals to organise orientation activities for the students when they arrive they are also in charge of maintaining contacts with external institutions who are part of the education-migration industry.

The proceeding sections will discuss the activities the international office engage in to recruit non-EU/EEA students to the University.

### 4.3 Selection and admission of international students

In most countries, legal regulation of student migration is derived from migration policy, which sometimes leads to significant contradictions with the policies of the tertiary

educational institutions (Riaño& Piguët, 2016). So due to the Dutch government needs to attract ‘good migrants’ to the Netherlands, Dutch Universities are devising several strategies to make their universities more attractive to potential students. As argued by one of the education professionals, he explained how education migration industry was a big business and ‘highly competitive’, therefore Radboud University has devised several ways to encourage international students. To thoroughly discuss the selection and admission of international students, this section will be further divided to discuss the activities the University engage in order to attract international students to Radboud University.

#### 4.3.1 Marketing and Recruitment

According to Beech (2018), the field of migration industry is characterised by ‘various public and private agencies and actors who provide information, products and services relating to international student migration, thereby promoting, facilitating and organising the process of migration’. The first interview question asked the role of the recruitment team with regards to the recruitment, admission and wellbeing of international students, and follow up questions were related to the migration industry in the Netherlands and the motivation to desire more international students at Radboud University. One of the education professionals from the recruitment team at the NSM described the daily activities at Radboud University which, includes using a different medium to attract and recruit international students and also the use of agents in the home country(ies) of the prospective students. Based on the arguments in the theoretical framework, Radboud University cooperates with several agents worldwide, and also have different Neso offices strategically located in several countries. Like one of the education professional explained, the students' agents know the students better and also give them better advise. So due to the competitiveness of international education and limited resources of the University, one of the education professionals explained that they target the countries they recruit from by developing marketing plans to attract ‘good migrants’ to the University. For example, one of the criteria used to recruit the students in the education professional words is

*educational compatibility because if we recruit in master’s program we need the country to have bachelor with the sufficient level with the sufficient comparable content, that it is actually a match (Education professional 1, Recruitment team, Radboud University, March 2019).*

So this criteria controls and restricts the number of students that are recruited from non-EU/EEA countries, because of the educational background can be incompatible most times. Because the University checks the ranking of the university and the educational compatibility on Nuffic, and most times students are judged based on these criteria and not based on personal capacities.

This furthermore shows the disadvantage non-EU/EEA students face due to the region they come from and how their qualifications are undermined and also confirms Zheng (2014) claims that Universities recruit “high value, internationally mobile students”, who can support their finances and contribute to research and development.

This form of a selection of ‘high value’ international students can be framed in the context of Dowling, Festing, and Engle 2008 argument of who a ‘successful expatriate’ is but in this sense international students, who are first ‘selected properly’ and ‘managed effectively’. They

further claimed that the selection criteria differ between the institutions involved, but all have common factors such as financial requirements, country or cultural requirements, language skills and admission requirements. However, there have been several debates with the quality of international students studying abroad, especially in Australia, where there have been claims that some international students cheat in the English proficiency test in order to get admitted into Universities (Baas, 2007). Moreover, this debate is also building at Radboud University, whereby some of the education professionals expressed their doubts about the quality of non-EU/EEA students being admitted at the University. However, this might not always be the case, as there might be differences *'between academics expectations and international students' capabilities'* which could eventually undermine the capacities of the international students (Sheridan, 2011).

Also, international education has become an essential source of income for most Universities. Therefore many universities can be classified as migration entrepreneurs in the Migration industry as they provide opportunities for mobility through considerable investment in outreach activities to access international student. However, within the Universities are also some entrepreneurs that have emerged, which I discovered during this study, and they are the current non-EU/EEA students at the University. Radboud University has devised a way to select current non-EU/EEA students as the University ambassadors who provide support to admitted students from their home country. One of the education experts claimed that they recruit current international students who act as ambassadors to the potential students from their home country.

*And we also the admitted students who, who tell us that they prefer to have a small discussion, small telephone call with one of our students, international students in their language. We also offer this, for instance. So that is something which we do after admission. So we try to have a team of students from as many nationalities and languages available. And then we ask admitted students if they want to have a phone call with these students who are already here, and then yeah (Education professional 1, Recruitment team, Radboud University, March 2019).*

From this revelation, the non-EU/EEA students roles have broadened from not just *'good migrants'* but also as facilitators of international education at Radboud University.

#### 4.3.2 Admission Requirements and Application Procedure

This section reviews the application requirements of the University and also the application procedure. After the international students are carefully selected, they need to meet the requirements set by the IND and also by the University. According to the requirements on the IND website, the potential non-EU/EEA students must have a (provisional) certificate of registration from a college or university for following a full-time accredited day course in the Netherlands before the college/University can apply for a residence permit on behalf of the student. Also, the education institution must be a recognised sponsor registered in the recognised register of referees. As a result of this requirement by the IND, the requirements to get admitted at Radboud University are a bit high and also the requirements are high to control the intake of international students like one of the experts described;

*because what we want to avoid is that we admit students, and once they are here it turns out they are not able to do the course and finish the study, I think that is worse than when the requirements are quite high, and it's difficult to get in because I guess the requirements we ask are quite high and it is not that easy to get in...(Education professional 2, Recruitment team Radboud University, April 2019).*

This quote confirms my observation that the strategy used by the University can be compared to the European Union policy measures aimed at controlling and countering the presence of non-EU/EEA migrants in Europe, by creating stringent migration laws and restrictive visa policies to deter them (Castles et al., 2012). However, in this case, Radboud University creates institutional policies which are governed by the Dutch immigration laws for regulating the 'inflow' of non-EU/EEA students into the Netherlands through the restrictive visa regime.

#### 4.4 Application of residence permit

As stated by Açıkgöz, (2015), he argued that one of the functions of the visa policy was to 'promote human mobility especially for countries where the visa is solely used for short term mobility'. However, the modern migration systems use the visa policy as a means of 'controlling' or 'preventing' the mobility of migrants, including the non-EU/EEA students (Açıkgöz, 2015). After the non-EU/EEA students get their provisional admission certificate from the University, the University applies for a residence permit on behalf of the students. For EU/EEA students, they do not need to apply for a visa before studying here. However, non-EU/EEA students need to meet the requirements set by the IND and the University before they are issued their Visa. In the Netherlands for instance, on the IND website, it states that the potential non-EU/EEA student should have 'enough money', which means the student must prove € 10,589.64/year (€ 882.47 X 12 months), and the full tuition for the program. So the financial requirements by the IND influence the requirements by Radboud University.

Also, since there is an agreement between the Universities in the Netherlands and IND for Visa application, it is easier to regulate international student migration.

*And it is we are quite in control because we know what is going on, we know which files are at the immigration office we know for which one we do not have a decision yet. So we can also send a reminder. So this is all we have a very good view of what is going on. And I know for other countries where students have to go to the embassy in their home country, then the universities have not the ability to have the overall view, they have to ask the students, but we have it sort of in our own control to see what's going on and who is we're in the process (Education professional 4, central desk international office Radboud University, April 2019)*

Although, in comparison with other countries where students have to queue or spend weeks waiting for the immigration office decision on their student application, the agreement between the IND and the Universities in the Netherlands makes it easier and faster for

students to get their visa decision. Which can be an advantage to non-EU/EEA students because the university acts as a 'sponsor' on behalf of the students and acts as a middleman;

*So I think that is very helpful for students. And the process is quite fast. I think I cannot speak for other countries. Of course, I do not know, but I think most of the documents which are at the IND office are we have a decision within about two or three weeks, even in the summer period. So that is quite fast, I think (Education professional 4, central desk international office Radboud University, April 2019).*

Moreover, also a disadvantage to the students due to the constant monitoring by the IND and the University since they are 'in control' of all the activities that relate to the immigration status of the non-EU/EEA students. The Dutch government acknowledges international education as a fast track opportunity to attract and retain 'wanted migrants' to the country, and to achieve this; the government has collaborated with universities in the Netherlands. However, the laws put in place to regulate and maintain the quality of the admitted international students influence their wellbeing negatively, and the next empirical chapter will explore this.

#### 4.5 Study progress monitoring by the International office and IND

All educational institutions in the Netherlands assess annually whether the non-EU/EEA students are making sufficient progress in their studies, and this is called study progress monitoring. This means that the University needs to inform IND whether the student is making sufficient credit to keep his/her permit (IND, 2019). This is a measure to regulate and monitor the non-EU/EEA students to see if they are still the 'high value' international students they recruited in the first place. Because if the non-EU/EEA student is unable to make the credit required, the University may deregister the student and in the process lose the residence permit. As explained by the study advisor,

*the only thing I think is not very clear is that at the IND is the IND rule and that you have to finish the pre-master program within a year, it's not something the university will...yeah, but it was not the university rule so students can't stay and study at our university but of course they cannot stay if they don't have a visa (Education professional 5, Study advisor Radboud University, April 2019).*

Like one of the education professionals explained that the study monitoring is not only about the migration law, but also the University wants all students inclusive of non-EU/EEA and EU/EEA students to perform well in their studies. However, the failure of the IND and the University to acknowledge the differences between EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA students, which could affect their study progress is being undermined. For instance, overlooking the effect of the migration policy and institutional practices on the wellbeing of these students is part of unacknowledged differences that are not being considered.

These challenges and difficulties non-EU/EEA student face while studying in the Netherlands may influence the study progress due to poor performance and truancy at school. Moreover, if the student is unable to meet the 50% study progress, it could result in their resident permit being revoked.

## 4.6 Summary

As argued previously, many universities in the Netherlands can be classified as migration entrepreneurs as they supply opportunities for international student mobility and regularly invest considerable financial capital in outreach activities to access potential international students (Beech, 2018). This chapter identifies the connection between the migration industry and international students migration in the Netherlands by examining the education professionals responses regarding the marketing and recruitment of international students through study abroad fairs and collaboration with agents abroad. So also by exploring the different activities at Radboud University that facilitates and regulates the recruitment of non-EU/EEA students in the Netherlands. Furthermore, this chapter as being able to explore how the institutional policies and practices at Radboud University are framed by the Dutch immigration policies which regulate the ‘intake’ of non-EU/EEA students.

## Chapter 5: Findings; International students interviews

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the analysis of the data with Atlas.ti based on the conducted interviews with the non-EU/EEA students. This section explores the wellbeing of the non-EU/EEA student by using Kloep, Hendry and Saunders (2009) definition of wellbeing to understand how the system of challenges and resources comes into a state of imbalance when an individual meets a challenge (see also Chapter 2). However, in this case, the resources are capitals. Like earlier stated, Bourdieu's theory of capital is used to conceptualise capitals international students use to live and study in the Netherlands, while the challenges are the pre-departure and post-departure challenges they face.

There are several sections in this chapter. Section 5.1; discusses the well-being of non-EU/EEA students, Section 5.2 discusses the challenges the non-EU/EEA students face as a result of their status in the Netherlands, and this was further subdivided into pre-departure and post-departure phases. Section 5.2.1 discusses the pre-departure challenges international students face while trying to migrate to the Netherlands to study. Section 5.2.2 discusses the post-departure challenges while studying at Radboud, which will explore the challenges non-EU/EEA students face due to the immigration laws in the Netherlands that also influence the institutional policies at the University. Section 5.3 discusses the capital the non-EU/EEA students bring with them to the Netherlands to study and how these capitals their well-being. Section 5.4 provides a summary of the chapter.

### Challenges

Studying abroad presents international students with exciting opportunities; nonetheless, with these opportunities come challenges. These challenges were further divided into pre-departure and post-departure challenges.

### 5.2. Pre-departure challenges

The pre-departure period is the stage for 'entry point' of study abroad for non-EU/EEA students (Durkin, 2008) and also this determines or influences the migration decision of these students.

It was necessary to include this while I was interviewing non-EU/EEA students because there are few studies concerning this, and also there were many challenges non-EU/EEA students highlighted while trying to study in the Netherlands. This section will discuss the pre-departure challenges of international students while still in their country of origin, which influenced their migration decision and also affected their well-being.

To investigate the pre-departure challenges, questions relating to; application and admission procedure, finance and visa application.

### Migration decision

The information about the Netherlands influenced the migration decision of most non-EU/EEA students. According to Brian (2012) and Zamborlin (2016), obtaining the right information about the culture of the host countries and also information about the program of study are identified as challenges most non-EU/EEA students face while making their migration decisions. Moreover, to obtain the information needed to make their migration decisions, non-EU/EEA students need to make use of all their three capitals, which includes economic, social and cultural. During the interview with the student participants, they gave various views and opinions about the information they obtained, which influenced their migration decision. For instance, a respondent from Botswana applauded the activities the international office Radboud University played while she was making her migration decision. According to her, she visited the University and got a tour of the University before she applied, and this influenced her decision coupled with her father's influence, who also lived in Nijmegen some years back.

*I would not say too easy, but also was not for me personally was not difficult. Because when I needed information, and I contacted them, they responded to me, honestly, speaking, they responded to me (Toni, Botswana, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

For instance, Toni from Botswana further explained how her father influenced her decision to study at Radboud University. Her social capital, which is the influence of her dad and her brother, who lives in the Netherlands, motivated her to choose Radboud university. However, one respondent felt the information he got concerning studying in the Netherlands was inadequate because his expectations did not meet reality, and he was disappointed with the reality.

*What I think they should give us clear answers. For example, if it is really hard to come here and not find a job, they should say that at the start they should say that, yeah, this is not possible here. So then, you know that okay, you should not apply there. But when you apply, and in the middle of halfway, You learn that most of the things you want to do are not possible, then it is pointless you know (Ahmad, Afghanistan, Pre-master's Student, April 2019).*

Another dimension I discovered was that respondents who had visited the University and the city had little complaints compared to those respondents who had never visited the city of Nijmegen. For instance, one of the respondents associated his decision to study at Radboud University due to his social network in Nijmegen, Netherlands, and apart from that, he acknowledges visiting the city of Nijmegen and liking the city.

*Because I knew someone from Yeah. Who was studying here before studying I also came here because a friend of mine she was living here, studying here and yeah, I visited her several times I knew the city, you know, I like the very young city, then I checked the University online. It was OK (Salvador, Chile, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

This discovery made me wonder if knowing the city and the University before studying there can help the non-EU/EEA students make better migration decisions, or it was necessary for the University to paint a complete situation of the current non-EU/EEA students living conditions in the city of Nijmegen.

Apart from information of the host country, other factors influenced the migration decision of some of the respondents. One of the remarkable discoveries during this study was how some non-EU/EEA students migrated because of love. According to King( 2002), Parreñas(2005), Baldassar& Gabaccia (2011), the possibility of developing and maintaining intimacy across vast distances has increased with the contemporary facility to travel and study abroad as well as to communicate across national borders. One respondent attributed his decision to migrate to study in the Netherlands as a result of love. Because his girlfriend studied in the UK, he decided to come to the Netherlands to stay close to her.

*She was studying in the UK, and I realised I wanted to be with her. So I was thinking, What if I look for a master program in somewhere in Europe, so actually, we could be close, probably not in the UK, but somewhere else now and within the European Union, it is easier to move around ( Miguel, Mexico, PhD student, June 2019).*

This respondent also identified the possibility to move within the EU as another reason to study in the Netherlands, which is an opportunity for non-EU/EEA citizens who are unable to achieve this due to the restrictive visa regime. During this study, I realised the importance of getting the right information about studying abroad, and how insufficient information can pose a challenge to the non-EU/EEA student, which can affect their well-being.

### Migration requirements

Non-EU/EEA students need to meet several criteria before they get admitted and granted a visa to travel. They need to make use of their acquired and embodied capital to meet the requirement set, such as economic and cultural capital. For the economic capital, they need to show their financial capacity to pay the tuition and maintain their living expenses, and for their cultural capital, their academic diplomas and English proficiency test should be adequate to meet the requirements. Many of these requirements can pose a challenge to most non-EU/EEA students due to the different previous educational system compared to the Dutch educational system, higher tuition and stringent financial obligations. Also, due to the unstable exchange rate of non-EU countries currency, for instance, the Indian Rupee can make financial issues a challenge to non-EU/EEA students(Clark, 2013) and this could affect their wellbeing negatively. For instance, one of the respondents explained how the unstable exchange rates posed a challenge for him, and how it did not make him make a reservation for his student housing which later affected his living conditions when he arrived in The Netherlands.

*Like when I see a room of 400 euro, I calculate it into my currency, and I say NO, In my country with this amount you get you to rent a duplex, and I can't be renting a room with this amount, I was still like that then finally time caught me up, and I had to come here,*

*and when I came here I thought maybe um(Alvin, Cameroun, Pre-master student, April 2019).*

Also, in the Netherlands non-EU/EEA students pay over 500% more than the Dutch students or EU/EEA students, and before non-EU/EEA students have their visa approved by the IND, they must meet the financial obligation of having the full tuition and also the living expenses of 12 months in the bank statement, or sent to a blocked EU account. This is a challenge that most students face because even after proving this financial obligation, it is still challenging to maintain that standard once they start living in the Netherlands. For instance, while I was processing the application, the financial requirement was a challenge to me due to the unstable exchange rates and also the Nigerian bank policy. At one point, I almost gave up on the admission because I was unable to meet the financial requirements and the deadline given by the University.

*It was a bit difficult for me to prove my financial capacity to the IND, due to the exchange rate which was running into several million when I converted it into my local currency, it got to a point I wanted to give up until a miracle happened  
(Researcher, Nigeria, Master's student, June 2019).*

To some respondents, the requirements by the University was too much and was stressful to meet this rule, while some respondents felt the application procedure at Radboud University was one of the easiest. For instance, Nelson from Ghana, was impressed with the visa system in the Netherlands, who found the application and visa procedure very easy and still unbelievable due to the restrictive visa regime most migrants from African countries face while trying to emigrate. In his words, he describes it as

*Well, it was too easy for me that I was asking myself because I mean, from coming from an African background, we know that it is normally difficult to get. That is what people make it look like when you want to travel to Europe, and other countries are difficult. However, this one came in very easy(Nelson, Ghana, Master's student, April 2019).*

While interviewing this respondent, I observed the excitement in his voice as he talked about the challenges African migrants faced to migrate, whereas to study in the Netherlands was “too easy” for him. This made him feel good as he no longer saw the limitations posed before him, but rather opportunities to explore the world with his new status as an international student. Like Czaika, de Haas & Villares-Varela, (2018) argued that it is easier for holders of passports from the ‘Global North’ too often “breeze through customs checks” to travel the world, while passport holders of countries from the ‘Global South’, need a travel visa to cross international borders. So this young Ghanaian’s joy and excitement were understandable since I felt the same way when I applied for my student visa to study in the Netherlands.

#### [Application and admission procedure](#)

Like earlier argued in the previous chapters, The Netherlands is fast growing as one of the exporters of international education, yet, as a researcher, I wanted to find out what

influenced this growth of non-EU/EEA students in the Netherlands from the students themselves. Questions asked here were related to how the students found the whole application and admission procedure at the university, how this influenced their decision to study at the university and also how it caused stress to them. One of the student participants from Cameroon was impressed with the services of the international office of Radboud University, because in his words

*Much help came from the international office, like constant communication was with the international office. And we did not just do it by writing but a series of phone calls, which I think I was lucky enough to like an agent. I do not know who it was, but an agent of the international office who was just so friendly and was really guiding me on the steps to follow to get admission we did not just do it by writing but a series of phone calls, which I think I was lucky enough to like an agent. I do not know who it was, but an agent of the international office who was just so friendly and was really guiding me on the steps to follow to get admission(Alvin, Cameroon, Pre-master student, April 2019).*

This student participants also explained how impressive the quick response from Radboud University was with regards to the application process, and described himself 'lucky'. However, some other non-EU/EEA students did not feel the same way as Alvin(Cameroonian respondent) as they described the application procedure as being tedious due to the documents they were being asked to present and also due to the bureaucracy at the international office of Radboud University.

*I do not feel like they are very approachable and understanding, they have their policy, and if you do not abide by it, they will say we hope we have informed sufficiently and yeah they do not care(Ahmad, Afghanistan, Pre-master's Student, April 2019).*

According to Ahmad, he felt the application procedure was complicated due to the challenges he faced while trying to apply and further explained that the international office was unapproachable during this period to attend to all his questions and he did not feel happy with this. He further made a comparison with his previous experiences at the university he attended in the US and described the experience in the US as better. Because he spoke to a person in the admission office with regards to the challenges he faced while applying to the school, compared to Radboud University where he spoke to "an office" and not a person. These practices affect the wellbeing of students because some of the student participants expressed the feeling of detachment from the admission officers and being ignored during the application process like Ahmad's experience. This attitude raises questions of how applicants are treated during the application period, and if the officers in charge of the applications and admission of students are aware of these practices that affect students during this period.

### 5.3 Post-study challenges

The post-study challenges include challenges student participants faced once they arrive and start living in the Netherlands. During the interviews with the student participants, they

explained the several challenges they faced and are still facing while trying to settle down in the city of Nijmegen. According to Andrade(2006), international students encounter more social and academic transitional issues more than the local students while trying to adjust to their new learning and social environment. This section will discuss the post-departure challenges the student participants faced or are facing due to the immigration laws in the Netherlands and the institutional policies at Radboud University, which is affecting their wellbeing.

### Finances

Maringe&Carter (2007) discovered that most international students experience some anxiety about their finances and 91% worried about how they were going to pay for their tuition and fees, and this affects their grades because they struggle to comprehend during lectures. In the Netherlands, non-EU/EEA students are only allowed to work for 16 hours/week, compared to EU/EEA students who are allowed to work 40hours/week. Also, to be able to work, the employer needs to get a work permit for the non-EU/EEA citizen before they can work. This pose has a great challenge for most of the student participants who were unable to get a job due to the migration law. One of the student participants from Chile explained how it was difficult for him to get a job due to the limited work hours, which could discourage employers from employing him, in his words

*So now I do not have a job. Yeah, it is, it is very hard to find a job. Because as a student, yeah, we can work 16 hours per week. But for that, the employee needs to apply for a job permit for me, so it is very discouraging for them to hire international students, because why would they go through all the paper(Salvador, Chile, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

Moreover, he acknowledged that most employers would prefer to employ an EU/EEA citizen due to the unlimited work hours, i.e. 40 hours/week they can work. Apart from the difficulty to get a job, non-EU/EEA students pay more in tuition and housing at Radboud University. For instance, non-EU/EEA students who are enrolled at Radboud University for 2019/2020 academic year will pay between €9.124,-€16.165/ year while, EU/EEA students pay legal tuition of €2.083. This tuition is a vast difference, which the non-EU/EEA students have to pay, which could affect their productivity at school due to the uncertainty of the finances. Blake (2006), emphasised how self-funding African students reported the challenges they faced while trying to pay for their studies while studying abroad. One of the student participants explained how the financial challenges he was facing 'affects' his mood and also interferes with his academic performance at school, in his words

*yeah, I think a bit it affects you because you have run out of money and you won't be able to study with a clear mind you know then so it affects a bit, your performance at school, in general, your mood...(Ahmad, Afghanistan, Pre-master's Student, April 2019).*

Apart from Ahmad, the other student participants complained about how they did not know how to pay for their next tuition and also how to maintain their living expenses. Also, the

student participants explained how they pay more for transportation and housing, while EU/EEA students enjoy free transportation around the Netherlands and pay less for housing.

### Student housing

The student housing is one of the most prevalent challenges the student participants highlighted. At Radboud University, the University only caters for new intakes and current students of the University have to search for accommodation by themselves. According to some of the student participants, they expressed how the University was segregating the Dutch students from international students by not allowing them to stay together.

*But I had noticed that when we were in SSHn buildings, international students were always in one particular building of Hoogevelde, the ones at the back, and then Dutch students are closer to the front buildings of Hoogevelde, and they all live together...(Betty, Zimbabwe, Bachelors student, April 2019).*

Betty also expressed how it was important for international students to mix with the Dutch students because according to her, it is crucial.

Apart from the perceived segregation from the student participants, they also expressed how they were unable to get a place to live in Nijmegen due to racial discrimination. Most of the student participants explained how they were turned down due to their international background.

*I saw a couple of rooms, which are available, posted by some students who lived there and when I like wrote to them that I was interested yeah at times they would even reply they will wait maybe a week or a few days after to send you a message that sorry but we need a Dutch student...(Alvin, Cameroon, Pre-master student, April 2019).*

While conducting the interviews, I was amazed that almost all the student participants had experienced this type of discrimination from the residents. Some of the student participants described the attitude of the residents in the city of Nijmegen, has not open to international faces. I also had a similar experience while searching for a place in Nijmegen, and I got a shocking response by an agent, who told me

*Nobody put a gun to your head to leave your country; you left by yourself (Researcher, Nigeria, Master, February 2019)*

This quote devastated me and affected my well-being because I could hardly concentrate during lectures, and I was almost homeless at a point. Apart from this, international students pay more and are asked to make ridiculous deposits to secure a place. Moreover, so many people have been scammed in the process of looking for a place to live.

### Study progress monitoring

The IND works with universities in the Netherlands to check whether international students make enough progress in your studies; this is called study progress monitoring (IND, 2019). The purpose of study progress monitoring is to check if non-EU/EEA students can make 50% of their study to move to the next stage of the study. Some of the student participants expressed how the study progress monitoring places a lot of pressure on them to meet the requirement because the inability to meet the requirement might affect their residence permit.

*And also one thing I think was not like um.... one thing I think demoralises international non-EU students when they come here is like, there is this law insisting that in order to maintain Your stay here next year, make sure you pass all your classes. You see. So it like, also gave me much stress and I found myself. I just noticed I had to put a lot more effort to in order to survive (Alvin, Cameroon, Pre-master student, April 2019).*

The student progress places much pressure on non-EU/EEA students, especially pre-master students, and this can be challenging to them, thereby affecting their well-being. According to Alvin, instead of the study progress motivating students to complete their study within the specified time, it actually ‘demoralises’ the students by putting undue pressure on them, which could affect them negatively from completing their program.

### The well-being of international students

It can be quite tricky to ask respondents about their well-being since most people might feel uncomfortable discussing this. So to understand this, the questions asked were related to how student participants responded to challenges when faced with it and how they were able to get over these challenges and vice versa, i.e. it seeks to understand how people cope with change and how it affects their levels of well-being. About this, some student participants described feeling frustrated and stressed out due to the several challenges they faced while studying at Radboud University. Burdett & Crossman, 2012; Gardner (2013) argued that international students consistently described the feelings of alienation or separation as a result of their new environment, which some student participants described. For instance, Salvador from Chile described feeling disconnected from the city due to the language barrier as he could not “interact” with the city;

*like being part of the city, you know, if you are not interacting with the city then just like an alien so get a language barrier that's a big barrier for really connecting part of the city. (Salvador, Chile, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

Aside from the language barrier in the city, some of the student participants also complained of how some lecturers sometimes spoke Dutch with other Dutch students in the classroom, which they described as being unprofessional and makes them feel the segregated at times. In addition to this, some respondents also described feeling frustrated due to the language barrier and also due to the challenges of trying to be part of the academic system. Betty from Zimbabwe explained how it was “frustrating” for her to get a group partner for class

assignments and ends up most time alone without a group. She explained how she got to a point and gave up on trying to mix with the Dutch students, and she believes it might be a 'cultural thing' amongst the Dutch students.

*And for me, because I saw it in, like, repeated in multiple people. I just thought maybe it is a cultural thing. Maybe they prefer to be in their own group. And so I also just, you know, fold back, and kind of stayed away, or just stayed with international students (Betty, Zimbabwe, Bachelors student, April 2019).*

Apart from Betty, Ahmad and Alvin also gave an account of a situation where they were both group less in group work and had some issues along the way with a Dutch student and had to inform the lecturer. However, they were both disappointed with the way the lecturer handled the situation and felt academic staff should encourage student inclusiveness and integration in their classrooms often because Dutch students work in closed groups.

Furthermore, many EU/EEA students studying in the Netherlands enjoy several privileges that non-EU/EEA students do not have access to such as access to student loans, cheaper tuition fee, 40hour/week student jobs and travel discounts. Some student participants described the inability to access some privileges that EU/EEA students enjoy as a disadvantage most non-EU/EEA face while studying in the Netherlands. For instance, for the travelling discounts, one the student participants described the feeling of being 'trapped' because he could not travel around the country and get to know it due to the expensive transport fare in the Netherlands.

*I think Yeah, I think it would be nice if you could if we could have that as well to get to know the country, you know, because travelling it is a super small country, but moving around is expensive. So I feel like kind of like a trapped, you know...(Salvador, Chile, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

Building on Nelson's argument that international education offers non-EU/EEA students the opportunity to explore the EU without any restrictions anymore. However, due to the expensive transportation in the Netherlands, this hinders the possibilities of exploring the EU, and this is Salvador's argument of the feeling of being 'trapped'.

To further explore the well-being of the non-EU/EEA students, the capital and coping strategies section will describe how the students managed to keep their well-being at an equilibrium whenever challenges oppose their capitals and resources.

#### 5.4 Capitals and coping strategies

Using Bourdieu's ideas of capital, the interview questions framed international student mobility as a product of the interaction of different social, cultural and economic structures regulating the field of international education and is interrogated with different forms of capital that students own as well as aspire to get in the process(Tran,2016). According to Kloep, Hendry and Saunders (2009), they argued that each individual uses and develops

valuable resources to cope with challenges they face, and these capital are derived from the value system the non-EU/EEA students have interacted or associated with. Also, the educational performance of non-EU/EEA students relies on the level and formation of the different capital and resources they have and how these satisfy the prerequisites legitimated by the education system (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977).

Therefore, this section will discuss how the student participants utilised their capitals and also used their capitals as a coping strategy to manage the post-departure challenges they faced while living and studying in the Netherlands. Coping strategies are the specific efforts, which can be both behavioural and psychological that people use to master, tolerate and reduce stressful events or situations (Taylor & Seeman, 1999). The student participants employed several methods and strategies to reduce, tolerate and master the challenges they faced; they explained some of the challenges and gave the strategy they used to combat it.

### i. Social capital

According to Tran (2016), social capital depicts the family's social status and positional superiority that non-EU/EEA students can access, through association with social memberships, networks and relationships. To understand the influence of social capital on the well-being of non-EU/EEA students while studying, the questions asked sought to understand how the student participants valued their social network and how relevant the network was to them. Moreover, because most of the student participants do not have family members here in the Netherlands, they expressed the challenges they faced while trying to navigate themselves in their new environment. However, three of the student participants had relatives and friends living in the city of Nijmegen, and one of the respondents from Afghanistan acknowledged how his relative was helpful to him when he first arrived into the city by showing him around.

*“Well, I have family here, my uncle who lives here And before and for last for one semester I lived with him. And yeah, he really helped me a lot. He and his wife to help me to adjust to the city and to become familiar with the culture. Yeah, with everything here (Ahmad, Afghanistan, Pre-master's Student, April 2019).*

However, some respondents were lucky to meet some friendly Dutch people while studying in the Netherlands who were so helpful to them during their challenging times. For instance, Nelson from Ghana explained how a Dutch couple and a Dutch friend were of great help to him, in his words he explained

*Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah I think yeah it is something which comes around like when you are when I was going through a problem recently, one of the things was that is what can come I can easily call this Dutch couple, and they will tell me to come home. So because they have offered their home as my place, yeah, so it is good. When you're going through something emotionally. I have a Dutch friend who is specialised in psychology. Like she is a psychologist by profession, and anytime I am going through a problem, and I just call her, and she just takes me through therapy for free (Nelson, Ghana, Master's student, April 2019).*

Nelson further explained how he used his social networks as a coping strategy while he was facing some challenges while studying at the University by talking to them and asking for their help whenever he needed it. However, many students participants were not as lucky as Nelson, as it was easier for them to make friends with fellow international students than with Dutch students. Because they felt the Dutch students operated as a closed group and were not open to international students, which made them feel excluded. However, Kim(2001) argued that this kind of friendship only provides short-term support for the students because it hinders adaptation processes for this group of students. Moreover, Nelson's experience confirms Hendrickson et al. (2011) arguments, that when an international student maintains friendships and networks with the host-national students and the residents, it positively lead to satisfaction and connectivity. Furthermore, from my personal experience, I realised that developing and maintaining friendships with the residents makes it easy to navigate through challenges which relate to unfamiliar cultural and educational institutions.

Apart from speaking and reaching out to social networks in the Netherlands, Alvin acknowledged that his family and friends expect of him was a strategy for him. This young Cameroonian explained how his family had invested in him, and he was not going to let them down, in his own words

*So I knew giving up will be like a failure of mine and will be shameful like yeah what will my family say, they have invested a lot for me to come here(Alvin, Cameroun, Pre-master student, April 2019).*

So while interviewing this student participant, his strategy was related to my strategy, because the expectation from my family motivated me. My family and friends were motivating me not to give up on my dreams.

Additionally, some respondents acknowledged the roles of IFES and the local church with their integration in the Netherlands, and these were mostly the African student participants. Like Matondo, 2012 claimed, religion has been the core of traditional African's life, no matter whom they believe or attach their faith, so I was not too surprised when they all said this.

## ii. Economic Capital

Economic capital is related to the financial resource that international students and their family and friends have and also invest in international education(Tran, 2016). Like earlier explained, non-EU/EEA students need to prove to the University and the IND, that they can cover their tuition and living expenses for a year. To say international education in the Netherlands is expensive is not an overstatement but is the reality, mainly due to the higher living conditions compared to Germany. One of the student respondents described the Netherlands as a "rip-off country" due to high living condition. Luckily for some of the students, their parents were still funding their education here in the Netherlands, one person

was on part-scholarship while the rest and including myself are self-funding. The students who still got financial support from their parents described themselves as fortunate not to worry about paying their school fees by themselves, but wished they could help their parents support the tuition. However, self-funding students described the financial challenges they are facing due to the tuition they have to pay for the new academic year. For instance, in my case, I have to rush up my Master thesis and put myself under pressure to avoid paying for the next academic year, which is affecting my well-being. Also, a couple of self-funding student participants expressed how they were looking for ways to sponsor their next academic year,

*The main challenge is to pay for my next year (laughs) it is a bit expensive, of course. um but I have been talking to some people I might find a sponsor that will help me (Ahmad, Afghanistan, Pre-master's Student, April 2019)*

Also, as I observed earlier, there are no scholarships or grants for current students in the University, and this makes it unfortunate for non-EU/EEA students in case they run into financial crisis and are unable to fulfil their financial obligation. Also, due to the work restriction, the non-EU/EEA students face in getting a job, most of the student participants explained the money management skills they developed to survive the financial challenges. Many student participants explained the strategies they used to manage their financial challenges like Toni explained how she tried to manage her finances since her parents send her money and she needs to reduce her spending,

*I am also managing, you know, when you first come here you also do not spend with spend and stuff. So I had to adjust and learn, okay, this is what I spend monthly. This is what I do and stuff like that. So yeah, it has been the same (Toni, Botswana, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

While some student participants also explained how they could not go to social outings with their friends due to the money management strategy, and this could hinder their interaction with the local people and the city, thereby leading to a feeling of exclusion

### iii. Cultural Capital

According to Merel(1994,1995), he explained how cultural a vital role in determining status and power in an individual. This section will discuss the cultural capital the international students brought to study at the university and the skills they have acquired while studying at the university in the form of language competence, foreign credentials and work experience. To get admitted to Radboud University, the applicant must meet the English language competence, e.g. IELTS or TOEFL. Also, in the case of IELTS, the potential student must have 6.5 in all the categories in the examination and an overall 6.5 to be admitted to study(RU, 2019). However, some students felt their skills, such as their language skills and capabilities, were being relegated due to their backgrounds. For instance, one African student participants explained how he was turned down for a job at the university with the excuse that his writing skills were poor.

*I should say because I say this to a point not to brag. I write good English; my lecturers give testimony to it. And there was a vacancy of people helping in the students writing centre, which I believe I, I qualify a hundred per cent. I am a native English speaker. You write an application, like, sorry, we considered being equal. So I decided to test the system. So I, I wrote to them that I needed academic assistance with my research. And I went there and apparently the guys had no skills they had nothing to offer. So then I thought, Okay, this is a clear case of my capacity or skill being relegated because of where I am coming from(Nelson, Ghana, Master's student, April 2019).*

Like in the case of Nelson from Ghana, who felt he was rejected for a post due to his background as an African, expressed his disappointment at the system and did not know his self-worth until he got an internship at Philips. Some student participants acknowledged that regularly speaking English to everyone had a positive impact on their spoken English, while others felt their level of English as diminished. The reason they gave was that most Dutch citizens do not understand some idioms and use of words and they decided to lower the level of their spoken English. Some participants furthermore explained why some of them fail some courses due to the way and matter the questions were structured. For instance, Salvador from Chile explained in his own words;

*Yes, yes. Well, both. I think it all you know goes back to your culture. regarding academia When I, I learned to write an essay, for instance, in Latin America, I think in most Latin American countries like this, I learned to use literary figures as metaphors, you know, to express something scientific. When I did this here for an assignment, I failed, because I spent for them, they say, why do you do this? You need to say it in one sentence, you know, you do not need to talk about the waterfall, that Nana in 10 lines because you can say this in one line, and period. And that is it. We expect you to do this. So this was a really hard challenge (Salvador, Chile, Pre-master's student, April 2019).*

Moreover, to most of the student participants who already had previous higher education credential, it was difficult for them at first to adjust to this challenge, but with time they got used to it.

Another relatable challenge, especially to African ladies, is the issue of getting the best hair and skin product, which Betty highlighted as a challenge to her. According to Cole(2019), cultural capital is capitals that demonstrate one's cultural competence, and in this instance, maintaining hair and skin is a skill needed to maintain one's self-identity as an African. To many European ladies who do not understand how difficult it is to maintain African hair, might see this challenge as a flimsy excuse, but to her, it was a big deal which affected her negatively. However, to cope with this, she opted for alternatives to fill in the gap. In her words

*But also have not had to struggle with small things like finding a hair product or finding, you know, lotion, makeup. I have had times where I walk in with one of my European friends. Just*

*to the Kruidvat or something and we want to get you to know makeup from maybe Maybelline like a foundation and there's always a range for her to choose from and then when I never have a shade that can make you feel out of place is those little things that when you see them repeated, you realize that it's not like the most comfortable environment. So the very, very beginning you do not feel very welcomed, but then you start to find ways to cope. Like you find yourself looking for international shops, Tako, the Pak or finding things online. And later on. I think you just come up with strategies to make yourself feel welcome because there is no there is no point in complaining when you cannot change it” (Betty, Zimbabwe, Bachelors student, April 2019).*

This section has explained the strategies student participants have employed to adapt their capitals to the challenges they faced, which could lead to a disequilibrium in their well-being.

### 5.5 Summary

As international students discover plenty of prospects and overture of experiences from the preparation level to graduation, they also go through challenges as they prepare, adapt, and adjust to a new academic environment. As Khanal & Gaulee (2019) argued *‘Study abroad is a challenging experience for students of all nationalities and backgrounds, and the transition is not easy’ (p.p.572).*

This chapter confirmed the close connection of how the daily activities at the university influence the well-being of the international students at Radboud University. To understand this relationship, I divided the student challenges into two sections, which are: pre-departure challenges and post-departure challenges. The aim is to understand how the activities of the university through the migration industry lens influences each stage the student participants found themselves.

The pre-departure challenges looked at the challenges the student participant faced before arriving in Nijmegen to study. While the post-departure explored the challenges, the student participants faced once they arrived and started living in Nijmegen, and it explored this phenomenon through the Bourdieu’s capital, i.e. capital the students brought with them to Nijmegen

This chapter also discusses how these challenges affect the international students and the coping skills strategies the student participants used to manage these challenges such as speaking to people, looking for alternative ways, stress management and the need to survive.

# Chapter 6: Conclusion

## 6.1 Introduction

*'I think it will just have to do with the rules of the country overall because I do think that the way the university operates is affected by the rules of the country as well...'*  
(Betty, Zimbabwe, Bachelors student RU, April 2019).

The aim is to gain insights into the *'institutional practices'* at the university that is shaped by the migration laws in the Netherlands, which affect the wellbeing of the international students at Radboud University. Therefore, a multi-actor perspective was adopted to capture the different perspectives of the social actors involved in the education-migration industry. The multi-actor perspective made it possible to study and analyse the non-EU/EEA students' (myself included) and the education professionals' diverse views and experiences in the industry. Through this approach, I was able to discover and study the daily activities of the international office of RU, and also the influence of these daily activities of Radboud University on the non-EU/EEA students well-being. These insights, therefore, contribute to the notion that Universities are part of the migration industry.

To provide an answer to the main research question- *"How do the "institutional" practices of the university international office affect the different aspects of the life of the international students at the Radboud University?"*. I have operationalised the dialogue between the student participants and the education professionals, and this dialogue is presented in the two empirical chapters. The first empirical chapter answered the first two sub-questions in this study, by putting an empirical focus on first the issue of framing 'the field of international migration policies and skilled mobility' and how it influences the institutional policies at the Radboud University Nijmegen. Secondly, it also explored 'the daily practices at Radboud University international office' through the lens of the migration industry while the second empirical chapter explored how the daily practices at the International office of Radboud University influence the overall wellbeing of the International students.

The stories presented by the non-EU/EEA students explained how the activities at RU international office influenced their pre-departure and post-departure experiences. The students further explained how the activities at RU international office shaped their migration decisions and also influenced their well-being while studying in the Netherlands. Also about the education professionals, the stories presented illustrated how the migration industry shapes the daily activities at Radboud University to facilitate the mobility of non-EU/EEA students to the Netherlands and also by the Dutch migration laws. In the end, it is all these factors in this study that need to be taken into account to understand the concept of migration industry and how it shapes international student mobility in the Netherlands. Also, these phenomena were discussed in-depth in chapter two of this thesis in order to create the theoretical foundation for this study and also to show their interconnectedness.

Chapter 4 explored the daily activities at the RU International office, which is to lure more *'high-value international students'* to the University to study. This chapter further discussed how these activities are influenced by the migration laws in the Netherlands, which intends to recruit *'good migrants'* to the Netherlands through the visa agreement between the Universities in the Netherlands and the IND. So to achieve this purpose, RU actively engages in several recruitment fairs in target countries to recruit more international students to RU. While analysing the responses from the education professionals, it became apparent that the migration industry shaped the institutional practices at Radboud University.

Chapter 5 discussed the wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students by framing wellbeing in the context of Kloep, Hendry and Saunders (2009) definition, where the capital/resources and challenges influence well-being. Non-EU/EEA students explained the different feelings they felt as a result of the challenges faced at the pre-departure and post-departure stages, and the students also discussed the coping strategies they used during these periods. The students highlighted some of the difficulties they faced due to the institutional practices at the university and how it affected their wellbeing while studying at Radboud University. Also, the students' capitals were framed in the context of Bourdieu's theory of capital to investigate the non-EU/EEA students' capitals and resources.

## 6.2 Main findings of this research

Based on the purpose of this research to explore how the migration laws in the Netherlands influence the institutional policies at Radboud University and how these institutional policies at the University influence the wellbeing of the international students studying at RU. Through this study, several revelations have emerged to show the relationship between the migration industry and international student mobility in the Netherlands, where the Dutch government is part of *'ensemble of entrepreneurs'* who facilitate international student mobility. This is due to the agreement between the Universities and the IND, to facilitate and also regulate the mobility of non-EU/EEA students to study in the Netherlands.

The Dutch government seeks to facilitate and regulate the inflow of non-EU/EEA students due to the need to encourage legal migration because of the possibility for the non-EU/EEA students to stay after study to compensate for the ageing population in Europe. Therefore, the Dutch government developed several policies such as the highly skilled migration and also the 'orientation year' for recent graduates in the Netherlands. According to Business.gov.nl(2019), The Netherlands considers it very important that highly skilled migrants have the time to find a job or start their own company after completing their studies in the Netherlands. Hence, the 'orientation year' gives a one-year visa to recent graduates from non-EU/EEA countries and scientific researcher to stay in or come to the Netherlands to seek employment without needing an extra work permit<sup>33</sup>. So it is impossible to discuss the education migration industry in the Netherlands without acknowledging the contribution of the Dutch government and the IND in this industry because the Dutch migration policies

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<sup>33</sup> More information on [www.ind.nl](http://www.ind.nl)

influence both the pre-departure, post-departure and also the post-study experiences of the non-EU/EEA students and also shape the institutional policies at Radboud University.

However, during this study, I realised that there is much effort to encourage international students to come to the Netherlands to study, but is the country well- prepared for the high influx of international students, especially in smaller and less popular cities and towns? There have been several media reports of international students being denied accommodation based on their nationality, and other forms of discrimination they experience<sup>34</sup>. Additionally, it is difficult for non-EU/EEA students to find part-time jobs to support themselves due to the work permit required and 16 hours/week, thereby making their living conditions tough. My concern is how will the Dutch government reduce these difficulties experienced by non-EU/EEA students studying and living in the Netherlands, in order to encourage more non-EU/EEA students. Also, a recent article dated on 30/07/2019 by Dutchnewsnl states the intention of the Dutch government to close down the 10 Neso offices located in 10 different countries across the continent, which could lead to a reduction in the number of non-EU/EEA students application to the Netherlands. This decision raises questions if the Dutch government no longer sees international students mobility, especially non-EU/EEA students as the *'good migrants'* needed to grow the Dutch economy (Dutchnewsnl., 2019).

This study also provided exciting insights at Radboud University, by showing how the activities at the University affects the wellbeing of the non-EU/EEA students at the university. During this study, I observed that some of the education professionals did not acknowledge the difference between EU/EEA students and non-EU/EEA students, thereby ignoring the privileges and the advantage the EU students have over non-EU students while living and studying in the Netherlands. One of the education professionals explained the difference between the non-EU/EEA students and the EU/EEA students has just the language barrier and cultural differences, thereby ignoring the mobility and financial advantage that EU/EEA students enjoy.

*'I think it is the same once arrived; it is the same for all the international students. It might be that language might be a problem. If you are not familiar with the English language or your culture is more modest than it might be different. For you to be open to other students, but I think there is not a difference between EU and non EU but more like the country you are from and the culture that is there.'*

*(Education professional 4, central desk international office Radboud University, April 2019).*

These unacknowledged differences make the professionals working at the University 'detached' from the non-EU/EEA students once the University admits them. For instance, Ahmad, the Afghan pre-student complained of how the international office was unapproachable while trying to get in touch with them, and this student participants further

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<sup>34</sup> Check <https://www.iamexpat.nl/education/education-news/international-students-dont-feel-home-netherlands> for more information.

described the relationship with the international office as unapproachable and not understanding. This study further revealed Ahmad's opinion, as the education professionals described a *'feeling of detachment'* from the wellbeing of the current students, as most of the activities organised were for potential students and new intake but fewer activities to help students during stressful situations. Although, one of the education professionals explained that the student Dean or psychologist handles the wellbeing of current students.

Also, while analysing the Radboud University annual report for 2019, the report states its need to control the intake of non-EU/EEA students;

*'Additionally, the university estimates the number of students to be 22,000. The focus is not on growth, but rather on quality. An additional focus is on a controlled increase in the intake of students from outside the EEA' (Annual report Radboud University, 2019).*

According to Riaño & Piguet, (2016), in most countries, legal regulation of student migration is derived from migration policy, which sometimes leads to significant contradictions with the policies of the tertiary educational institutions. Moreover, this was revealed during the interviews with the education professionals and the analysis of the RU annual report 2019. This argument raises questions if the university does not consider students from non-EU/EEA as *'high-value international students'*, where their skills and qualifications are being relegated due to their background. During the interview, some of the education professionals explained how some education professionals at Radboud University believed that the inflow of non-EU/EEA students to the University does not improve the level of internationalisation of the University due to the level of English and their previous educational qualifications. This argument confirms the points made by several student participants of this research who felt their skills were being relegated due to their background.

Because of the need to recruit *'good migrants'* to the Netherlands, the activities of the international office are channelled at events to *'target countries'* to lure students from such countries. This, however, makes me wonder if Radboud University recruits students based on their nationality (most especially EU/EEA students) and the financial capacity of the students (students from wealthy non-EU/EEA family), or the recruitment is based on individual capabilities and the different capitals the students will bring to the University.

This thesis also showed more revelation concerning non-EU/EEA students studying at Radboud University, as the students explained how the migration laws in the Netherlands and also the institutional practices at the University influence their wellbeing. Almost all of the student participants complained of housing challenges, inability to get a part-time, the language barrier, the Dutch academic system, the study monitoring pressure and also the inaccessibility of the Dutch students. Also, during this research, I noticed that most non-EU/EEA students who had developed a friendship with the Dutch students or the Dutch citizen in the Netherlands acknowledged the positive influence it had on their wellbeing and living conditions. For instance Nelson from Ghana cited the relationship he had with a Dutch couple and a Dutch friend as those people who were there when he faced challenges, this actually supports the claims that friendship with the citizens of the host countries makes international students feel better at home in their new environment (Hendrickson et al. 2011).

Some students also complained about their relegated skills and capital due to their background, and some complained about how it affected their confidence and self-esteem.

These challenges affected some of the non-EU/EEA students, and they also felt their views and opinions were not handled appropriately because of the *'feeling of detachment'* education professionals exhibited. With this research and the research participants responses, I was able to show the interconnectedness of the migration industry, the University, and how it influences the wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students at Radboud University.

### 6.3 Reflection and recommendations for future research

There are a couple of recommendations that build on the approach that has been applied in this research. Firstly, I am going to reflect on what should be done differently when conducting a follow-up study on the phenomenon. Secondly, I am going to suggest new empirical questions that could be interesting to explore in future research.

At the end of chapter three, I reflected on the research process by discussing the dilemmas and challenges I faced while conducting this research. For instance, in the chapter, I explained how I was unable to conduct an ethnographic study due to the short time frame. I spent four weeks at the NSM Radboud University, to conduct my research which allowed me to observe some of the marketing and recruitment activities at the department, which was not enough to explore the different activities that take place at the department. Also, I was unable to observe the daily activities at the International office central desk of the University, which could have contributed to my research, to observe the responses of queries and questions of non-EU/EEA students.

Furthermore, this study adopted a multi-actor perspective. However, the research did not cover the student Deans and psychologist interview(s). To accurately capture the wellbeing of the non-EU/EEA students, I wanted to interview one of the students Deans to explore how often students complain of challenges due to stressful condition. However, the interview could not hold due to the issue of confidentiality, so I was only able to access and examine the responses of the non-EU/EEA students. In order to create a broader insight into the wellbeing of the students, it might be interesting to interview the student deans and psychologists and also observe how this session takes place either as a participant-observer or non-participant observer. Furthermore, future research should include; agents from NUFFIC, agents from Neso offices, workers from IND and the Dutch government to be able to cover all the social actors involved in this industry and capture their different perspectives about the industry.

Also, it might be interesting to conduct this research again in different universities, especially in bigger cities in the Netherlands to compare the challenges students face, and also compare the institutional policies in these Universities. For instance, one of the education professionals explained how it might be easier for non-EU/EEA students to get part-time jobs in bigger cities compared to Nijmegen because there are more international people and more international students. Also, when conducting a further study of this research, future researchers should pay more attention to the fact that some of the student participants (especially African student participants) provided some negative examples when answering my questions, sharing mostly their struggles and challenges and not so much of the

achievements and the opportunities. So to understand this better, I would suggest a follow-up study of this research focus on the challenges of African self-funding students studying in the Netherlands.

However, apart from improving this present study, the results generated from it should also be used to build on another relevant issue that could help to gain more insight into the education-migration industry in the Netherlands.

#### 6.4 Recommendations for future policy-making

Echoing sentiment from non-EU/EEA students (I included) and education professionals (who are concerned with the wellbeing of international students), this thesis consistently observed that the challenges around the wellbeing of students come less from the students' failure to adjust to challenges or adequately use their capitals and resources, than from the University's failure to formulate integrative measures. This research showed how non-EU/EEA students face several hurdles right from the application and admission process, despite often having the requirements and capitals to excel in academic endeavours. Most of these hurdles originate at the level of the state and local policy, but also at the institutional level as well. Hence a few policy recommendations are made which could help the Dutch government to encourage more non-EU/EEA students to choose the Netherlands as their study destination and also help Radboud University to manage the overall wellbeing of non-EU/EEA students.

##### Recommendation for the Dutch government

For the Dutch government, the recommendations are:

1. Create an interactive platform for all the stakeholders in the education migration industry in the Netherlands, which includes all the social actors in this industry and also the residents and both academic and non-academic staff of Universities in the Netherlands. These platform's goal should be to create an avenue for all the social actors involved to share their different ideas, to be able to build up solutions to the challenges faced by all actors.
2. Increased hours for non-EU/EEA students and Work permit: The work hours of the students should be reconsidered and increased to ease the financial difficulties students face while studying. Also, to be able to work 16 hours per week as a non-EU/EEA student, the employer needs to apply for a work permit for such person who discourages them from employing or also encourages '*black jobs*'. So to reduce these challenges non-EU/EEA students face and also curb 'black jobs', the Dutch government could review the text written on the card i.e. 'Tewerkstellingsvergunning (TWV) vereist voor arbeid van bijkomende aard, Andere arbeid in loondienst niet toegestaan'<sup>35</sup>, and instead state that the student is allowed to work without using the work permit clause. Also, the spouses of non-EU/EEA students should be allowed to work just like it is allowed in other major study destinations, e.g. Canada.
3. Review study progress monitoring: like most of the student participants explained how the study progress monitoring demotivates them instead of motivating them. In

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<sup>35</sup> Check <https://ind.nl/en/study/Pages/study-at-university.aspx> for more information.

other to achieve the goal of study progress monitoring, the Dutch government should consider extending preparatory courses from 12 months to 14 months. The extra two months will allow students to have an idea of how the Dutch school system works in the first block of their studies and also allow them to settle down in the new academic environment.

4. Students benefits: Just like the EU/EEA students enjoy several benefits such as student free week for transportation and several 'korting', such an initiative could be implemented to help non-EU/EEA students reduce their cost of living in the Netherlands.

### [Recommendations for Radboud University](#)

For Radboud University, the recommendations are:

1. Creating opportunities: Radboud University should create opportunities for non-EU/EEA students to conduct research which might not necessarily be within the Netherlands, but in countries in the global South. Researches will improve the rating of the University and also help students have different perspectives from different continents. Besides, the University should consider introducing campus activities, which should include a mix of Dutch, EU/EEA and non-EU/EEA students to organise intercultural activities to bring continents together. This kind of activities will bridge the gap between the EU and the non-EU and also broadens the global perspectives of both local and international students.
2. Orientation week: for future orientation week, the University should consider giving information on basic things like hospital registration, emergency numbers in case of an emergency and registration at the municipality. Also, non-EU/EEA students should be encouraged to volunteer by giving them information on how to do this. Volunteer jobs could help students integrate better by encouraging them to learn Dutch and also help them make some money for paid volunteer jobs. Furthermore, in addition to the student mentors, former non-EU/EEA students who are living in the Netherlands and are willing to mentor new intakes should be involved in the orientation week, as they might have better advise and explain from their personal experiences.
3. Internationalisation of the academic environment: Hendrickson et al. (2011) claimed that the role of educators and teachers is significant in the process of adaptation for students because they need to be aware of the difficulties non-EU/EEA students face and they need to support intercultural friendship for students to integrate better. To achieve this, I would suggest more training for both academic and non-academic staff about how they handle non-EU/EEA students. This training should focus on how to handle non-EU/EEA students as individuals and not generalising them based on their nationality. Moreover, by showing empathy towards non-EU/EEA students by acknowledging the advantages and privileges of EU/EEA students over non-EU/EEA students.
4. Housing: More accommodation should be created for students as this is one of the significant issues non-EU/EEA students face in Nijmegen. Also, an integrative approach should be used to allocate student housing for students, for instance, they should encourage more Dutch students to be open to international faces by mixing

Dutch students with international students in student complexes. An Integrative approach will reduce the feeling of alienation and segregation students face while living in Nijmegen.

5. Funding: It will be a good idea if there are scholarships aimed at current outstanding students from EU/EEA countries as there are presently none available. Financial assistance will help outstanding students to complete their studies if they are unable to do so due to financial problems.
6. Collaboration with other stakeholders in the city: the University should collaborate with other stakeholders in the city of Nijmegen such as the municipality, some representatives of the residents, the church and some local businesses. This collaboration makes the residents of Nijmegen ease up towards international faces and more open to them. For instance, Volunteer the Hague in collaboration with The Hague International Centre encourages residents to volunteer as mentors to international students to offer them temporary housing and also give them advice on how to find permanent housing. This will reduce the rejection rate of international students face while seeking housing in the city and also make the residents more receptive towards international faces. For the local businesses, it is an avenue for them to market their businesses and also create job opportunities for students.

### 6.5 Final concluding remarks

To conclude, non-EU/EEA students come across the multiplicity of prospects and overtone of experiences from the pre-departure experiences till post-study experiences, they also go through challenges as they prepare, adapt and adjust their capitals and resources in their new academic environment (Khanal & Gaulee, 2019). However, a multi-actor perspective has shown how the Dutch government migration policy and institutional policy at the University can interfere with the non-EU/EEA students wellbeing, by challenging their capitals and therefore hindering their integration into their new academic environment. That is why it is essential to look beyond the migration policies that are often formulated to lure international students and also stay after studying (Beech, 2018). However, the Dutch government can formulate a policy that will make studying abroad a pleasant experience for the non-EU/EEA students, which will motivate them to stay after study.

Also by investigating the three capitals non-EU/EEA students have acquired over time from different institutions they have interacted with, this thesis has attempted to shed light onto how these capitals can lead to academic success for students if used correctly and vice versa. Also, I would recommend to non-EU/EEA students to step out of their comfort zone and make more friends in order to enlarge their social networks. Therefore, it was exciting and valuable to capture the views of all the respondents, coupled with the researcher's personal experiences.

Finally, by providing in-depth assessment and target support measure for non-EU/EEA students, this will result to students acclimatising early to their new academic environment and therefore, make significant contributions to Radboud University through research and a

reduction in psychological challenges students face. Hopefully, this inspires other Universities and governments to follow in their footsteps by adopting a similar approach which could have a lasting impact.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Education professionals

code	Name (pseud)	sex	location	position
Education professional 1	Rosa	Female	NSM, RU Nijmegen	Marketing and recruitment
Education professional 2	Jan	Male	NSM, RU Nijmegen	Marketing and Recruitment
Education professional 3	Femke	Female	central desk international office Radboud University	Marketing and recruitment
Education professional 4	Nelly	Female	central desk international office Radboud University	Marketing and recruitment
Education professional 5	Sanne	Female	RU, Nijmegen	Study advisor
Education professional 6	Frederica	Female	RU, Nijmegen	Study advisor

### Appendix 2: Student participants

Name (pseud.)	sex	Country of origin	age	location	visa type
Alvin	Male	Cameroon	20's	the housing complex, Nijmegen	student visa
Ahmad	Male	Afghanistan	20's	the housing complex, Nijmegen	student visa
Betty	Female	Zimbabwe	20	Nijmegen	student visa
Miguel	Male	Mexico	30's	RU, Nijmegen	Zoekjaar visa
Nelson	Male	Ghana	27	central Library, RU	student visa

				Nijmegen	
Toni	Female	Botswana	26	RU, Nijmegen	student visa
Salvador	Male	Chile	29	RU, Nijmegen	student visa
Patrick	Male	Cameroon	30's	WhatsApp call	Zoekjaar visa
Researcher	Female	Nigeria	35		student visa

### Appendix 3: Interview Guide for international students

#### Background questions

- Can you please tell me a little about yourself? Age ,name ,ethnicity,etc
  - Can you briefly explain your academic background to me?
  - What motivated you to move abroad to study?
- 1) Motivation to study in the Netherlands
    - Was studying in the NL your preferred option?
    - Why did you decide to study in the Netherlands?
    - Did any other factor(s) influence your decision to study here in the Netherlands such as highly skilled migrants visa etc.?
    - Why did you choose to study at RU?
    - Did you solicit the service of an agent while applying to RU? If yes
    - Then How do you look back at the process of getting admitted here? Was it difficult/easy according to your standards?
  - 2) Expectations from the university
    - How do you value the teaching style at RU?
    - What are your expectations with regards to the teaching style at RU?
    - What are the differences compared to the teaching you were used to?
    - What do you expect from the university with regards to the living conditions of the foreign students?
  - 3) Wellbeing
    - Are you presently facing some challenges due to your status as an international student at RU? If yes,
    - Did you, at any point, feel stressed due to these challenges? If yes,
    - What coping mechanism are you using as an international student to adapt to these challenges you faced?
    - As your previous experiences helped you manage these challenges in any way?
    - Can you explain if you feel you were fully prepared for the challenges you presently face or faced while studying?

- Are you aware of any service(s) available to international students at the University in case they face a stressful situation?
- Who is according to you important in guiding you in the city of Nijmegen and at the University?
- Have you ever felt socially excluded while studying and living in the Netherlands?
- Can you explain to what extent you make new friends that you consider important in your social networks?
- Can you explain the kind of support you get from your social network( such as friends, relatives, acquaintances)?
- Can you explain to what extent these relationships influence your total well-being(motivated ) in the Netherlands?
- Has your financial situation improved or diminished during the course of your study at RU?
- Did this financial situation affect/ distract you in any way during your studies?
- Can you explain how your linguistic capacity has been widened in the course of your study at RU?
- Did you feel disconnected at any point from Dutch society because of the language differences?
- Does this affect your daily activities at the university and in the city? If yes,
- How did you feel about this?
- To what extent did your social status change because you moved to the Netherlands?
- Can you categorise yourself as a highly-skilled migrant? If yes,
- Do you feel appreciated as a highly-skilled migrant in the Netherlands?
- How does this influence the way you feel about yourself?
- Do you, in general, feel welcome in the city of Nijmegen and at Radboud University? Why?

##### 5) functions of student affairs office and international office

- Are you aware of the functions of the international office and the student affairs with regards to foreign students?
- How will you describe your overall experience with both the I.O and student affairs?
- To what extent do you find the International Office and the student's affairs department helpful with regards to your living conditions and experiences in the University?
- Are you satisfied with the techniques the I.O and student affairs office use to handle any of your complaints?
- Can you explain if the international office gives you enough information with regards to studying at RU and living in Nijmegen?
- Through which means do you get this information?
- Is it sufficient? If not, can you suggest better ways to disseminate information?
- Are you satisfied with the services provided for international students at the university? Please motivate your answer
- Do you think the “practices” at the international office with regards to housing and campus arrangements has led to unintended socio-spatial segregation amongst non-EU students and the local students? If yes, please explain

- Have you ever felt like stopping your study due to challenges faced while studying? Why?
- Was the international office and the student affairs department aware of this? If yes, was their intervention helpful?
- Can you explain the practice(s) at RU, that is affecting your study as an international student at RU?
- Do you think EU students face fewer challenges compared to non-EU students? Why?

#### 6) Plans after study

- What are your plans after the study?
- Can you explain if your overall study experience will/has prepared you for life after studies?
- Did your present study meet your expectations from RU?

#### 7) Recommendation

- Which area would you want the international office and the student affairs office to improve?
- Which area would you want the I.O and S.A to stop or minimise that will be helpful to students?
- Which policy could you advise the S.A and I.O to implement to help non-EU students improve their living conditions in the Netherlands? if any
- Why do you feel it is necessary or essential for the university to implement it?
- General remarks

### **Appendix 4: Education professionals interview guide**

- Can you explain the role of the international office with regards to recruitment? Admission and the wellbeing of international students?
- Do you think prospective international students are well informed of the requirements to get admitted into RU? Why/why not?
- Can you explain if the admission requirements at RU makes it easy for foreign non-EU students to be admitted and enrolled at the university?

#### Admission criteria

- After a student meets the required admission requirement, does that guarantee a place in the university, or other conditions applies? If Yes, what are the conditions?
- How do you assess the quality and motivation of foreign non-EU students?
- When do you reject an application?
- After an application has been rejected for a particular program, does the international Office offers sufficient assistance to the prospective students to figure out the other options available to them? How?
- When you reject applications, do you feel bad about rejecting them? Alternatively, do you feel you are acting unfairly?
- Do you think some students from specific countries are more rejected than others? Why?

- How do you position the student visa requirements in the Netherlands, are they strict or relaxed? Why?

The influence of the Dutch migration law on the daily activities

- What are the most important institutions that you encounter in your daily work? What do they do?
- To what extent do these institutions influence the number of foreign non-EU students admitted into the University?
- How does the Dutch immigration law influence the institutional policies in the university?
- Does this influence the number of international students enrolled at the university?
- (Can you explain the ‘institutional practices/policies’ that influence the number of foreign students admitted?)
- Do you sometimes feel like you work for an immigration office?
- Could you describe the daily activities in the international office as motivated by the pursuit of financial gain? (by providing a variety of services facilitating human mobility across international borders)
- Can you characterise the field of international education and highly skilled migration in the Netherlands as gradually conflating? Why/why not?

Challenges

a) Challenges with the management of non-EU students

- From your interactions with non-EU students, do they have different problems for international students from EU countries? Why/ why not?
- Could you estimate if non-EU students find it easier or tougher to adapt to the university environment?
- what is the most common challenge(s) that non-EU student frequently complain from your interaction with them?
- Has the university taken into account these challenges faced by these students while implementing institutional policies?
  - Do you think the non-EU students are well informed of the expectation of the school from them? Why?
  - Does the university consider the expectations of students from the university? How?

4.The wellbeing of non-EU students

- Do you think the international office should be concerned with the wellbeing of international students? Why/why not?
- Have you ever been confronted with foreign non-EU students who expressed their dissatisfaction with the admission process?
- What steps did you take to manage the situation?
- Do you consider the complaints and suggestions of international students with regards to admission procedure?
- Can you describe the admission procedure at RU, is it stressful for international students? Why/why not?
- Are there events or webinars to help reduce the stress for prospective international students?

- Are there plans to incorporate events to help prospective foreign non-EU students manage their stress level during the application period?
- Do you support colleagues in other departments with various activities; e.g. organising the arrival weekend and its activities?
- Do you collaborate with the students' affairs and counselling with regards to the wellbeing of international students?
- Are there in house training for staff members with regards to the management of international students?
- Are there instruments used to gauge the satisfaction of international students studying here.

#### Student affairs

- At what stage does the international office hand over the student to the student affairs dept.
- With regards to the wellbeing of international students is the international office or student affairs in charge?
- Which department is responsible for the integration of international students at the University

#### 3) Study progress report

- how does the Dutch immigration law influence the study progress of international students?
- How often do non-EU students complain of the pressure and challenges of maintaining the study progress?
- Which activities and policies have been implemented to enable non-EU students to adapt to their new academic environment?
- Do you think these activities and policies are practical? please explain how it is measured

#### 4) Graduation and after study

- Do you think non-EU students are well informed of the services available to them after study, such as career counselling etc.
- Are you aware of the general opinion of non-EU students on non-ceremonial graduation at RU?
- Are there plans to introduce graduation ceremony for students after graduation

### **Appendix 5: Interview Guide for former students of the university**

#### Background questions

- Can you please tell me a little about yourself? Age ,name ,ethnicity,etc
- Can you briefly explain your academic background to me?
- Could you please briefly describe your current visa status?

#### Motivation to come to the Netherlands

- What motivated you to come to the Netherlands to study?
- Did you study in the Netherlands with the intention to migrate?
- What motivated your decision to seek a job post-study here in the Netherlands?

#### Employment

- What challenges did you face, or are you facing to get a job here in the Netherlands?

- How do you feel about your present job?
- From your experience, how can you describe the labour market for non-EU nationals here in the Netherlands?

#### International immigration policy (government)

- Could you describe your transition from study visa to your present status?
- What were the difficulties you encountered as a result of the government policy while changing your visa?
- Did it affect your stay and your living conditions here in the Netherlands?
- How did /do you feel about this?
- From your experience and understanding, which stakeholders have essential roles in the relevant policy-making with regards to international students and highly skilled migrants?

#### Highly skilled migration visa

- What does highly skilled migration in the Netherlands mean to you from your understanding and experience?
- From your experience, Does the highly skilled visa favour former international students who have studied here in the Netherlands?
- From the few years you have lived in the Netherlands, are you aware of any changes in the migration policies towards highly skilled migrants?
- How do you feel about these changes? Are they positive or negative?
- From your understanding and experience, why do you think the government have implemented these changes?

#### Wellbeing

- Are you presently facing some challenges due to your status as a non-EU working in the Netherlands? What are they?
- Do you feel appreciated as a highly-skilled migrant in the Netherlands?
- How does this influence the way you feel about yourself?
- Did you feel disconnected at any point from Dutch society because of the language differences?
- Has this affected you in any way while applying for jobs here in the Netherlands?
- To what extent did your social status change because you have a job in the Netherlands? How does this make you feel?
- Has your financial situation improved or diminished while working and living in the Netherlands?
- Can you explain to what extent you make new friends in the Netherlands that you consider essential in your social networks?
- Can you explain the kind of support you get from your social network( such as friends, relatives, acquaintances)?
- Can you explain to what extent these relationships influence your total well-being(motivated ) in the Netherlands?

#### Recommendations

### Appendix 6: Codes

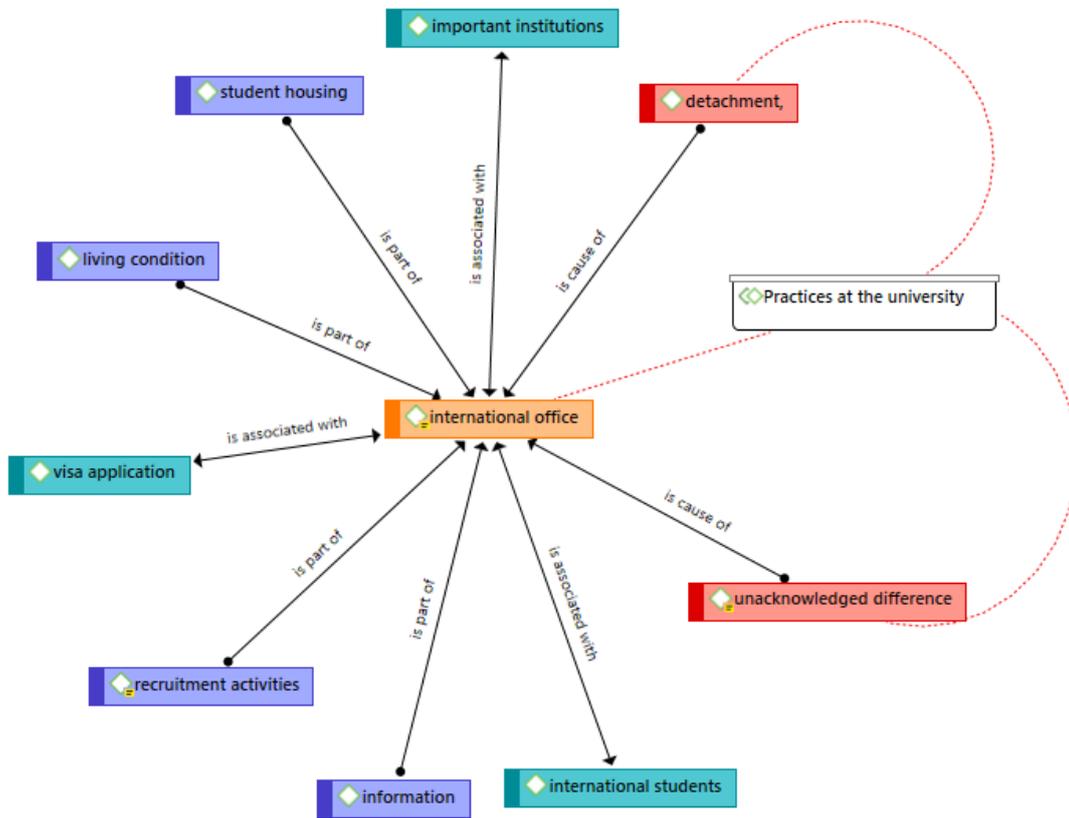
I coded my transcripts via Atlas.ti. I used specific codes that were derived from my research question and formulated others. The codes used for the education professionals transcripts are:

Admission	Detachment	Dutch students
Expectations	family and friends	Important institutions
Information	International office	International students
Language	Living conditions and Student housing	Marketing officer
Mental health	Nijmegen	Practices at the University
Radboud University	Recruitment	Student advisor
Student services	Visa	Work and Finances

Codes used for student participants:

Challenges	Cultural capital	Dutch culture and students
Education-migration industry	Finance	Health and Well-being
Highly skilled migrants	IND and visa	Information
International office	International students	language
living condition and housing	Nijmegen	Radboud University
Social networks and support	Work	

Appendix 7  
Code tree of International office



Appendix 8  
Code tree of international students

