



Lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire

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**Lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South
Yorkshire**

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University

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Dedication

For

Binniam Mekonnen and Elsa Mekonnen

Acknowledgments

I began my research journey with enthusiasm and sheer determination to fulfil my long-held ambition that caught my imagination ever since my primary school in Ethiopia, enduring a 20 mile round trip on foot every day.

Fuelled by curiosity, with me has grown the thirst for knowledge where my adventurous round trips to school have shuttled me far from the only village school in the vast expanse of the Nile Gorge, at the top of Great Rift Valley, to faraway places; to Europe where my life was transformed when I had my beloved children, **Binniam and Elsa**, who have given me a renewed sense of purpose in life and to whom I dedicate this thesis. I thank them both for their understanding and forgiveness for any 'lost quality time' during these years.

My great thanks go to my parents (albeit my Dad is no longer with us) who lived a very simple life but with great wisdom believed and invested in education; without their support I would not have come this far. Even during my latest endeavour, my Mum's gentle nudge in her motherly way - *'one has to finish, what one has started'* - has been my dutiful reminder and motivation.

My great thanks and gratitude go to my supervisors, Dr Nicola Palmer and Dr Karen Quine, who have guided me through this journey and whose experience and support have given me invaluable perspectives to see the finishing line of what seems otherwise a long and lonely marathon.

Finally, I am indebted to all my good colleagues and friends who have been instrumental in restoring trust and confidence in myself to keep going, knowing that 'one is never alone'.

Abstract

The research investigates the lived experience of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs' (BAIEs) and their challenges and opportunities in South Yorkshire within the region-specific history, economy, demography and cultural contexts. It also accounts for recent Black African Immigrants' entrepreneurship trends and challenges underpinned by the broader theoretical domain of entrepreneurship and sub-domains of ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship.

Black African Immigrants are reported to be the least studied and most under-represented social groups among visible ethnic minorities in the UK. Moreover, previous research has been limited to large inner cities and within well-established communities and thus has been unable to represent the experience of outer regions and recent migrants' experience. Among researchers of ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship, combining together two social groups, African and Caribbean immigrants as 'Afro-Caribbean', is a common mistake which arguably fails to recognise the distinctiveness in their pattern and history of migration, education and background and approaches to entrepreneurship. Furthermore, these studies lack methodological diversity, relying heavily on quantitative data and failing to capture the lived experience in greater depth and breadth.

This research adopts a phenomenological approach of qualitative methodology recognised as effective in exploring lived experience. Sociological based theory on "othering" and "belonging" is used as a lens to critically explore the experiences of immigrant entrepreneurship from the perspective of BAIEs. The research findings suggest that BAIEs face disproportionately high barriers from the opportunity structure as external barriers, whilst internal challenges include the fact that BAIEs are predominantly restricted to ethnic niche markets whose core customers are small in size and transient, hampering growth potential and the ability to break into the mainstream and high-growth markets. These impediments may be observed to relate to the social and cultural identity of the BAIE as an "othered" social grouping in the UK business community context, often lacking a sense of belonging and facing structural exclusion. In spite of this, the research has observed new knowledge about how BAIEs have developed entrepreneurial attributes of resilience (high tolerance to risk, uncertainty and adaptability) and cultural predisposition (high propensity and

preparedness towards enterprise) as their response to overcoming challenges and maximising opportunities in the host country and region.

The research is intended to impact on advancing knowledge of diversity in entrepreneurship and to assist policy makers, BAIE managers and practitioners to make more informed decisions that align with a need to promote inclusion and diversity in line with the region's strategic vision.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background and rationale

This chapter presents the background and rationale, research focus, and structure and organisation of this PhD thesis on Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs (BAIEs) in South Yorkshire. 'Black African' as a social group and census category was recognised and introduced only in the 1990 census (Daley, 1998), though Africans existed for many hundreds of years through the British Empire's historical and trade links with many African countries from where cheap and unskilled labourers were brought to work on infrastructure and in heavy industries, as reported in migration reports and literature, (Daley, 1998; Nwankwo, 2005; Spaan and Moppes, 2006; IMI, 2008; Ojo, 2013; Migration UK, 2017).

After the declared independence of many African countries, the UK has continued to be the preferred destination for Africans to study, to do business and for diplomatic relations. In recent years, due to civil wars, political persecutions, instability and escaping poverty, many Black African immigrants have come to the UK as refugees and asylum seekers (Migration UK, 2017; Migration Yorkshire, 2017). These recent Black African Immigrants are recognised to be amongst the highest educated immigrants in Western countries (Oliveira, 2006) and have been actively engaged in self-employment, creating wealth and jobs and contributing to the UK society and economy. According to the Enterprise Research Centre (ERC, 2013), Black and ethnic minority businesses contribute up to £32 billion to the British economy per year.

Despite their significance, however, Black African immigrants are the least studied social group among visible ethnic groups in the UK and the few research studies that have focused on them confirm that they are facing disproportionately high challenges (barriers); more research has been consistently argued to be necessary to increase understanding of this social group's entrepreneurial activities (Daley, 1998; Nwankwo, 2003, 2005; Ojo, 2013, 2017).

This PhD thesis focuses on the lived experience of BAIEs who came to the UK between the late 1970s and 2017 and relocated from major cities such as London, Birmingham and Leeds to outer regions, in particular to South

Yorkshire. This geographical dispersion is recognised to have followed on from the UK Home Office's decision to '*share the burdens of social services and housing demands*' according to the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999).

Region-focused research is justified as BAIEs' experience outside big cities has a unique set of circumstances that distinguish them from those living and running businesses among well-established communities in inner cities.

Thus, this research rationale is aimed at developing new knowledge and understanding of BAIEs within a specific regional context. Through acquisition and dissemination of this knowledge, it endeavours to raise awareness about BAIEs' lived experience as entrepreneurs contributing to debates around immigrant employment.

Black African Immigrant communities are among highly educated and trained migrants with tremendous potential as entrepreneurs and human resource, being part of Britain's long history and integral to the social, economic and cultural fabrics as acknowledged by Bollard and Kalra (1994), Daley (1998), Ram and Jones (1998), Nwankwo (2005) and Deakins and Freel (2012).

Despite this, their difficulty in fully integrating, contributing and benefiting from economic growth over recent decades indicates that Black and minority ethnic communities are not achieving their full potential in the economy. It has been postulated that this is, at least partially, due to lack of access to resources and historical inequalities and discriminatory practices (Bonacich, 1980; Ward and Jenkins, 1984; Aldrich *et al.*, 1990; Bank of England, 1999; Woods, 2001; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Deakins and Freel, 2012).

Nevertheless, immigrant communities make notable contributions in most Western economies and it is important to highlight these in order to emphasise the social and economic relevance of this research. Research and knowledge-informed policy interventions and adapting practices to minimise barriers and better integrate new immigrants is a worthwhile investment with a multiplier return in contrast to ill-informed perceptions that view immigrants *per se* as 'costs' or 'burdens to society'. The OECD's (2014) has highlighted the significance of immigrants' contributions globally. Furthermore, in relation to entrepreneurship specifically, according to The Immigrant Learning Centre (2018), 43% of Fortune 500 companies were founded or co-founded by 1st and 2nd generation immigrants,

including Apple, Google, IBM, Facebook, Yahoo and Amazon, whilst 28% of High Street businesses were founded by immigrants. This indicates the job-creating potential of immigrant entrepreneurs. However, despite the evidence, immigrants persistently face stigma and stereotypical views (Nagara, 2013; Travis and Malik, 2013) that affect community cohesion and present a potential obstacle for new immigrants seeking to integrate and materialise their full potential in UK business communities; this is an issue that holds relevance for policy makers, scholars and practitioners concerned with industrial strategy and economic growth, social cohesion and inclusion.

On the contrary to the aforementioned stereotypical views, ill-informed perceptions and, sometimes, racist rhetoric, research studies have indicated that migrants are able to be equally if not more highly productive members of society, actively engaged and contributing significantly to the economy. For example, the OECD (2014) report on labour markets stated that immigrants accounted for 70% of the increase in the workforces in Europe and 47% in the US over the past ten years. Migrants fill important niches both in fast growing and declining sectors of the economy, contributing significantly to the economy by reducing skilled labour shortages and expanding the labour supply. They are predominantly young and flexible, boosting the active workforce population, filling the gaps of the ageing population and better-educated groups.

As discussed further in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 of this thesis, there are many examples where immigrants have transformed many US and European cities into economically vibrant attractive places to invest and live. A range of ethnic groups are highlighted in this context: Koreans in Los Angeles; Jewish communities in New York; and Cubans in Miami, as acknowledged over time by Bonacich *et al.* (1977), Light (1980) and Porters and Manning (2008).

In a European context, Kloosterman *et al.* (1999, p.2) have emphasised the significant impact of immigrants on economic growth in many European cities stating, '*Today it is unthinkable to imagine cosmopolitan cities of London, Paris and Amsterdam without immigrants' contributions*'. It is acknowledged that the actions of immigrants have transformed urban landscapes in many ways by revitalising parts of abandoned city districts and local markets, supplying new products and services at competitive prices and even, in some cases, creating

new markets (e.g. ethnic tourism) and job creation (for both co-ethnics and host nation citizens).

Particularly in the UK, as corroborated by various prominent researchers (Ram and Jones, 2008; Deakins and Freel, 2012; ERC, 2013), it is suggested that ethnic minority-owned businesses are very important to the national economy. Indeed, ethnic minority-owned businesses are reported to contribute up to £32 billion per year, boosting the economy, regenerating declining sectors and places, serving as catalysts for transitional trading links, and easing the integration of new immigrants (ERC, 2013).

In the regional context, immigration has a positive impact on the South Yorkshire region in supplying the necessary labour force to sustain the economy. According to Migration Yorkshire (2017), the fertility rate for South Yorkshire is below the 'replacement level' needed to maintain the population level without international migration.

Whilst migrants have been acknowledged to make significant contributions through their entrepreneurial activities in many OECD countries, their economic involvement is not without challenges; in fact, it has been officially reported that they face a disproportionately higher degree of structural challenges (barriers) in accessing finance, capital and markets where policy intervention is necessary that facilitates access and simplifies regulatory hurdles (ERC, 2013; OECD, 2014).

This PhD research inquiry recognises BAIEs as a specific social group amongst other groups of immigrants that has potential economic significance and is worthy of study. The research examines the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire regional historical, socio-political and economic contexts. BAIEs are acknowledged to exist as a social grouping and their entrepreneurial activities are articulated within the theoretical and conceptual domains of entrepreneurship in general and ethnic entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship and Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurship in particular.

1.2 Research focus

1.2.1 The research question

The focus of the research is to explore the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire, emphasising specifically their accounts of opportunities and challenges. The justification for choosing the South Yorkshire region and BAIEs as the subject of this research was explained in section 1.1 and is discussed further in Chapter 4.

The central research question is: 'What are the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire in their entrepreneurial activities?' From this central question, the following sub-questions have been developed in line with the research aims and objectives:

- What are the backgrounds of BAIEs in South Yorkshire?
- What are BAIEs' key motivations in their entrepreneurial ventures?
- What do BAIEs consider as challenges (barriers), and what are the implications of these for their businesses?
- What do BAIEs consider as opportunities, and what are the implications of these for their businesses?
- Who are BAIEs' employees, core customers and key supporters?
- What are BAIEs' experiences regarding provision of support?
- What are BAIEs' future plans and aspirations?
- To what extent are the experiences of BAIEs commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs?

1.2.2 Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of this PhD research inquiry are centred around two core ideas: gaining deeper understanding and knowledge about the lived experiences of BAIEs; and identifying challenges (barriers) and opportunities with a view to recommending solutions whilst maximising opportunities. This is particularly timely as the region's major city strategic body, the Sheffield City Partnership Board, recognises current unsustainable disparities and inequalities and launched its vision in 2018 to make the city more inclusive and sustainable through policy initiatives that support its diverse communities. The researcher intends to share knowledge gained through academic publications and through regional networks that allow access to concerned strategic bodies within South Yorkshire's four urban centres (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield) in order to inform their policies and practices.

Here, it is worth acknowledging my position in the research and my personal motivations for studying the topic area. My research position will be acknowledged further in Chapter 3 of the thesis. I am Ethiopian with experience of running my own business in the UK for 12 years, prior to my current employment as an academic in international business at Sheffield Business School. As such, I am interested in how my identities as 'Black African' and as an 'immigrant entrepreneur' have shaped my life journey or 'lived experience': my first-hand account and impressions of living as a member of a minority or oppressed group. I am curious to understand the experiences of other Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs (BAIEs) to better understand the extent to which BAIEs exist as a distinct social grouping with commonly shared characteristics and experiences. With this in mind the overall aim of this PhD research is:

To explore the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs within the UK business environment, focusing on the regional context of South Yorkshire.

There are five specific research objectives attached to the overarching research aim:

1. To present a critical review of existing literature pertaining to the identity and lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs
2. To develop a methodology to enable the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs to be captured
3. To investigate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs linked to their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire)
4. To critically evaluate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire against currently known experiences of entrepreneurs and immigrant entrepreneurs *per se* with a view to considering the distinctiveness of BAIEs as a discrete social group
5. To identify implications for the further development of theory and practice.

1.3 Research context and contribution

As already noted in the introduction to this thesis, the context of the research is focused on a specific social group, BAIEs, in the geographical location of the South Yorkshire region. It is important in view of the acknowledgement that Black African Immigrants are the least studied and under reported social groups among visible ethnic minority in the UK and very little is known about their entrepreneurial activities (Nwankwo, 2005; Ojo, 2013; Daley, 1998). In fact, Black African as a census social category was recognised and introduced only in the 1990's UK Census report (Daley, 1998) regardless of their existence in the country for many hundreds of years. An investigation of BAIEs holds relevance for South Yorkshire given the strategic agenda of the regions' major city, Sheffield City Partnership Board 2018 to make the city more inclusive and sustainable city for all its diverse residents (Sheffield City Partnership Board, 2018). Furthermore, from personal and professional experiences BAIEs in South Yorkshire are recognised to be an economic group worthy of study.

Chapter 4 focuses on the regional context of South Yorkshire (history, demography, economy) as a location for BAIEs and is supported by empirical data and evidence from: Migration Yorkshire (2017); ONS, 2011; Runnymede,

2012; YHRMP, 2009; EKOS, 2007; Legi, 2006; Beattie, 1986 and Pollard and Holmes, 1976.

The research contributions of this PhD study are presented in Chapter 7 and span four major areas: empirical; theoretical; methodological; and practical.

1.4 Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into seven chapters: Introduction; Literature Review; Methodology; Context; Findings and Analysis; Discussion; Implications of the Research and Research Conclusion. Table 1.1 links the research objectives of the study with specific thesis chapters and this section outlines the content of each chapter.

Table 1.1: Thesis chapters and corresponding research objectives

Thesis Chapter	Research Objective
2: Literature Review	To present a critical review of existing literature pertaining to the identity and lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs.
3: Methodology 4: Context	To develop a methodology to enable the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs to be captured.
5: Findings and Analysis	To investigate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs linked to their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire).
6: Discussion	To critically evaluate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire against currently known experiences of entrepreneurs and immigrant entrepreneurs <i>per se</i> with a view to considering the distinctiveness of

	BAIEs as a discrete social group
7: Conclusion and recommendations	To identify implications for the further development of theory and practice.

Source: (Author's own work)

Chapter 2 appraises the existing body of knowledge and academic material within the general domain of entrepreneurship, ethnic minority entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship and Black African Immigrant entrepreneurship respectively. An appraisal of the literature identifies BAIEs as the least studied social group among visible ethnic minorities in the UK. Little is known about their entrepreneurial characteristics, challenges and opportunities, which agrees with the findings of Nwankwo (2005), Daley (1998) and Ojo (2013, 2017). Previous studies in the field of ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship tend to group together Black Africans and Caribbeans as 'Afro-Caribbeans', whilst in fact these ethnic groups exhibit marked differences in regard to their patterns of migration, education, history and approaches to entrepreneurship (Nwankwo, 2005). Thus, the chapter highlights gaps in the existing literature that fail to explain the contemporary context of BAIE identities and the complex social, economic and political dynamics of the challenges and opportunities facing recent Black African immigrants and their distinctive entrepreneurial attributes. The literature review is thematic in nature, focusing on four explicit themes relating to the research question, aim and objectives of the PhD inquiry. Firstly, definitions, concepts and theories of entrepreneurship are presented. Next, the focus moves to ethnic minority entrepreneurship before considering immigrant entrepreneurship and, lastly, Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurship. I have made a contribution in presenting my own work and by adapting other works in graphic, figurative illustrations and table formats to depict or compare the relationships of complex concepts and characteristics where I believe this simplifies ideas, metaphorical analogies and definitions whilst amplifying contents. The literature review summarises key arguments about each theme. In line with Research Objective 1 it is worth noting that the notion of "othering" and "belonging" has been explored in Chapter 2, (2.6 to 2.7) as an underpinning theoretical framework and sociological phenomenon explaining the root cause of 'inequalities and marginalities' on 'group-identities'

and its implications on community integration and social cohesion in Western societies and in the particular contexts of BAIEs.

Chapter 3 includes a discussion of methodological considerations in the design of the research. It includes consideration of the underpinning epistemological, ontological and philosophical approaches. This is informed by theoretical discussions as to what constitutes legitimate knowledge and the scientific underpinning of this knowledge, as explained by various prominent authors in the field of research methodology (Straus and Corbin, 1998; Wilson, 2010; Bryman and Bell, 2011; Silverman, 2011; Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Symon and Cassell, 2012; Gray, 2017). One of the gaps in research into ethnic minorities and immigrant entrepreneurship (highlighted in Chapter 2) is the lack of methodological diversity; most of the previous research seems to draw conclusions on quantitative-based, broad-brush data which fails to voice and fully capture the lived experiences of ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurs. To this end, this PhD research study adopts a phenomenological research approach within the qualitative paradigm; this allows the participants' lived experience to speak for itself, in line with arguments made by Ely *et al.* (1991) and Moustakas (1994).

As a social researcher, I recognise my own affiliations, prior knowledge, experience and philosophical stance whilst interpreting the 'interpretation' of participants about their lived experience. In a phenomenological approach this can only be possible if and when the researcher is able to make sense of their reality as near as possible to how its participants feel it or live it. This is to say that the researcher cannot be 'neutral', but is an integral part of the research, as argued by McCauley *et al.* (2007), Blackburn (1996), Sultana (2007) and Denzin (1986). Chapter 3 thus clarifies my research position and perspective. I adhere to chosen methodological conventions through inbuilt reflective and reflexive practices, as recommended by Sikes (2004), Gray (2017) and Lincoln and Guba (1985).

The methodology chapter presents clearly the criteria and process of selecting participants through purposive sampling. The process of collecting data through semi-structured interviews is recounted, supported by informative graphic, figurative illustrations, tables and snapshot evidence to demonstrate

methodological integrity and rigour and full compliance with research ethical standards. The approach to data analysis is outlined.

The limitations and constraints of the research are acknowledged. These are mainly associated with well-versed challenges of qualitative research vis-à-vis conventional standards of reliability, validity and replicability that are advocated by quantitative researchers in agreement with Burns (2000). However, attempts to ensure trustworthiness of data are accredited. This research is contextual in focus; it has a limited geographic scope, South Yorkshire, and is primarily focused on 16 individuals who are first generation Black African immigrants. It is recognised that this focused approach offers greater depth and breadth which is in line with qualitative research convention, where arguably a need for deeper understanding and insightful appreciation outweighs sample size and generalisation (Bizri, 2017; Guest et al., 2006; Saunders *et al.*, 2009). This research is focused on the lived experiences of BAIEs in accordance with phenomenological study, as set out in the aim and objectives; however, it proposes that future studies should consider comparative investigation with other social groups. The rationale for adopting a regional and context-specific research focus is detailed in Chapter 4 of the thesis.

Linked to the development of the methodology (Research Objective 2), Chapter 4 outlines the geographical context of the research. Regional or country-specific studies of entrepreneurship have been identified to hold value as they highlight location-based environmental factors that play a role in nurturing entrepreneurial attributes born out of culture, religion, generation and class (GEM 2016-17; Hofstede, 1991; Deakins *et al.*, 2009). It has been argued that various regional activities are influenced by opportunity structures within a specific region that affect the stimulation of entrepreneurial spirit and the extent of entrepreneurial success. As Deakins *et al.* (2009, p.23) argue, *"If the environment is not conducive, then the entrepreneurial talent will lie dormant"*

The impact of regional variations on entrepreneurial activities has been corroborated by the findings of Ram (1993). In his research the same ethnic minority social groups in the UK were observed to have different levels of entrepreneurial engagement due to differences in enabling factors that were shaped or governed by location, such as level of investment and enhanced infrastructure.

Acknowledging this, Chapter 4 argues that BAIEs' unique set of circumstances is worthy of research based on South Yorkshire's specific geographic, economic and historical contexts, BAIEs' demography and migration experience, and the recent trends, changes and challenges of immigration.

South Yorkshire region specific data, reports and literature have provided the basis and rationale of this research; these include Migration Yorkshire (2017), Census (2011), EKOS (2007), Legi (2006), Ram and Jones (1998), Woods (2001), IOM (2013), and Deakins and Freel (2012).

Furthermore, Chapter 4 presents an extensive range of secondary data that offers examples and evidence on BAIEs and South Yorkshire's history, geography, demography and economy.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to presenting the key findings and analysis of the PhD research inquiry based on semi-structured interviews with 16 BAIEs regarding their lived experiences of their entrepreneurial pursuits in South Yorkshire.

The interview responses of BAIEs are collated and presented in table formats to demonstrate the identification of shared experience, whilst samples of direct quotes are presented, followed by discursive analysis. Moreover, I have presented some findings in figurative form to capture the and represent the issues more clearly. The chapter presents its key findings under seven broad headings relevant to the research question. These are: BAIEs' year and reasons for migrations into the UK; entrepreneurial motivations; challenges; opportunities; core employees, customers and supporters; provision of support; and future business plans and aspirations. Throughout, a lens of 'othering and belonging' is applied in line with Research Objective 3 and the identity of BAIEs as Black African immigrants as well as their entrepreneurial identity. The extent to which lived experiences are born out complex historical, societal, economic, political and environmental factors - in other words, limited opportunity structures and ethnic resources which impede entrepreneurial success - is considered.

In Chapter 6 key findings from Chapter 5 are selected and organised under four 'big issues' and sub-themes explained with underpinning academic theories and concepts from Chapter 2.

The four 'big' issues are:

- life histories;
- adaptability and resilience;
- social status; and
- cultural integration.

These issues are considered in line with the underpinning theories and concepts relating to entrepreneurship and immigrant and ethnic minority identities pinpointed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Chapter 7 highlights the contributions of the research and reflects on the research approach, the research journey, and implications of the research. It concludes the thesis and offers recommendations for researchers and policymakers. In line with the aim and objectives of the thesis, three contributions of the study are noted.

A contribution to knowledge through the creation of new knowledge is recognised in terms of the provision of a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of BAIEs, linked to their identities as Black African immigrants and their identities as entrepreneurs. Here, their strategic responses to overcoming challenges and maximising opportunities emanating from a unique set of circumstances are noted. These have equipped them with the entrepreneurial attribute of 'resilience', which have been broadly labelled as 'push and pull factors' in most previous literature. For BAIEs, resilience attributes are personified in their behaviour and actions with entrepreneurial characteristics of high tolerance to risk, uncertainty and adaptability, enhanced by 'cultural predisposition' displaying entrepreneurial attributes of high propensity for and preparedness towards enterprise and self-employment. As a researcher and educator, I aim to share this knowledge within the sphere of academia through seminars, conferences and publications to advance knowledge of diversity in entrepreneurship. Testimony to this is that I have been the guest lecturer on 'Diversity in Entrepreneurship' for all strategic groups for the last five years in

Sheffield Business school, produced two full conference papers for the Institute of Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) and an abstract of a conference paper in 2017 for Migration and Diaspora Entrepreneurship (MDE).

A contribution to the knowledge and practice of policy makers is also noted. The PhD study provides the basis for a more informed understanding of the challenges, opportunities and entrepreneurial attributes of BAIEs as a social group. As acknowledged previously in this chapter, this group is of interest in debates over the promotion of inclusive regional economic growth. The PhD inquiry enables policy makers to consider policies around the provision of business support in line with the needs of all entrepreneurial groups. Given the economic contributions that BAIEs are identified to offer it is arguably in the interests of regional policymakers to facilitate acceleration of the entrepreneurial growth of BAIEs by avoiding (minimising) barriers through engagement, advocacy (representation), and working in partnerships. Various professional bodies (agencies) are able to align their practices with the findings of the research for effective outcomes.

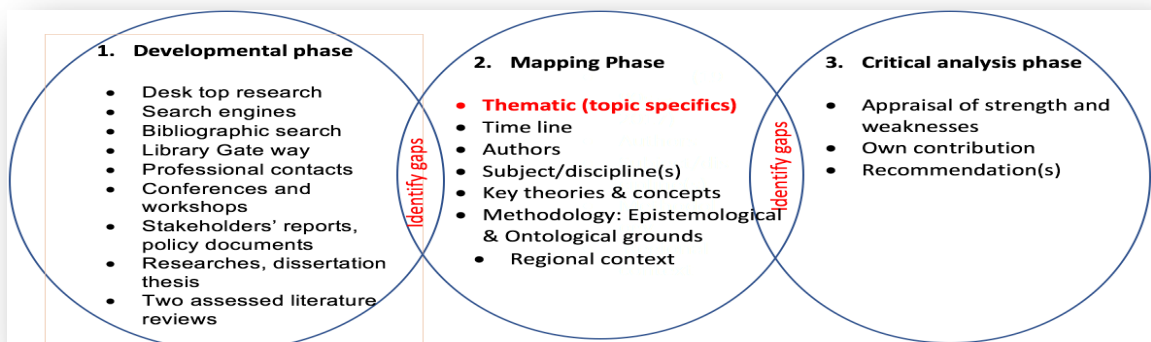
Chapter 2: Conceptual and theoretical appraisal of the evolution of entrepreneurship from multidisciplinary perspectives underpinning the experience of BAIEs

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the chronological development, structure and scope of the Literature Review in its endeavour to critically appraise the existing body of knowledge and academic materials on the research topic (Gray, 2017; Hart, 1998).

I have adopted a three-phase development of the literature review in locating the relevant research materials on the topics under investigation. Throughout these phases, I have been able to combine traditional practice such as exploiting personal and professional networks and exploring library resources, technology platforms and search engines which have given me access to an extensive range of publications on the subject as demonstrated in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Three phase development of Literature Review



Source: (Author's own work)

Phase 1 is a developmental phase. It is an exploratory and extensive phase of searching for research materials and publications on the broad topic area in order to find a gap or gaps. During this phase I discovered that Black Africans are the least studied social group in the UK and very little is known about their entrepreneurial activities (Nwankwo, 2005; Ojo, 2013; Daley, 1998).

Phase 2 is a mapping phase. It involves a process of categorising and narrowing down the literature by themes and topics, including research

approaches (methodologies). During this phase I learnt that most previous research was based on quantitative approaches, lacking in methodological diversity and mainly based on big cities. Thus, there was a lack of replicable research to capture recent immigrants' experience in outer regions.

Phase 3 is a critical analysis phase. It involves crystalizing and refining the research focus in line with identified gaps whilst building on existing literature and evaluating the potential for knowledge contribution.

The starting point of this exercise was through desktop research, in particular exploring Library Gateway search facilities, refining through key words and phrases such as 'Entrepreneurship', 'Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship', 'Immigrant Entrepreneurship' and 'Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs'. This exercise generated an extensive list of publications; however, through the refine and filter facilities, it was possible to narrow down and locate more relevant and up-to-date publications. Furthermore, accessing those publications and their bibliographies led to new sources which contributed to the development of key themes.

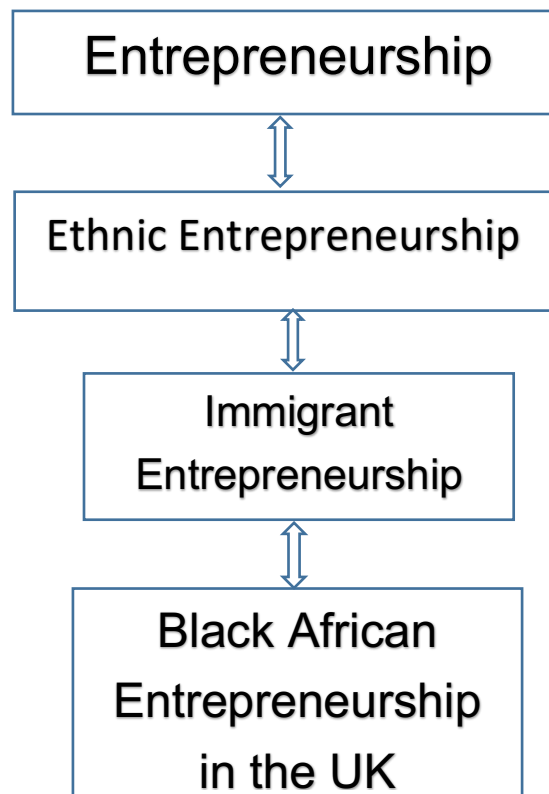
Contributing to three peer-reviewed academic conferences also enhanced the process of identifying existing research patterns and trends. I attended three conferences at the Institute of Small Businesses and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) where I presented two full conference papers in 2013 and 2016 and had an abstract on Migration and Diaspora Entrepreneurship (MDE) accepted in 2017. These activities enhanced engagement with up-to-date academic research ideas and discourses in the field and, in turn, helped to shape the literature review focus.

Reviewing the literature was an iterative process whereby continuous refinement was necessary, even after data analysis, in order to explain the underlying phenomena with the relevant theories and concepts, alongside identifying gaps that may not fully explain aspects of these phenomena from the emergent research findings.

The structure and organisation of the literature review has been presented under four core topics derived from the general premise of entrepreneurship as

an overarching theoretical and conceptual framework, drills down to three themes of ethnic entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship and Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurship in the UK as demonstrated in Figure 2.2. Although the themes are presented in discrete sections in this chapter, it is important to stress that the themes were found to interrelate, and the boundaries of the literature themes were fluid.

Figure 2.2: The content and structure of the Literature Review



Source: (Author's own work)

Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs as the subject of the research study have been analysed through integrated theoretical and conceptual themes embedding the key research themes of enquiries relevant to the research aim and objectives. These embedded themes of enquiry (key conceptual definitions, entrepreneurial backgrounds and motivations, challenges and opportunities; attributes and provision of business support) have been analysed and interwoven through the overarching headings and subheadings of the literature review.

2.2 Entrepreneurship: Definitions, key concepts and theories

The review explores diverse historical understandings and perspectives of Entrepreneurship with critical analysis about its relevance to contemporary interpretations and applications by various stakeholders, particularly the implications that this may have for the subject of this research, BAIEs. This is intended to bring a fresh viewpoint that would contribute to the advancement of knowledge in Entrepreneurship.

2.2.1 Entrepreneurship and an Entrepreneur explained for the purpose of this study

It was decided that reviewing literature from the historical and contemporary contexts including definitions and interpretations of entrepreneurship and an entrepreneur would help to enhance our knowledge and understanding of the subject as agreed by many authors (McClelland, 1961; Gartner, 1980,1990; Delmar, 2000; Ucbasaran *et al.*, 2000; Bruyat and Julien, 2001; Jones *et al.*, 2011; Kalkan and Kaygusuz, 2012).

In line with the research objectives and the research question and sub-questions presented in Chapter 1, it was important to have a clear sense of how the lived experiences of BAIEs were to be conceptualised. Part of the intention was to explore the entrepreneurial behaviour of BAIEs and obtain a deeper understanding about their distinctive entrepreneurial attributes born out of their personal experience, behaviour and environment.

Perhaps the term ‘entrepreneurship’ has become the most frequently used and ‘abused’ terminology or ‘buzzword’ (Gartner, 1990) in the media and our public discourse, conveying different meanings and interpretations. The origin of the concept is associated with mankind’s history, development and economic activities.

In recognition of entrepreneurship’s ‘ancient’ origin, the act of enterprising has been described as “at least as old as humankind” (Bridge and O’Neill, 2012, p.12).

Mankind has been making exponential advancement on many fronts. Many academics, researchers and learners have embarked on defining and redefining ‘entrepreneurship’ to reflect its contemporary contexts, as it emerges as an academic discipline with its own theories and controversies (Deakins *et*

al., 2012). Kalkan and Kaygusuz (2012) acknowledge that the study of entrepreneurship has intensified since the 1980s as a result of various forms of government funding and sponsorship and emergent global trends linked to the dominance of the market economy, increased globalisation and neoliberal ideology.

Wickham (1998) pointed out that American entrepreneurship researcher Gartner (1990), in consultation with academics and business leaders, has been notable in his attempts to define 'entrepreneurship', a concept which has generated over 40 definitions, some with shared attributes whilst others are contradictory. The debate on definitions has continued to date, making 'entrepreneurship' the subject of multi-disciplinary studies. Despite, a lack of consensus, it is important to outline the definitions of entrepreneurship, entrepreneur and enterprise for the purpose of this research.

So, the quest to establish a universally-accepted definition of entrepreneurship (Burns, 2011) has not been settled, and the purpose of this thesis is not to restrict the concept to an absolute definition, but to reflect on the diverse perspectives visible in the literature and critique their relevance within contemporary contexts.

Most works on this topic have come to the same conclusion, namely that entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon and a multidisciplinary concept and, while it may not be possible or necessary to establish a single definition, it is important to encourage further research to establish an integrated and coherent theoretical framework to advance knowledge of entrepreneurship (Bruyat and Julien, 2001; Jones *et al.*, 2011). Jones *et al.* (2011) for their part set out to analyse 323 literature works (articles) on the topic of international entrepreneurship published between 1989 and 2009. Though they claimed to have made a 'quantitative and qualitative methodological contribution', they came to the following conclusion:

It is perhaps unlikely that theories unique to International Entrepreneurship will be produced. Instead it will continue to develop theory that spans the domain of international business and entrepreneurship, as well as beyond (Jones et al., 2011, p. 648).

Enterprise, entrepreneur and entrepreneurship are derived from one original concept believed to be a French word, 'entreprendre' which dates back to the

18th century. It is attributed to Richard Cantillon, an Irishman who lived in France, when he used the term in his published essay in French in 1775. Thus, derived from the word 'entreprendre' meaning to 'take between', also sometimes given as 'undertake', the word entrepreneur referred to a 'go-between', whilst entrepreneurship is an activity (running a business) undertaken by the entrepreneur, as discussed by Bridge and O'Neill (2013).

In its contemporary usage in the English language, entrepreneurship is used and defined as the pursuit of opportunity beyond one's current resources by taking risk and operating in an uncertain environment. Although there are many debates and broad interpretations of Cantillon's original application and the context, it is now commonly understood as a person, (owner-manager) with the foresight and confidence, or possibly the need, to operate in conditions when costs may be known but rewards are uncertain according to the perspective of economic writers (Schumpeter, 1934; Knight, 1961; Kirzner, 1979) which will be discussed in section 2.2.2.

I have integrated the following definitions (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2002, 10th ed. and Reference.com, 2013) in order to reflect the contemporary, mainstream usage and significance of these terms and concepts in the English language today and for the purposes of this research:

Enterprise: the term enterprise is defined as a project undertaken or to be undertaken, especially one that is important or difficult or that requires boldness, energy, readiness, an adventurous spirit and ingenuity in undertaking, which is organised primarily for the commercial purposes of a business.

Entrepreneur: is a person who has possession over a company, enterprise or venture and assumes significant accountability and initiative for the inherent risks and the outcome.

Entrepreneurship: is the practice of starting new organisations or revitalizing mature organisations, particularly new businesses, generally in response to identified opportunities.

Entrepreneurship ranges in scale from single projects involving the entrepreneur part-time to major undertakings creating many opportunities.

Aside from these different historical and conceptual accounts, the contemporary usage of entrepreneurship has been intensified in our daily language of political and economic discourse. Entrepreneurial attitudes, aspirations and activities have been highly promoted and endorsed by cross-sections of public and private organisations as a matter of policy and practice which has not only embedded the concept in our consciousness, but also has significant implications with respect to setting the tone on an individual's motivation, managerial practice (through qualitative and quantitative measurement of an entrepreneurship index), output, and performance.

This practice applies at global and national levels, influencing governments' economic and business policy funding and investment policy priorities (see Bosma and Schutjens 2011; Autio *et al.*, 2012; Ojo, 2013) and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor Report (GEM, 2016-17).

For example, following on from the findings of the Global Entrepreneurship Development Index (GEDI, 2010), the UK government has shifted its funding policy and priority towards larger, high growth orientated firms at the expense of small enterprises:

*In an effort to prioritise a diminished budget for the SME sector there has been a focus on access to capital and the stimulation of high growth firms. For example, a £21bn package of "Credit Easing" measures were announced in the Pre-Budget statement of Autumn 2011 to ease the flow of credit to businesses that do not have ready access to capital markets (Autio *et al.*, 2012, p.22)*

This example indicates how the interpretation, attitude and implementation of entrepreneurship could have a practical impact on resource and budget allocations which, in turn, will have an impact on small businesses and particularly BAIEs who are not seen in high growth sectors.

The next section (2.2.2) explores different theories of entrepreneurship and their schools of thought, and explores the agent of entrepreneurship, the entrepreneur, in more detail.

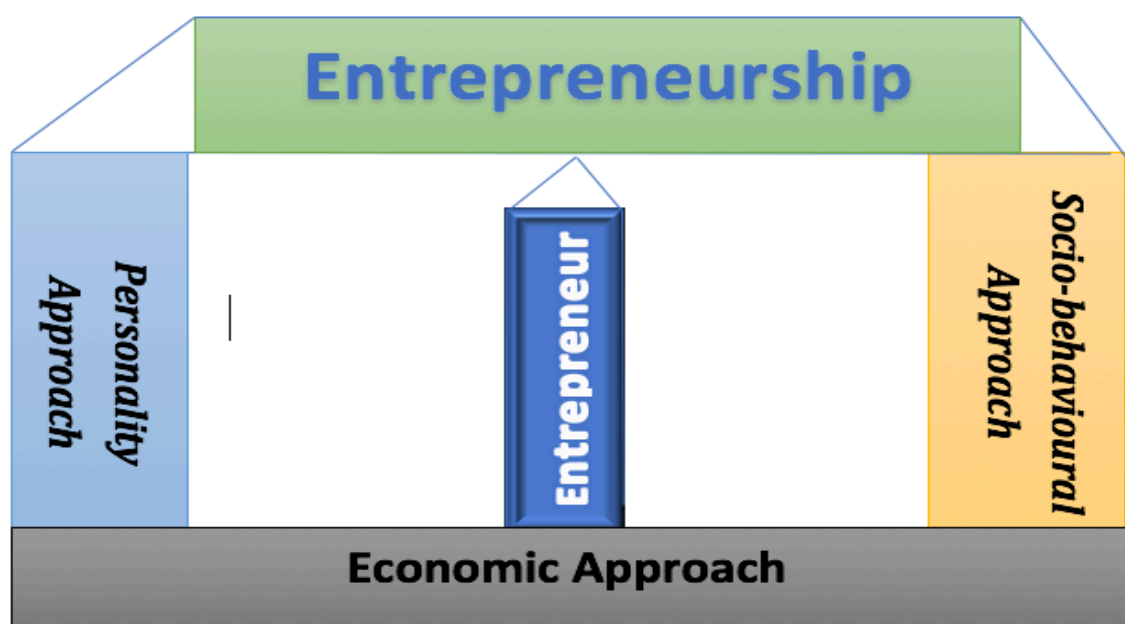
2.2.2 Theories of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship researchers and theorists have been grouped into three major camps (schools of thought), based on their respective approaches to entrepreneurship and subsequently to the definition of an entrepreneur. The reason for defining this concept, at least in this research, is to serve the purpose indicated in section 2.2, i.e. to have a better understanding of what is meant by entrepreneurial role, orientation and attributes when studying the lived experiences of BAIEs. It is acknowledged that the purpose of this study is not to seek a perfect definition of concepts; as Bruyat and Julien put it in their article 'Defining the field of research in entrepreneurship':

No definition is good in itself. A definition is a construct at the service of the research questions that are of interest to a scientific community at a given time (Bruyat and Julien, 2001, p.167)

Based on the interpretation of an entrepreneur's perceived emphases, many prominent researchers and writers such as Say, Cantillon, Krizner, Schumpeter and Knight have advocated different stances which can be broadly categorised into three major approaches which dominate contemporary understanding of the concept. These are: Economic; Personality; and Socio-behavioural approaches (Figure 2.3). See Appendix 2.1 for the chronology of Entrepreneurship Theory.

Figure 2.3: Approaches to entrepreneurship



Source: (Author's own work)

The purpose of this illustration (Figure 2.3) is an attempt on the part of the researcher to simplify and depict metaphorically complex and interrelated concepts. Thus, 'entrepreneurship' is conceived as an overarching domain held by the central pillar, an 'entrepreneur', whose historical and theoretical definition is founded in the 'economic approach' which gave way to the emergence of two further perspectives and definitions, 'the personality' and 'socio-behavioural' approaches.

The Economic approach

This approach is advanced by neoclassical and classic economists Say and Cantillon, who viewed an entrepreneur as someone who co-ordinates different factors of production (land, labour and capital) to respond to unfulfilled opportunities and is recognised as being a catalyst for economic change and development. The assumption made here is based on an entrepreneur's ability to possess and coordinate tangible physical resources or factors of production during an era when agricultural economy was dominant.

This theoretical approach has been the subject of criticism on the basis that the theory implies that to be an entrepreneur one has to possess factors of production which is a 'resource-based view'. There is a risk of excluding those who have entrepreneurial potential and ability without the privilege of wealth and ownership of means of production. Thus, this could undermine the entrepreneurial potential of relatively poor nations in their entrepreneurial ability and economic development (Bruyat and Jullien, 2001; Okhmina, 2010).

An entrepreneur in this case is also recognised to be a risk taker with the ability to appropriate profits through the act of coordinating his/her own resources and bearing the risk of future uncertainty.

Bruyat and Jullien (2001) argue that an entrepreneur is much more than someone who is assumed to possess the means of production, but is someone with the imaginative, creative power to engage in entrepreneurial activities in the service sectors too:

Entrepreneur is not a blind machine that responds automatically to environmental stimuli (interest rates, subsidies, information networks,

etc.), but a human being capable of creating, learning and influencing the environment (Bruyat and Jullien, 2001, p.165).

The foundation of the economist approach is that economic incentive is the main rationale or raison for an entrepreneur's activity, suggesting entrepreneurship and economic incentive to be mutually dependent.

One of the weaknesses of this perspective is that there are other reasons and inspirations for why entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurial activities, not least personal challenge, a desire to sometimes solve social problems or even the intention to make sacrifices for societal benefit not only for their own good (Montanye, 2006).

The underpinning argument of Kirzner (1979) and Schumpeter (1934,1949) from the Austrian school of thought is similar to the dominant paradigm in the contemporary understanding of an entrepreneur.

Kirzner (1979) sees the entrepreneur as someone who is alert to profitable opportunities for exchange; an entrepreneur plays a 'middleman' or intermediary role, facilitating exchange (trade). Thus, this informs the ideology of free trade, internationalisation and globalisation.

According to Kirznerians an entrepreneur is someone who does not necessarily own factors of production, but one who owns information or knowledge of the market, (customers and suppliers) which may not be readily available to all (imperfect knowledge). Thus, an entrepreneur is someone who creatively facilitates the exchange for payment.

Here the emphasis is about the significance of information and knowledge in the marketplace and the entrepreneur's ability to facilitate changes by discovering these opportunities.

Thus, the key advantage point of an entrepreneur depends on his/her alertness and readiness to constantly discover opportunities (opportunity recognition) and use them profitably.

Schumpeter's (1934) 'innovation theory' view of an entrepreneur is 'a special person', who is an 'innovator'. He argues that an entrepreneur's economic benefit comes from introducing new technological processes and products. This assumption belongs to the economic theory cluster and Schumpeter

understands an entrepreneur as an extraordinary person with the ability constantly to invent new products and technology.

Schumpeter believes that an entrepreneur, through his/her innovative capability and 'creative destruction' brings economic benefits for him/herself and society is a catalyst for economic change. He argues that a business venture of anyone who does not have such innovative capability will be short-lived, (not sustainable) and will not yield economic gain (profit).

Works in the literature which critique this approach argue that innovation or the introduction of new technology do not always have to be prerequisites for being an entrepreneur, at least in a contemporary context, as there have been successful entrepreneurial ventures resulting from adapting existing technologies incrementally. For example, the subject of this study, BAIEs, predominantly belong to this category of entrepreneurs operating in ethnic niche markets with limited resources who build up their enterprises incrementally, as explained and discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

Schumpeterian theory does not explain the entrepreneurial potential or contribution of small enterprises and relatively poor nations who may not rely on personal or national wealth to invest in new innovation or technology (Bruyat and Jullien, 2001; Okhmina, 2010).

Knight (1961) holds the view that an entrepreneur is someone who takes a calculated risk for the economic reward (profit) by bearing uncertainty due to his/her engagement in economic activities in the future. Thus, an entrepreneur is seen as someone who is prepared to take part in economic undertakings in an uncertain world. Perhaps all too often an entrepreneur has been described as a 'risk taker', which is a widely-held view, although there are some authors who have a different take on this. For example, Low and MacMillan (1988) argue that risk-taking is not a natural characteristic of an entrepreneur; he or she may have a tendency to take risks as much as everyone does, however, they are very good risk managers.

According to Knight (1961) there are risks whose probability of occurrence can be calculated and insured against accordingly. However, the uncertain nature of diverse variables in business are difficult to calculate and cannot be insured against. Therefore, for Knight an entrepreneur is someone who engages in

economic activities in an 'uncertain business environment', taking the responsibility of overcoming those uncertain challenges by deploying his/her managerial skills. Here, Knight criticises literature that is based on an entrepreneur's personality traits (personality approach), implying that this ignores the need for managerial competencies.

The main premise of the economic writers' approach can be summed up as explaining what happens when entrepreneurial acts are incentivised by profit, ownership or innovation, but it does not explain 'how it happens', a criticism made by the 'Personality approach' as stated by Bruyat and Jullien (2001, p.165) that "*an entrepreneur is not a blind machine that responds automatically to environment stimuli...*". The next section discusses the position of the personality approach with regard to an entrepreneur.

Personality Approach - Psychological Characteristics

The central focus of this theory is the entrepreneur's personality, also known as psychological characteristics or 'traits' of an individual who possesses or displays rare entrepreneurial attributes which are perceived to be innate, inherent or inborn qualities.

This is an approach which attempts to identify and measure the entrepreneurial attributes of an individual as observed by Chell (2008) who remarks on this school of thought:

Using psychological descriptors that are assumed to be part of the psychological make-up of individuals that cause them to be disposed to behave in particular ways with the assumption of causation enables psychologists to predict the likelihood of certain kinds of behavioural outcomes (Chell, 2008, p.4).

The psychological descriptions of entrepreneurial personalities (characteristics) are extensive; for example, Kuratko and Hodgetts (1998) have presented 42 distinctive attributes, all personifying an entrepreneur (see Appendix 2.2).

However, there are three key characteristics attributed to an entrepreneur which are commonly referred to by most writers on this topic. These are risk-taking propensity, internal locus control and need for achievement, which will be explained in detail below.

Risk-taking propensity

This is one of the key characteristic traits of an entrepreneur, as argued by authors such as Knight (1961) who advocate that a risk-taking personality is a crucial indicator of entrepreneurial attributes.

Although a 'risk taking' personality has been considered to be a fundamental characteristic of an entrepreneur, the focus has shifted to 'risk manager' (Low and MacMillan, 1988). Chill (2008) adds to this critique that an entrepreneur as a risk taker is an initial preoccupation, whilst an entrepreneur is widely viewed as a decision-taker who exercises choice amongst alternatives.

The next section discusses another attribute of an entrepreneur, 'internal locus control'.

Internal Locus Control

Locus of control is another key personal characteristic and psychological descriptor used to identify an individual's attributes in relation to entrepreneurship in his/her perception of the underlying cause of events in his/her life, as described by Lefcourt (1976).

The individual believes that his/her behaviour is determined by his/her personal decisions and actions (internal), and are not due to fate, luck or other external circumstances. People with internal locus of control believe that they can control what happens in their lives. On the other hand, people with external locus of control tend to believe that most of the events in their lives result from luck, essentially being in the right place at the right time. Okhomina (2010, p.7) acknowledges that:

The theory of locus of control was developed by Rotter in the 1960s and emerged as "social learning theory" of what effect perception of control has on their behaviour.

Lefcourt (1976) is a protagonist of Rotter's locus control theory, believing that man is a free agent, the maker of his/her own fate. He has asserted that individual locus control is a key determinant factor in the face of an adverse environment to succeed, survive or fail. The author undertook a 'laboratory-controlled experiment' on various species' behaviour and their reactions

towards their adverse environment which he claimed is relevant to human behaviour of locus control.

This theory has been criticised for ignoring other vital factors such as environment, culture and history, which have a powerful influence on entrepreneurs. According to the findings of many authors in the field of entrepreneurship, an environment which is beyond the control of an entrepreneur could have a detrimental effect on any enterprise (Ram, 1993; Deakins and Freel, 2009; Okhomina, 2010).

Indeed, the influence of environmental (socio-political, economic, legal and technological) factors have been highlighted as being critical. The conducive or negative conditions of an entrepreneur's environment can create or destroy entrepreneurship in any given country, as discussed under the socio-behavioural approach. In this PhD inquiry whilst recognising internal locus control is an important attribute of entrepreneurship, environmental factors are also accepted to have a significant influence, especially for BAIEs in a host country environment.

Need for achievement

This assumption was defined and advanced by McClelland (1961, 1965) in his respective studies envisaging an entrepreneur as someone with a tendency to choose and persist at activities that hold a moderate chance of success or a maximum opportunity of personal achievement and satisfaction without an undue risk of failure.

The author empirically linked the 'high need for achievement' with an entrepreneurial propensity. As the result of his studies, the focus of entrepreneurship research has been the individual for many years, especially within the small business context. It has been argued that it is the individual who brings his/her dream and human capital into the enterprise Wickham (2006). The individual's entrepreneurial pursuit is articulated as an extension of the owner's/manager's personality and self-expression and intricately bound up with family needs and desires (Burns and Dewhurst, 1989).

McClelland (1961,1965) took diverse samples of business executives and claimed that those who consistently displayed a 'high need for achievement' did succeed in achieving high performances, whilst in his 1965 research publications he established that students who exhibited a higher need for achievement in their studies have subsequently pursued their careers in business. He then concluded that the 'high need for achievement' characteristic is a predictor of entrepreneurship and an attribute limited to some individuals, but not to all, which is the basis of controversy and critique surrounding his ideas.

However, it is important to stress that McClelland (1965) acknowledged that these needs are learned and influenced by culture, not biologically determined, admitting that some cultures produce more entrepreneurs because of the interaction process that creates a high need for achievement.

This has been the subject of much criticism from many authors (Chell *et al.*,1991; Delmar, 2000; Bruyat and Jullien, 2001; Chell, 2005), including those who agree that there are some individuals who are more suited to business than others. However, this assumption which exclusively focuses on personality traits is not defensible on many grounds. Ultimately, the challenges voiced are in line with criticisms made in regard to the emphasis paid to individual's 'personality traits' without equal attention to environmental contexts and attributing factors.

The following is a brief summary of major criticisms by the aforementioned authors against the assumption of individual 'personality characteristics or traits' as determinants for entrepreneurial success:

- Characteristics are not stable or static but change over time, and it is inappropriate to search for a single trait.
- Characteristics are subjective judgments and are difficult to define or measure.
- Concentrating too much on personality may lead to the danger of ignoring environmental and cultural factors.
- Too much emphasis on personality may also under-value the role of education, training, experience, exposure, inspiration and role models.

- The argument ignores historical factors, such as access to resources that provide opportunities.
- Difficult to develop a policy intervention for selected individuals with personality traits.
- It does not explain the diverse rate of entrepreneurial engagement among regions and groups (age, gender, ethnic background, social class, education).
- Encourages an unfair system, by diverting resources, funds and support from 'less entrepreneurial groups and regions' to other more engaged groups and regions.

On the other hand, there are some authors, e.g. Fisher and Koch (2008), who argue forcefully that entrepreneurs are born, not made, and that entrepreneurship is preconfigured in their DNA coding:

Both genetic evidence and survey data support the notion that a substantial proportion of entrepreneurial behaviour is genetically determined. Put simply, much entrepreneurial behaviour is inherited. The entrepreneurial personality that drives risk-taking, innovation, and the founding of new firms isn't something one can buy from the shelf. Nor can the salient features of an entrepreneurial personality easily be taught or learned, whether at Harvard or even from one's parents (Fisher and Koch, 2008, p.2).

Regardless of whether entrepreneurs are 'born or made', the aim of this PhD research remains open to exploring both inherent and learnt entrepreneurial attributes from the range of literature perspectives. As there are so many different entrepreneurial ideas, there is no single route to entrepreneurship. While there may be those with an inherent desire to create business, and who have intrinsic qualities that make them successful entrepreneurs, there are others who learn, develop and acquire those attributes from their life experience and their environment.

As clearly stated in the introduction to this thesis, one of the sub-research questions of this exploratory research study is to gain a better understanding of BAIes' motives, characteristics and competencies within their specific socio-political, economic and environmental contexts. To this end, the next section explores socio-behavioural approaches, extending the investigation into the social, cultural and environmental contexts within which an entrepreneur operates.

Socio-behavioural approaches

Socio-behavioural approaches recognise the relevance of some of the personality attributes of entrepreneurs but place emphasis on environmental and cultural factors which may have a strong influence on individuals, a perspective adopted in this research.

Proponents of this approach argue that the social and national culture within which individuals are operating could have a strong influence on entrepreneurial activities, as acknowledged by Hofstede's seminal ideas that envisage national cultures to differ on various grounds: "*region, religion, gender, ethnic, generation and class*" (Hofstede, 1991, p.15).

For example, dealing with failure or the perception of failure differs between the US and UK; whereas the US readily accepts that failure is an important lesson that leads to success, in the UK there is a stigma attached to it, and the UK is less tolerant to failure, as reflected in the enactment of bankruptcy laws restricting individuals from pursuing other opportunities (Deakins and Freel, 2009).

Ram (1993) has identified different rates of participation in small business ownership and entrepreneurial activities among some groups in the UK, where 'African-Caribbeans' and women have low rates as compared to the high rates of Asians; he argues that this is not due to their natural predisposition or propensity, but due to negative environmental factors or barriers.

Ram (ibid) also highlights regional variations; for example, the South East of the UK has a high concentration of business activities, reflecting conducive environmental factors and better infrastructure.

Ethnic minorities' business activities are higher in big cities such as London as compared to outer regions and cities, due to environmental opportunities which mean that individuals are able to mobilise resources and capital among well-established communities; these include social capital, network capital, intellectual capital and access to finance (Deaknis and Freel, 2009). Deakins *et al* (2009:23) purport:

In summary, factors that influence entrepreneurial success or failure are complex and cannot be reduced to specific economic incentives or

character traits; environmental factors have significant impact. After all, “if the environment is not conducive, then the entrepreneurial talent will lie dormant’ (Deakins et al., 2009, p.23)

Summary

It is apparent that entrepreneurship has been the subject and topic of research from a multitude of disciplines; economics, sociology and psychology have presented diverse definitions and underpinning theories that are born out of these diverse perspectives.

Entrepreneurship is not just a subject of intellectual curiosity, but also it has practical implications for our lives and influences the government’s strategic agenda.

There is a considerable literature on entrepreneurship, some of which displays opposing views whilst others share common features in their definitions and interpretations. However, most authors agree that entrepreneurship is a complex phenomenon, and it may not be possible or necessary to search for a single definition, but instead work towards building an integrated and coherent theoretical framework.

Entrepreneurship theories are generally categorized in three camps based on their interpretations of an entrepreneur: economic approach; personality approach; and socio-behavioural approach. Among other things, the entrepreneur’s motivations, characteristics and social structure are the basis of these diverse theoretical perspectives.

The literature which advances the economic approach sees an entrepreneur as motivated by economic incentive, whilst the personality approach emphasises that it is the individual personality of an entrepreneur that determines the success or failure of an enterprise. Although the list of such personalities is extensive, the three entrepreneurial personality attributes most commonly referred to are: high need for achievement; internal locus control; and risk-taking propensity. The third theoretical approach is socio-behaviourist, which does not deny some of the unique attributes of an entrepreneur, but its proponents argue that environmental factors (historical, socio-economic, political and cultural factors) are more critical for entrepreneurial success and

can be improved more readily through intervention than an individual's biological make up.

These different theoretical perspectives, born out of diverse and sometimes contradictory interpretations, highlight differences of historical dimensions of their times and are based on different schools of thought. However, all agree that entrepreneurship is an important subject of study for economic, social and technological development, and more research is encouraged to reflect the evolving and fast-paced nature of human endeavour in the field.

This research has enriched its understanding through exploring these diverse perspectives of entrepreneurship and the extensive range of research in the field. Whilst I agree that an individual (entrepreneur) should be the focal point of entrepreneurship study in order to gain a better understanding about motives, attributes and competencies, I disagree with the view that this should be looked at only through the lenses of economic rationale. On the other hand, whilst I recognise the significance of entrepreneurial personalities, these are not necessarily predetermined by innate attributes 'in the DNA', but equal attention and study should be given to potential attributes gained from learning and developing within the entrepreneur's specific contexts, and changes are also possible through informed policy interventions.

Contexts such as background, exposure, events, circumstances and experience alongside social, cultural and environmental factors should be an integral part of a research study in order to gain a complete picture of an entrepreneur's activities.

In this research, I set out to investigate BAIEs' lived experiences in South Yorkshire within their specific historical, socio-economic, political and geographical contexts. The research takes into consideration BAIEs' multiple identities as ethnic minorities, immigrants and specifically Black African migrants, the underpinning theoretical background of which will be explored in the next sections 2.3 -2.7.

2.3 History of Ethnic Minority Entrepreneurship

Ethnic entrepreneurship has been the subject of study more markedly since the late 1960s and later intensified in the 1970s and 1980s (Sonfield, 2005) across a range of disciplines. This trend has continued to date, as acknowledged by prominent authors (Light, 1984; Waldinger, 1988; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Deakins and Freel, 2012) following on from the emerging significance and movement of race and identity in politics, economics and social domains both in North America and Europe in the 1980s. Academic institutions both in the UK and US have been engaged in multi-disciplinary research and scholarly works and encouraging diverse perspectives regarding ethnic minority business growth challenges. As Waldinger *et al.* (1990, p.9) note:

The idea was to bring researchers together from the disciplines of sociology, economics, geography, political science, anthropology and business management to compare and contrast approaches to explain the growth of ethnic businesses.

The 1980s were an era of great economic and technological advancement that brought both challenges and opportunities beyond national boundaries. Governments around the world began to liberalise their markets, introduced business friendly economic policies and embraced new technologies for small business entrepreneurs to take advantage of these opportunities. However, various research in the US and Europe has confirmed that some groups, most notably ethnic minority enterprises, were not equal beneficiaries, regardless of their high rate of participation. In the UK, ethnic minority groups were facing more challenges (barriers) in their economic progress, which has become the focus of concern for policy makers and researchers (Bank of England, 1999; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Deakins and Freel, 2012).

In the US, the findings of Light (1984), Waldinger (1988) and Waldinger *et al.* (1990) highlighted that access to resources has been an impediment particularly for minority Black African entrepreneurs in North America. Indeed:

Compared to native whites, native blacks are high in economic disadvantage, low in class resources of entrepreneurship, but similar in respect to ethnic resources of entrepreneurship (Light, 1984, p.209)

Early research findings (Bonacich, 1980; Ward and Jenkins, 1984; Aldrich *et al.*, 1990) have revealed that these discrepancies are born out of historical

inequalities faced by ethnic minority groups, the lack of a level playing field, marginal economic positions, inadequate access to resources, and discriminatory practices.

To date, ethnic entrepreneurship has been the subject of research interest and will continue to be in order to gain deeper understanding through establishing integrated theoretical underpinnings that explain various dynamics and to enhance entrepreneurial practices.

Among early ethnic minority research works in the UK were the studies of Aldrich *et al.* (1981), Jones *et al.* (1992), and Storey (1994) whose works were mainly focused on Asian minorities (Indian, Chinese, Pakistani and Hong Kong Chinese). Most of these literatures suggest that after post-industrialisation in the 1980s, ethnic minorities in the UK have taken on self-employment as a way of escaping racial discrimination in the workplace, seeking independence and social mobility rather than economic incentives. Their findings stated that most Asian entrepreneurs in the UK according to Storey (1994) were concentrated in retail 'corner shops' and catering industries. These entrepreneurs were noted to be merely surviving through working long hours seven days a week and mobilising resources from the community and family as a source of cheap labour (as cited by Jones and Ram, 2013). This was also claimed to be part of a wider trend observable across Western economies:

Self-employed business ownership is a virtually assured antidote to the discrimination as suffered by racialized minorities in Western urban society (Jones and Ram, 2013, p.5).

However, the literature mainly focused on Asians and there was very limited research on other ethnic minority entrepreneurs. In particular, Black African ethnic minorities and their entrepreneurial activities have been relatively understudied compared to other groups among Britain's visible ethnic communities, as acknowledged by Daley (1998), Nwankwo (2005) and Ojo (2013).

The Literature Review now extends its appraisal on the following related issues in line with the research focus, research sub-questions and objectives:

- What is ethnic 'minority' entrepreneurship?
- Theoretical and conceptual frameworks
- Immigrant Entrepreneurship

- Black African Entrepreneurship in the UK

2.3.1 What is 'Ethnic minority' Entrepreneurship?

Although defining ethnic minority business may seem straightforward, it is in fact a complex task; the activity is evolving and has different definitions in different countries, as the following quote confirms:

Defining the concept of a 'minority business' is a complex task. On the surface, it would seem that a business owned solely, or at least primarily, by members of a 'minority' group would constitute a 'minority business'. Yet, various arguments have been made that build upon or modify these seemingly simple definitions, and even the basic terminology is open to debate (Sonfield, 2005, p.223)

I will be presenting examples of these definitions from US, EU and UK perspectives and will point out possible theoretical and practical implications for businesses, researchers and policy makers.

One immediate, distinctive difference between the US and EU/UK is that the US literature rarely uses the word 'ethnic', as it generally refers to 'minority businesses'. This is because in the US the term 'ethnic enterprise' is perceived to be referring specifically to ethnic/cultural products or markets (Logan and Alba, 1994), whereas in the EU and UK 'ethnic minority businesses' is a widely used and accepted terminology without any connotations.

This has led to different arguments in defining the minority business to be either in the market context, the owner's race or based on disadvantage and exclusion criteria. Some authors (Chaganti and Greene, 2002; Menzies, *et al.*, 2003) suggest it should be based on the entrepreneur's personal involvement, connections and association or self-identification with a particular 'ethnic' or 'minority' group. In the EU context, being a disadvantaged and excluded business owner involves immigrant status with a distinctive cultural, social and linguistic profile. Here, the ethnic identity of an entrepreneur might be posited to hold relevance for the lived experience, in line with Research Objective 3 of this PhD study.

US, EU and UK definitions and interpretations

In the US, the definition is provided by the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) in line with the US Federal government assistance program and policy requirements as articulated by Sonfield, 2005, p.224):

In line with the US government minority assistance programme requirements, a 'minority businesses' previously had to be at least 51% minority-owned. Under the new NMSDC policy, a firm can have as little as 30% minority-ownership and still be eligible for corporate minority-targeted contracts.

In the US, the list of recognised 'minority' groups include African-American, Hispanic-American, Native Americans (American Indian, Alaska Native) and Asian Pacific Americans.

In the UK, minority businesses are generally categorised as 'Black and Minority Ethnic entrepreneurship' (BME) or 'Ethnic Minority Business' (EMB) and in order to qualify "an enterprise should be owned or controlled by more than 50% of minority ethnic individuals" (EKOS, 2007, p.70), whereas the EU uses the definition provided by The Institute of Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES, 2008):

Ethnic minority entrepreneurs have been understood as entrepreneurs or potential entrepreneurs who are immigrants in the countries concerned. Immigrants are defined as persons who have been born abroad, irrespective of their nationality and whether they are considered ethnic minorities or not in the countries involved. 'Immigrants' also includes the offspring of immigrants, the second generation or the native-born children of the first generation (cited in Oliveira, 2006, p.16).

This thesis has adopted the definition provided by the EU, as it presents a comprehensive context and the UK has to endorse existing EU directives until the full implementation of Brexit. For the purpose of this research identifying (defining) BAIEs is not an issue as firms that formed the research sample are 100% owned by BAIEs themselves, but it should be noted that 7 (11.11%) have UK and EU (white Caucasian) employees (see Chapter 3).

In summary, the central theme of literature (Logan and Alba, 1994; Sonfield, 2005; Oliveira, 2006; EKOS, 2007; IMES, 2008;) and discourse about different definitions and interpretations of 'ethnic minority enterprise' in the EU and UK or 'minority enterprise' in the US are born out of their respective political, social

and economic policies. In the US, minority-owned businesses have grown and evolved, engaging with non-minority individuals. Thus, the definition and minority status changing from 51% to 30% is important for eligibility for government initiatives (positive discrimination) which encourages firms' competitiveness.

In the EU and the UK most 'ethnic minority businesses' are relatively emergent, growing trends and are owned typically by members of ethnic minority groups, and host countries stipulate non-discriminatory policies. However, 'ethnic minority status' is defined subject to qualifying as having more than 50% ownership. On the other hand, governments in the EU promote various initiatives targeting 'disadvantaged groups' including immigrants and 'ethnic minorities', at least in principle in order to create an environment conducive to the development and growth of ethnic minority enterprises.

On the basis of the Literature Review, regarding diverse definitions, associated criteria, and business rationale, there are no clearly established business benefits or disadvantages for firms involved as a result of being labelled with 'minority' or 'ethnic minority' status or descriptions. On the other hand, critics such as Ram and Smallbone (2003a) call on the need to broaden the definition beyond ethnicity, class and ethnic resources to consider the broader macro-economic and regularity issues (Kloosterman and Rath, 2003). Some aspects of this are discussed in the next section on ethnic entrepreneurship theories.

2.3.2 Ethnic Entrepreneurship Theories

This section discusses particular aspects of ethnic entrepreneurship; theoretical explanations distilled from overarching discussions presented in 2.2.2 within the general domain of entrepreneurship.

I would like to remind the reader that the term 'ethnic' and 'immigrant' are used alternately when reference is made to recent immigrants, although it is acknowledged that the former is inclusive whilst the latter excludes ethnic minorities who may have lived for centuries in a given country (Light and Gold, 2000; Volery, 2007). The ethnic entrepreneurship theoretical framework is

applicable to both groups though 'Immigrant Entrepreneurship' is discussed in a separate section, 2.4.

Ethnic entrepreneurship theory development has its foundation in an ethnic entrepreneur's market entry decision in a host country where the typical ethnic markets are generally characterised by low barriers of entry, low capital, low education, low qualifications, small scale production, high labour intensity and low added value with cutthroat competition (Volery, 2007). Although some aspects of this characterisation may be still true, it fails to recognise the evolving nature of recent immigrants' profile as being highly educated, diverse and operating in high added value and high-tech sectors in the UK, Europe and the US (Oliveira 2006; IMI, 2008; Deakins and Freel, 2012).

Fundamentally, it is based on the question and interpretation of 'what constitutes an entrepreneur's decision to engage in an entrepreneurial activity?', and this has led to the development of different ethnic entrepreneurship theories known as culturalist and structuralist perspectives.

Supporters of the culturalist approach believe that immigrant groups have culturally-determined features leading to a propensity to favour self-employment (Masurel *et al.*, 2004).

This implies that the determining factor for an entrepreneur's decision to engage in entrepreneurial activity in a given host country is mainly influenced by the individual's cultural and family values and experience born out of cultural capital, social capital and human capital. However, it does not offer any explanations about the critical role of the environment (opportunity structure) which in some countries restricts immigrants' engagement due to political, economic and social conditions:

The structuralist approach, on the other hand, suggests that external factors in the host environment, such as discrimination or entry barriers on the labour market due to education and language deficits, pushes foreigners into self-employment (Volery, 2007, p.32).

It is implied that it is the opportunity structure (environmental factors) which determine an ethnic entrepreneur's decision to enter into a given host nation's specific market.

For example, culturalists argue that an entrepreneur's behavioural factors are the determining factor by referring to personal traits inherited from family culture, experience with ventures, forward-looking attitude, etc., whilst structuralists advocate contextual factors as the determining ones by referring to new market possibilities, regulatory systems, technology trends etc. (Masurel *et al.*, 2004).

In recent years, these stances and stereotypical views of 'ethnic' entrepreneurship have been challenged with continuing research from a range of disciplines such as sociology, economics, anthropology and business management, demonstrating that culturalist and structuralist perspectives alone are unable to explain this complex phenomenon.

The prevailing argument that arises is that it is not only the entrepreneurial behaviour of an individual or the opportunity structure (environmental factors) in isolation that determine the success of an enterprise, but the interplay between them (Volery, 2007). This observation has led to the development of the 'Interactive Model' conceptualized by Waldinger *et al.* (1990a). Thus, the success of an ethnic enterprise is conceived to depend on a complex interaction between opportunity structures and group resources, as illustrated in Figure 2.4 depicting constant interactions of opportunity structure and ethnic resources. In addition to this model, the 'Social Embeddedness' model (Granovetter, 1985) and the 'Mixed embeddedness' model (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999) have been developed to explain ethnic entrepreneurship's evolving and complex interactions, each contributing their perspectives to the development of an ethnic entrepreneurship theory.

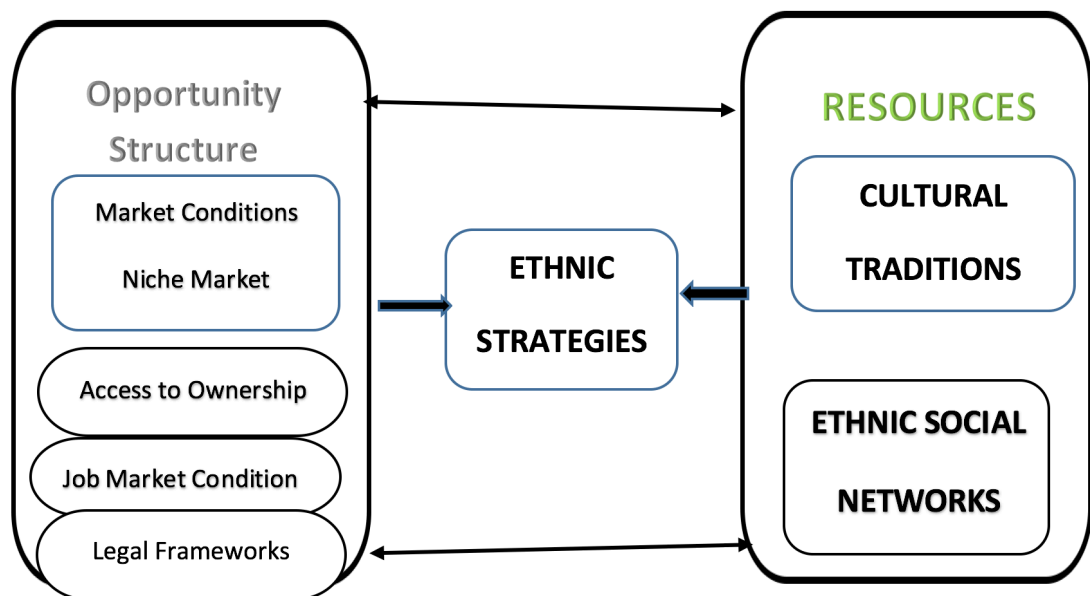
Social embeddedness is a theory developed by Granovetter (1985) and claims that an individual's behaviour and institutions are affected by social relations. Hence, an individual's choices and actions are largely driven by the social context within the continuum influx of interactions. It is a relational concept; the embedded individual or entrepreneur exists in a set of relationships within society whose choices and actions are inter-dependent and influenced by one another.

Mixed embeddedness proponents such as Kloosterman *et al.* (1999) explain that ethnic entrepreneurs are embedded or implanted within the margin of

formal and informal opportunity structure of a host country, mobilising and exploiting opportunities from and within its own ethnic resources and niche ethnic market:

Mixed embeddedness recognizes that the structure of a local economy and legal institutional factors exert a strong influence on the creation and existence of small business economy in general (Volery, 2007). This idea holds relevance for this PhD study of BAIEs within a regional context.

Figure 2.4: Interactive model of ethnic entrepreneurship development



Source: Adapted from Pütz (2003) and Waldinger *et al.* (1990 as cited by Volery, 2007)

Figure 2.4 depicts the interplay of opportunity structure and ethnic resources; it asserts that it is neither a structuralist nor a culturalist approach that explains the ethnic entrepreneur's actions but the multidimensional interactions between them and beyond are seen to hold relevance.

Middleman minorities theory

The term 'middleman minorities', coined by Hubert (1967), refers to minority entrepreneurs who mediate between the dominant and subordinate groups

whose customers typically are members of marginalised racial or ethnic groups that are segregated from the majority groups.

Typical examples presented in the literature in characterising the middleman minority role are: South Koreans in the US who distribute merchandise to black minority neighbourhoods and inner cities on behalf of large US corporations; Jews in Europe; Chinese in Southeast Asia; Indians in Africa and France. All these groups have displayed middleman minority characteristics. The literature emphasises the unique position and intermediate status between the elite and the masses, between the producers and the consumers (Bonacich, 1973).

Although the role of middleman minority characterisation has implied its positive role by bridging two groups in a racially or ethnically stratified society, often distributing products made by the ruling group to the consuming masses, middleman minorities have been the subject of racial tensions, conflicts and riots.

In some instances, middleman minorities are often hated by both sides - the host society and other minority groups - and are perceived as clannish, disloyal and unscrupulous outsiders. There have been reports of large riots which led to the destruction of thousands of businesses and properties owned by these middlemen: for example, the 1992 Los Angeles race riots destroyed 2,300 Korean stores (Gapmin and Kolodny, 1994).

Middleman minority theory may be aligned to a culturalist approach which claims that it is the minority element that determines entrepreneurship (Turner and Bonacich, 1980) and encourages certain ethnic groups to mobilise their resources and set up businesses to occupy middleman minority positions. Bonacich (1973) explains this idea citing examples of the intermediary role of the middleman, such as Armenians, Indians and Japanese trading as bankers, barbers, brokers, launderers and restaurateurs serving mainly marginalised ethnic groups, who do not belong to their wider ethnic groups.

The theory has been criticised for its characterisation of a middleman minority referring to ethnic groups as purely economic migrants, not interested in integration with the indigenous culture and society due to their intention to return to their countries of origin. However, it may be contended that many of these entrepreneurs have settled permanently in the US and other hosting

countries, and the above assertion does not explain the diverse, complex and evolving nature of recent migration phenomena.

The 'middleman minorities' paradigm (Bonacich, 1973) states that immigrants develop a 'sojourner mentality' and engage in middleman occupations or easily liquidated businesses with low entry barriers because of host community antagonism, discrimination and constrained opportunities for upward mobility. Bonacich (1973) suggests that middlemen entrepreneurs act as intermediaries or as agents linking ethnic products to consumers and also linking ethnic employers with co-ethnic employees.

Through these entrepreneurs, it is argued that members of ethnic immigrant groups seek any help inwardly which in return helps to develop a strong sense of bond and solidarity which helps to create social capital within the community. This has given way to the development of 'enclave theory' and the emergence of ethnic entrepreneurship.

The middleman minority theory has received criticism, as the premise of its argument is based on the balance of power between 'majority ethnics' and relatively 'minority immigrant ethnics', or 'indigenous' versus immigrants. Here, relationship dynamics have been highlighted including, 'ethnic antagonism', 'ethnic discrimination', 'ethnic conflict', 'ethnic tension' and 'ethnic relations'. However, middleman minority fails to explain the reverse situation, for example the historical case in South Africa, where the minority white ethnic group had a supreme power of balance over the majority indigenous Black Africans (Turner, 1986).

Generally, it is assumed that middleman minority phenomena are largely believed to be the product of a pre-industrial and colonial society, related to their economic, social and political structure and in the contemporary free market economy context it is unlikely that there is a role for the middleman minority business model.

Enclave theory:

An ethnic enclave describes a geographical area with high ethnic concentration, characteristic cultural identity, and economic activity. The theory of social

capital and the formation of migrant networks creates the social foundation for ethnic enclaves

The theory developed from the perspectives of sociological science and was subsequently adopted by as part of the body of knowledge on ethnic entrepreneurship theory. Sociologists suggest that ethnic enclaves develop as and when ethnic minorities encounter obstacles impeding their entry into the 'mainstream' of host society in the communities' assimilation process. The creation of an 'ethnic enclave' presupposes either the failure of immigrants or entire ethnic groups to move up through the social hierarchies caused by the reluctance of ethnic groups themselves to shed their traditional values and/or the resistance of the indigenous majority to accept them because of racial, religious or other shortcomings (Porters and Manning, 2008).

This implies that this is a reaction pursued by ethnic groups to reaffirm their identity and their interests; those who are abandoned at the bottom of the social ladder start to compete for positions of advantage by mobilising resources within the ethnic groups (Despres, 1975).

The enclave is concentrated and spatially identifiable as, by the very nature of their activities, their businesses require proximity to their mass clientele and a measure of physical dispersion within it, but middleman minorities live among the mass of the population.

Ethnic entrepreneurship literature (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990) suggests that when minority group needs are not met by the mainstream markets, it is only natural that this generates high demand for a market which can be adequately addressed by immigrant entrepreneurs who have the expertise, knowledge and contacts, thus further consolidating the ethnic enclave. But for this to happen, there should be a substantial number of immigrants, social and human capital. Examples of cities which have created areas of ethnic minority group-dominated clusters are visible in the case of Jewish communities in New York (Manhattan), Koreans in Los Angeles and Cubans in Miami. (Bonacich *et al.*, 1977; Light, 1980; Porters and Manning, 2008).

In most Western cities, the sites of such thriving ethnic enclaves are even named after the specific ethnics' countries of origin, such as China Town in London and the US, Little Italy in New York and Little Havana in Miami, Florida.

However, there is some literature including early research by Aldrich *et al.* (1980) on Asian ethnic entrepreneurs in the UK who over-rely on a single co-ethnic customer base which creates detrimental cut-throat survival. This view has been consolidated by Ram and Hillin (1994), when the authors advise that ethnic enclaves could be a trap, jeopardising ethnic business development, growth and opportunities for breaking into the mainstream arena.

Terzano (2014) in her publication 'Commodification of Transitioning Ethnic Enclaves' reflected on the pre-19th century classical view of writers who perceived the 'ethnic enclave' to be a temporary phenomenon that new immigrants have to go through until they eventually shed their identity and melt into Americanisation, hence stating the inevitability and necessity of assimilation. Other researchers believe that ethnic enclaves will continue to evolve as a launch pad for new immigrants or will be revived by old immigrants for social, economic and identity reasons, and in some instances, will be protected by local governments to preserve such heritage for touristic consumption and in the interests of the local economy; for example, it is observable that ethnic enclaves such as 'Little Italy' in the US, 'Little Portugal' in Toronto, Canada and 'Chinatowns' both in the US and UK often have local government protection.

Outsiders have different perceptions about 'ethnic enclaves'; some see them as positive markers of authenticity while for others, there are negative connotations of the ethnic enclave as a place of danger, housing illicit activities and akin to ghettos. Their interpretation is open to subjective perception. However, the creation of ethnic enclaves is a reality and is evolving, shaped by opportunity structure and ethnic resources, although there is no uniform model to apply to all ethnic enclaves, as the Cuban-American enclave in Miami highlights - home to 48% of all Cuban-Americans (Arboleya, 2013) and a distinct as a locale *"characterized by highly interdependent industries, ones which are less dependent on majority industry"* (Wilson and Martin, 1982, p.135).

Portes (1987) who undertook extensive research on Cuban's enclaves in Miami reached the conclusion that, although often cited as an outstanding case example of the ethnic enclave, it does not clarify the dynamic aspects of the process, the actual steps through which individual and family business goals become implemented.

The empirical study by Portes (1987) acknowledges the transformation of Miami from a sleepy town to an economically and socially vibrant city, one of the fastest growing in the US:

Miami is a changed city. In the course of two and half decades it has evolved from a sleepy resort town at the southern tip of the United States into the country's second international banking centre and one of its fastest growing cities. Miami is simultaneously a regional centre of the American economy and the emerging commercial and financial capital of the Caribbean region. The latter role was achieved by displacing New Orleans as the principal trade outlet with Latin America. This emerging position is both the key to the city's economic development and the principal source of its problems. Along with legitimate trade and banking, there is contraband, illegal immigration, and the immense shadow of the Colombian narcotics traffic (Portes, 1987, p.340).

She concluded that the story of the emergence of the Miami ethnic economy offers an example of the limitations of single-factor theories of entrepreneurial behaviour. The outside context may facilitate or inhibit business initiatives, but given a minimum opportunity, groups with the necessary internal resources will move to take advantage of them. She acknowledges that minorities are, more often than not, at a disadvantage in competing with members of the native-born majority and implies that policy intervention may be necessary when she states that ethnic networks will not produce an ethnic economy by themselves, but they can support, in manifold ways their individual members.

Disadvantage theory

There is a consensus among ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurship researchers that immigrants arrive in their host country with very limited resources, experience, contacts and human capital, usually exacerbated by a lack of proficiency in the host country's language, which places them in a disadvantaged position (Ishaq *et al.*, 2010; Deakins and Freel, 2012; Ram and Jones, 2013; Ram *et al.*, 2013). The disadvantage theory is embedded inside the structuralist approach and rooted in sociology, attempting to explain the significance of environmental and structural factors of a host country (Light and Gold, 2006).

Furthermore, due to complex historical, social and economic realities, ethnic minorities face more barriers and challenges including discrimination in upward

social mobility (Hamnett *et al.*, 1994). This phenomenon applies not only to first-generation immigrants, but also to second and third generations, though the degree of relevance may vary as stated in the following quote:

*Blocked mobility is a powerful spur to business activity. Immigrants suffer from a variety of impediments in the labour market: unfamiliarity with the language of the host country, inadequate or inappropriate skill, age, and discrimination. Lacking the same opportunities for stable career employment as natives, immigrants are more likely to strike out on their own and to experience less aversion to the substantial risks that this course entails (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990, p.411).*

Whilst Ram and Jones (2013) who are among the most prominent researchers in ethnic entrepreneurship, assert that entrepreneurship represents the liberation of ethnic minorities across Europe and claim that '*...self-employed business ownership is a virtually assured antidote to the discrimination suffered by racialized minorities in Western urban society*' (op. cit., p.13). They conclude that:

Entrepreneurship has long been mooted as a vehicle for social mobility for ethnic minorities across Europe (op. cit., p.24).

Literature from psychological, sociological and economic perspectives (Light, 1984; Waldinger, 1988; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Ram, 1993) recognises that the risk-taking tendency of immigrants is higher than natives' behaviour. This tendency may have been associated with an often-difficult migration experience in leaving their countries of origin and problems of settling in a new host country. Paradoxically, this may seem a 'disadvantageous encounter' but may become an advantage in as far as being a strong motive to starting an enterprise.

Bonacich's (1988) findings of the South Koreans in Los Angeles and many successful ethnic entrepreneurs in the US, EU and UK are born out of these shared migration experiences which gave them a competitive advantage in pursuing business.

In the UK context, this has been highlighted by prominent authors in the field of small business and entrepreneurship (Hamnett *et al.*, 1994; Ishaq *et al.*, 2010; Deakins and Freel, 2012; Ram and Jones, 2013; Ram *et al.*, 2013) among others:

Small business then provides an avenue to independence and possible self-advancement both for qualified and unqualified Asians ... some British born children of Asian origin are combining professional qualifications with shops and services, for example as pharmacists (Hamnett et al., 1994, p.152)

Basu and Goswami (1999) have also identified a range of motives under 'push factors' or disadvantageous positions in the labour market which have forced or driven them to choose self-employment.

However, the literature (ibid) acknowledges that the mere establishment of a business does not necessarily guarantee all that is desired, as Black and ethnic minorities face many hurdles which they have to overcome. Unfortunately, only a few achieve success, and many are forced to close down or operate at a bare minimum, unable to expand due to lack of resources or tailored support.

Some aspects of 'The advantages of being disadvantaged' are discussed in sections 2.4 and 2.5 about the motives of BAIEs, whilst 'resilience' as a BAIE entrepreneurial attribute envisaged to assist BAIEs to adapt, overcome and evolve against challenging and sometimes hostile host country environments is explored specifically at the end of the chapter.

2.3.3 Summary

Most of the literature agrees that ethnic entrepreneurship continues to be an important topic and will continue to be the subject of research for the foreseeable future. It has captured the imagination of scholars and practitioners from a range of academic disciplines with a view to developing theoretical frameworks that explain the complex phenomena and dynamics.

The literature acknowledges that ethnic entrepreneurship has become an important aspect of modern urban life and fulfils a key economic and social role for ethnic communities (Volery, 2007). The restructuring of Western economies post industrialisation has brought both opportunities and challenges to ethnic minorities. On the one hand, the loss of low skilled employment opportunity has created loss of income and caused poverty, alternatively, it has created opportunities for small to medium enterprises, including the creation and growth of ethnic entrepreneurship in inner cities with its own trials and controversies.

Ethnic entrepreneurship research findings play a significant role in informing policies and practices for governments, public and private institutions in order to enhance economic growth, racial cohesion and inclusive societies.

However, there are still discrepancies in clearly defining and interpreting some concepts, including what constitutes 'ethnic', 'minority' and 'immigrant' entrepreneurs, which create confusion and misunderstandings among researchers and also in some cases act as practical impediments in regard to funding eligibilities and associated negative perceptions and connotations.

Theoretical frameworks too are diverse and there is continued effort to distil contemporary contexts from historical interpretations and understandings.

In summary of this section it is apt to quote Ram and Jones' (2008) introductory statements to highlight the importance of ethnic entrepreneurship in the UK context:

Ethnic minority owned businesses are an important and growing feature of the private sector, playing a significant economic and social role. Government figures estimate that there are 300,000 ethnic minority owned businesses, contributing an estimated £20 billion annually to the UK economy. Ethnic minority businesses are important not just because of their numbers or financial contribution; they have also helped transform particular sectors of the economy and in the regeneration of depressed inner-city areas (Ram and Jones, 2008, p.1)

Ethnic minority owned businesses' contribution to the UK economy has been corroborated by other researchers (Deakins and Freel, 2012). This has not only been confirmed by ERC (2013), but also has highlighted increasing trends more as indicated in the following quote which signifies the critical importance of these social groups:

Black and ethnic minority enterprises contribute to the UK economy between £25 billion and £32 billion per year, regeneration of declining sectors and places, catalysts for transnational trading link; and the integration of new migrants ERC (2013, p.4).

This PhD research study aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge of entrepreneurship from particular social groups by investigating the lived experiences of BAIEs in the South Yorkshire regional context, considering their identities as Black African immigrants and entrepreneurs. As indicated in the sub-research questions presented in Chapter 1 this will include consideration of

their backgrounds, motivations, challenges and opportunities, employees, core customers and key supporters, resources, future plans and aspirations.

2.4 Immigrant Entrepreneurship

This section discusses some of the confusion that arises due to the lack of unified conceptual definitions regarding 'ethnic', 'immigrant', 'migrant' and 'diaspora/transnational' within the domain of ethnic entrepreneurship, whilst attempting to present these rationales in discursive style and table summaries.

2.4.1 Lack of unified conceptual definitions

The trend in a lack of a generally accepted definition runs through from the general domain of 'entrepreneurship', 'ethnic entrepreneurship' to 'immigrant/migrant entrepreneurship' as the former two topics have been discussed in previous sections.

In spite of growing research interest in the field, there is no generally accepted definition of ethnic minority and immigrant entrepreneurs. There are various approaches to defining these groups that cause confusion both in conceptual and practical terms. One approach attempts to define 'ethnic entrepreneurship' based on the ethnic origin of the owner, staff and the customer base, implying that it is owned and staffed by ethnic minorities and serving its own co-ethnic customers (Ram and Jones, 2008). The other approach is based on complex social relations, and ethnic minority is defined based on disadvantageous socio-economic and political contexts. Thus, ethnic minorities are often acknowledged to be social groups who are on the margins of societies, excluded from mainstream activities (Gunaratnam, 2003; Anthias and Davis, 1992). In this context, the concepts "Othering" and "belonging" offer a means of exploring and explaining inequalities and marginalities that exist between mainstream and Black and ethnic minority communities in Western societies. Notions of "othering" and "belonging" are sociological ideas engendering inequalities and marginalities on group-based identities. The idea of being different is something that is socially perceived and structurally and systematically reinforced in a number of everyday contexts (Powell and Menendian, 2017; Brons, 2015), not least in the workplace and in business communities.

Thus, the entrepreneurship of ethnic minority groups as distinctive, marginalised and unintegrated from the 'mainstream' arguably reflects societal culture. Defining ethnic (minority) entrepreneurship as distinct from entrepreneurship *per se* is something that is reinforced through institutional structures and systems. Arguably, this 'othering' not only profoundly affects community integrations and cohesion, but it may be argued that, by virtue of segregation, it also restricts the "othered" groups from realising their full potentials including in their entrepreneurial endeavour. One of the sub-research questions of this thesis asks:

- To what extent are the experiences of BAIEs commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs?

This is important in terms of understanding the identities and lived experiences of BAIEs in the context of this PhD inquiry. It is a theme that will be returned to in Chapter 7. For now, in terms of reviewing existing literature, it is important to highlight that the entrepreneurial activities of ethnic minority groups have, to date, been positioned as distinct and different.

While some authors (Volery, 2007; Light and Gold, 2003) use the term 'ethnic' and 'immigrant' alternately, they acknowledge that 'ethnic entrepreneurship' is an inclusive category for different ethnic minority groups while 'immigrant entrepreneurship' excludes those minorities who have lived in a given country for centuries.

In an attempt to define ethnic entrepreneurship, the terms 'ethnic' and 'immigrant entrepreneur' have been used alternately, although, of course, 'ethnic' or ethnicity does not necessarily mean being an immigrant:

Ethnic entrepreneurship is a broad concept and refers to business activities in a certain area driven or undertaken by people of a different ethnic or cultural (including religious) origin than the indigenous population (Masurel et al., p.78)

This nuanced view is shared by Volery, as reflected in the following quotation:

The immigrant definition excludes, however, members of ethnic minority groups who have been living in the country for several centuries, such as Afro-Americans in the USA, Jews in Europe or aborigines in general. 'Ethnic' on the contrary, does not exclude immigrant or minority groups,

and the term 'immigrant would be appropriate when an ethnic group is new in a host society (Volery, 2007, p.28)

In contrast, research commissioned by the EU, for example the European Commission Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General (ECEIDG, 2008), sees a nested relationship between 'immigrant entrepreneurship' and ethnic entrepreneurship:

Generally, "ethnic entrepreneurship" has been mainly referred to as businesses connected to a certain immigrant group, functioning on a closed basis and dependant on a certain community (including workers, suppliers and clients). Therefore, "immigrant entrepreneurship" is seen as a broader concept that also includes businesses that target non-ethnic clients and that function in the open economy (as opposed to the closed market defined by the immigrant community). In other words, this form of entrepreneurship is characterised by the immigration experience and can hence be dubbed "immigrant entrepreneurship." This term does not have any connotation that necessarily reflects dependence on ethnic resources (ECEIDG, 2008, p.6).

The discourse of categorisation goes as far as suggesting that,

the notion of the entrepreneur is in itself 'discriminatory, gender-biased, ethnocentrically determined and ideologically controlled (Ogbor, 2000, p.605).

Adding to these complications of descriptions of 'migrant entrepreneurship' and 'diaspora entrepreneurship' are equally competing concepts and definitions in this arena which this thesis attempts to highlight from each particular perspective.

Ram *et al.* (2017) demand that the focus of future research should be embedded locally, working with local agencies aimed at providing practical support to new immigrant businesses alongside the ongoing discourse regarding these underlying conceptual and theoretical definitions.

The following summarizes definitions of these associated terminologies; 'ethnic entrepreneurship', 'immigrant entrepreneurship', 'migrant entrepreneurship', 'refugee entrepreneurs' and 'diaspora entrepreneurship' presenting the respective dimensions and perspectives. The first three concepts are adapted from Chaganti and Greene, (2002) where they attempt to provide conceptual clarifications by integrating previous definitions, indicated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Conceptual clarity of definitions of immigrant, ethnic and minority entrepreneurs

Concept	Definition
Immigrant Entrepreneurs	Individuals who, as recent arrivals in the country, start a business as a means of economic survival. This group may involve a migration network linking migrants, former migrants and non-migrants with a common origin and destination (Butler and Greene 1997a): “An immigrant is a person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country” (Pearsall, 1998, p.914)
Ethnic Entrepreneurs	“. . . a set of connections and regular patterns of interaction among people sharing common national background or migration experiences” (Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward, 1990, p. 3).
Minority Entrepreneurs	Business owners who are not of the majority population. U.S. Federal categories include Black, Hispanic or Latin American, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian, or Alaska Native descent. This group occasionally includes women.

Source: Butler and Greene (1997a); Waldinger, Aldrich, and Ward (1990); and U.S. Department of Commerce (1997) (as cited by Chaganti and Greene, 2002, p.128)

Among recent literature which is engaged in ethnic minorities scholarly works, Davidaviciene and Lolat (2016) grapple with this issue of lack of conceptual clarity in these seemingly similar terminologies, but with different meanings. The authors have added more associated terminologies, such as 'refugees', 'asylum seekers' and 'foreigners' which are a subset of 'immigrants' (Sepulveda *et al.*, 2008), each category representing a unique legal status and holding specific implications for an individual's right to work and live in a hosting country. This misunderstanding and confusion is widespread in media and public discourse which has created ambiguity (Migration UK, 2017; House of Commons Library, 2017). For the purpose of this PhD thesis, I have adapted the definition of the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the status of refugees, endorsed by The United Kingdom Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (cited by House of Commons Library, 2017).

The UN Convention defines a refugee as someone who:

... owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his [or her] nationality and is unable or,

owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself [or herself] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his [or her] former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.
(cited by House of Common Library, 2017)

So far, the thesis has discussed diverse definitions of terminologies generated by interdisciplinary approaches which have led to the absence of unified concepts which, in return, present scope for misunderstanding and misinterpretation of scholarly works.

Table 2.2 presents the differences and similarities between migrant, refugee and asylum seeker definitions by The Guardian (2015) in association the 1951 UN Refugee Convention as subset of immigrant. Although these three terms may be similar, each has a different meaning and is governed by different international obligations.

Table 2.2: Distinctions in definitions of the terms migrant, refugee and asylum seeker

Term	Definition
Migrant	is someone who moves from one place to another in order to live in another country for more than a year (Pearsall, 1998).
Refugee	is a person who has fled armed conflict or persecution and who is recognised as needing international protection because it is too dangerous for them to return home; they are protected under the 1951 UN Refugee convention.
Asylum seeker	is someone who claims asylum and does not immediately return to the country s/he fled from.

Source: Adapted from The Guardian (2015)

The UN Convention states that asylum seekers and refugees must be given access to fair and efficient asylum, refugee procedures and measures to ensure that they live in dignity and safety while their claims are processed. However, it has been noted that refugees and asylum seekers, have specific needs and often suffer from multiple levels of social disadvantage, exclusion and inequalities, for example due to their ethnicity, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation, and therefore require specific actions to ensure equality (Regional

Migration Partnership Yorkshire and Humberside, 2017; Sepulveda, *et al.*, 2008). In this context, the need to acknowledge these social groups as different and as discrete social groups is argued.

2.4.2 Diaspora entrepreneurship

The term “diaspora” does not have a specific accepted definition, neither does the term have legal recognition, and as a result many diverse meanings and interpretations exist (International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009). This assertion has been endorsed by a number of researchers of entrepreneurship (Safran, 1991; Porters *et al.*, 1999; Ember, 2004; Dori, 2009, 2010 and Ojo, 2017).

Historical reference to the origin of the word has been made exclusively with regard to the Jewish diaspora, but in recent years the term has been used to include other mass scatterings of people from around the world with increased trends of migration globally due to war, conflict, political instability and globalisation (Ember *et al.*, 2004; Mohamoud and Formson-Lorist (nd)).

The phenomenon of ‘diaspora entrepreneurship’ is born out of immigration and immigrants’ experience in their host countries whilst maintaining strong linkages and affiliations with home cultures, and even their entrepreneurial activities are focused on their ethnic goods and services. On the other hand, such communities are identifiable by certain group characteristics: being clustered into ethnic enclaves, isolation from the host countries and societies (resistance to integration) due to the perception that they do not belong (strangers) and their strong desire to return to their countries of origin at some point in the future (Safran, 1991; Abubaker, 2005).

Diasporas start businesses in the same way as many immigrant entrepreneurs within the scope of their host nations or in both host country and country of origin where they become ‘transnational entrepreneurs’, whilst some return to their homeland as ‘returnee diasporas’ for investment. So, these are different avenues that immigrant entrepreneurs explore as the global business environment provides the opportunities to capitalise on their human, social and network capital benefiting themselves, their country of origin and host nations.

Thus, diaspora entrepreneurship has now become an emerging opportunity that immigrants are exploring; scholars are grappling to conceptualise these growing trends as many governments of developing countries are creating attractive conditions as they are aware of great potential within their diaspora population globally (Ojo, 2017; De Silva, 2016; Mohamoud and Formson-Lorist (nd)).

For example, Safran (1991) and Abubaker (2005) define diaspora as migrants who left their native land but maintain strong links and affiliations with their country of origin, whilst implying that diasporas resist integration with their host countries and societies, which may not be a default position for all immigrants, in all places and at all times.

Discussions of diaspora entrepreneurship are usually combined with ethnic/immigrant entrepreneurship, whilst in recent years “transnational entrepreneurship” is another addition to these concepts in this domain (Dori *et al.*, 2009; De Silva, 2016; Ojo, 2017;), which complicates conceptualising common and distinctive characteristics.

Transnational Entrepreneurs are those immigrants who forge and sustain social relations, networks, ideas and information between their countries of origin and their host countries for the purpose of business opportunities, with the essential feature being multiplicity of engagement, frequent travel between the host countries and countries of origins through entrepreneurial activities (Porters *et al.*, 1999; Dori *et al.*, 2009, 2010)

Characterisation of transnational entrepreneurs on the basis of ‘frequent travel’ between the host nations and countries of origin to pursue business activities has been questioned as ‘needless’ due to the introduction of efficient communication technology (De Silva, 2016).

To summarise these ideas, Table 2.3 presents the characteristics and definitions of transnational and diaspora entrepreneurships and types of entrepreneurs adapted from Dori *et al.* (2009), as cited by De Silva (2016).

Table 2.3: Characteristics and definitions of Transnational Entrepreneurship, Diaspora Entrepreneurship and Types of Entrepreneurs.

Types of Entrepreneurship	Definitions	Types of Entrepreneur
Transnational Entrepreneurship	Entrepreneurs who migrate from one country to another, maintain and sustain business-related linkages with their former country of origin and currently adopted host countries and societies. Frequently (at least twice a year) travel to their country of origin (Dori <i>et al.</i> , 2010; Porters <i>et al.</i> , 1999)	Immigrants engaged in two or more socially embedded environments; maintaining global relations, enhancing creativity and maximising their resource base.
Diaspora Entrepreneurship	Members of ethnic or national communities who have left their native homeland but still maintain links with their homeland (Ojo, 2017; Safran, 1991)	Immigrants engaged in individual or team business operations exclusively to county of origin and communities from countries of origin. Strongly identify with countries of origin and have less integration with host country. Motivated by longing to return home.

Source: (adapted by the author)

Whilst theoretical discourses have been continuous in an attempt to provide integrated theoretical frameworks and conceptual definitions, the latest research by Ram *et al.* (2017) recommends that the future focus of ethnic/migrant entrepreneurship research in the UK and Europe should be on how research should inform and influence policies and practices at all levels by recognising the importance of the multiplicity of contexts in which migrant entrepreneurs are embedded.

It is argued that migrant enterprise must be seen as grounded in the wider political-economic environment as well as in the social capital of its own communities:

The concern with how research influences policy and practice may well be a further feature of European approaches in due course. Migrant entrepreneurship is being invoked as a response to an array of diverse challenges, from enhancing competitiveness to promoting integration.

The opportunities for meaningful and engaged scholarship are considerable (Ram et al., 2017, p.16).

In summary, different conceptual definitions explored in this and previous sections about ethnic/minority/migrant/immigrant//diaspora/transnational entrepreneurs, including in the overall domain of entrepreneurship, have contributed to its multi-dimensional insights for the ongoing debate and exploration of the subject. Each strand has highlighted new perspectives, adding to existing knowledge, though unified definitions may not be possible or even necessary considering the interdisciplinary nature of the subject (Bruyat and Julien, 2001; Jones et al., 2011).

Immigrant entrepreneurship is considered to be appropriate in describing participants of this particular research, 'Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs' in South Yorkshire, as none of them has ventured into any business activities which indicate their strong linkages directly with their countries of origin. On the other hand, although it has been apparent that their core customers are their co-ethnics and wider ethnic minority group communities, their offerings are not exclusive, and their businesses are open to consumers from all social groups in principle, minority status or not.

Regarding the supplies, including ethnic goods, the BAIEs under study in this PhD inquiry reported that they source from the host UK's big cities (London, Birmingham, Leeds and Manchester), thus there are no direct linkages between host and home countries. Transnational entrepreneurship operations are non-existent currently and are unlikely, at least in the short to medium term, due to their capacity to engage with their countries of origin; some of the interviewees are not welcomed in their homelands due to their political affiliation, which is the main reason for their departure in the first place. In the long term, some have expressed interests in international business engagements between their countries of origin and the host country (UK) in the distant future.

2.5 Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurship in the UK

This section considers literature on Black African Immigrants in the UK and comparable groups' historical and contemporary migration trends, entrepreneurial activities, challenges and opportunities.

2.5.1 Background

Historically, many immigrants from British former colonies, mainly from Sub-Saharan African countries, settled in the UK as a source of cheap and unskilled labour, working predominantly in heavy industries, such as infrastructure, construction, manufacturing and agriculture. However, as has been noted in current literature (Daley, 1998; Nwankwo, 2005; Spaan and Moppes, 2006; IMI, 2008; Ojo, 2013), the contemporary migration trends and patterns to the UK and the profile of the immigrant population from these regions have profoundly changed. According to the International Migration Institute (2008), the reasons underlying current immigration trends from Black African countries are conflict, war and poverty. In the UK the main causes of Black Africans' migration in recent years have been identified as civil wars, armed conflict, escaping from political prosecution, escaping from poverty and seeking further education.

Data from EU-wide studies (Oliveira, 2006) and research commissioned by the Directorate General Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission highlights that immigrants from Black African countries are amongst the most highly-qualified and trained professionals in Western countries, who not only see opportunities in niche markets but also are capable of combining their skills to take advantage of their networks and resources in the mainstream markets.

The International Organisation for Migration (2013), *African Exodus, Trends and Patterns of International Migration Report* (Spaan and van Moppes, 2006) acknowledge that the era of colonialism shaped many patterns of international migration in Africa which present startling statistical data about the recent size and patterns of migration between the 1990s and 2005. It is an Africa-wide phenomenon, but the report particularly identified countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda, Somalia, Senegal, Rwanda, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Kenya, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Ivory Coast and South Africa.

In line with this phenomenon, Kloosterman *et al.* (1999) and Oliveira's (2006) study commissioned by the EU acknowledged the growth of international migration during the last decades of the twentieth century and identified significant increases in the numbers of immigrant small-business owners:

Today it is unthinkable to imagine cosmopolitan cities such as London, Paris, Amsterdam, Madrid or Lisbon without immigrant entrepreneurs (Kloosterman et al., 1999, p.2).

Immigrants have a significant impact on economic growth in European cities in many ways (Kloosterman et al., 1999); these include changes in urban landscapes, revitalising abandoned city districts and local markets, supplying new products and services at competitive prices and even, in some cases, creating new markets (e.g. ethnic tourism), and job creation (for both co-ethnics and host nation citizens).

Whilst Asian entrepreneurs (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese) are described and discussed in most ethnic minority case studies and reports, (Ram, 1998; Ishaq, 2010), there are many ethnic minority groups in the UK with their own entrepreneurial characteristics, which have been the subject of entrepreneurial studies. Among them are Black African and Caribbean entrepreneurs, although the intensity of such entrepreneurial activity varies between these groups.

Black African minority businesses (mainly from Black African countries) are under-represented and at times called '*a minority within minorities*' according to the BME Final Report Omar et al. (2006).

Black African immigrant entrepreneurs are part of the fabric of British society and their key contribution to the UK's socio-economic and cultural development is significant though it is under-represented in ethnic minority studies (Bollard and Kalra, 1994; Ram and Jones 1998; Deakins and Freel, 2012).

Daley (1998), Nwankwo (2005) and Ojo (2013, 2017) are among the few researchers whose works are focused on Black Africans in the UK and are able to explain their migration history, size, the distinctiveness of Black African immigrants, and the high degree of segregation and structural discrimination faced by the communities. At the same time, they were able to point out some of the weaknesses of the Black African entrepreneurs' business model outside the niche markets for growth strategies. However, there are some acknowledged limitations in these research works both in scope and methodology that further research needs to build on. Daley's (1998) work has been heavily drawn from the Census (1990) demographic database on the wider Black African communities in the UK and their experience in the broader

socio-political and economic contexts, but it is unable to examine entrepreneurial activities in particular; while Nwankwo (2003, 2005) and Ojo (2013, 2017) have looked at Black African Entrepreneurs in the UK, the limitations in both works are that their samples are all from London and mainly based on homogeneous and established (Nigerian) communities. Thus, this may not be representative of the experiences of recent immigrants who are living outside London in small counties and in 'transient' migrant communities. Therefore, this research attempts to address the gap both by focusing on the lived experiences of recent migrants outside London and on their entrepreneurial activities.

One of the earliest works, by Daley (1998) on Black African ethnic groups, highlighted a view that is widely shared by many researchers in the field regarding the chronic lack of data on these groups. This literature has established that 'Black African' as a census category was only recognised for the first time in 1990. To date, the census's ethnic descriptor lacks clarity on 'Black Africans' as it is combined with Black-African/Black-Caribbean/Black-British/Black-others which is overlapping, complicated and makes it difficult for researchers to determine the exact size whenever that is necessary methodologically, as indicated in Chapter 4, Section 4.3.

Daley's (1998) paper draws heavily for its analysis on the 1990 Census, when the Black African population was 212,262 (0.4 per cent of the total UK population and 7 per cent of the ethnic minority population) where just over one third (36%) of this group was British born.

Based on the Census' demographic database, the author (Daley, 1998) drew a range of socio-economic indicators which shed light on the Black-African group who have been highly segregated and marginalised from the mainstream society even compared to Black Caribbean:

It is clear that the Black-African group tends to have similar spatial patterns to the Black-Caribbean, but a high degree of segregation from white and other ethnic groups. This can be explained through discrimination, economic marginalisation and poor social housing, although cultural factors do contribute to the pattern. It is suggested that Black-African concentrations may begin to disperse to replicate the current suburbanisation experience of the Black Caribbean (Daley, 1998, p.1703).

Daley points out one of the weaknesses of previous literature on Black Africans and ethnic minority groups by Little (1948), Goody and Muir Groothues (1977, 1979) and Killingray (1994), who failed to recognise heterogeneity in the process of migration and the dynamics of spatial concentration and segregation between Black-African and Black-Caribbean:

Because of their racial and cultural similarities, studies of the Black-African and Black-Caribbean communities were often generalised (Daley, 1998, p.1704).

This has been corroborated by Nwanko (2005) who pointed out:

... the tendency towards over-generalisation, that is, viewing the UK's ethnic minority population as a monolithic group. Ethnic minority businesses are far more diverse than is generally assumed. For example, because of racial and cultural similarities between Black African and Black-Caribbean communities, studies of the latter are often generalised to apply to the former. Entrepreneurial orientations of Black Africans differ from those of Black Caribbeans and, indeed, other ethnic sub-groups in the UK (Nwankwo, 2005, p.122).

For example, the history of Black Africans' migration differs significantly as they were either 'seafarers' from African coastal communities (Sierra Leone, Nigeria and the East Africans from British Somaliland) who subsequently settled in British ports, or students seeking to further their education and with the prospect of returning home, whose numbers were not more than 10,000 before 1950 (Banton, 1955 as cited by Daley, 1998). Black-Caribbeans on the other hand were directly recruited for the purpose of employment in the UK's infrastructure. Black-African numbers grew exponentially as most African countries sought their independence, becoming able to extract their natural resources and institutions and infrastructures. This served to empower African citizens who began to travel pursuing education, leisure activities and other interests which form the history and pattern of their migrations to western countries:

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the student migrant was accompanied by a group of wealthy, often young, men and women, mainly from the West African states of Ghana and Nigeria, whose principal purpose in the UK was to shop or to 'sport' (Daley, 1998, p.1705)

However, Daley (ibid) also observed another wave of African migration into the UK since the 1970s, due to political instability and human rights abuses that have led to an increase in the number of Africans seeking refuge in the UK from

countries such as Eritrea, Ghana, Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia, Angola, Congo and Nigeria.

These trends and patterns of migration reflect the contemporary context of Black African immigrants and the birth of entrepreneurial activities in the country. Because of, among other reasons, lack of data, being over-generalised with Black Caribbean and other ethnic groups:

very little is known about African owned small businesses; how they are evolving, their growth trajectories, the depth of ethnic and non-ethnic networks and how they are managing to survive for a variety of reasons (Nwankwo, 2005, p.120).

2.5.2 Challenges (barriers)

Among key features and aspects of literature on Black African entrepreneurship, 'barriers (disadvantages) and 'opportunities' (advantages) have been the central focus of discourses with evolving and marked strengths, weaknesses and controversies that this thesis attempts to address next.

Being recognised and labelled as 'disadvantaged' from mainstream society is the criterion used to define 'minority' businesses in the US, notably immigrant business owners (Sonfield, 2005). In the context of the EU/UK, however, this idea of being 'disadvantaged' extends to being excluded on the basis of the owner's immigrant status, 'ethnicity', cultural, social and linguistic profile (Chaganti and Greene, 2002; Menzies et al., 2003).

The 'disadvantage' phenomenon has also been used as the basis of 'disadvantage theory' embedded within structuralist approaches to the analysis of immigrant experiences. The state of being disadvantaged is manifested in immigrants being denied opportunities of employment in mainstream societies, leaving immigrant populations with little option but self-employment. This, it is claimed, gave rise to 'immigrant entrepreneurships' (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Ishaq *et al.*, 2010; Deakins and Freel, 2012; Ram *et al.*, 2013; Ram and Jones, 2013). It has been recognised that this disadvantage has become a key catalyst for immigrants to strike out and form their own businesses as a means of achieving economic independence and upward social mobility (Hamnett *et*

al.,1994) as well as for recognition and self-expression, which is intricately bound up with family needs and desires (Burns and Dewhurst, 1989).

A growing body of literature has identified the main areas and reasons of disadvantage for ethnic minorities in the UK and particularly for Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs; these include societal and institutional racism and discrimination (Rex, 1986; Ram, 1993; Hamnett *et al.*, 1994; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Ishaq *et al.*, 2010; Deakins and Freel, 2012; Ram *et al.*, 2013).

Societal and institutional racism and discrimination are long-established structural barriers that disadvantage immigrants and ethnic entrepreneurs and create an impediment to materialising their potential in the UK, Europe, North America and in many countries around the world. This has been recognised by governments and, in response, various support initiatives and policies have been introduced. However, slow progress has been made to date, and it has not been possible to overcome these challenges; this thesis explores some of the challenges next.

2.5.3 Institutional racism (discrimination) and the need for intervention.

The Institute of Race Relations (IRR) in the UK defines 'institutional racism' as occurring when a whole organisation's procedures and policies disadvantage Black Minority Ethnic (BME) people.

In the UK the 1999 Macpherson report into the death of Stephen Lawrence was significant in providing a definition of institutional racism for the first time:

The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racial stereotyping which disadvantages minority ethnic people (Irr.org.uk, 2017)

Among a growing body of research that examines institutional racism, Deakins and Freel (2012), authors who have been advising both the central government in the UK and Scottish government, have noted the importance of acknowledging institutionally-embedded cultures that serve to discriminate against minority social groups. They revealed the existence of discriminatory

practices, racist attitudes and culture in British institutions against immigrants and certain groups:

Due to formal institutional practices that naturally favour specific groups in society, for example men over women or white business-owners over ethnic minority business owners, access to resources such as finance and markets is very limited (Deakins and Freel, 2012, p.81).

In keeping with the idea of socially disfavoured or disadvantaged groups, Deakins and Freel (2012) explain that there are reasons as to why mainstream banks are likely to be discriminatory to ethnic minority businesses, including the selection process and tradition of loan proposals that lack consistency, and the subjective nature and 'relationship'-based decisions which may disadvantage certain groups (Deakins and Freel, 2012). These may be morally hazardous as they are considered to present 'artificial barriers and constraints' against the growth potential of some categories of small firms.

Barriers to access to finance for immigrant entrepreneurs have been identified as one of the main disadvantages to developing Black African immigrant businesses according to many research corroborations in the US, EU and UK (Light, 1984; Waldinger, 1988; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Fraser, 2005; Omar *et al.*, 2006; Deakins and Freel, 2012). Although most ethnic entrepreneurs share the burden of discriminations and disadvantages, the degree of institutional discrimination is arguably much higher against Black African immigrant entrepreneurs, which makes them the most disadvantaged group, reiterating their status as a 'a minority within minorities' according to the BME Final Report (Omar *et al.*, 2006).

Research by Fraser (2005) at Warwick Business School into ethnic minority and white-owned SMES has provided compelling evidence and examples of Black African-owned businesses facing barriers in accessing finance. This research reported that Black African-owned businesses have a 37.4% likelihood of outright rejection for loan applications, which is significantly higher compared to Pakistani (13.2%) and White-owned businesses (10.4%). The study has also identified that Black Caribbean-owned businesses have a 28.1% likelihood of outright rejection. As a result, Black African/Caribbean businesses are the most likely to feel discouraged from applying for finance - they represented 45.9% of businesses in this group which needed new finance. This has meant that Black

African businesses tend to seek high overdraft facilities (66.2%) in order to manage their cash flows at a significantly higher rate than Indian-owned businesses (30.7%) or white-owned businesses (31.9%). This is a trend that has been also acknowledged by policymakers.

Indeed, a 2007 survey by the Department of Trade and Industry found that ethnic minority-owned businesses typically pay higher loan charges than white-owned businesses. The survey also revealed that the gap between the amounts sought and amounts raised by Black African- and Pakistani-owned businesses is greater than the national average. Ethnic minorities are also much more likely to be rejected for loans and are often discouraged from applying for finance (DTI, 2007, as quoted in the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2009).

Such barriers and inequalities of opportunity were called an 'ethnic penalty' by the spokesperson of the Commission for Racial Equality at the time:

For far too long, Black and minority business owners have paid the "ethnic penalty". There is inadequate provision of business support and poor access to finance and new technology. We hope that the new Task Force will work towards dismantling these barriers. Black and ethnic minority owned businesses should be afforded equal opportunities to reach their full potential (quoted by Fraser, 2005).

Broadening this discussion to an EU-wide context, as aforementioned, research conducted by Oliveira (2006) investigated the experience of immigrant entrepreneurship. His study acknowledged that access to finance is a critical problem which limits entrepreneurs' choice of business sector, and market entry and growth potential:

Although there have been notable cases of successful immigrant entrepreneurs in advanced economies, most of these immigrant entrepreneurs are funnelled towards sectors at the lower end of the market, mainly establishing their business in markets with low barriers of entry in terms of capital outlays and required educational qualifications (Oliveira, 2006, p.5)

The study (ibid) also acknowledged that the growth prospects of immigrant entrepreneurs are compromised or constrained due to the nature of the sector or market that they are operating in, due to lack of skills and access to critical resources such as finance. In these markets production is mainly small-scale, low in added value and often very labour-intensive; earnings are typically

relatively low, and days are long and hard for many entrepreneurs, lacking in many cases, access to significant financial capital and deemed lacking in appropriate educational qualifications.

Other authors (see for example, Hamnett *et al.*, 1994; Woods, 2001) who looked at the issue of equalities from historical and socio-political perspectives, urge the need to understand the root cause of these challenges in order to address them and learn from them:

The distribution of wealth across the world today is a consequence of several thousand years' economic changes. Hence it is important to look in history for an explanation about the inheritance of current disproportionate positions (Woods, 2001, p.18)

Woods' (2001) assertion that the root causes of social injustice have historical, political and economic explanations implies that the disparities of today are connected to the past. Hence, addressing these fundamental issues is not just a matter of a single initiative, political party or community effort, but rather it requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders that they are capable of learning from history and are prepared to embrace change in their values, beliefs and opinions.

Woods (2001) further argues that it is history that has created this scenario, and 'the events of today are the history of tomorrow', so if we want to try and predict how businesses will develop in the future, we must analyse today's issues, as well as those of the past.

The following quote highlights some of the historical context of social, economic and political nature of attitudes and stereotypes, some intrinsic, which are regularly experienced by BME small businesses to date.

The attitudes and stereotypes created over the centuries of British Empire seem to have been more enduring than the economic and political institutions of the Empire, and they continue to exist and exert major effects. Indeed, racial hostility feeds from disadvantage as much as it helps to perpetuate it. So that there is a vicious circle in which stereotypes of inferiority prompt discrimination and produce disadvantage. (Hamnett *et al.*, 1994, p.155)

In addition to institutional racism discussed previously, 'societal racism' / 'consumer racism' has also been highlighted as a potential barrier to immigrants' entrepreneurial activities.

2.5.4 Societal racism and consumer racism.

Ishaq *et al.*, (2010) conducted research into the experience of ethnic minority small businesses in the independent retail sector. The researchers analysed the experience of business owners of South Asian origin, who set up their businesses which have become known as 'corner shops' in the UK. The research discovered that there exist a range of barriers and challenges which are shattering the entrepreneurial dreams due to racism.

It was concluded that *'racism in all its forms will not be conducive to encouraging potential entrepreneurs from ethnic minority backgrounds to establish new businesses, and hence racism is a barrier to entry'* (Ishaq *et al.*, 2010, p.362) Ishaq *et al.*'s (2010, p.372) finding that the majority (two-thirds) of business owners had regularly encountered racism in a variety of forms, including, verbal racial threats and insults, racially-motivated physical attacks, frequently vandalised business properties and a boycotting of ethnic minority small businesses, suggests experiences that may reflect societal and consumer racism rather than individual racist acts. In the Ishaq *et al.*, (2010, p.371) study it is interesting to note that the authors reported the perceptions and experiences of respondents and these included beliefs that police, and 'authorities' are either ignoring or not addressing reported issues and incidents, which had resulted in frustration affecting the entrepreneurial spirit and confidence of businesses, their staff and families. In the case of these Asian businesses, serious health problems (depression, fear, anxiety, anger, inferiority and embarrassment) were noted that may have discouraged second generations of immigrants from considering business and enterprise. This type of incident is not however reported to be widespread among BAIEs. One reason for this might relate to the limiting of their current operations within ethnic enclaves, and the patronage of their businesses by mainly co-ethnic communities.

Shimp and Sharma (1987, p.280) have claimed that:

'Consumer Racism' defined as the antipathy towards a given ethnic group's products or services as a symbolic way of discriminating against that group based on beliefs, value, quality, appropriateness and morality.

Ouellet (2007) provides a fascinating discussion of the behaviours of racist consumers towards minority-owned companies, suggesting that there may be moderating behaviours that owners might take in order to mitigate the effects of consumer racism. However, it is important to acknowledge that his ideas amount to responding to the symptoms rather than the root causes of the challenges presented to ethnic minority entrepreneurs. With respect to understanding the social and consumer challenges faced by Black Africans, research by Crockett and Wallendorf (2004) is worthy of note. They acknowledge the role of normative political ideology in consumer behaviour, arguing through their analysis of African-Americans that *"consumption in the United States is a primary arena in which political ideology is expressed and constructed"* (Crockett and Wallendorf, 2004: 511). For the owners of minority-owned businesses, ethnic and social group identities are difficult to separate from entrepreneurial identities when shopping may be identified *"as an expression of social and political relations between households"* (Crockett and Wallendorf, 2004: 511).

In the most extreme cases, ethnocentrism and animosity is manifested in deliberate and organised discrimination, i.e. boycotting. Based on the experience of enterprises located in the US and Canada, Ouellet (2005) has discussed consumer racism as a new postulation that racism has shifted in focus, technically away from race (pertaining to genetic ancestry) to ethnicity (shaped by shared traditions, learned behaviour, and customs).

The next section discusses 'opportunities (advantages) including resources of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs and their communities, and government funding initiatives' support for ethnic minorities and small businesses.

2.5.5 Opportunities - provision of support (intervention)

Government intervention and public-sector support policies for enterprise and small business in the UK have been increased by successive government administrations since the 1980s, starting with the Thatcher Government regarding job creation. However, mechanisms for the delivery of enterprise support have gone through many changes in line with current government policies, continuously adopting new approaches, frameworks and models. In a UK context these tend to be adapted from the US experience rather than EU

trends according to researchers (see for example, Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Van Delft *et al.*, 2000; Deakins and Freel, 2003, 2012; Levent *et al.*, 2003; Generation Report, 2006; EKOS, 2007; DTI, 2007).

In regard to BME businesses, in recent years there has been a significant shift in the orientation of ethnic groups, namely towards self-employment and ethnic entrepreneurship (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Van Delft *et al.*, 2000; Levent *et al.*, 2003); however, there is little evidence about its effectiveness (Omar *et al.*, 2006).

EKOS (2007) has identified five (evolutionary) stages of support provision between 2000 and 2010:

- Small Business Support (2000)
- Business Brokerage Project (2001)
- Deprived Urban Post Office Fund (2002)
- Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI), (2006/7)
- Regional development to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) (2010)

There has been intense criticism from scholars as to why these initiatives have not been effective in addressing the issues (Deakins and Freel, 2003, 2012; EKOS, 2007; Generation Report, 2006).

According to Deakins and Freel (2003), the major weaknesses of government-backed initiatives are that they have been driven by government-led targets rather than allowing flexibility to address the specific needs of small businesses. For example, European Regeneration and Development Funding (ERDF) was available for start-up businesses that had a turnover potential of £100,000 or the ability to employ more than one person after one year. Whilst this was beneficial for a select few, there was a move away from focusing provision on supporting start-ups, and their geographical nature limited which businesses could access the support.

Duplication and lack of consistency is another common area of criticism, with commentators pointing out that this represents an overall weakness in support provision in the past when established businesses as opposed to newer businesses, tended to receive the greatest amount of support. In addition, it has

been acknowledged that the range of schemes, agencies and authorities (over 300) make it very complicated and confusing for businesses to navigate.

The short-term duration of funding is one of the weaknesses faced by UK agencies, since they themselves are presented with uncertainty about their future, hence discouraging long-term action plans. Uncertainty about the agencies' funding and future existence has had a huge impact on business support initiatives and, as a result, most of the short-term initiatives have been argued to be little more than paper exercises.

By contrast, the support provision in other countries such as Germany and France shows little or no duplication in services, and hence no competition for resources. Indeed, in the context of many European countries, agencies are noted to be set up to complement each other, not compete.

For example, in Germany the 'IHK' is a relatively independent, powerful body which employs specialist staff, whereas in the UK, until 2010, there was no single overall body that had autonomy. This has had an impact on the quality of business advice; without a strong employer, business advisors in the UK have tended to be 'generalist' rather than 'specialist' consultants.

In France, in particular, it is notable that there is cooperation and partnership between support agencies with a high degree of interdependency. There are also different types of Chamber of Commerce: 'Chamber de Metier' for big companies and 'Petite de Commerce' for small businesses and self-employed people (Deakins and Freel, 2003). This offers scope for a more contextualised support service, responsive to the needs of business

Currently, national and regional support providers in the UK such as ERDF, LEP, Business Link Yorkshire and Yorkshire Forward have been closed down, which has left significant gaps in the provision of support for ethnic minority and small businesses. At local authority levels, there are general business advisory services, but with very limited resources.

2.5.6 Opportunities (advantages) – Ethnic resources

The culturalist approach suggests that some immigrants/ethnic minority groups have a high propensity and cultural predisposition towards setting up their own businesses by referring to certain characteristics such as 'dedication to hard work', 'frugal lifestyle', 'risk-taking', 'ability to network' and 'nurturing of solidarity' among co-ethnic groups (Masurel *et al.*, 2004). Basu and Goswanmi (1999), on the other hand, identify a range of 'push' and 'pull' factors to explain immigrant entrepreneurs' self-employment motivations. Another concept introduced to explain both structuralist and culturalist approaches combined is 'mixed embeddedness' (Kloosterman *et al.*, 1999) - the wider economic and institutional contexts with ethnic resources that present immigrants' entrepreneurial opportunities and challenges. Here, the relevance of the ethnic niche market should be acknowledged (Kushnirovich, 2010, p.412):

Ethnic concentration of immigrants based on shared origin, experience or ethnicity in a host country's economy is usually described as ethnic niche, ethnic enclave and ethnic economy

An ethnic niche market is considered to present an advantage and opportunity for immigrants (Bonacich *et al.*, 1977; Ram *et al.*, 2013; Bizri, 2017), providing speciality, brand loyalty, strong network ties, a sense of solidarity and social capital by immigrant communities in the host country. Additionally, it has been identified to serve as a means of survival, a launching pad for new immigrants (Ram *et al.*, 2013) and a method of preserving their identity and culture. It is also argued that it is a soft stepping stone towards the (social) integration process, as in the case of Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union countries in Israel. On the other hand, some commentators have argued that an ethnic niche market is an act of 'separatist' rejection to integrate or assimilate, is small in size, promotes isolation and restricts growth opportunities; similar arguments have been made about the 'ethnic enclave theory', where Ram and Hillin (1994) advise that ethnic enclaves could be a trap and 'forced entrenchment strategy', jeopardising ethnic business development and growth and breaking out into the mainstream arena. Nwankwo (2005) is very strong in his view regarding the informal niche market for Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the UK. He believes that it is predominantly operating in an informal sector:

Much of the activities in this sector comprise basic personal survival activities that creates little in the way of sustainable employment or wealth (Nwankwo, 2005, p.124).

Other researchers, such as Volery (2007), characterise ethnic niche markets as, typically, low capital, low education, low qualifications, small scale production, high labour intensity and low added value with cutthroat competition.

In the context of this PhD inquiry I agree with the position of the literature that ethnic niche markets provide an opportunity for immigrants to mobilise the resources embedded within their community. They are best placed to serve their needs; in return, this gives them a competitive advantage over 'outsiders'. This provides a competitive advantage due to their knowledge of their core customers, authenticity of the product and service, material and moral support from the community, a loyal customer base on which they can build, confidence and experience in developing their businesses. However, equally valid concerns are acknowledged: the small size of the target market; relatively poor disposable income, and lack of diversity in products and services restrict growth and constrain break-out opportunities into the mainstream market.

2.5.7 Opportunities (advantages) – Resilience

The concept of resilience has been identified as a key BAIes' entrepreneurial attribute as defined and explained by prominent authors, Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003; Gavetti and Levinthal, 2000 and Dothan and Findiikoglu, 2017. It is recognised as entrepreneurs' attributes of adaptability, strong self-belief, determination, resourcefulness in the face of a challenging and, at times, hostile environment that an entrepreneur deploys to overcome challenges. This clearly relates to the distinctive and persistent characteristics of immigrant-ethnic entrepreneurs, in particular to BAIes, who are manifesting these qualities of high tolerance to risk and uncertainty, high propensity to self-employment and preparedness to work harder. They do so by being adaptive to constant changes as they value their business more than a commercial entity but one that provides them with a sense of purpose, means of preserving identities, means of self-expression, upward social mobility, self-realisation, self-actualisation and sense of freedom as corroborated by (Bridge and O'Neill, 2013; Wickham, 2006 and Burns and Dewhurst, 1989). This has been identified

and explained as a source of motivation and opportunity in the finding sections of 5.2.2 (Chapter 5).

Furthermore, the discussion chapter, (Chapter 6) has articulated the phenomena of 'adaptability and resilience' in (section 6.2) by integrating the findings with current academic literature.

Most of the literature agrees that Black Africans are among the most highly educated immigrants in Western countries (Nwanko, 2005; Oliveira 2006; IMI, 2008; Daley, 1998; Deakin and Freel, 2012). The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2002) as cited by Nwankwo (2005) identified that Africans have the highest total entrepreneurial activity index (TEA):

Africans are five times as likely to be involved in an autonomous business start-up compared to Whites and other population subgroups. It states that African people are the most likely to see good business opportunities and have the highest total entrepreneurial activity index (TEA) overall of all ethnic groupings. The TEA index for African men is 50 per cent compared with 14.6 per cent amongst Caribbean men and 11.3 per cent amongst Asian men (Nwankwo, 2005, p.127)

Here, resilience is considered as an opportunity derived from immigrants' and ethnic entrepreneurs' experience adopted into their business management and practice that helps them to cope, survive and thrive in a host country and a new and disadvantaged environment. Resilience is defined as the ability to absorb strain and rebound from difficulties more resourcefully and strengthened (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003; Mallak, 1998) through learning and relearning from mistakes and experience, whereby an individual develops risk taking, pro-activeness and innovation in entrepreneurial settings.

Resilience refers to the maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging conditions (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003, p.95).

Resilience in the entrepreneurship context is about fostering learning and preparedness to encounter challenges, ordinary adaptive processes that promote competence, restore efficacy and encourage growth (Egeland *et al.*, 1993) and enable absorption of strain.

These processes evolve as a result of a set of distinct dynamics that do not readily occur in groups or organizations (Bhamra *et al.*, 2011) but through experience that entrepreneurs internalise cognitively. These dynamics generate

cognitive, relational or structural capabilities (Kantur and Iseri-Say, 2012) which is a forward-looking capability by individuals:

Resilience is a form of intelligence that is premised on an actor's beliefs about the choice of actions and the subsequent impact of those actions on outcomes. Such beliefs derive from an actor's mental model of the world (Gavetti and Levinthal, 2000)

Dothan's and Findikoglu's (2017) research focuses on minority Arabs running businesses in Israel and minority-owned Jewish businesses in Turkey, the case studies of which allow them to draw the conclusion how each minority group in the respective host countries is able to adapt and evolve, displaying these resilience attributes in the face of an opportunity structure of disadvantage in each host country.

This relates to the survival nature of immigrant-ethnic entrepreneurship through their resilience attributes to adapt to constant changes, as in the famous Charles Darwin quote:

It is not the strongest species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but the species that survives is the one that most responsive to change (nd).

Indeed, adaptability and the ability to adjust to changing circumstances is a trait that is recognised to be linked to the notion of resilience and one which has been noted to be linked to success in Black African entrepreneurship (Vwakyankazi, 1983; Morris and Zahra, 2000; Pitt and Kannemeyer, 2000; Kiggundu, 2002; Kropp et al, 2006) in response to historical disadvantage but also in contemporary contexts.

The next five sections of this chapter focus on the identity of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs as a social group facing disadvantage through marginalisation and inequality in Western societies. The sociological ideas of 'othering' and 'belonging' are highlighted as a lens through which to analyse the lived experiences of BAIEs later in this PhD thesis.

2.6 Othering and Belonging in the context of BAIEs

Adopting 'othering' and 'belonging' for the purpose of this research has introduced a sociological framework and critical lens to study Black and Ethnic Minorities and in particular BAIEs from a new ontological approach revealing

their social reality emanating from the perspective of 'who they are' rather than on the merits of 'what they do'.

'Othering' and 'belonging' as conceptual framework effectively reveals the experience of BAIEs in the contemporary context, where this has profound impact on the subjects (individuals in the 'othered' social groups). It is understood that 'othering' and 'belonging' is a phenomenon deeply rooted within complex structures and systems of a nation causing detrimental consequences. This is manifested on many fronts including a politically charged self-identification, driven by social convention and an active process as a means of discrimination, marginalisation and alienation of 'others', which has far-reaching consequences on those social groups, such as BAIEs who are being "othered" as corroborated by prominent authors, Powell & Menendian (2016) and Brons (2015).

The notion of 'othering' and 'belonging' in the context of BAIEs' lived experience has served as a sociological framework and critical lens to clarify most expressions of prejudice on the basis of the group identities (race, nationality, ethnicity, sex, religion, etc.) that marginalise BAIEs as 'Black Africans' and 'Immigrants' which has been explained in the following sections (2.6 – 2.7).

For the purpose of this research, 'othering' and 'belonging' are defined as sociological phenomena (social constructs), in agreement with prominent sociologists such as Brons (2015) and Powell and Menendian (2016).

We define "othering" as a set of dynamics, processes, and structures that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences based on group identities. Dimensions of othering include, but are not limited to, religion, sex, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status (class), disability, sexual orientation, and skin tone. Although the axes of difference that undergird these expressions of othering vary considerably and are deeply contextual, they contain a similar set of underlying dynamics (Powell and Menendian, 2016, p.17)

The authors (ibid) have further elaborated the definition of "othering" as a broadly inclusive framework that captures expressions of prejudice and behaviours such as atavism and tribalism, but it should be noted that it is also a term that points toward deeper processes at work, only some of which are

captured by those terms, such as Islamophobia, ethnocentrism (racism) and nationalism.

2.6.1 “Othering” and “Belonging” as a framework in this PhD study

Powell and Menendian (2016) argue that “othering” and “belonging” encompass a clarifying framework for many expressions and experiences of prejudice on the basis of group identities. The authors recommend this framework as capable of revealing a set of common processes and conditions in propagating group-based inequality and marginality that are more enduring and systematically expressed. Thus, in this research, I have adapted this framework within the exploration of the lived experience of BAIEs. This is in line with Research Objective 3 (as outlined in Chapter 1):

- To investigate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs linked to their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire)

“Othering” as a conceptual framework encompasses a wide range of categories of group-based identities and differences, but in the context of this particular research, it is applied to framing BAIEs' group-based identities on the basis of their ‘race’ and ‘socioeconomic status’ (class) as ‘Black Africans and Immigrants’. This is to explore the extent to which BAIEs’ challenges (barriers) and opportunities in pursuing successful enterprise are influenced and determined through the act of “othering” and “belonging” with a view to being able to consider more fully the distinctiveness of BAIEs as a discrete social group in line with Research Objective 4.

Brons’ (2015) definition of “othering” reveals its profound impact on the subject (individuals in the ‘othered’ social groups) by stating that it is a politically charged self-identification, driven by social convention, and an active process as a means of discrimination, marginalisation and alienation of ‘others’ which has far-reaching consequences on those social groups such as BAIEs who are being “othered”. The notion of social ordering and the positioning of dominant

groups against 'subordinate' ones is fundamental to the maintenance and reproduction of these ideas. As Brons (2015, p.75) notes:

Othering is social organisation maintained through an active process of exclusion, opposition and hierarchization. A phenomenon maintains its identity in semiotic systems only if other units are represented as foreign or 'other' through a hierarchical dualism in which the first is privileged or favoured while the other is deprived or devalued in some way.

Thus, it is possible to conclude that "Othering" and "belonging" are two sides of a social phenomenon whose actions and reactions are mirrored.

In contrast to 'othering', Brons (2015, p.75) remarks that:

"Belonging" connotes something fundamental about how groups are positioned within society, as well as how they are perceived and regarded. It reflects an objective position of power and resources as well as the intersubjective nature of group-based identities.

"Belonging" is a tendency that sociologists have long observed within human societies to organize and collectively define themselves along dimensions of difference and sameness, of 'in-group' and 'out-group'. Thus, society creates associations and disassociations which could have a significant impact on 'out-group' members on the basis of socially-constructed group boundaries and identities, where 'race' and 'immigrant' socioeconomic status are group-based identities for the subject of this particular research, namely, BAIEs.

This means society constructs social groups that it considers 'belong', who are favourable and are considered as 'in-groups', whilst it 'others' other social groups which do not belong and treats them as 'out-groups', i.e. not favourable; and it claimed that societal systems and structures are designed to implement this.

After exploring the literature relating to ethnic entrepreneurship, immigrant entrepreneurship and the context of BAIEs, it was recognised that the notion of being seen as different, operating outside of the 'mainstream', and being situated outside of homelands, in 'host' countries positioned BAIEs as 'outsiders' within the notion of a singular local economy and business community. Thus, "othering" and "belonging" was recognised to be an appropriate theoretical framework to offer critical lens through which to analyse the lived experiences of BAIEs

In pursuit of justifying “othering” and “belonging” as a theoretical framework for group-based identity, the next sections analyse the key enactment mechanisms of “othering” and “belonging” in Western societies, (including United Kingdom) at socio-cultural, structural (institutional) and system levels against minority groups, in particular BAIEs.

2.6.2 Key enactment mechanisms of “othering” and belonging”

Sociologists have identified the following key enactment mechanisms of “othering”, through **political and electoral strategies, creating master narratives and culturally embedded structures and systems** which are the focus of these sections.

“Othering” and “belonging” through the mechanism of political and electoral strategies.

According to Powell and Menendian (2016), in the contemporary European and North American contexts, it is through political arenas and discourses that “othering” and “belonging” are taking centre stage by organised and self-identified groups who strive for power with an influential propaganda of “othering” that demonises and dehumanises immigrants and foreigners as a whole, and ‘Black Africans’ in particular. This phenomenon has led to the rise of many far-right groups who deliberately evoke anxiety, resentment and fear of the other (immigrants, minority and ethnic groups and foreigners) among mainstream communities by activating negative sentiments as master narratives in people's consciousness that associate the “othered” with ‘terrorists’, ‘foreigners’, ‘radicals’, ‘criminals’ and ‘Islamists’. The impacts of “othering” on immigrant and ethnic business communities has already gained attention in entrepreneurship literature. Essers and Tedmanson (2014) for example have explored the experiences of Muslim Turkish Migrant businesswomen in the Netherlands, acknowledging some of the underlying relations of power that shape identity and observing multiple experiences, interpretations and responses to marginalisation within the context of entrepreneurship.

Powell and Menendian (2016) also cite examples to strengthen their argument that othering and belonging are enacted through political strategies: in the US, the idea of stoking anxiety, resentment, or fear of the “other” has been used as the electoral strategy which brought President Donald Trump to power and has further emboldened demagogic ideology. In the United Kingdom, Brexit was a politically motivated and charged referendum that was campaigned and won against immigration and immigrants. This has created an atmosphere of animosity that fuels “othering” which kills confidence, and increases a lack of belonging, the feeling of being second-class citizens and uncertainty among ethnic minority groups, in particular BAIes who have expressed their grave concerns (See Chapter 5).

In the UK, research by Burnett (2016) at the Institute of Race Relations corroborates how such political strategies target immigrants and ethnic minorities. Racial violence spiked in the immediate aftermath of the EU referendum, not only due to the xenophobic climate created by the nativist referendum debate, but also in the divisive policies and programmes of successive governments prodding it for political gains. The following quote by the author (ibid) strongly expresses the impact on the “othered” minority social groups, in particular on immigrants.

Whatever else Brexit means or does not mean, it certainly means racism. Born of fortuitous circumstances, lacking programme or policy, the government has had to find its ‘mandate’ in the twin Brexit themes: that immigration is unravelling of the nation, and anything foreign, except investment, is abhorrent to its ethos – thus giving a fillip to popular racism and elevating institutional racism to fully-fledged state racism Burnett (2016, P.85).

The author (ibid) argues that racism and xenophobia have become tied into the state itself, making nativism the state ideology and ‘take back control’ its political culture. He also criticises governments reducing racial violence, a socially-based issue, to individualised ‘hate crime’ when politicians are challenged to address damaged social cohesion.

Similar research by the University of Liverpool, Parkinson (2017, p.85) has echoed the same concerns by stating ‘Brexit puts social cohesion at risk-abroad, at home and locally’ whilst acknowledging that ‘the nation has voted,

and its decision must be respected. But the consequences are enormous and frankly ominous’.

To this effect the aforementioned research presents compelling data and comprehensive statistics demonstrating the upsurge of racist incidents against immigrants in the aftermath of the referendum which states that the ‘newness’ of this post-referendum racism is rooted in and sustained by the structural racism of ‘old’. Thus, it is the literal manifestation of the political climate which sustains it. The following extracts are factual incidents cited in the literature by Parkinson (2017, pp.87-91) during and in the aftermath of Brexit:

- *Between 24 June’16 and 2 July’16, 599 racist incidents were reported to Scotland Yard: an average of 67 per day, compared to 44 per day prior to the referendum.*
- *Between 16 June’16 and 30 June’16, more than 3000 hate crimes were reported to the police across the UK: a 42% increase on the same period in 2015.*
- *There were incidents against black people. Jewish people were targeted. People were singled out for attack on the basis of speaking a foreign language, or presumptions about their ‘right’ to be here. Children were amongst those who received abuse, sometimes travelling to or from school.*
- *The assertion of Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond stating that ‘millions of ‘marauding’ African migrants pose a threat to the UK’s infrastructure.*
- *A poster unveiled by Nigel Farage as part of the ‘Leave’ campaign, depicting a queue of migrants and the caption ‘Breaking Point: Britain has failed us all’, is likened by critics to Nazi propaganda.*

According to Garber (2015), such politically charged campaign of “othering” goes back a long time in human history as the following quote indicates, where “othering” has been created and promoted by elites and political opportunists by appealing to group-based identities in order to advance their agendas and accumulate or reinforce political power:

Political strategies informed by “othering” are hardly unique to the United States or even democracies. Aristotle and other ancient Greeks warned of “demagogues”, leaders who used rhetoric to incite fear for political gain (Garber, 2015, p.23).

Thus, political rhetoric is widely used to galvanise groups with a ‘pack mentality’, associated with ‘group position theory’ Blumer (1958), as cited by Powell and Menendian (2016) that nurtures ‘race prejudice as sense of group

position' and collective social process rather than a result of individual interactions or bias.

Othering primed through master narratives (associations)

Societies' environment and social context, including families and community leaders and friends, are purported to prime those who are considered as 'in-groups' to recognise which distinctions, stereotypes and meanings are relevant for social meanings and deeds, as summarised in the following quote where any differences are collectively taken as 'natural' according to 'group position theory':

Through talk, tales, stories, gossip, anecdotes, pronouncements, news accounts, orations, sermons, preachments, and the like, definitions are presented, and feelings expressed ... If the interaction becomes increasingly circular and reinforcing, devoid of serious inner opposition, such currents grow, fuse, and become strengthened. It is through such a process that a collective image of a subordinate group is formed, and a sense of group position is set (Powell and Menendian, 2016, p.24).

One of the elements of group position theory is a feeling that the "othered" subordinate group is in some way **intrinsically different or alien**. This alienation is markedly significant by stigmatising the Black 'race' by creating association with crime, violence and lack of intelligence among mainstream societies' and institutions, creating a master narrative which damages the "othered" social groups' confidence, self-esteem, credibility and reputation even in today's so called 'post racial and colour blind Western societies' where several attempts have been made to overcome racism.

Race may be widely dismissed as a biological classification, **but dark skin** is an easily observed and salient trait that **has become a marker in Western society**, one imbued with meanings about crime, disorder and violence, stigmatizing entire categories of people (ibid). These associations and shared meanings, in turn, affect our perception of "othered" groups.

When politically motivated and socially primed "othering" is translated into policies that cement these social divisions, it exacerbates inter-group inequalities and has a profound impact on "othered" social groups. This type of

“othering” is implemented through **structures and systems** that are very subtle and complex to detect, but could have lasting consequences, as explored next.

The above analysis based on the research literature presents compelling and strong arguments on how society is primed to “othering” through creating master narratives which stigmatise certain social groups on their group-based identities, as in the case of this research, BAIEs’ race and socio-economic status, as ‘Black Africans’ and ‘immigrants’.

“Othering” through systems and structure

In this regard, it is suggested that systems and structures are not neutral but are designed to service certain groups favourably whilst excluding or making it difficult for “othered” social groups to filter through complex systems that are open to conscious and/or sub conscious interpretations of people working in various institutions. For example, banks may design lending policies that systematically exclude immigrant entrepreneurs by setting key lending criteria which they know are impossible to meet by “othered” social groups, [including BAIEs] such as *financial track records, collateral, credit ratings, references, citizenship status, mainstream types of businesses, guarantors* etc.

Thus, the “othered” minority groups', in particular BAIEs', barriers to success are not mainly due to lack of training, skills, ambition, commitment, creativity or knowledge (factors that often shape 'capabilities'), as various research establishes that the reality is the reverse. BAIEs are in fact among the most highly educated groups in Europe (Oliveira, 2006), but it may be that it is the act of being “othered” that denies or restricts them access to opportunities, resources and markets through institutionally embedded rules, complex structures and systems. In this context, investigating the lived experiences of BAIEs is important to understand their realities.

It is worth repeating at this point that Black Africans were recognised as a census group in the UK only during the 1990 census, despite their existence in the country for hundreds of years (Daley, 1998) and this can be aligned to an unequal political system and structure which deprived them of recognition and equality. Even when their social category was recognised, it was combined into

overlapping and complex groupings as 'Black Africans/Caribbean/mixed/others', even as recent as on the 2011 census. Although this may seem to be an 'innocent mistake', the category is based on skin colour. This social categorisation does not take into account different cultural backgrounds, history or countries of origin, but is rather naively based on a common denominator which reinforces "othering". This action, it may be argued, serves to highlight the disadvantaged groups' social location within the British historical, socio-political and economic context. This historic, socio-political inequality has led to further economic inequity reinforced by the policies of various institutions. It may be claimed that the act of "othering" has a profound impact on black and immigrant communities, alienating generations of minority groups and denying or restricting their access to resources and opportunities akin to a collective punishment or 'ethnic penalty', as expressed by the spokesperson of the Commission for Racial Equality in the UK (as quoted by Fraser, 2005).

Thus, ethnic minority groups, including BAIEs may be theorised to be the subject of "othering" consciously and unconsciously (subconsciously) at societal, individual and institutional levels but, arguably, the institutional level has a more detrimental impact in affecting their entrepreneurial activities, as Tilly (1999) and Powell and Mendaian (2016) explain:

As harmful as discrimination, conscious or unconscious, may be in shaping group outcomes, it is the institutionalization and structural features of othering that perhaps most explain group-based inequalities as observed by sociologists (Powell and Menendian, 2016, p.26).

Tilly (1999) consolidates this idea further by stating that individual acts of discrimination on the basis of group-based stereotypes harm their victims, but group-based categories and meanings are social and collective. When replicated across society and over time, individual acts of discrimination have a cumulative and magnifying effect that may help explain many group-based inequalities and differences.

The author (ibid) in his publication of 'durable inequality' explains institutional-level "othering" as a deliberate and instrumental mechanism with wider scope and far-reaching consequences through exclusionary laws designed to keep out or restrict certain minority groups (in this research case BAIEs), whilst allowing

the dominant social group to control access to community assets, resources and social capital.

This is best summed up in the following quote by Powell and Menendian, 2016, pp.25-26):

In the contemporary context, the most common mechanism for institutionalising group-based differences is policies, laws that restrict access to communal resources by out-groups, and thereby hoard those resources for in-groups. Such laws may be explicit, such as racialized immigration and naturalization rules that prevent members of certain groups from becoming citizens, or Jim Crow segregation laws that relegated black Americans to separate and inferior schools, jobs, train cars, restaurants, theatres, public bathrooms, parks, and even water fountains. Such laws may also be designed more surreptitiously to maintain group-based advantages.

Thus, “othering” then becomes structured in the world through processes that are institutionalized or culturally embedded at different levels of society, from the neighbourhood level to the larger political-legal order. With respect to Black African entrepreneurship, research by Atewologun *et al* (2016, p.233) in their examination of socially salient identities focused on black men and women have claimed that *"self-identity, sense of belonging or 'Otherness' and structural constraints are tightly intertwined"*. Thus, it is important to recognise that any examination of the lived experiences of BAIEs needs to pay attention to the multiples identities held by this social group. These identities, it is claimed, are influenced by racial order in society (Udah, 2017).

Sociologists such as Powell and Menendian (2016) acknowledge that discrimination is *“persistent and long lasting in market-based economies”*, and state that markets do not do an effective job of promoting tolerance; this suggests that curbing discrimination is the provenance of policy rather than market forces.

2.6.3 Failure of various initiatives of integration, inclusiveness and tolerance to successfully overcome “othering”

The problem of “othering” defies easy answers or solutions. There have been many responses to this problem, but they have failed to produce a more

inclusive society for various reasons whilst we focus on segregation and assimilation, all of which have failed to harness harmonised diversity.

Segregation and assimilation policy and practice fail to harness harmonised diversity

A sustainable and effective policy and practice to diversity and inclusion must not only improve inter-group relations but also reduce inter-group inequities and group-based marginality at all levels: individual, societal and, perhaps more importantly, institutional levels.

Segregation on the basis of group membership (group-identity) and the formation of enclaves exacerbates “othering”, signifies differences through physical separation and prevents association (integration) with another group.

No matter how well-intentioned segregation may be, it fails to resolve the problem of the “other.” It may be argued to represent a denial of the “other’s” full humanity or efforts. Although the context is different, segregation has been tried in many communities in conflict zones, such as in Iraq, Israel and South Africa in its troubled past, but the strategy has only heightened de-humanisation between segregated groups. Historically, segregation has been pursued as a policy in the US, a developed nation traditionally characterised by civilised rule, size and cultural diversity, and it has failed to produce racial harmony.

Assimilation is another attempt in response to the problem of the “other”, but this has again failed as, essentially, it involves the ‘out-group’ converting into the dominant group, which includes changing language, religion, culture and identity which has been criticised to amount to ‘white-washing’ (Joseph, 2012; Jean, 2016;). Assimilation too has failed to address the problem of “othering” because of its apparent disregard for diversity, as best explained by Powell and Menendian (2016, p.31) in regard to the experience of immigrant ethnic groups in both Europe and America:

This [assimilation] sometimes is implemented that immigrant ethnic groups coming to Europe and America becoming “white”, “naturalised”, with devastating results due to loss of cultural knowledge and identity. Thus, assimilation is a false solution to the problem of othering, as it seeks to erase the differences upon which othering is structured. When differences in identities are socially relevant or personally significant,

assimilation is not the solution, as it demands that the marginalized group adopt the identity of the dominant group, leaving the latter's identity intact.

To this effect, Jean (2016) in her academic blog about implicit and colour-blind racism discusses how contemporary racism paints itself a false image of 'inclusiveness' under cover of assimilation, whilst in reality it promotes 'white-washing' where minority groups are not totally welcomed but tolerated only when they are acting 'white'. The blog exposes the myth of portraying Western cities and communities as 'melting pots' and centres of 'multiculturalism' whilst in reality *'everyone's race and culture is not celebrated, but the goal is to subdue those with racial differences, to "white-wash" them'*. Yet assimilation in the US and UK is a façade which lacks genuine conviction to bring about structural and systemic changes other than condescending political correctness (PC) that does not fully recognise and embrace all social groups' differences. Thus, it may be postulated that only "belonging" brings a solution to the problem of "othering".

On the surface, the notion of 'assimilation' into the contemporary 'colour blind' and 'post-racial society' may seem positive and empathetic, but this strategy often backfires and frustrates minority groups as it ignores the underlying systemic "othering" endemic, paying attention only to the socio-economic and political order in the contemporary society.

So, it may be argued that neither 'assimilation' nor 'segregation' is the answer to the problem of "othering" but it is through "belonging" that harmonised diversity can be nurtured, and genuine inclusiveness can be achieved which is the focus of the next section.

2.6.4 "Belonging" as a solution for "othering"

It may be contended that "belonging" is the only viable solution to the problem of "othering" where the inclusion of the "othered" groups is not compromised with their individual and group identities but, instead, they are all welcomed through embedded institutional structures and systems that reflect a truly inclusive and harmonised diversity.

Here, it should be highlighted that belonging is not solely transactional, a means to an end, but it entails genuine, unwavering commitment to respecting difference and ensuring that all people are welcome and feel that they belong in a society - what sociologists call expanding the “circle of human concern” (Rudd, 2015, p.1).

Thus, people embrace change and make significant differences to their lives when they are living and operating in a reassuring environment where they feel that they belong. As Rudd (2015, p.1) notes:

Belongingness or widening the circle of human concern involves “humanizing the other” where the most marginalised outgroups are brought into the centre of our concern through higher order love. In a true compassionate democracy, a society that is in balance, everyone “belongs.” In that model of cognitive caring there is only one circle of citizen - those who we care about all the time. In that democracy, the fates of all people are linked. When any group of citizens is deprived of opportunity, everyone is affected, and everyone rallies to restore equilibrium.

Widening the circle of human concern in order to nurture “belonging” to all communities, combating any prejudice, requires a collective paradigm shift and it may be argued that governments are best placed to play decisive roles in facilitating and reinforcing this through structures and systems.

2.7 Chapter reflections and literature gaps

In line with Research Objective 1 this chapter has focused on presenting a critical review of existing literature pertaining to the identity and lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs. In doing so, it has, primarily, noted a relative lack of focus on Black African immigrants as a visible ethnic minority group in the UK.

Most studies acknowledge that Black African immigrants are the least studied group among visible ethnic minorities in the UK, partly due to lack of data on ‘Black Africans’ as a social group prior to the 1990 Census. Moreover, even those few studies seem to conflate characteristics of the group with ‘Black Caribbean’ or ‘other’ ethnic minority groups. There is a need for more focused

and contextualised studies of Black Africans, particularly in the field of entrepreneurship, that might inform effective and relevant policy interventions.

Having undertaken the Literature Review, I have been able to observe the following gaps:

- Absence of regional (South Yorkshire) focused and context-specific study of Black African immigrant entrepreneurs
- Lack of methodological diversity in ‘voicing’ the lived experience, (Phenomenology) that gives greater insight into BAIEs.
- Lack of a holistic approach that combines individual entrepreneurs' unique set of circumstances beyond ‘personal trait theory’. In particular there is a need to identify and recognise if BAIEs possess entrepreneurial attributes born of migrant experience and there is scope to better understand the dynamics of the BAIE community.

It is important to note that aspects of the third gap were acknowledged by Daley (1998), Nwankwo (2005) and Ojo (2013) in their respective studies. However, Daley's (1998) research methodology is based on a statistical and database quantitative approach and did not fully capture the lived experience of BAIEs, whereas Nwankwo (2005) and Ojo (2013) based their research in London with well-established communities and did not fully explain the experience and context of recent migrants outside London amongst transient immigrant communities. Thus, this research sets out to fill that gap.

"Othering" and "belonging" offer a sociological lens to explore the experiences of BAIEs in Western societies, linked to the positioning of and complex relationships navigated by ethnic and immigrant communities on the basis of their group-based identities.

By adopting "othering" and "belonging" as a critical lens, this research endeavours to undertake a more critical exploration of the lived experience of BAIEs in South Yorkshire in line with Research Objective 3.

It is understood that the dimensions of "othering" include, but are not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, sex, religion and skin colour. However, the evaluation of this phenomena is examined from the dimensions of

‘race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status’ in the context of this research and BAIEs’ lived experience in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

The literature review has examined various attempts to improve social cohesion and community integration, for instance; **segregation** and **assimilation**, but without success due to their short sight in understanding the underlying and deeply rooted causes. Among these are ‘political and electoral strategies that evoke fear and anxiety against foreigners, minority groups and immigrants’ and ‘create ‘master narratives’ that associates immigrant as aliens, potential terrorists, criminals’ that perpetuate “othering” through deeply embedded culture, structure (institutions) and systems. This ‘demonization’ and ‘dehumanisation’ of immigrants and foreigners has a very strong and profound influence in societies’ subconscious on how they perceive the “othered” groups even without necessarily being ‘racist’.

The perception of “othering” within mainstream society and ‘ill-informed’ polices through institutionalised structures and systems not only kills confidence, creates uncertainty, restricts minority enterprises [BAIEs], but also perpetuates further “othering” that reinforces more isolation of “othered” groups by pushing them to seek alternative means of belonging, such as forming ‘ethnic enclaves’ as an entrenchment and defensive strategy. “Othering” has manifested itself within the context of this research through its consideration of BAIEs’ access to resources and opportunities in line with the sub-research questions outlined in Chapter 1.

Acknowledging a sociological stance it is reflected that is not the free market that best addresses imbalances in allocating resources and creating opportunities in a society, but it is the responsibility of governments to intervene and redress historical inequalities and marginalities and nurture an organic development of “belonging” which pays greater dividends to all and bring about a genuinely inclusive community that is timely and relevant to the geographical context of this PhD research inquiry with Sheffield Partnership Board’s 2018 mission to make Sheffield an inclusive city.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, presents methodological considerations for this research whilst exploring the underpinning theoretical and philosophical discourses.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

It is useful to briefly remind the reader of the research objectives and questions introduced in Chapter 1 prior to providing clear justifications and discussions of the adopted research methodology. The research is aimed at exploring the lived experience of BAIEs within the context of the host country (UK) business environment and focusing particularly on South Yorkshire regional context.

The study is context-specific, as outlined in its objectives and questions, and attempts to contribute to a deeper understanding and knowledge about a specific group of entrepreneurs, BAIEs. Bazeley (2013) argues that context-specific knowledge and expertise is of justifiable research merit as it provides critical insight into problem-solving and sound decision-making purposes.

The specific research objectives of the study are:

1. To present a critical review of existing literature pertaining to the identity and lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs
2. To develop a methodology to enable the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs to be captured
3. To investigate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs linked to their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire)
4. To critically evaluate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire against currently known experiences of entrepreneurs and immigrant entrepreneurs *per se* with a view to considering the distinctiveness of BAIEs as a discrete social group
5. To identify implications for the further development of theory and practice.

Linked to these objectives, the overall research question is 'What are the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire in their entrepreneurial activities?'

From this central question, the following sub-questions have been developed in line with the research aim and objectives:

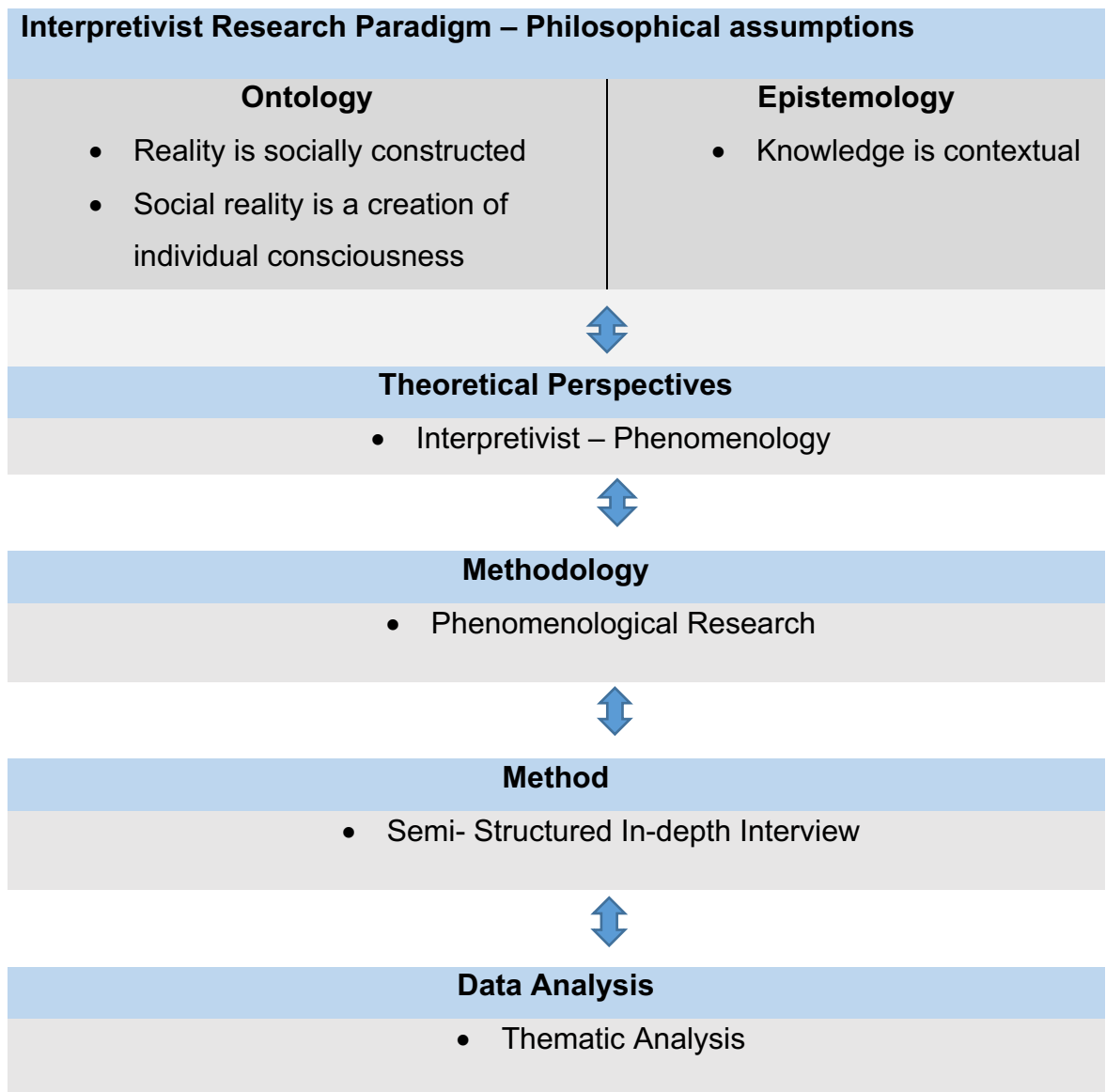
- What are the backgrounds of BAIEs in South Yorkshire?
- What are BAIEs' key motivations in their entrepreneurial ventures?
- What do BAIEs consider as challenges (barriers), and what are the implications of these for their businesses?
- What do BAIEs consider as opportunities, and what are the implications of these for their businesses?
- Who are BAIEs' employees, core customers and key supporters?
- What is BAIEs' experience regarding provision of support?
- What are BAIEs' future plans and aspirations?
- To what extent are the experiences of BAIEs commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs?

This chapter outlines the methodology; essentially it is concerned with the research design and execution of the study. Figure 3.1 provides an overview of the iterative nature of the decision-making involved in the methodological approach and illustrates the inter-connected phases of the research methodology.

The chapter is divided into six sections:

- Methodological Orientation and Philosophical Stance.
- Research methods;
- Data analysis, process and procedure;
- Ethical considerations;
- Limitations;
- Chapter summary.

Figure 3.1: Methodological Approach



Source: (Author's own work)

Overview

The underlying assumption I have adopted in this research is that reality is socially constructed and social reality is a creation of individual consciousness in agreement with Gray, 2017.

Therefore, my position in adopting a phenomenological approach emanates from the notion that knowledge of socially *constructed and individually created* reality must be analysed through the process in which it occurs. This approach is recognised as Phenomenology (interpretivist) research which identifies the essence of people's everyday experience of reality from the individuals' perspective as discussed by Moustakas, 1994. In the Phenomenological

research approach, knowledge is created through repetitive reinforcing and cumulative evidence (Lincoln and Guba, 1995).

Figure 3.1 presents the overview of the methodological underpinning theory, research approach, structure, organisation and operationalisation of data collection, development of categories and themes relevant to the research questions (Figure 3.2).

I have identified potential participants (for purposive sampling) and designed selection criteria (Figure 3. 3) and interview process and steps (Figure 3.4) together with data collection, coding, organisation and analysis) and integrated frameworks as illustrated in (Figures 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8) respectively.

Other methods considered

In my early research endeavour, where I aimed to investigate the issue (research question) in a larger scale and context (Immigrant Entrepreneurs within SME in the UK), I envisaged adopting a quantitative approach to be operationalised by means of a 'survey'. However, as I refocus the question in its current frame of reference (BAIEs' lived experience in South Yorkshire), I have identified the Phenomenological approach within a qualitative method more capable of exploring complex and subtle human relationships, by enabling the researcher's human role of interpreting the enquiries into BAIEs' lived experience.

At an operational level, I considered, 'focus groups' as a means of collecting data, but this was rejected on the basis of confidentiality, peer dominance and practicality concerns.

3.2 Methodological orientation and philosophical stance

This section discusses the researcher's philosophical stance and the theoretical perspectives adopted in line with the researcher's personal and professional experiences and philosophical assumptions. It attempts to explore the phenomena under investigation, the nature of reality and means of legitimising (claiming) knowledge. These are the central points of the discussion.

Epistemology is a philosophical stance that determines what constitutes and what does not constitute legitimate knowledge, whilst ontology is the essence (study) of reality (truth) or social entity (phenomena) under investigation (Wilson, 2010; Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Symon and Cassell, 2012; Gray, 2017).

Our claim of knowledge and view of reality underpins our adopted theoretical perspective and methodological approach. Based on our philosophical assumptions, there are different theoretical perspectives regarding the nature of reality (ontology) and the way knowledge is acquired (epistemology).

According to the positivist (objectivist) approach, the nature of reality exists independently (or externally) from human consciousness, and knowledge is acquired through scientific observation of empirical data without interpretation of meanings on the part of the researcher. Alternatively, the interpretivist (subjectivist) approach rejects this view and asserts that reality and meaning do not exist in an external world to be discovered by the researcher but are fluid and open to change created by people's interactions and interpretations with the world and (Gray, 2017).

I am presenting these two contrasting approaches, positivist and subjectivist, in order to provide a clear justification as to why I have aligned this research with a subjectivist philosophical stance. A positivist approach is mainly associated with the natural science discipline, which is governed by measurement, correlation, statistical logic and verification, and typically adopts methods such as surveys, questionnaires, experiments and random sampling. In contrast, an interpretivist approach is not interested in measurement or quantification, but in the depth and breadth of an investigation, which is why it is usually described as 'detective work' (Gray, 2017). The subjectivist approach appreciates subjective knowledge and is aimed at theory building informed by deeper understanding and knowledge which is underpinned by subjectivist ontology. In the subjectivist approach, a method typically adopted is 'semi-structured and in-depth interviews' (Wilson, 2010; Bryman and Bell, 2011; Saunders *et al.*, 2012; Symon and Cassell, 2012; Gray, 2017). The nature of social reality is a creation of individual consciousness, I set out to investigate individuals' experience as it is lived by them.

As stated by Gray (2017), positivism has been the dominant epistemological paradigm for much of the twentieth century both in the natural and social sciences; but today there is an emerging consensus among the scientific communities that the interpretivist approach is a preferable option, especially in regard to social science inquiries.

As a social science researcher, I do not claim that I am neutral, and I recognise my own philosophical assumptions, affiliations and adopted methodological preferences, as argued by Popper (1962; cited in Johnson and Duberley, 2000) in regard to scientists and their particular research theories bias. Thus, I take an active role, as the research issue is of great interest to me both in a personal and professional capacity. I recognise my prior knowledge and experience and am acutely aware of the danger of bias or distortion; hence it is necessary to adopt reflective and reflexive practices to ensure the integrity of this research (see 3.3.3). This is in agreement with the ideas of Burrell and Morgan (1979) that everyone approaches their subject of interest through implicit and explicit assumptions.

I argue that knowledge is theory-laden, influenced by the researcher's prior knowledge, experience, perspectives, stories, values, belief systems and interpretations, which are also reflected in the use of language, meaning and context in line with the subjectivist position.

I have borrowed the following two direct quotes from Blackburn (1996) and McAuley *et al.* (2007) respectively to sum up subjectivist assumptions and to support my argument:

Subjectivist assumptions concern the ontological status of the social phenomena we deal with, which, philosophically, entail the view that what we take to be social reality is a creation or projection of our consciousness and cognition. What we usually assume to be 'out there' has no real independent status separate from the act of knowing. In knowing the social world, we create it. We are probably just not aware of our role in these creative processes (McAuley et al., 2007, p.32).

Blackburn (1996) for his part, further explains truth and the condition of truth using our medium of language and its contextual meaning as follows:

A sentence is true if there is some context in which it could be uttered (with its present meaning) and expresses a true or false proposition. The truth condition of a statement is the condition the world must meet if the

statement is to be true. To know this condition is equivalent to knowing the meaning of the statement (Blackburn, 1996, p.381).

Blackburn (1996) criticizes the positivist position as 'misconception' in presenting 'truth' as being 'universal', 'true at all times and circumstances', denying the possibility of truth's subjective interpretation and context-specific meanings.

I therefore argue that there is no logical and natural property and relationship between the 'term' or 'concept' of 'truth', and the meaning it represents and expresses which intrinsically preserves its meaning(s) for 'eternity'. I argue that truth and its meaning are a matter of consensus within a given society, time and context whose views, perspectives and values could evolve with its environment and norms. Here, I would also like to argue that such changes not only affect linguistic semantics, but also the 'concept' we grasp when the norms, values, perspectives and assumptions as a society evolve through changes as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (1994).

Thus, this research endeavour is about exploring the 'lived experiences' of BAIEs in South Yorkshire within the dynamics of their environment, making sense of their experiences; the researcher takes into account their unique circumstances, environmental factors and personal attributes and identities as immigrants, socio-political and economic, all of which provide the context of their reality.

The epistemological and ontological points made by McAuley *et al.* (2007) and Blackburn (1996) in regard to the 'concept' of truth in their languages are often used as a correlation of the dispositions acquired by inculcation into a community's practice in the use of a word. This usage blurs the distinction between our thoughts and intentions expressed via language and the practices that are conveyed or suggested through the words that we use.

According to Erban (2008), truth and falsehood have been conceived historically as primarily relations between beliefs and facts, and only indirectly as relations of sentences which symbolically represent beliefs. Here, beliefs are mental constructs, ideas and other cognitive representations which are

developed over the course of one's life and which are associated with various degrees of conviction or confidence.

Looking at the broader definition of language, McAuley *et al.* (2007) have asserted that language is the only expression of reality and it is arbitrary, constructed and relative; words are defined by other words. These ideas support an argument for interpretivism.

In this doctoral research study, the 'true' social reality of BAIEs is acknowledged to be contextual, varied, normative, subjective and socially constructed from a subjectivist perspective.

As a social researcher, I have identified with Johnson and Duberley (2000) in that any knowledge claim is influenced by goal-directed human actions and intervention:

The adjudication of the veracity of any knowledge claim can only occur through reference to the pursuit of the interests encoded, by epistemic subjects, during social construction. Such interests are pursued through goal-directed human actions and interventions which, through practical activities, confront the tolerance of a mind-independent reality (Johnson and Duberley, 2000, p.170).

It is important to acknowledge and capture a socially-constructed experience of reality by BAIEs. Thus, gaining greater insight and knowledge informed by this social group perspective could serve as a catalyst for action by policy makers and practitioners in the social world to bring about positive changes (such as emancipation, equality, justice and fairness) and practical intervention within South Yorkshire as indicated in the research aims and objectives.

3.2.1 Author's research philosophical stance and methodological affiliation

It is important to recognise my own (researcher) philosophical stance and methodological affiliation which are made up of multiple identities and interests, all of which are contributing factors in shaping my views and perspectives. Doing so will inform the reader about the position adopted in transparent ways whilst adhering to the corresponding research conventions and practices to

ensure the integrity of this research. The following quote from Sultana (2007) sums up my argument:

It is critical to pay attention to positionality, reflexivity, the production of knowledge and the power relations that are inherent in research processes in order to undertake ethical research (Sultana, 2007, p.383).

Currently, I am employed as a Senior Lecturer at Sheffield Business School, but I embarked upon a doctoral research journey after taking up this academic post. I am a British citizen of Black African origin (Ethiopian) who has a close proximity to the culture, socio-political and business environment of the research participants, both in their countries of origin and here in the UK. My identity as a former consultant, business owner and manager for 12 years in the UK has provided me with a tacit knowledge, working experience and contacts with various BME groups. I recognise that the choice of and interest in this research is born out of the combination of my personal and professional experience, knowledge and commitment.

Whilst I recognise the need to restrain my prior knowledge so as not to influence the outcome of the research, my background, networks and existing relationships with the BAIE community have facilitated my access to BAIEs. The group has been described as '*notoriously difficult to penetrate for research purposes*' as acknowledged by Nwanko (2005, p.123). Indeed, African communities have been acknowledged as 'hard to reach groups' by researchers in the field (Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000).

I identify myself as having 'insider' knowledge within the community under investigation, and this has provided me with an advantage in gaining access to a diverse range of participants, and this diversity makes a difference and helps to balance any biases.

Denzin (1986) asserts that a researcher's biography and experience are important in social science research, which I believe consolidates my argument in this regard:

Interpretive research begins and ends with the biography and self of the researcher (Denzin, 1986, p.12)

(For details of my relevant experience and background, see Appendices 3.1 and 3.2).

Due to the interactive nature of social research, I cannot be objective, nor do I strive to be, but I aim to acknowledge these possibilities, even if I do not precisely know how they have influenced my research. However, the acknowledgement will, as a minimum, allow the reader to identify 'where I am coming from' and the lens(es) through which my research has been conducted.

I have over 12 years' experience as a practitioner (exporter and consultant) and member of the BME Business Forum as a former entrepreneur through which I have some knowledge and existing contacts within ethnic minority entrepreneurship and the wider community. In my current role as a Senior Lecturer at Sheffield Business School, I have been engaged in attending business meetings and regional and local events to maintain my knowledge and networks.

Whilst I recognise that these attributes provide me with the privilege and advantage points in gaining access, building trust and better understanding (interpretation), I reiterate that I am acutely aware of the concerns of bias and distortion that come with qualitative research.

I have therefore routinely integrated reflective and reflexive practices alongside regular consultations with my PhD supervisors, which are integral parts of phenomenological research.

Furthermore, a researcher's reflexive and reflective practices are substantiated by Sikes (2004, p.15) in his research methodology publication:

Being a reflexive and reflective researcher is about being a rigorous researcher who is able to present their findings and interpretations in the confidence that they have thought about, acknowledged and been honest and explicit about their stance and the influence it has had upon their work.

Bryman and Bell (2011) and Gray (2017) also equally acknowledged this as a critical undertaking by all qualitative social researchers. In section 3.3.3 of this chapter, I have presented the application of these practices in order to minimise the likelihood of my own bias or distortions in this research.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research - Phenomenological and Theoretical Perspectives

This research explores BAIEs' individual and shared 'lived experiences' (reality) in South Yorkshire in their entrepreneurial pursuits.

Thus, it studies how the nature of such individual and social reality is best explored in an interpretive approach (qualitative research philosophical paradigm). Whilst I appreciate that a quantitative philosophical paradigm may be best suited to natural science, qualitative research provides greater insights into the subtleties and complexities of human lived experience, especially from the social science perspectives. Burns (2000) stated that qualitative research adds flesh and blood to social analysis which may not have been detected in any statistical analysis usually adopted in quantitative researches.

Moustakas (1994) described phenomenological research as a strategy of inquiry in which the research identifies the essence of human experience as a phenomenon as described by participants. He also appreciates that as a philosophy as well as a method the procedure involves studying lived experience in order to develop patterns and relationships of meanings.

Within the qualitative interpretive research, I have adopted a phenomenological approach, as this illuminates the nature of human experience and provides a detailed description (McAuley *et al.*, 2007) of lived experience with regard to the challenges (barriers) and opportunities of BAIEs and their changing environment (historical background, geographical, socio-political, economic and entrepreneurial activities), shaped by their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire) (in line with Research Objective 3).

The subject of this research inquiry (investigation) is concerned with deeply rooted issues in the culture, experience, values and perceptions experienced by BAIEs in their host country. I argue such social realities are too complex to simplify and quantify into hard facts and empirical data according to the positivist's convention. I argue that 'one's perception is one's reality', hence the nature of this reality here involves 'relationship, emotions and perceptions' which are lived in human experience, and the positivist approaches of reducing and codifying into empirical data can only diminish the 'sense-making human

role' of a researcher, whilst this is encouraged in the phenomenological approach.

McAuley (op. cit.) discussed phenomenology in an organisational context, arguing that its approach provides an understanding of 'interior', deeper meanings, the emotions and values that are part of the person's lived experience.

Gray (2017) consolidates the phenomenological perspective that social reality has to be grounded in people's own experience of that reality, as the aim of phenomenological methodology is to shed light upon meanings of human experience. Indeed, phenomenology seeks to understand the world from the participant's point of view and in phenomenological research, knowledge is created through repetitive reinforcing and cumulative evidence (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Phenomenology deals with a science of experience of consciousness (sequence of reflection), an approach developed by Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and further advanced by many protagonists of this branch of philosophy that has since been widely applied in social research. Amongst its advocates are Heidegger (1962), Jaspers (1963), Brentano (1973) and Macann (1993) and it is an approach that has been adopted across a range of disciplines including, psychology, sociology and political economy, as cited by Marx (1975) and Bologh (1979).

Burns (2000) advances the argument about the relevance of the phenomenological approach in social sciences by pointing out 'social reality' as it is perceived by individuals. The author in this case refers to the fact that social reality is regarded as a creation of individual consciousness with meaning and the evaluation of events seen as a personal and subjective construction; thus, the focus is on the individual case rather than general law-making.

Therefore, in my view and in the context of this research, the BAIEs' individual and social reality consists of cultural, moral and perceptual judgements which refer to people's collective and individual understandings and insights, and these virtues could not have been fully explained by reducing them to quantifiable empirical entities. For this reason, I argue that a phenomenological study is best suited to explore and describe the reality of individual and social

group experiences and perceptions in a given cultural and historical context, in this case; BAIEs in South Yorkshire (UK).

Ely *et al.*, (1991) have described the roles of the qualitative researcher as allowing those being studied, in this research case BAIEs, to speak for themselves, to provide their perspectives in words and other actions in an interactive process in which the persons studied teach the researcher about their lives.

Thus, as a social researcher, I am not merely reporting, as an act of thin description (Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Denzin, 2001), but I am seeking to interpret their narrative, actions, motives, meanings, contexts and circumstances in as lifelike a manner as possible. Ely *et al.* (1991) suggest that the aim of the qualitative researcher is to understand the experience of participants as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it.

Therefore, as has been explained and discussed, the qualitative phenomenological research approach is applicable within the specific context of the research, whereby the researcher is able to make sense of individual perceptions and social meanings and experiences expressed in regard to the phenomenon being studied (Ely *et al.*, 1991; Bunhanan and Bryman, 2009).

In an effort to make sense of BAIEs' distinctive entrepreneurial attributes, this research has inductively developed a conceptual framework in order to gain a deeper understanding of BAIEs than already exists in the literature (Saunders *et al.*, 2012). Thus, this research aims to make a contribution to knowledge by highlighting new understandings where these insights (the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire) have not been adequately covered within the existing literature, as previous research in the UK has been based on BAIEs in big cities, mainly in London.

3.3 Methods

According to Gray (2017), method is the systematic approach towards the collection of data so that information can be obtained from the data, whilst Jankwicz (2000) states that a specific method is determined by the researcher's methodological preference. Punch (1998) refers to method as a tool or

technique of data collection and analysis deploying questionnaires, interviews and observations underpinned by the overall research methodological preferences and theoretical perspectives.

Qualitative research also has a range of methods through which a variety of empirical materials are collected, such as interview, observation, life story and visual texts to mention just some (ibid).

This study, as qualitative research, employs the semi-structured interview method of collecting data about the lived experiences of BAIEs as this is the most suitable for phenomenological research, allowing an interpretive mode of inquiry to understand complex human experience, in accordance with Moustakas (1994). In other words, it is a method of learning about another person by listening to their descriptions of what their subjective world is like for them.

In order to gain a full insight into their perspectives, participants were asked to respond to open questions (why, how, what) on key areas and issues established from the literature review. Furthermore, two pilot projects were conducted, and conference papers were produced in 2013 and 2016 where emerging issues were incorporated as the interview progressed. Thus, follow-up questions, examples and clarifications have been developed on emerging trends and matters.

The following as illustrated in Figure 3.2 are the key areas of the semi-structured interview questions and discussions regarding BAIEs' general background information on complex social interactions in their entrepreneurial activities. The nature of the questions and process of inquiry allowed the participants to reflect naturally on their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire).

Figure 3.2: Thematic Questions

General background

- Tell me about yourself; age, education,
- Where do you come from, when and why?

Motivations

- Why have you chosen business as a career?
- Why are you in this particular business?

Challenges

- What do you consider as challenges in running your business?
- What is the impact of these challenges on you and your business?
- How do you overcome these challenges?

Opportunities

- What do you consider as opportunities in running your business?
- What are the benefits (values) of these opportunities to you and your business?
- What are your entrepreneurial attributes (resources)?

Key Supporters, core customers and employees

- What kind of support do you need and receive?
- Who are your core customers and why?
- Who are your main employees and why?
- Where and how did you get your start-up capital?

Provision of business support and any special needs

- What are your 'business support needs'?
- Who provides you with these business support needs?
- How satisfied are you with this support?

BAIEs' perception of success

- What do you consider as success in your business?

Future Plans, aspirations and strategies

- What are your future plans and aspirations/strategies?

Source: (Author's own work). Please also see (Appendix 3.3) for research questions

Research operationalisation

Lived experience is defined through participants making sense of their own subjective experience, as expressed in their own words from their memories of daily life through interactive engagement with the researcher. He, in return, interprets their reality in order to make sense of these descriptions by giving meanings within contexts.

Participants are engaged individually to answer semi-structured thematic questions (Figure 3.2) that provoke their memories and make sense of their

experience of owning and running an enterprise as Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire.

These thematic questions (Figure 3.2) are designed based on previous works (from the literature review) and enhanced by two research pilot projects which allow me to capture the phenomenon of BAIEs' lived experience.

On the other hand, emergent themes, concepts and categories from the data, such as 'othering' and 'belonging', 'resilience', 'mixed embeddedness' and 'social capital' have informed the literature review iteratively in further exploring BAIE's lived experience.

As and when each individual participant's interview was transcribed, I had to read and revise the transcript by identifying, highlighting and labelling key phenomena (lived experience) relevant to the research questions recognised as 'content analysis' (Bazeley, 2013).

In an attempt to identify shared experiences, make sense of the phenomena and in order to provide analysis, these key individually identified phenomena are categorised and aggregated into clusters of themes recognised as 'thematic coding' Saldana, 2013 as illustrated in Figure 3.7 and 3.8 (chapter 3).

Then shared experience, trends and patterns are analysed and explained, using the literature materials whilst recommendation is made for further research and investigation on unique issues and experience that are not fully addressed in this particular research (refer to section 7.5).

The methodological operationalisation of BAIEs' lived experience is explained in Chapter 3, whilst the findings and discussion of this particular research is demonstrated in chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

3.3.1 Identifying potential participants and the process of sampling

I recognise that the techniques and process of identifying participants and sampling are intrinsically linked to the methodological orientations and the research aims, objectives and questions as stated by Symon et al. (2012), prominent authors in the qualitative organisational research context:

Our choice of research participants should be determined by the focus of our research, thereby enabling us to meet our research aims and answer our research question (Symon et al., 2012, p.36).

Symon et al. (2012) also point out that purposive (non-random) sampling is the most frequently used form of non-probability sampling in qualitative research. This is a technique that requires the researcher's judgement in choosing cases that will provide answers to research questions and meet the stated aims and objectives. In this particular research, I have outlined BAIEs' common profile, criteria and typical characteristics of potential participants as candidates for this research unit of analysis.

This predetermined criterion of identifying participants who are more likely to provide rich data and can answer questions in line with the research aims and objectives is a well-established and acceptable norm as acknowledged by prominent authors among those I consulted in the research design process (Patton, 2002; Neuman, 2005; Bryman and Bell, 2011; Symon et al., 2012; Gray, 2017;).

Moreover, I also suggest that one has to consider other practical, financial and resource implications without compromising methodological conventions and integrities. Such factors include accessibility, credibility, availability, relevance, time and costs which may have direct or indirect influences on the outcome of a research.

Within the purposive sampling I have made a conscious effort to draw participants from a wide spectrum so as to capture diverse views and perspectives, as advised by Bryman and Bell (2011). For example, I have considered people from 13 types of business sector, diverse age groups and different countries of origin (9); furthermore, length of time in business (from 1 year to 40 years), educational background (high school to PhD), location and

year of migration to the UK (1978 to 2016) were among further criteria which were taken into consideration.

Figure 3.3 presents the basis of participants' selection criteria.

Figure 3.3: Participants' Selection Criteria

A) Essential criteria
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Country of origin – Africa (Sub-Saharan Africa) 2. Identity – Black African/British/African-British (mixed heritage) 3. Legal status – Refugee, asylum seeker, British citizenship and legally allowed to work/live in the UK (permanently/temporarily) 4. Address – s/he has a registered business address 5. Duration – s/he has been in business for at least six months to a year. 6. Residence – South Yorkshire 7. Year of migration - 1970s to 2016
B) Desirable criteria
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Diverse country of origin in Africa (East, West, North and South) 9. Diverse business sectors (industries) 10. Diverse profile: age groups, gender, education etc. 11. Willingness to be video/audio recorded and sign a consent form 12. High profile stories - individuals who may have 'interesting/relevant/high profile stories'

Source: (Author's own work)

These 12 selection criteria are made up of two categories: essential, which all potential candidates must possess to participate and in line with the research objectives; and desirable, which are optional, but equally important in bringing diverse perspectives.

Particularly in determining the size of the sampled participants, I have consulted a variety of authors' suggestions and conclusions which suggest that, in regard to qualitative research, the emphasis is more on the quality and depth of the data than the quantity. As in phenomenological studies, a single case study is

an accepted sample size as this could provide insightful reflection, deeper understanding and appreciation rather than generalization (Bizri, 2017). Guest *et al.* (2006) and Saunders *et al.* (2009a) acknowledge a sample size between 4 and 12 is sufficient to reveal key patterns.

However, my decision to engage with multiple participants (16) in this research is not to seek a 'statistically' representative sample of their population, but to strengthen the inference of 'recurrence' through diversity in regard to the shared lived experiences and social reality of BAIEs so that it presents a balanced picture and affords me to consider the research sub-question, 'To what extent are the experiences of BAIEs commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs?'

The process of selecting (nominating) potential participants

Based on my existing contacts, networks, 2011 UK Census data and local directories, I was able to identify the size, location and profile of my research unit of analysis. From this preliminary information, I was able to nominate 31 potential participants using the selection criteria shown in Figure 3.3. Once I had established this list, I proceeded with the research interview process as per the steps outlined in Figure 3.4.

Although not all participants had to go through all the steps indicated, there were some participants who required even more steps in order to secure their research participation, still with no guarantee that they would take part in this research. However, by and large, the outline steps given in Figure 3.4 were followed as a general guideline.

As discussed in section 3.4 'ethical considerations', I have taken on board general recommendations, guidance, code of ethics and practices in business research provided by SHU (2015/16), Denscombe (2007), Saunders *et al.* (2012), Symon and Cassell (2012), Research Society (2016) and Gray (2017) which provide helpful recommendations on participants' vulnerability, informed consent, confidentiality, data protection and personal and legal implications, among other routine practicalities within the mainstream cultural norms and standards of research integrity. However, there were very limited suggestions

about working with minority social groups, who may need more intensive and informal approaches that may be born out of different cultural norms and experience. Hence, I had to design these extensive processes and steps which I found to be accommodating albeit exhaustive. Further discussions are also provided in section 3.3.2 regarding data collection and interview procedures detailing the number of hours spent on each process.

Figure 3.4: Interview process and steps

Step 1: - Identify and list potential participants based on the selection criteria (Figure 3.3)

Step 2: - Contact nominated potential participants, introduce myself, the research and check their willingness to participate

- Exchange contact details and agreed methods for further communications

Step 3: - Arrange first meeting (in person) as and when required

- Establish trust and provide more detailed information about the research and processes involved including audio, video recording and consent form.

Step 4: - Arrange second meeting for interview as and when agreed by the participant, ensure the time is convenient and place (venue) is suitable

Step 5: - Interview takes place

Step 6: - Transcribe audio/video recording

Step 7 - Present the copy of the transcription to participants for confirmation and amend any discrepancies.

Source: (Author's own work)

During my initial telephone communications, 6 of the 31 BAIEs contacted said they were not interested in participating in the research interview, making 25 available for an initial meeting and consultation in person. Following on from the initial meeting and consultation, a further 5 candidates (3 female and 2 male) dropped out, being unable or unwilling to participate in this research for different reasons, such as reluctance to be recorded on video or audio material, or being

unhappy to sign the participant's consent form, which is an important ethical requirement.

Finally, 20 of the initial 31 potential participants expressed interest in taking part and interview sessions were scheduled whilst allowing for further meetings and consultations as required.

In total, 16 candidates fully cooperated by attending preliminary meetings and completed the interview sessions in full, after which the data was observed to reach saturation point and it was not necessary to proceed to interviewing the remaining 4 candidates; they were thanked for their cooperation and informed that there was no need for further interviews, a possibility which I had already explained at the start of the interview recruitment process.

Table 3.1 presents a summary and an overview of the sample, whilst Tables 3.2 to 3.9 discuss in detail specific samples and data features from methodological perspectives.

Table 3.1: Background Summary of participants and key information (findings)

Business Owner	Country of origin	Gender	Age	Education / qualification	Reason for migration	Year of migration	Business sector/industry	Years in business	Turnover	No of employees	Town	Scope of operations
BAIE 01	Eritrea	M	mid 30s	High school & self-taught	war and security	2003	Consumer electronic shop & café	3	£5000 stock value	2, Co-ethnic	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 02	Ethiopia	M	mid 40s	College, (Diploma) Electrician by trade	Political persecution	2000	Restaurant	2	undisclosed	3, Co-ethnic	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 03	Ethiopia	M	early 60s	PhD	Political persecution	1978	Property investment (residential letting)	40	£2m	not disclosed	Sheffield	South Yorkshire
BAIE 04	Ethiopia	F	mid 30s	Uni. drop out & self-taught	family	1990	Hairdressing beauty treatments	11	(estimated £1m)	3, Co-ethnic +1	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 05	Liberia	M	early 50s	Uni drop out	war and security	2004	Home improvement - maintenance	6	undisclosed	1 + temporaries (various)	Sheffield	South Yorkshire +
BAIE 06	Ethiopia	M	early 40s	MSc in catering & hospitality	Political prosecution	2006	Restaurant	2	undisclosed	self-employed (partner)	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 07	Sudan	M	mid 40s	High school	Political persecution	2004	Barber shop	5	undisclosed	5=2, Co-ethnic =3	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 08	Ethiopia	M	mid 30s	High school	Political persecution	2005	Taxi operation	6	£21,000 (net)	Self employed	Sheffield	South Yorkshire +

Business Owner	Country of origin	Gender	Age	Education / qualification	Reason for migration	Year of migration	Business sector/industry	Years in business	Turnover	No of employees	Town	Scope of operations
BAIE 09	Republic of Congo	M	early 30s	University 2nd year drop out	war & political instability	2006	Barber shop	3	undisclosed	7, co-ethnic	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 10	Nigeria	F	Late 20s	MSc	study	2014	Recruitment agency	3	undisclosed	6, co-ethnic	Rotherham	South Yorkshire
BAIE 11	Nigeria	M	Mid 40s	PhD	study	1995	Restaurant	17	undisclosed	4, Co-ethnic	Sheffield	Sheffield
BAIE 12	Somalia	M	Late 40s	BA	war & political instability	1994	Transport and Logistic Training services	13	undisclosed	7, co-ethnic	Sheffield	South Yorkshire
BAIE 13	Ghana	M	Late 40s	Diploma	second generation	n/a	Furniture design & fittings	15	undisclosed	6, various	Sheffield	South Yorkshire
BAIE 14	Nigeria	M	42 (early 40s)	BA - Economics	originally to study but his father left Nigeria due to political case	late 90s (98?)	Food store	4	£80,000.00	self-employed (husband & wife)	Doncaster	Doncaster
BAIE 15	Zimbabwe	M	late 40s	BA - Law	originally to study, then stayed in the country due to instability in Zimbabwe	2002	Immigration and asylum legal services	5	not disclosed	5	Sheffield	South Yorkshire
BAIE 16	Nigeria	M	mid 40s	BA - Accounting	to study	not disclosed	Food store	5	£60,000.00	self-employed (wife & husband)	Barnsley	Barnsley +South Yorkshire

Source: (Author's own work)

Participants' Profile

Table 3.1 presents the characteristics of the 16 BAIE interview participants, drawn from the four urban centres of South Yorkshire - Sheffield, Doncaster, Barnsley and Rotherham - and comprised of nine countries of origin: Ethiopia, Nigeria, Liberia, Sudan, Republic of Congo, Somalia, Ghana and Zimbabwe. Furthermore, the summary table captures some relevant background details of these participants, such as age, gender, type of business, duration in business, turnover and educational backgrounds which highlight their personal, social, economic and entrepreneurial orientations, some of which are discussed in this chapter, from methodological perspectives. It is important to iterate here that a concerted effort has been made to ensure that the data has been anonymised to avoid the specific identification of individuals.

Countries of Origin

Table 3.2 represents the participants' countries of origin, which are from nine Sub-Saharan African countries (SSA) from where BAIEs are migrating to the United Kingdom. Greater numbers of participants are from Ethiopia and Nigeria, which are the most populous nations on the African continent - 104,957,000 and 190,886,000 respectively according to UN 2017 World Population Report (UN, 2017) - and are among the top immigrants coming to the UK according to the House of Commons Library (2017) migration statistics.

I cannot discount the fact that my own background (originally from Ethiopia), personal networks and contacts may have given me greater access to these groups.

Table 3.2: Country of Origin of participants

Country of Origin	Number of participants
Ethiopia	4
Nigeria	4
Eritrea	1
Liberia	1

Sudan	1
Republic of Congo	1
Somalia	1
Ghana	1
Zimbabwe	1
Total	16

Source: (Author's own work)

Age

Table 3.3 shows BAIEs' age ranges, between late 20s and early 60s. This data shows that half (eight) of the participants are between mid-40s and late 40s. The second most common age groups are those between the ages of mid 30s and early 40s. On the other hand, late 20s, early 30s and over 50s are the least frequent.

Table 3.3: Age profile of participants

Age	Number of participants
Late 20s (27-29)	1
Early 30s (30-33)	1
Mid 30s (34-36)	2
Early 40s (40-43)	2
Mid 40s (44-46)	4
Late 40s (47-49)	4
Early 50s (50-53)	1
Early 60s (60-63)	1
Total	16

Source: (Author's own work)

Again, it may not be possible to draw a definitive conclusion from the age group, except that the majority of them are within the middle aged and mature age group who have chosen businesses due to limited opportunity in the labour market and the fact that almost all of them, with the exception of one, are first generation immigrants.

Consideration must be given to the lengthy process and duration of the asylum application process which, on average, took more than five years for BAIEs to be allowed to pursue their business idea and legally engage in any entrepreneurial activities.

Gender

Table 3.4: Gender of participants

Gender	Number of participants
Male	14
Female	2
Total	16

Source: (Author's own work)

The male gender is the most frequent profile from the above data. Although some businesses are owned by couples (husband and wife), the husband came forward to take part in this interview. Even when I requested to interview a female business partner (wife) on a number of occasions, the wives insisted that their male spouses (husbands) were best placed to tell their story. I have attempted to determine whether this is a cultural issue, but it has been explained that the agreement within the family business is that the male partner takes more responsibilities in running the day-to-day management of a business and thus has more insights in to the business. It is an interesting aspect for further research exploration but gender-specific issues are not the focus of this research - the focus remained on the shared ethnicity and identity of participants as Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs (BAIEs). However, I understand that research carried out in London on BAIEs by Nwanko (2005) has reached the same conclusion, i.e. that BAIEs are male gender dominated in terms of ownership and control, with the exception of some sectors, namely beauty salons and cosmetics.

An example of my determined but unsuccessful efforts to interview a BAIE (woman) who owns a law firm may be provided; this took a year and three booked meetings were arranged, which were subsequently cancelled. Finally,

she assigned her partner for the interview, and he told me the story behind her reluctance to attend the interview. I have noted this in my reflection diary which sums up some of the tragic migration stories that the participants volunteered during the interviews.

Education

Table 3.5 indicates that more than half of the participants (10) had completed higher education at Diploma, Bachelor degree, Masters and PhD levels.

Table 3.5: Education levels of the participants

Education level	Number of participants	Remarks
PhD	2	
Masters	2	
Bachelor degree	4	
University (dropout)	3	two from second year, one from final year
Diploma (college)	2	
High school	3	
Total	16	

Source: (Author's own work)

Among the remaining 6 participants, 3 had high school level education and the other 3 had university level education, but 2 of the latter dropped out in their second year and 1 was unable to graduate due to civil war in their country of origin. It is important to note that none of them are illiterate and, in fact, most have higher education qualifications. This supports the previously mentioned observation in Chapters 1 and 2 that Black African Immigrants in Europe are among the highest qualified and educated immigrants as acknowledged by previous researchers (Daley, 1998; Nwanko, 2005; Oliveira, 2006; and IMI, 2008).

Participants have also a wide range of educational backgrounds in terms of field of studies: business and management; medicine; accounting; engineering; design; hospitality; and geography.

From general observation, there is no clear evidence that links their education level with their business success. Some participants are pursuing their professional business careers within the field of their studies and interest are breaking out of the typical 'ethnic minority business sectors', discussed in 3.6. On the other hand, some are engaged in completely different sectors than their field of study or qualifications.

Not all candidates disclosed their financial positions due to the sensitive nature of the information, and thus I am unable to use financial information as a commercial measure of success. Although they have migrated to the UK in different years and circumstances, their duration in business could reveal some measure of success.

However, care must be taken not to make a sweeping statement or draw definitive conclusions, though there are some indications that some of those with the higher level of education are breaking out of typical 'ethnic-dominated' business sectors into more professional sectors such as law firms, property investment, design and recruitment agencies.

Higher level of education attainment among BAIEs (participants) is consistent with the findings of Oliveira (2006), an EU-wide study research commissioned by the Directorate General Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission. The author highlights the fact that immigrants from black African countries are amongst the most highly qualified and trained professionals in Western countries, who not only see opportunities (in the niche and mainstream markets), but also are capable of combining their skills to take advantage of their networks and resources. Again, no definitive research finding is available to suggest that highly qualified BAIEs are successful in the UK.

Business sectors

Table 3.6 shows that participants are engaged across 13 types of diverse business sectors; most (10) of these business sectors are relatively accessible,

with low barriers to entry, and do not require special qualifications or licences to undertake business activities, other than basic legal compliance, health and safety and industry standard regulations. These sectors come under typical businesses where traditionally there are high concentrations of ethnic minorities. However; there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that there are BAIE dominated, nationality-specific industries.

Table 3.6: Participants by type of business (sectors)

Type of business (sectors)	Number of participants
Consumer electronic shop & café	1
Restaurant	2
Property investment (residential letting)	1
Hairdressing beauty treatments	1
Barber shop	2
Home improvement (maintenance)	1
Taxi operation	1
Recruitment agency	1
Transport, logistics and training	1
Furniture design and fittings	1
Food store	2
Food store and car dealership	1
Immigration and asylum legal services	1
Total	16

Source: (Author's own work)

However, some participants are engaged at least in the specific regional context in emerging business trends and sectors (legal services, taxi, property investment, design and home improvements) that require qualifications, capital, expertise and special licence respectively due to the nature of their businesses. These sectors are among emerging sectors and a growing trend that more qualified BAIEs are increasingly capitalising on their intellectual and human capital.

This has been noted by Oliveira (2006) as indicated in her EU-wide studies of immigrant entrepreneurs as per the following quote:

Although there have been notable cases of successful immigrant entrepreneurs in advanced economies, most of these immigrant entrepreneurs are funnelled towards sectors at the lower end of the market, mainly establishing their business in markets with low barriers of entry in terms of capital outlays and required educational qualifications (Oliveira, 2006, p.5)

The other interesting trend that was noted during the research execution process is that minority businesses are clustered (concentrated) in some relatively close geographic proximities, forming their own enclaves. This has provided a sense of community, 'safety and security in numbers' alongside practical and operational business needs in sharing knowledge, experience and resources.

Location of businesses

Table 3.7 shows the location of the participants, where Sheffield has a significantly high representation. In spite of their business location, half (8) of the BAIEs interviewed are operating across the South Yorkshire region; therefore, their experience would reflect the phenomena within the four South Yorkshire urban centres.

Table 3.7: Location of participants

Location	Number of participants
Sheffield	13
Doncaster	1
Barnsley	1
Rotherham	1
Total	16

Source: (Author's own work)

UK Census (2011) data offers data on the number of BAIEs in each town (see Chapter 4). However, my repeated efforts to get precise and current numbers of BAIEs in each urban centre suggest that no designated office in South

Yorkshire has monitoring activity including numbers. I have undertaken informal investigation and observation on the ground by talking to residents in each city, which has revealed that anecdotally, BAIE numbers have decreased dramatically, which requires further research in itself. I have learnt, by talking to Black African Immigrant residents and businesses, that there have been significant migrations of BAIE entrepreneurs from smaller urban centres (Rotherham, Barnsley and Doncaster) to bigger regional cities including, Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham and London.

Some residents were able to cite the number of businesses in their streets as they live and shop there: these have never been more than 10 or 15 at any one time. Therefore, it may be questioned if the current number of BAIEs is far less than what is indicated in the 2011 UK Census. Residents have acknowledged that the financial crisis has had a big impact on minority businesses in particular and some of them have closed down or moved to other cities (as cited above), looking for employment or better business opportunities. I have personally observed the transient nature of BAIEs - their businesses are portable due to the fact that they are mobile. The structure of BAIE businesses does not require big capital investment and, thus, they are not tied to long term investments or have very little 'capital sink', risk which makes them distinctive in their business set up and investment portfolio.

It appears that this trend is consistent with immigrant individuals who have been relocated by the Home Office, (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999) to specific cities eventually moving on to other (bigger) cities, once they have been granted 'leave to remain' or resident status, searching for better job prospects or following their social networks. Once again, there is scope here for further research which is not the focus of this PhD inquiry.

As indicated above, I have contacted South Yorkshire organisations including, chambers of commerce, business support agencies and voluntary organisations, who may have direct contact with BAIEs and they do not have up-to-date records of the size of the BAIE population in their respective urban centres.

Duration (years) in business

Table 3.8 shows that 9 of the BAIEs have been in operation for 1-5 years, whilst 7 are mature businesses which have been operating for between 6 years up to four decades. This signifies that the research is able to capture BAIEs' historical and current experiences.

Table 3.8: Duration (years) in business

Number of years	Number of participants	Remarks
1- 5	9	
6 -10	2	
11-15	3	
16 - 20	1	
Over 20 years	1	Over 40 years in operation
Total	16	

Source: (Author's own work)

It is also worth stating that the survival of BAIE businesses for the first five years is critical, and in this case, most have more than survived what are known to be critical years for small businesses and in particular for minority business, during which time, according to many studies in the domain of small businesses, most fail. For example, according to Small Businesses UK (2017), four in ten small companies do not survive for five years.

Turnover

Six of the BAIEs have disclosed their financial information or turnover, which ranges from £5000 (start-up capital) to £2 million, whereas 10 of them did not choose to disclose their turnover. It is apparent that financial information is a very sensitive matter, particularly for minority businesses, so most participants felt uneasy sharing such data, whilst some explained that they did not have the correct figures to hand and they would prefer not to mislead rather than having the motive to conceal.

Table 3.9: Turnover

Amount	Number of participants	Remarks
£5000 - £10,000	1	Initial capital
£20,000 - £30,000	1	
£50,000 - £100,000	2	
£1 million	1	
£2 million	1	
Undisclosed	10	Sensitive information!
Total	16	

Source: (Author's own work)

This research has achieved a better outcome in demonstrating the financial performances of BAIEs, albeit just less than half of the participants, than similar research by Nwanko (2005) in London, which was unable to obtain such declarations from any of the respondents due to BAIEs' perceptions of financial information as being private. One participant confessed off the record that such information is shared only with very close trusted friends and apparently to avoid unnecessary attention by the authorities in regard to taxation.

Despite the fact that some of the participants did not quantify their business success in financial terms, they were able to describe their performance in qualitative terms. For example: *'We are doing well'* (BAIE 02), *'I am happy with what I am doing'* (BAIE 09), *'I am comfortable in my life and able to support my family'* (BAIE 08), *'I have a good life work balance'* (BAIE 04). This is also consistent with BAIEs' motives and how they 'perceive' their successes in 'personal and subjective terms' rather than in 'monetary terms', as will be explored in Chapter 5. This is not a behaviour intrinsic to BAIEs, but common among small business owners as corroborated by Hall (1995) who described that the perception of 'failure, success and survival' as usually personal and subjective to small business owners and founders.

3.3.2 Collecting data – Interviews

The interviews took place between 2015 and 2016 where, on average, two informal meetings were necessary with each potential participant before the actual interview took place.

This was necessitated for three main reasons: primarily to make sure that participants were operating in legal settings and that they had traceable addresses. The author recognises the dilemma of 'illegal businesses' entities with regard to moral, ethical and legal concerns; therefore, in this research, businesses who are not operating legally or do not have a registered business address have been deliberately excluded from being the subject of this study.

Secondly, it was appreciated that pre-interview meeting(s) are necessary to meet in person and establish access and trust with participants. BAIEs are usually apprehensive and do not respond to emails, letters and phone calls. BAIEs have already been described as 'difficult to reach groups' for research purposes (Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000).

Thirdly, such meetings were recognised to be necessary to introduce the research project to the BAIEs and agree an interview date, place and time based on participants' convenience.

Therefore, it was necessary to plan for a series of personal and informal visits to participants outside of the research interview. These visits took place in different ways. For example, I had to dine in restaurants, shop in the food stores, have my hair cut in the barber shop and I took my daughter to the female hair salon, where I was able to meet the owner and had the opportunity to introduce myself and the research.

On rare occasions, I was able to secure one-to-one interviews without any need for further meetings. However, in most cases, it was necessary to arrange a second informal meeting. Sometimes this involved finding a community liaison to facilitate the meeting and to discuss this more in detail and clarify my interests before the interview. In extreme cases, such effort took as long as a year, where many meetings were cancelled. I have made purposeful efforts to ensure that female gender entrepreneurs are represented in the sample though it has not been always possible. For example, as mentioned earlier in this

chapter, I made several attempts to interview a female professional business owner which has took a year, but still a male partner was assigned to take part in the interview. I also encountered a few BAIEs who were curious about my research and were happy to spend time chatting with me but were unwilling to participate in the study.

Overall, the process proved to be extremely time consuming, but it afforded me a compelling experience and comprehensive understanding, which makes all the effort of the research endeavour worthwhile. Once I had gained their trust, participants were very keen and enthusiastic to tell their stories (lived experiences) and, as a result, this research has made some contribution in bringing depth of understanding into BAIEs' lived experiences, a phenomenon which is usually made up of complex and subtle issues intertwined within social, political and economic contexts.

A total of 1635 minutes (27 hours and 15 minutes) was spent meeting BAIEs in person and collecting data through semi-structured interviews. The detail and breakdown are indicated as follows:

- 19 hrs and 15 minutes for one-to-one interviews;
- 8 hrs for preliminary interview meetings.

This does not include the time spent on those discarded interviews, incomplete interviews, and the time spent in meeting participants individually to provide them with transcribed copies of their interviews. After each interview, such meetings were necessary to obtain the participants' verifications and where minor corrections, or clarifications took place regarding some details which took a relatively short amount of time.

The interviews were recorded on video and audio materials, after which I transcribed them myself which involved considerable time and effort but was recognised to be a valuable exercise that gave me greater insights into and familiarity with the data.

3.3.3 Research diary and reflective practice

Through my professional and personal experiences, I had already developed a habit of writing diaries and blogs regularly. This was a technique that I adopted more methodically in my research fieldwork and which formed the basis of my reflective practice. I also see that reflective and reflexive practices are embedded within the qualitative interpretative research paradigm and an act of personal development for continuous learning (Schon, 1983).

I will be discussing the applications of these two inter-connected concepts and practices within the context of my research development. I have also made use of Kolb's Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984) and Gibb's Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988) as frameworks to structure my thoughts and actions.

Reflective practice through research diaries

I adopted the research diary notes to inform my reflective practice as a conscious means of action, learning both from my mistakes and successes, through which not only did I make sense of my actions and reactions, but I also internalised them to enhance knowledge and experience. These were not discrete, one-off actions but became part of an inbuilt system of self-discipline that helped me to keep a critical eye throughout the development of my research journey.

The following is a perfectly fitting quote as I see the PhD research inquiry as a learning journey that enhanced my personal effectiveness as a researcher:

When successes are accepted without understanding their meaning, then the actions taken to create those successes, being accidental, and are unlikely to be repeated (Murdock and Scutt, 1977, p.197.)

Schon (1983) and Bound *et al.* (1985) do also emphasise the act of reflective practice that a learner or practitioner has to ritualise, or even impose, through prescribed activities and experience in order to challenge one's 'taken for granted' assumptions and bring about a higher level of behavioural changes and intellectual growth. In essence:

*Reflective learning is the process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in a changing conceptual perspective (Bound *et al.*, 1985, p.59).*

As a researcher, I agree with Jones *et al.*, (2006) that reflective practice has a moral and ethical dimension through which scholars and practitioners self-critique their assumptions, values and interpretations of the world that puzzle them.

I have structured my reflective thoughts under four headlines: Backward-looking; Inward-looking; Outward-looking; and Forward-looking. These are adapted from the reflective questions posed by the Twenty First Century Learning Academy (2011):

The need to be backward-looking serves as the mirror into my past actions by asking questions such as 'What went well and why?' and 'What didn't go so well and why?'

Through being inward-looking I question my own feelings and satisfactions, asking 'How do I perform?' (in relation to my expectations, standards and plans).

Outward-looking involves a comparative assessment in relation to others. Questions of relevance here include:

'How is it perceived by participants?'; 'What do my supervisors think about this?';

'How does this compare to other practitioners and researchers?'

Finally, the aspect of forward-looking is where I project my action plans with the view to make changes and improvements by asking questions, such as

'What improvement should I make to avoid (minimise) mistakes?' and 'How could I replicate or maintain good practices?'

I have presented the following specific example of reflective practice based on my first interview with participant BAIE 01 to provide a concrete context.

The interview was recorded both on video and iPhone recording devices but, for an 'unfortunate' reason, the sound on the video was not audible, whilst the pictures were very clear. The participant who is the manager of a high-tech electronic shop took the initiative in setting up the iPhone on a mobile stand which he offered to use from his shop. Unfortunately, he didn't press the record button properly, so nothing was recorded on the iPhone device. This was

discovered by BAIE 01 right after the interview. He was apologetic and willing to be interviewed again, if necessary.

After this incident, I outlined my reflection and shared it with my supervisory team who had the opportunity to observe the recording and read the transcription where they agreed with my reflection and offered me their comments.

Within a week, I rearranged the interview and this time, I was much more prepared, and there was a good sense of synergy between myself and the interviewee. As a result, it was a very productive interview with successful improvement, which set a good standard and almost became second nature in proceeding into further interviews.

Figure 3.5 presents a brief extract (sample) from an early incident in my reflective diary.

Figure 3.5: Sample of my interview progress, feedback and reflection

<p style="text-align: center;">Date: 20th April 2015</p> <p>What went well and what didn't go so well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The participant has good trust and is keen to tell the story, and the story is compelling• There was a system failure (audio system was quiet) and iPhone didn't record <p>How do I feel about this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disappointed, but remain positive• I was too eager for the participant to speak and didn't probe him enough to clarify, explain and provide examples.• I was busy writing notes though I maintained eye contact with the participant• I could do better <p>What do my supervisors think?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advised me that I need to allow the participant to finish his thoughts, fewer interjections, but overall good.

- The audio is quiet but audible, however, if the participant is willing to attend, it would be a good idea to conduct the interview again for comparison purposes.

How could I improve this?

- Better preparation - arrive early, test the recording equipment myself prior to commencing the interview
- Relax, undertake less writing and be more engaged in the interview
- Feel confident in seeking opinion and advice from my supervisors

Source: (Author's own work)

As illustrated above, I was able to identify common mistakes in regard to preparations and the need for checking systems and took on board the supervisory team's advice and recommendations. I undertook the second-round interview which went successfully and learned an important lesson. As a result, I developed and put in place an interview check list that became second nature for me to implement when undertaking further interviews until completion of the data collection phase.

Reflexive Practice

The core premise of reflexivity in qualitative research, as I understand it, is about recognising the position of a researcher; a claim to knowledge is the construction and interpretation of multiple realities that are shaped and impacted by the researcher's philosophical assumptions, theoretical perspectives, cognitive principles and norms.

Thus, the researcher's effort to this end is not to be defensive about this interdependency and interplay, but rather to inform others about his or her awareness and actions in the most transparent way possible.

As mentioned earlier, reflective and reflexive practices are interconnected, where the former is a routine activity through which a researcher is assessing process, events and interactions afterwards to inform the latter. Thus, routine

and habitual practices and activities enable the researcher to internalise and transform this into the next level (reflexively) as an inbuilt wisdom where the researcher is able to pay attention, respond and balance interactions of social phenomena as they happen.

Reflexive practice is an awareness of thoughts and actions as they happen, in the middle of the interaction and engagement, which implicates the researcher according to Schon (1983). Hence, to reflect is to monitor one's action as it happens by paying attention, being self-observant or being mindful about oneself and others (Roulston, 2010). To this end, this is how I have routinely integrated reflexive practice throughout the interview sessions.

In my reflexive approach, I became more alert throughout the interview process whilst 'having the end in mind' and thereby I felt able to skilfully manoeuvre the discussion. I remain engaged whilst making a mental note about the theme of the discussion and asking leading and follow-up questions as appropriate. I felt a sense of duty to constantly weigh up whether the information provided was adequate and consistent for what was to become the basis of my knowledge claim. This 'helicopter view advantage point' gave me 'multi-tasking' responsibility and judgement. I was simultaneously checking my own actions and interaction, together with the participants' integrity and consistency to ultimately ensure that the foundation of my 'knowledge claims' were 'solid' and were grounded within the standards and conventions of the chosen methodology.

3.3.4 Setbacks, challenges and action learnings

The purpose of highlighting some of my setbacks and challenges as a researcher is that others may learn from this in handling and overcoming challenges, whilst remaining focused and making progress in their research development. I am certain that this experience has given me a tremendous set of personal and professional skills including, resilience, resourcefulness, determination, commitment and intellectual growth.

The challenges I faced were multi-dimensional: emotional, practical and professional in nature. I will be discussing further aspects of my 'personal

learning and reflection' in Chapter 7. For now, the focus is on technical setbacks and practical challenges and experience.

Technical setbacks

During the PhD development, I have encountered very unfortunate technical computer problems on more than two occasions where I lost significant amounts of work which caused me huge stress. Without going into the details, some of it could have been prevented by saving or backing-up data in multiple locations rather than relying on the PC hard drive or flash disks. The latest incident was the worst of all; I lost my data analysis at a critical stage of my research. Everything possible was done by IT experts both at SHU and externally, but it proved to be beyond retrieval. So, I learnt the lesson about the need to have a research data management plan in the hardest way.

My supervisors were very understanding and supportive during this time and I had to undertake data analysis multiple times, which, paradoxically, not only helped me to gain familiarity with my data, but also helped me to be very critical in my analysis and overall discussions. However, I would not recommend this option to anyone, by any means!

As a result, I am now backing up all of my work every day, routinely and in multiple locations in line with the University's research data management guidelines (issued subsequently to my experiences).

Change of Director of Studies (DoS)

The Director of Studies (DoS) for my PhD has changed four times, the last two times was due to staffing changes at the university. My current supervisors joined my project at the writing-up stage which has been destructive for my focus alongside attempts to deal with all the administrative formalities to ensure continuity and consistency of supervision in line with research degree policies.

In summary, some of the challenges and setbacks that I faced were beyond my control, whilst others were due to lack of self-discipline and experience which, admittedly, caused me stress and cost me time and resources. However, on

reflection, overcoming those challenges has given me valuable lessons and equipped me with 'skills for life'. I have become a more methodical, patient, resourceful, rational and an intellectual being. Above all, throughout the PhD inquiry I remained focused and accomplished the research task within the registration time and in line with the resources available through sheer determination, commitment and humility, perhaps learning about myself as much as the project itself.

3.4 Data analysis, process and procedures

The adoption of a phenomenological research approach informs the researcher's methods of research operationalisation (data collection, organisation and analysis). Thus, in this particular research, data is collected through semi-structured interviews and the organisation and analysis of data is implemented through hybrid methods of **phenomenological interpretation of themes and meanings** (Van Manen, 1990; Wertz et al., 2011) and adapted thematic coding that incorporates a provisional list (prior coding) harmonised with emergent themes (Saldana, 2013).

The hybrid methods are justified in order to capture the complex and subtle phenomena of BAIEs' interactions and relationships in the dynamic business and institutional environment that the research is investigating.

Figures, 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 present a snapshot of the categorisations, organisations and data analysis.

Particularly, Figure 3.7 'BAIEs Coding category and summary framework on motivation and support, challenges and opportunities' has identified the top eight coding structures, (public sector institutional factors, employment environment factors, private institutional factors, co-ethnic community factors, societal factors, international, regional and global factors and entrepreneur's internal factors) where green highlighted numbers cite clearly the corresponding sections in each chapter of the thesis.

On the other hand, direct quotes from participants have been categorised and organised into similar themes, through **phenomenological interpretation** of themes and meanings in the findings chapter.

Whereas through thematic coding (as adapted figure 3.6), it has been possible to identify a coding structure. For example, figure 3.8 illustrates how BAIEs' key findings of challenges (barriers) have been identified as demonstrated in Table 5.3.1 which are linked to the theories discussed in the literature sections 2.5.2 to 2.5.4.

In the same way, BAIEs' Key opportunities are identified in section 5.4 and are linked to the relevant theories in the literature review sections 2.5.5 to 2.5.7.

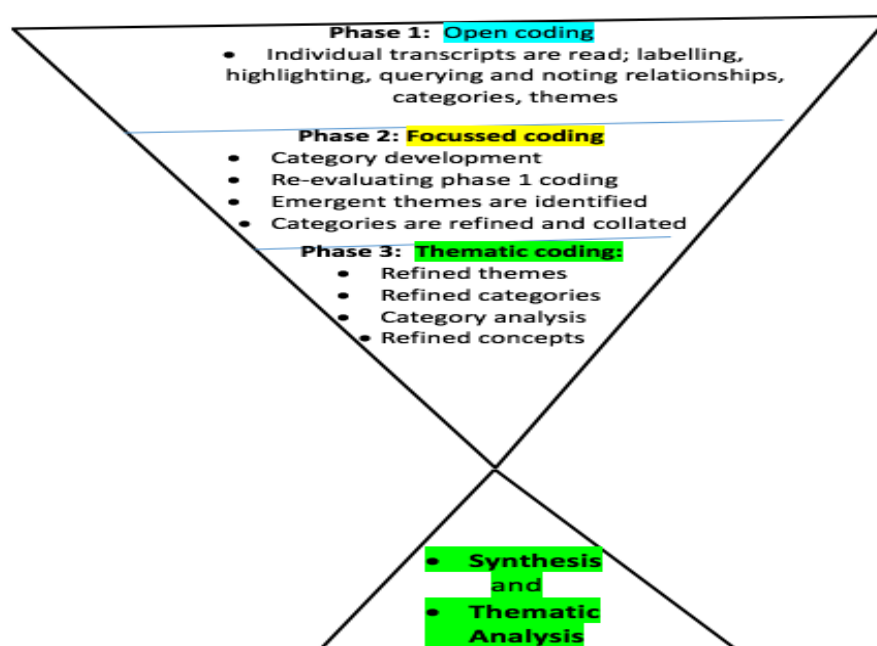
BAIEs' key motivations have been identified under section 5.2 and are linked to the literature review section 2.5.5 to 2.5.7.

I have developed a Reversed Triangle Coding Framework (see Figure 3.6) to illustrate the three-phase development of the research data collection, organisation, coding and analysis.

Prior to this, I have observed and adopted ideas from existing frameworks and recommendations by Krathwohl (1993), Bazeley (2013) and Saldana (2013). It is recognised that some of these are designed for a quantitative approach (employing cross tabulation, correlation, regression and factor analysis) but qualitative approaches were also noted to offer descriptive sequences (first cycle coding, second cycle coding and focused coding) using extended phrases and sentences which are the basis of thematic analysis (Smith and Osborn, 2008; Saldana, 2013).

I have therefore incorporated these ideas to illustrate the chronological development of the data collection, coding and analysis procedures involved in this PhD research study based on a metaphorical analogy of reversed triangles. Figure 3.6 serves as a framework to conceptualise how the process begins from a wide-open angle, narrowing down to much more focused key findings (issues) and then the angle expands again, at the synthesis and analysis phase.

Figure 3.6: Revised Triangle coding framework



Source: (Author's own work)

See also figure 3.8 for the screen short evidence of the complete cycle of data collection, organisation, labelling, coding and analysis.

Phase 1, Open coding.

This is the initial phase where a preliminary coding takes place at different stages of collecting data, such as during the interview, filing notes, transcribing the interview and reading transcribed and printed texts by labelling, highlighting and bolding sentences and paragraphs, recognised as 'open coding' (Bazeley, 2013). This phase is also recognised to involve 'content analysis' (Krathwohl, 1993) where relevant texts are identified and coded into meaningful information according to the research question. Then, this data is aggregated into patterns and trends as confirmed by the literature or emerging during the process at the phases of focused and thematic coding (ibid).

I began familiarising and sorting out the rich data from its raw contents (video and audio) to transcribing into Microsoft Word electronic files and in printed paper formats. I applied basic systems of coding, which have been fundamental to the stages of familiarising, categorising, querying and refining data. For example, I employed the technique of highlighting using electronic colour codings (red = challenges, green = opportunities, blue = support, purple =

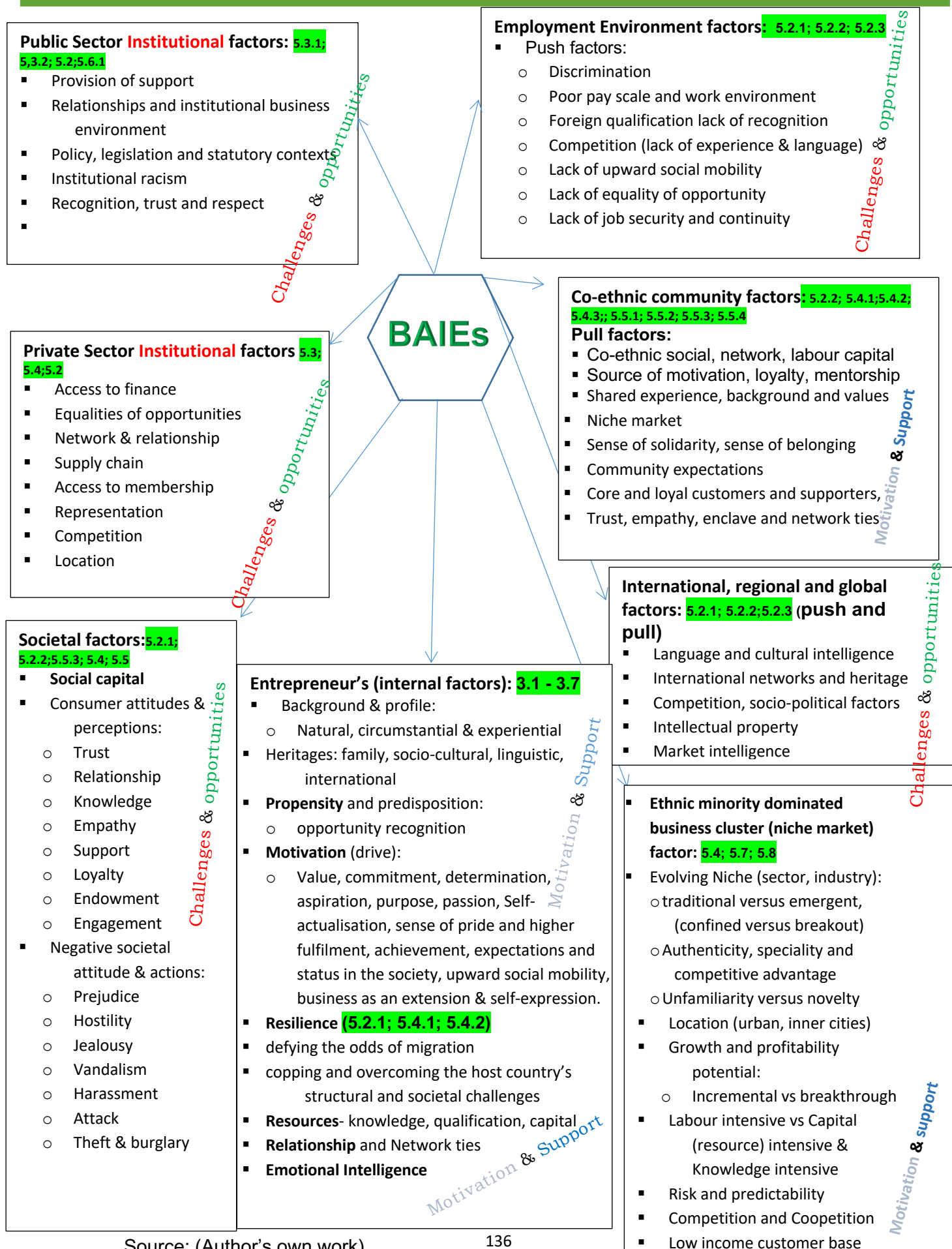
quotes, faint blue = motivation and bold highlighted words, phrases and sentences) in relation to key themes and concepts. I also kept a thesis diary where I noted down crucial links, relationships and queries. Once I completed the transcriptions, I spent a significant amount of time reading each transcript several times and making notes and highlighting key and emerging categories on printed materials. During this process, themes of patterns, trends and concepts were defined with existing literature as provisional coding (Saldana, 2013) whilst some evolved and new concepts emerged. This is a common progression of coding in qualitative research according to Saldana (2013).

Phase 2, Focused coding

During this phase, I began to identify categories and created columns in Microsoft Excel where two-stage Excel tables were created into which the data had been extracted from the transcript, transferred and populated into corresponding categories (fields) to demonstrate relationships between these themes and against the research sub-questions.

It is here where defined categories were developed, such as shared characteristics of BAIEs' profiles, business types, motivation, what BAIEs consider challenges and opportunities, whilst 'resilience' and 'social capital' have emerged as new categories after analysing 'co-ethnic groups' as core supporters, employees and customers. See Figure 3.8 for a 'screen shot' example and complete cycle of data collection, organisation, labelling, coding and analysis whilst Figure 3.7 presents the coding categories and summary with corresponding chapters, topics and numbers.

Figure 3.7: BAIEs Coding category and summary framework on motivation and support, challenges and opportunities (TM)



Source: (Author's own work)

Figure 3.8: Screen shot and example of complete cycle of data, collection, organisation coding and analysis

7/13

BAIE 03 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

TM: Reflecting on your own experience to date, what are the main challenges and barriers you have been facing (if you have any at all) in running your business?

BAIE 03: Always, barriers come in all directions. To start with, one of the things that encourage me to do a private enterprise is that when I was graduated in 1980, my thesis was one of the best, but I saw the end of exclusion in regard to employment opportunities. It didn't matter how good you are, if you are not local (intelligence). This discouraged me a lot. I applied about 10 employment positions after my PhD (1980) and even in 88 after my temporary employment in Brussels - Europe after a well-paid job. This was at the time of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's period when lectures were cut off from their permanent tenure. There was so much shake up where every lecturer was very busy applying for job in several universities. So those of us with less experience and plus one who comes with foreign accent and one that didn't work the British System, was very difficult. I applied for 70 positions, including to some which I was over qualified, and also to role that was perfectly suited to my qualification, I had everything to go for. I couldn't even get invitation for interview.

TM: What do you think was the reason?

BAIE 03: Well, I have got the answer later on. There were incidents that I become quite a recognised name putting applications many times and some people who administer the process felt sympathetic towards me and were able to share some insights when I questioned them over the phone as to why I wasn't successful and I didn't even get a response. Usually, you get a standard response. There are two types of responses; when you apply if you don't have a recognised standard that they didn't bother to process your application

and there are few which they recognised and should be interviewed. Then if you get an interview, and you get a reply you that unfortunately on the day there were other people who were more suitable and you were unsuccessful. But, I was not in that category. I was not a candidate. And there were incidents when I have been told by some individual administrators that my problem was that I was indeed well qualified and at times over qualified for the job you are applying, but it is your name! You will never get this kind of job in this country in this area and that gave me the strength. It cost me! I was not blaming anybody. I then said to myself, I will follow my father's footsteps. Hence, I started to doing my own business whilst applying for jobs outside universities.

TM: are you grateful, you don't get the job considering what you have done now?

BAIE 03: Well, I always believed, I will get a job or I will create a job that was always with me. I never and never had time to complain. It is their loss too, they didn't give a job to me, and I created my own job. In fact I even employed quite few people, but I don't regret it. I earn more than a consultant who is sweating but I work less work, but earn more even at my retirement. I see that I have got an interesting job and I am quite happy. So, I don't regret it or regret it.

TM: What do you think are the main challenges and barriers that other businesses (BAIEs) are facing in South Yorkshire specifically and in The United Kingdom generally?

TM: let us think about business specific difficulties, what were your business-related problems.

BAIE 03: of course, there were many and you cannot run business without facing difficulties and risks. There are always difficulties and there are always challenges. But I am not interested in challenges, I think you will tell me and I won't give you when I face a problem, I face it very early, because I know I will deal with it. I don't deal with them, I will find somebody who can. There are very bad challenges, for example accidents where my property was on fire and you have tenants living there or tenants are fighting each and set to murder each other. What do you do? I am talking about in a property (blocks of flats) where twenty students living there and they are under great danger. Such incident brought the ambulance and the fire services. This could be potentially detrimental to your business. So, in business you can face all sorts of problem which is beyond yourself.

2. Organisation of data (labelling, coding and content analysis)

	Participant	Background	Motivation	Qualifications	Challenges (Barriers)	Opportunities	Recommendation	Support from family, friends and community	Customers	Business support	Products/services	Relationships-Inst.	Resilience
BAIE 01													
BAIE 02													
BAIE 03													
BAIE 04													
BAIE 05													
BAIE 06													
BAIE 07													
BAIE 08													
BAIE 09													
BAIE 10													
BAIE 11													
BAIE 12													
BAIE 13													
BAIE 14													
BAIE 15													
BAIE 16													
Summary													
Time													

3. Summary coding (refining, summarising and thematic analysis)

	Code1	Code 2	Key points	BAIE 01	BAIE 02	BAIE 03	BAIE 04	BAIE 05
BAIE 01								
BAIE 02								
BAIE 03								
BAIE 04								
BAIE 05								
BAIE 06								
BAIE 07								
BAIE 08								
BAIE 09								
BAIE 10								
BAIE 11								
BAIE 12								
BAIE 13								
BAIE 14								
BAIE 15								
BAIE 16								
Summary								
Time								

Source: (Author's own work)

Please note that Figures 3.7 and 3.8 are not intended for a reader to read the content details, but they are included to provide snapshot-illustrations of the development and complete cycle of data collection, organisation, labelling, coding and emergence of thematic categories in this research.

Needless to say, the process was iterative; it was necessary to revisit and analyse transcripts for confirmation, corrections and justifications even after categories were developed. This led to Phase 3 where, through the process of thematic coding, refinement of themes took place.

Phase 3, Thematic coding

This was the final phase of the coding process, where Phases 1 and 2 were further refined and consolidated, facilitating the identification of clearly defined categories and themes according to their relevance to the research sub-questions and in line with the overall research objectives. This final phase presents a clear picture from which to draw analysis and conclusions of the research findings.

The three-phase development of coding is in line with phenomenological research which seeks to continually develop *'description, analysis and understanding of people's perceptions and interpretations of their experience that are socially significant aspects of their reality'* (Bazeley, 2013, p.247). Thus, I developed key categories and themes through a stage-by-stage sorting and coding process that produced logically related categories in a coherent framework. This facilitated the mapping of BAIEs' collective understanding of their lived experiences from which I am able to demonstrate key findings and draw analysis and conclusions in the findings (Chapter 5).

3.5 Ethical considerations

The research was subject to University research ethics approval. Throughout the research process all of the ethical considerations were in line with the SHU research ethics and integrity framework. As mentioned earlier I also consulted external sources of best ethical practices and recommendations, mindful of the

principle that 'research should do no harm' to the researched nor the researcher.

I was deeply aware that it is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that each potential issue/subject of research enquiry is carefully examined and that participants are consulted as necessary about any potential implications and discomfort that may arise. I ensured that individuals who were taking part in the research were informed in person and in writing that they were free to withdraw their consent from participating in the study at any time.

All participants were adults, deemed mentally and physically stable and were enthusiastic to volunteer to share their stories.

As explained in section 3.3.1 'Identifying potential participants and the process of sampling', 5 candidates were withdrawn from the interviews on the basis that they did not want to be audio or video recorded and were unwilling to sign the consent form.

Thus, the participants were well-informed through the letter of introduction, participant information, the consent form (Appendices, 3.4 and 3.5) and, above all, in person during the preliminary meeting about the purposes of the study and the dissemination of research findings.

It is the role of the researcher to ensure confidentiality at all times, unless explicit consent is given by participants. All reasonable steps should be taken so that confidential details are secured and not published or passed on to any third party. The researcher may have to preserve anonymity of participants' identities when reporting the findings of the analysis (Claire and Raymond, 1993) if this should be required by the participants. The relationship between the researcher and the participant must be based on trust and integrity and the researcher must ensure that the participant's information is fully protected.

To this end, it was agreed that the identity of all participants are anonymised and the participants have been assigned codes from 'BAIE 01' to 'BAIE 16', whilst participants are willing for the researcher to retain types of business and locations in any academic publications following on from the research findings.

Due to the nature of the research, there were no identified risks, conflicts of interest or concerns regarding the safety and security of the participants during

or after the interview. All interviews took place in the business premises of participants and at a date and time that was most suitable to them, and I took the utmost care to ensure that their business operations were not affected by virtue of their involvement in the interview process.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, copies of their interview transcripts were shared with the participants in order to verify that the recorded text was a true description of their story. Additionally, during the process of data analysis the identification of themes was shared with my supervisory team as a means of corroboration in line with striving for trustworthiness in qualitative data.

3.6 Limitations

There are some limitations of this study that I wish to acknowledge.

Firstly, it is acknowledged that the research is limited in its geographic scope to four urban centres in South Yorkshire (Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster and Barnsley) and but it is not intended to be generalisable, although it is intended that there will be scope for researchers of BAIEs in other urban centres to consider transferability of findings in other national and international contexts. The focus of the research is justified within the specified geographic context for a number of reasons; firstly, due to the fact that the majority (63%) of the BAIEs are new arrivals (1990s - 2000s) and were dispatched to South Yorkshire following the Home Office policy of dispersal of asylum seekers across the UK (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999 according to Legislation.gov.uk/1999). The BAIEs in this research study are 'recent settlers' in South Yorkshire but they are also transient in nature and move between cities once their asylum case is processed for better jobs, opportunities and social networks. Nevertheless, their lived experiences will, at least partly, draw on their residency in South Yorkshire at the time of the interviews.

Most of the limitations are associated with the qualitative nature of the research and the difficulty in applying conventional standards of reliability, validity and replicability (Burns, 2000). In response to this, a need to demonstrate trustworthiness of data was acknowledged (Guba, 1981; Shenton, 2004) with respect to the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of

research findings. Credibility was addressed through prolonged engagement with and persistent observations of the sample through a series of interactions, alongside triangulation of the interview data with secondary research sources and personal experiences of being a Black African Immigrant Entrepreneur prior to my employment as a university academic. The issue of transferability was addressed through the employment of purposive sample that was intended to ensure a range of BAIE experiences were captured (as discussed in section 3.3.1). It should however be noted that there is a limitation in that most immigrants in the UK are first generation; in this research study sample, all but one participant is a second-generation immigrant.

Dependability is intended to be facilitated through the detailed and rich description of the research process that has been offered in this chapter. As already mentioned, confirmability has been considered in relation to clarifying transcribed data with participants and sharing my identification of data themes with the supervisory team.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the methodological considerations that are intrinsically linked to the researcher's philosophical assumptions, theoretical perspectives and affiliations in designing the research inquiry on Immigrant Entrepreneurship, and in particular the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire.

To this end, I have presented my role as a social researcher, recognising associated influences and adopting practical and technical applications to maintain the integrity of the research within its methodological conventions, including integrated reflective and reflective practices.

The study is underpinned by an interpretivist phenomenological approach exploring entrepreneurial motivations, attributes, opportunities and challenges and other associated phenomena as shown in 3.3.1 from BAIEs' perspectives, emanating from their distinctive migrant backgrounds, specific historical, socio-political and economic contexts.

The chapter has demonstrated a well-documented process of identifying and nominating 16 participants, using purposive sampling that fulfils the research objectives and research questions (Bryman and Bell, 2011), across a wider range of business sectors and portfolios.

The research has adopted a semi-structured interview, a commonly used research method, in an exploratory research; in this particular case, how BAIEs make sense of their lived experience as immigrant entrepreneurs in the host nation, through which the research endeavours to examine the dynamics of societal, institutional, ethnic, and entrepreneurial factors, grounded in social capital and mixed embeddedness theories discussed in Chapter 2.

Participants' selection criteria, process and steps have been adequately justified as illustrated in Figures 3.3 and 3.4, whilst the systematic organisation, coding and analysis of findings has been illustrated through a Reversed Triangle Coding framework (Figure 3. 6). Furthermore, the complete cycle has been exemplified in Figure 3.8, depicting the chronological development of key categories through three phases of content analysis, coding and thematic analysis.

The research has demonstrated that it meets the ethical considerations in line with SHU policy and best practice recommended by prominent authors by making sure that participants' safety and confidentiality is maintained throughout, as explained and evidenced by the relevant letters and consent form. Whilst maintaining the relevant methodological conventions in regard to this research, I have acknowledged some limitations of the study.

The next chapter, Chapter 4, presents the specific geographical context of the research.

Chapter 4: Context

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a brief overview and snapshot of South Yorkshire's history, geography, demography, business and economic activities and its regional and business environment implications on BAIEs' enterprises as discussed by Hofstede, (1991), Ram, (1993), Deakins *et al.* (2009) and GEM, (2016/17) in section 1.4.

Most of the background literature (data, information, policy documents and practices) to inform this chapter has been obtained from stakeholders and affiliated national, regional and local organisations in the UK

The data and information are extracted from a range of national, regional and local sources about the wider region of Yorkshire and the Humber, focusing particularly on South Yorkshire. The principal data sources include: Economic Development for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities in South Yorkshire: Final Report (EKOS, 2007); Local Economic Growth Initiative report (LEGI, 2006); Census (2011); historical publications (Pollard and Holmes, 1976; Beattie, 1986); Migration Yorkshire (2017); Sheffield Migration Stories (Runnymede, 2012); Report of the Commission of Inquiry into The Needs of Black and Minority Ethnic People in Doncaster (John, 2002); Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership (YHRMP, 2009); and the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2011).

I would also like to acknowledge the discussions and personal communications that I have had with the following organizations which have helped in locating additional information:

- Creative Sheffield;
- Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance (REMA);
- Doncaster Ethnic Minority Regeneration Partnership (DEMRP);
- Barnsley Black and Ethnic Minority Initiative (BBEMI).

Whilst stories and background information about geography, migration and demography are presented in descriptive style throughout this chapter, data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2011) is mainly in statistical format

which I have adapted and presented into table formats for the purpose of this thesis.

I recognise that the information resources that underpin this chapter of the thesis are designed with the political agendas of institutions in mind I also acknowledge that universities, independent think tanks and voluntary organisations have adopted various research methodologies in their respective publications that allow for a less politicised view of regional geographical contexts. However, there is still limited evidence of extensive research that spans the context of Black African immigration, minority ethnic entrepreneurship and immigrant entrepreneurship in South Yorkshire.

In Chapter 2 the question of identity was raised with respect to the status of BAIEs as simultaneously falling into the category of 'immigrant', 'minority ethnic' and 'Black African' entrepreneurs. The focus of this research remains on BAIEs, acknowledging this to be a social group with multiple, intersected identities. Thus, I have explored and incorporated data and information from the wider umbrella group, 'Black and Minority Ethnic (BMEs)', as I consider that they have common characteristics and shared experiences and it is therefore appropriate to include such data as part of the research context.

Hereon in, the chapter is structured into five sections: history and geography; demography; economy; BME-specific challenges; and summary to provide an overview and snapshot of South Yorkshire as a location of BAIEs.

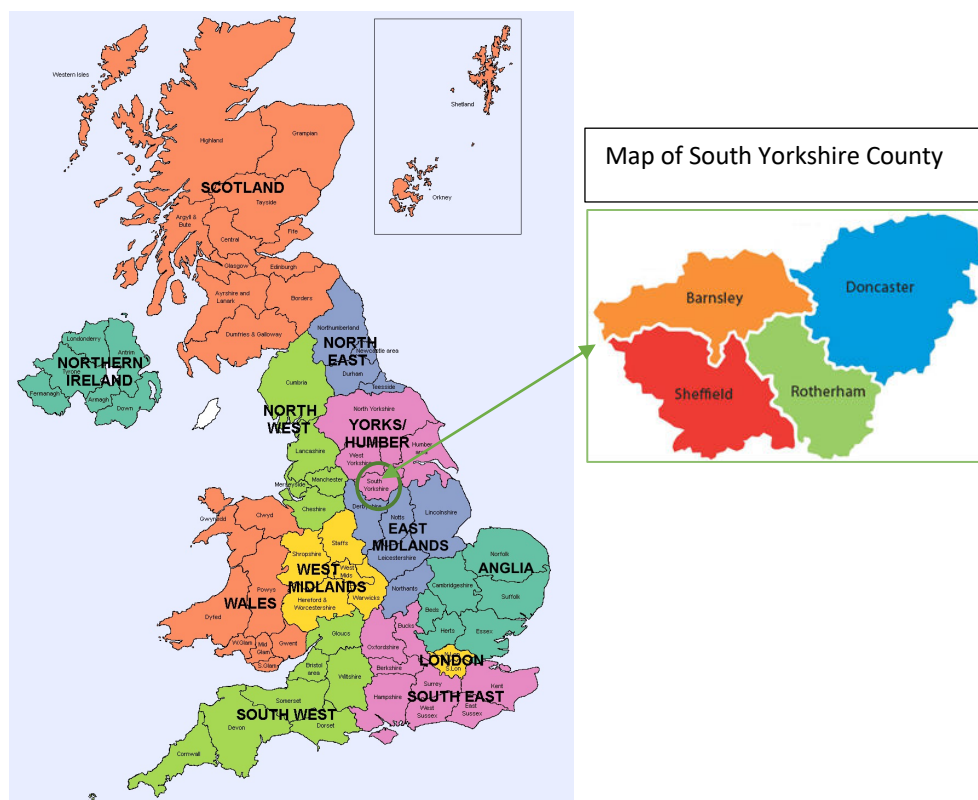
4.2 History and Geography

South Yorkshire is a metropolitan county in the north of England. It is the most southerly county in the Yorkshire and Humberside region with an area of 1,552 square kilometres (599 sq.km) comprising four metropolitan boroughs: Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. As a county, South Yorkshire was created on 1 April 1974 following the Local Government Act 1972 (Mapsofworld, 2014).

South Yorkshire has borders with Derbyshire (to the south-west), West Yorkshire (to the north-west), North Yorkshire (to the north), the East Riding of

Yorkshire (to the north-west), Lincolnshire (to the east) and Nottinghamshire (to the south-east) (ibid): see Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: Map of UK and South Yorkshire county



Source: Electoral Calculus (2018) ©Electoral Calculus, reproduced with permission.
(See Appendix 4.1 for the Electoral Calculus letter of copyright permission).

4.3 Demography

This section illustrates the changes, trends and challenges of demography by ethnicity, based on the 2011 UK Census, highlighting the relative growth of BMEs in the South Yorkshire region whilst pointing out associated challenges and opportunities.

Population trends and comparisons regionally and nationally

Historically, the patterns of immigration to South Yorkshire are in line with national trends, where the first immigrants arriving in the UK were from the Caribbean and Pakistan/India for hundreds of years and then, more recently, a significant proportion of refugees have come from countries such as Yemen

and from the African continent escaping war, conflict and political prosecution according to Migration Yorkshire (2017) and the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership (YHRMP, 2009)

Population growth in South Yorkshire is driven by a combination of international migration and natural changes and according to Migration Yorkshire (2017), Sheffield has the largest population with over half a million people and, in addition, has grown fastest at a rate of 1.1% which has dominated the size and rate of changes in the region. The 2015 migration report reveals that the greatest number of new arrivals are settled in Sheffield. This is perceived to have had a positive impact on the region in terms of supplying the necessary labour force for the economy as the fertility rate for South Yorkshire is below the identified 'replacement level' needed to maintain the population level without future international migration.

I have adopted the population categorisation from the UK Census (2011), though I would like to acknowledge and reiterate from Chapters 1 and 2 that there are some weaknesses in endorsing the ethnic classifications used by the UK Census. These classifications and categories are complex, overlapping and do not reveal clear and accurate empirical representation, particularly for Black African minorities as illustrated next (Nwankwo, 2005). Black Africans as a census group were introduced only in the 1991 census (Daley, 1998).

UK Census, 2011

This may be a subject of another research study and one of the recommendations that I would like to suggest is that future censuses clearly identify ethnic groups and origins by country of birth, including Black African countries. For the purposes of this research, their exact number is not so important, as explained in the Methodology chapter. Therefore, ethnic classification of Black African categories in the 2011 UK Census has served as a general indicator of trends and changes at regional and national levels about the subject and unit analysis of this research.

Table 4.1 shows that the overall BME population in England and Wales is nearer to eight million (14% of the population), and the Census (2011) shows

that this population is increasing compared to the ageing white population, whereas the following table (4.2) shows the proportion of BMEs in the wider region of Yorkshire and Humberside, where the number of Black Africans is significantly lower.

Table 4.1: Population - England and Wales

Ethnic Group	England		Wales		England and Wales	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
All usual residents	53,012,456	100.0	3,063,456	100	56,075,912	100.0
White	45,281,142	85.4	2,928,253	95.6	48,209,395	86.0
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1,192,879	2.3	31,521	1.0	1,224,400	2.2
Asian/Asian British	4,143,403	7.8	70,128	2.3	4,213,531	7.5
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	1,846,614	3.5	18,276	0.6	1,864,890	3.3
Other ethnic groups	548,418	1.0	15,278	0.5	563,696	1.0
All Ethnic minorities population	7,731,314	14	135,203	4	7,866,517	14

Source: (Census, 2011)

Table 4.2 shows that the number of all ethnic minorities in Yorkshire and Humber is 591,777 (11%). The demography of Black African origins comes under the black population, black and mixed category which is 80,345 (1.5%), but the census does not show clearly Black Africans separately, as discussed above.

Table 4.2: Population in Yorkshire and Humber

	Value	Percent
All categories: ethnic group	5,283,733	100.0
White	4,691,956	88.8
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	4,531,137	85.8
White: Irish	26,410	0.5
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	4,378	0.1
White: Other White	130,031	2.5
Mixed	84,558	1.6
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	33,241	0.6
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	9,321	0.2
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	26,008	0.5
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	15,988	0.3
Asian	385,964	7.3
Asian/Asian British: Indian	69,252	1.3
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	225,892	4.3
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	22,424	0.4
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	28,435	0.5
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	39,961	0.8
Black	80,345	1.5
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	46,033	0.9
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	23,420	0.4
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	10,892	0.2
Other	40,910	0.8
Other ethnic group: Arab	21,340	0.4
Other ethnic group:	19,570	0.4
All Ethnic Minority population	591,777	11%

Source: (Census, 2011)

The next tables (Table 4.3 and Table 4.3.1) present the demography of Black Africans in the county of South Yorkshire, which is higher by 3% compared to the wider Yorkshire and Humber region as a whole: 80,345 (1.5%).

Table 4.3: Population in South Yorkshire

Ethnic Group	Barnsley		Doncaster		Rotherham		Sheffield		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	Percent
All residents	231,221	100	302,402	100	257,280	100	552,698	100	1,344,001	100%
White	226,285	98	288,066	95	240,758	94	462,544	84	1,218,024	90.6%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1,630	0.7	3,321	1.1	2,551	1.0	13,289	2.4	20,796	1.5%
Asian/Asian British	1,661	0.7	7,614	2.5	10,551	4.1	44,385	8.0	64,226	4.8%
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British: African	995	0.4	1,309	0.4	1,672	0.6	11,543	2.1	15,523	1.2%
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British: Caribbean	149	0.1	778	0.3	283	0.1	5,506	1.0	6,718	0.005
Black/African/Caribbean/ Black British: Other Black	77	0.03	250	0.1	157	0.1	3,033	0.5	3,518	0.003
Other ethnic group	424	0.2	1,064	0.4	1,308	0.5	12,398	2.2	15,197	1.13%
All Ethnic population	4,936	2%	14,336	5%	16,522	6%	90,154	16%	125,978	9.4%

Source: (Census, 2011)

Table 4.3.1 presents specifically the Black African/Caribbean/British/African population in South Yorkshire's four urban cities extracted from Table 4.3.

Table 4.3.1: Summary of the population of Black African/Caribbean/British/African and other Black in South Yorkshire

Towns	Total Number	Percentage of the total population (231,221)
Barnsley	1,221	0.5%
Doncaster	2,337	0.8%
Rotherham	2,112	0.8%
Sheffield	20,082	3.6%
Total	25,752	6%

Source: (Census, 2011)

Table 4.3 shows the population of South Yorkshire where the total BME population is 125,978 (9.4%), of which Black African/Caribbean/British/African are 25, 752 (6%).

However, it is not clear what is the exact number of Black African Immigrants from the above overlapping and complex identifications. It could be estimated as much as half of the total groups. Thus, over 12,000 (3%) considering the recent migrants are mainly from the African countries in this category, and the number is likely to grow, according to (Migration Yorkshire, 2017 and Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership (YHRMP, 2009). EKOS (2007, p.6) has reported that:

BME communities were predicted to account for more than 50% of population growth nationally between the years of 1999 to 2009 against an ageing white population

The Migration Observatory (2016) has also consolidated the trends of population growth; more than 53% between 1991 and 2014 were attributed to the direct contribution of net migration, a trend that would have economic and social impacts in South Yorkshire.

On the other hand, the range of economic development and labour market indicators demonstrate that the performance amongst some of BME communities, in particular Black African Migrant communities, is significantly lower compared to the White or Asian population, a topic that is discussed next.

4.4 Economy, employment and business activities in South Yorkshire

Historically, in South Yorkshire, as the wider region of Yorkshire and Humberside, the economy was dominated by heavy industries: mining, agriculture, steel and textiles. South Yorkshire has inherited massive job losses and unemployment following the decline of these heavy industries in the 1980s and the restructuring of the economy (Legi, 2006).

The variations in economic performance indicators where BMEs are achieving less are even higher in South Yorkshire as compared to the UK national average. This trend would be likely to continue or even worsen, further reinforcing social division, poor community cohesion and marginalisation of these disadvantaged groups, making the long term social and economic cost very high. Thus, the EKOS report (2007) and Census (2011) have highlighted the need for informed policy intervention to enable BMEs to engage productively in the economic activities and use their full potential by overcoming barriers. The next tables (Table 4.4 and Table 4.5) present the economic activities by ethnicity at national and regional levels where Black Africans consistently indicate lower (6%) than the national and regional average (9%) according to the UK Census (2011).

Table 4.4: Economic Activity in England (all categories: Age 16 and over)

Ethnic Group	All categories: Economic activity Total	Economically active		Economically active: Self-employed		Economically active: Unemployed		Economically inactive:	
		Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
All categories: All Ethnic group	42,989,620	27,332,373	64%	3,846,289	9%	2,023,485	5%	15,657,247	36%
White: Total	37,452,110	23,768,813	63%	3,384,577	9%	1,556,703	4%	13,683,297	37%
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Total	654,129	441,657	68%	48,829	7%	65,642	10%	212,472	32%
Asian/Asian British: Total	3,123,249	1,955,513	63%	291,278	9%	208,605	7%	1,167,736	37%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Total	1,342,033	921,133	69%	82,770	6%	158,567	12%	420,900	31%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	682,466	477,090	70%	42,287	6%	86,882	13%	205,376	30%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	487,733	327,512	67%	29,700	6%	48,492	10%	160,221	33%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	171,834	116,531	68%	10,783	6%	23,193	13%	55,303	32%
Other ethnic group: Total	418,099	245,257	59%	38,835	9%	33,968	8%	172,842	41%

Source: (Census, 2011)

Table 4.4 demonstrates economic activities of the population by ethnicity from the age of 16 and over in England, where 'Self-employment' average for all ethnic groups is 9%, white total 9%, mixed total 7%, Asian total 9%, but Black total 6% which is 3% less than the average total. On the other hand, the unemployment data for the black population is between 12% and 13%, compared to Asian 7%, mixed 10% and white 4%.

Although the data does not reveal detailed analysis, unemployment in the black population is three times higher than among the white population.

Table 4.5: Yorkshire and Humberside Economic activity by ethnic group (all ages 16 and over) self-employed

Local authority: county / unitary	All categories: Ethnic group	Mixed/multi- ple ethnic group: Total	Asian/ Asian British: Total	Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British: Total	Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British: African	Black/African/ Caribbean/ Black British: Caribbean	Black/African/ Caribbean / Black British: Other Black	Other ethnic group: Total
Barnsley	13,234	65	233	36	15	16	5	25
Bradford	31,751	416	9,049	352	139	186	27	375
Calderdale	14,203	133	1,122	61	17	35	9	39
Doncaster	16,400	117	796	102	49	42	11	93
East Riding of Yorkshire	25,335	106	334	33	20	10	3	60
Kingston upon Hull, City of	9,873	106	402	72	60	6	6	117
Kirklees	27,723	282	5,029	306	58	225	23	155
Leeds	42,656	568	4,652	808	365	285	158	465
North East Lincolnshire	7,596	38	266	31	23	6	2	56
North Lincolnshire	8,989	34	428	16	8	5	3	46
North Yorkshire	58,047	236	542	109	59	22	28	86
Rotherham	14,122	70	1,131	63	30	26	7	80
Sheffield	30,265	354	3,060	639	280	263	96	439
Wakefield	16,855	105	916	102	65	28	9	70
York	12,449	87	288	46	26	16	4	60
Total	329,498	2,717	28,248	2,776	1,214	1,171	391	2,166

Source: (Census, 2011) Table 4.5 shows self-employment data in Yorkshire and Humberside and particularly in South Yorkshire's four urban towns, where self-employment for Black/African/Caribbean/British businesses make up a total of 840, consisting of Barnsley (36), Doncaster (102), Rotherham (63) and Sheffield (639).

4.5 BME specific challenges (barriers) at community and employment (self-employment) levels

Most of the report and research materials cited in the introduction to this chapter identified that BMEs in general and specifically Black African Immigrants face barriers (external and internal) that impede their integration within mainstream British society and their ability to unleash their potential in order to become productive members of society on two fronts (external and internal). Some of the key challenges are presented in bullet points under the summary headings of internal and external challenges in Figure 4.2. These are the key issues as acknowledged by the aforementioned stakeholders and independent parties (John, 2002; Legi, 2006; EKOS, 2007; YHRMP, 2009; UK Census, 2011; Migration Yorkshire, 2017) who have engaged and researched about the challenges of BME communities' economic activities and labour market in South Yorkshire and beyond. It is worth noting that most of these findings corroborate the particular findings of this research, as explored in the next chapter (Chapter 5).

Figure 4.2: Summary of Internal and external barriers (challenges) at community and employment (self-employment) levels.

A: Summary of Internal barriers:

- Ethnic minority communities live in most deprived inner cities
- Get stereotyped and stuck in 'their own' stereotyping
- Lack of proficiency in English language is perceived as a key barrier for both new and old communities
- Lack of role models and representation
- Lack of contacts and networks
- Family circumstances and added responsibilities
- Lack of confidence to be able to fulfil career ambitions
- Young skilled and qualified people attracted to bigger cities unable to fulfil career ambitions locally.

B: Summary of External barriers (challenges)

- Experience of racist abuse and attacks common against newly settling immigrant communities
- Police not trusted to respond or take complaints seriously
- Absence of trust and respect kills people's aspirations and motivations.
- Negative societal attitudes towards immigrants and ethnic communities
- Racial violence, abuse, harassment, intimidation and attack

Source: (Adapted by the author from various resources cited in 4.5)

4.6 Chapter Summary

South Yorkshire is strategically located at the heart of the United Kingdom in close proximity to major northern cities (Leeds, Manchester, York, Nottingham and Birmingham), while travelling to the capital, London, is about 2 hours by train; it is thus well connected and accessible, which makes the region a desirable county for business and for living.

The four urban centres of South Yorkshire, Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield, have enjoyed worldwide recognised industries in mining, steel, textiles and agriculture. These modern centres have also adapted to the challenges and needs of the global economy by restructuring their industries and becoming strong competitors in knowledge base and service sectors, such as higher education, high tech sectors, travel and tourism and financial services.

International migration to the region is similar to the national trends, where historically people migrated from the Caribbean, Pakistan, India and Africa through colonial routes and international trade for hundreds of years; in recent years, due to war and conflict, mass migration has taken place, as refugees and asylum seekers have come from the African continent (Migration Yorkshire, 2017). The region has also attracted a huge influx of people from Eastern European countries, both as temporary and long-term residents, which has changed the diversity and dynamics of the population.

Migration has both new opportunities and challenges, as discussed in this chapter more specifically from the perspective of BMEs and BAIEs. Migration Yorkshire (2017), whilst recognising its short-term challenges, has acknowledged the positive contribution of international migration in contributing to the region by supplying the necessary labour force for the economy, as the fertility rate for South Yorkshire is below the 'replacement level' needed to maintain the population level without future international migration.

However, BMEs and in particular BAIEs are facing challenges which impede their employment and entrepreneurial potential, as discussed in sections 4.4 and 4.5.

The summary points provided in Figure 4.2 in relation to '**internal and external barriers**' might be argued to provide clear indications and manifestations of how Black and Ethnic Minority communities are being "othered" in the region which, potentially, affects their sense of 'belonging' and serves to restrict access to critical resources and opportunities in the mainstream markets.

It is important to recognise that there has been continued interest in BMEs and several efforts have been made by successive governments and various stakeholders to understand the dynamics and impacts of these phenomena. Indeed, it could be asserted that progress has also been made in integrating and supporting BME communities through legislation, policy and practices to ensure equality of opportunities. Yet, there is a need to consider official politicised data alongside lived experiences 'on the ground', the central focus of this thesis to which Chapter 5 now turns.

Chapter 5: Findings of BAIEs' lived experience

This chapter presents the findings of the research in relation to Research Objective 3:

To investigate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs linked to their identities as Black African immigrants, their identities as entrepreneurs and the regional context in which they are based (South Yorkshire)

Chapter 3 outlined the research design and execution of the PhD study. The process of thematic data analysis that was adopted was described. This process enabled the identification of themes. It is those themes that are presented in this chapter, with a consideration throughout of experiences linked to identity via lens of othering and belonging, as acknowledged in Chapters 2 and 3.

Thus, this chapter presents the key research findings based on the semi-structured interview with 16 BAIEs about their lived experiences in their entrepreneurial pursuits. Participants' important features, background and profile such as country of origin, age, gender, education, types of business, location, duration in business and turnover have been identified and discussed as a means of illustrating the characteristics of the research sample in Chapter 3.

The key findings explored in this chapter are presented explicitly in line with five of the research sub-questions presented in Chapter 1 as a means of addressing the central research question: 'What are the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire in their entrepreneurial activities?'

- What do BAIEs consider as challenges (barriers), and what are the implications of these for their businesses?
- What do BAIEs consider as opportunities, and what are the implications of these for their businesses?
- Who are BAIEs' employees, core customers and key supporters?
- What is BAIEs' experience regarding provision of support?
- What are BAIEs' future plans and aspirations?

5.1 What are the backgrounds of BAIEs in South Yorkshire?

This section establishes the backgrounds of BAIEs in South Yorkshire by considering specific years and reasons for migration to the UK.

Participants were asked to confirm which year they migrated to the UK and what were the main reasons for their migration. The responses have been collated and presented in Tables 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 respectively.

Table 5.1.1: Year of migration

Year of migration to the UK	Numbers	Remarks
2010 - 2017	1	
2000 - 2009	8	
1990 - 1999	4	With the exception of one in early 1990s, the three came during mid to late 1990s
1970 -1979	1	1978
Unknown	1	Not disclosed
UK born (second generation)	1	From immigrant family
Total	16	

Source: (Author's own work)

Table 5.1.1 shows that half of the participants migrated to the UK between 2000-2009 followed by 1990–1999. The data shows that numbers are far smaller prior to the 1990s and in recent years (post-2009).

The findings in regard to the year of migration show that most participants are relatively recent migrants, over the last 10 to 20 years.

Table 5.1.2 indicates that for more than half (9) of the participants the main reasons for migration are war, conflict, lack of security and stability and political persecution in their countries of origin and it can be identified that they have come to the UK seeking asylum.

Table 5.1.2: Reason for migration

Reason for migration	Number of participants	Remarks
War, conflict, lack of security and stability and political prosecution in their country of origin.	9	The main reasons for migration
To join family	1	Whose father is political dissident
To study	5	Two stated political related cases
Others, (UK born)	1	Second generation, born in to the migrant family
Total	16	

Source: (Author's own work)

The data covers a period of over 40 years, to be more precise between 1978 and 2014, providing past and recent immigrant cases. However, the peak of migration is recorded between 2000-2009, accounting for half of the migrants, followed by the late 1990s. Thus, 12 BAIEs (75%) migrated to the UK between late 1990s and 2009 according to the findings (Table 5.1.1).

The accounts from 3 participants from Ethiopia (BAIE 03), Liberia (BAIE 05) and Eritrea (BAIE 01) depict compelling stories shared by many participants in regard to reasons for migrations. This insight is important in understanding BAIEs' entrepreneurial character-building, resourcefulness and tolerance to risk, summed up as resilience, born out of their lived experience (exposure):

"I was, fortunately or unfortunately, whichever way one can see it, I was part of the student movement against the Ethiopian Government, Emperor Haile Selassie who was the king of Ethiopia. It was at the time where the student revolution was engulfing the whole country, okay! The movement was about 'let the land be to the tiller!'. We had to fight the emperor so that he relinquishes power and the land was given to the poor, farmers. Being part of that, I was probably the in the older batches about to graduate then revolution came and engulfed us and I couldn't graduate. There was a national student campaign, what we called

'Zemecha' [campaign] and I had to join that, I was one of the oldest students then.

Then there was another phase of the revolution where we had to survive through the 'Red Terror' time, unfortunately, which led to the loss of many young people's lives, so, I came through that. I came to the UK in August 1978 to study for a Master's degree, but traumatised by the experience. The notion of refugee was not an issue then. Either you escaped as a political dispersal to the neighbouring countries, Kenya or Sudan if you are lucky enough to escape, but not to Europe. Otherwise, you are in prison or dead, there were no other alternatives. In the midst of this turmoil there were very few scholarship opportunities by the British, US and European governments for university graduates to study for their Masters and PhD. So, that is how I came here. Of course, I wanted to go back to Ethiopia and my university when I finish, but the 'Derg regime' [the military regime who took over] at the time was still consolidating its power and it was not an inviting situation to go back" (BAIE 03).

The following quote from a Liberian immigrant (BAIE 05) recounts the same ordeals (war and conflict) as the main reasons for his migration to the UK:

"I came to this country [UK] in 2004, because of the problem, civil war in my country, Liberia. I came here as an asylum seeker. In Liberia, university, I did civil engineering, but it is a long story. The year I was supposed to graduate, the war broke out and I couldn't get graduated and get my university undergraduate degree, my qualification. I had to flee to save my life. So, when I came to this country, it was a bit difficult, because I wasn't allowed to work or study until I was granted a refugee status in 2010, after six years" (BAIE 05).

An Eritrean immigrant (BAIE 01) too shared a similar story:

"I came to the UK in 2003, because of the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea and that we had to leave, it was a very difficult time, I didn't have a plan to come to the UK, but it became a destiny" (BAIE 01).

Notably, 5 BAIEs stated their initial purpose of coming to the UK was to study, but a change of circumstances including their political affiliations, activities or their families' participation in the political changes in their country of origin forced them to subsequently seek asylum in the UK as per the following participant's story from Nigeria (BAIE 14):

"I came to the UK in the 1990s originally to study, but my dad who had a Western education, graduated in Electrical Engineering in London. When he returned home after his graduation back in Nigeria, he was prosecuted for his political views which happened to be against the ruling party. Unfortunately, it was unsafe for all his family to live a normal life. So, I had no choice but to seek an asylum here in the UK. Luckily my dad had prepared me about the prospect of life in this country as a foreigner, that really helped me to cope with life in this country. That is why I wanted to preach the same gospel to my son. I may be wrong, but I would encourage him to work hard and for himself" (BAIE 14).

From the remaining 2 participants, 1 (BAIE 04) came to join her father who was a political dissident who had already been granted asylum seeker status and subsequently been allowed to stay in the UK. The final participant (BAIE 13), the only second generation immigrant to be interviewed, was UK-born into a migrant family from Ghana.

The stories of these participants reveal that they are not necessarily economic immigrants, but their migration to the UK was often forced due to political views, war and conflicts in their countries of origin. Being persecuted for their political beliefs or tribal identities seems to have instilled a greater sense of awareness about potential threats, survival and collective resistance mechanisms in their entrepreneurial activities, effectively managing risks which are the foundations of their entrepreneurial attributes - recognised as resilience and explored in section 5.4. Resilience as BAIEs' nurtured entrepreneurial attributes born out migration, prior exposure, and lived experience has not been adequately recognised and covered in the existing literature, whilst this PhD research inquiry has recognised this as one of the key emergent entrepreneurial attributes of BAIEs as illustrated and demonstrated in sections 5.2 and 5.4 of this chapter.

5.2 What are BAIEs' key motivations in their entrepreneurial ventures?

The concept of motivation in this research refers to individual entrepreneurs, incentives (drivers) and reasons for setting up their enterprises in the host country. Most literature reflects the dominant assumption that ethnic and immigrant entrepreneurs are engaged in business not out of choice, but out of necessity, through being excluded from mainstream employment opportunities. However, this research data shows that whilst immigrants are disadvantaged in mainstream labour markets, trends are also emerging that suggest that immigrants' motivation towards business is not static but evolving, including those who engage in business deliberately and exploit their strengths. Some are motivated by their exposure or experiences (bad and good), displaying a high degree of 'propensity, predisposition and preparedness' for entrepreneurial activities which could provide new perspectives in the understanding of immigrant entrepreneurs.

5.2.1 BAIEs' key motivations in setting up their own businesses

Participants were asked why they have chosen 'business as a career' and discussed their relevant skills, experience and knowledge in their respective businesses. The responses have been organised and identified into two major categories: external (push) and internal (pull) factors. The definition of these two key categories and key findings are presented and analysed in detail with a view to better understanding the rationale, incentives and objectives of BAIEs in their decision to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

The findings of participants' motivation factors are a very critical component of this research, as I believe that it is through this prism that BAIEs have identified and assessed challenges and opportunities.

Table 5.2.1: BAIEs' key motivations for setting up their own businesses

	Key findings
Pull-internal (opportunity driven)	■ Upbringing (family heritage, role model, values, exposure) - cultural propensity to owning and running business
	■ Being own boss (autonomy)
	■ Support (friends and co-ethnic community)
	■ Achieving higher level needs (intellectual, spiritual and social)
	■ Opportunity recognition
	■ Job satisfaction, security and continuity
	■ Education, experience and passion-led
	■ Resilience - the advantage of being disadvantaged: Entrepreneurial attributes born out of migrant background, exposure and experience (tolerance to risk, willingness to scarifies, endurance, problem solving, virtue of hard work and resourcefulness)
Push - External (necessity driven)	■ Survival - born out necessity
	■ Poor payment (wage), poor working conditions and job insecurity
	■ Discrimination (racism) at work place

Source: (Author's own work)

The responses indicate that BAIEs are influenced by both push and pull factors, however; the depth and breadth of key findings have extensive ranges in pull factors as compared to push, which are listed under just three factors. Although this may not be conclusive, judging by the responses, it is apparent that respondents have given great emphasis to and demonstrated passion for the 'pull' reasons. However, one may argue that push and pull factors are two sides of one coin and are symbiotic in nature. Each type of factor is now given attention, in turn.

5.2.2 Pull – Internal motivation factors (opportunity driven)

As Table 5.2.1 illustrates, there were 8 emergent themes from the interview data that related to pull factors, considered to represent opportunity-driven influences: 'upbringing'; 'being their own boss'; 'support'; 'achieving higher level needs'; 'opportunity recognition'; 'job satisfaction, security and continuity'; 'education, experience and passion-led'; and 'resilience'.

Upbringing

'Upbringing' emerged as a key theme in relation to the key motivations of BAIEs in their entrepreneurial ventures. During the analysis of the interview data a number of sub-themes were identified in relation to this: 'family'; 'heritage'; 'role models'; 'values'; 'exposure'; and 'cultural predisposition to owning and running a business'. In total, 5 participants identified that their upbringing was one of the main motivational factors in their decision to set up their own businesses.

Some of the participants recounted that their family members own businesses in their country of origin and they had early exposure to the business environment which has given them the confidence and courage to engage in business themselves. Other participants referred to their family as the source of their inspiration, acting as role models, whilst the wider community culture and traditions equally were identified to have given them basic skills, experience and courage applicable to their current business ventures. The following quotes exemplify that "upbringing" is not just a matter of sentiment, but has served to provide strong guiding principles and sources of practical relevance to the BAIEs:

"I think it is to do more with my family upbringing; my father was a very good businessman. In our part of Ethiopia, we have only a few options in life; either you are a businessman, or you become a priest or maybe a farmer if you are lucky and you have land.

I grew up watching my father and my mother too, how they were behaving and managing life though I was discouraged to follow their examples. Instead, I was groomed to be a man of white collar. My father was very keen on that and my father sent me to a private school, 'General Wingate School' which was an equivalent of Eton in the UK.

I was a silent admirer of my dad's entrepreneurial ability which was always in the back of my mind. My father used to say, 'whatever you do; never die poor' that stays with me forever. I came from a very solid family; 'work is pride, not working but someone looking after you is considered as begging' so that value was what stopped me seeking benefit and work for myself" (BAIE 03).

The above participant has clearly described how his parents have had a profound and long-lasting impact in shaping his future and career in enterprise, enabling him to hold a full-time employment post whilst his part-time property investment at the time of interview was reported to be worth over £2 million.

The following is another response to the same question in regard to his motivation for choosing the business route although he was a PhD qualified professional in Medical Science:

"I picked up early on, in my childhood as this [food] is the central thing in most African families which brings everyone together, to share thoughts and experience under one roof. I think I have the blessing of my ancestors and have picked up the skills from family and communities" (BAIE 11).

Again, this restaurant owner's response sees his business career, motive and aspiration as being highly inspired and influenced by the culture and tradition of his upbringing, but the community is specifically acknowledged as a source of influence on his identity as a BAIE.

In the same way, participant BAIE 14, who runs his own food store in Doncaster responded that his family were influential in his motivation for running a business. He explained how he got the inspiration and confidence based on his observation of his mother's business in his country of origin, Nigeria, whilst the strength and means of survival came from his father:

"That is what mum did in Nigeria and this has given me the background knowledge and confidence about the business. I picked all of that from back home, watching my mum and adapted my own to the needs of my customers here, adapting it to the situation.

Another thing I inherited from my dad's side is that he lived in this country, [UK] and he studied electrical engineering in London, back in the day. And when I came over, my dad had prepared me about the prospects of life in this country as an immigrant. That is why I wanted to preach the same gospel to my son. I may be wrong, but I would encourage him to work hard and for himself" (BAIE 14).

Being their own boss

A desire to 'be their own boss', gaining autonomy and flexibility emerged as another clear theme in relation to internal motivation factors. Among participants who indicated that the idea of being their own boss had motivated them, flexibility, autonomy and freedom also emerged as attractions that come along with risks and responsibilities. The assumptions are that the risks are worth taking against the reward of running one's own business; one is able to make one's own decisions, it provides a sense of purpose, freedom and stimulating venture with the potential for better income and job satisfaction.

Table 5.2.2: Additional quotes on ‘flexibility, freedom and being own boss’ as motivations

BAIEs	Response regarding motivations
BAIE 08	<i>" Firstly, running my own business appeals to me because being self-employed, gives me flexibility and no one is bossing me around. It is flexible, less pressure and the income is better, I am able to support my family. In my previous job, I can't be sure about the continuity of my job which used to concern me a lot" (BAIE 08)</i>
BAIE 13	<i>"I prefer to do my own business, because I enjoy the freedom and flexibility very much which I also know that it comes with risk and responsibility"(BAIE 13)</i>
BAIE 14	<i>" I just got fed up of working for somebody. I just wanted to be my own boss and be in control of my destiny. Since I started my business I am in control of my own life, no alarm clock, I wake up when I want, it gives me the flexibility I needed. Yes, I travel a lot, but it is my own decision to do that. I could have sat at the shop and goods could have been delivered to me but at the cost of the middle man"(BAIE 14)</i>

Source: (Author's own work)

The additional quotes in Table 5.2.2 are compelling examples of BAIEs' motivations for setting up their own businesses, underlining four dimensions associated with being their own boss: autonomy; flexibility; being in control of own life; and job continuity.

Support

Five participants clearly stated that support from friends and their respective co-ethnic communities had been critical in their business undertakings. The type and scope of support ranged from interest-free loans for start-up capital to moral and practical encouragement. Some even acknowledged that they had taken the inspiration for their business idea through 'informal internship' opportunities by observing and visiting their co-ethnic business operations whilst waiting for their asylum applications.

The following two quotes sum up the key findings, where the first one (BAIE 07) highlights the critical nature of such support from the inception of the business idea and as the 'preferred source' of start-up capital due to religious values, whilst the second participant (BAIE 02) acknowledged interest-free loan support from his friends and community had served as a motivational factor.

BAIE 07's co-ethnic community raised an interest-free loan (Halal) when setting up his business, as his religion will not allow him to borrow money from a bank and pay interest on it:

"I learnt this from friends when I was in my few first years as a refugee and I can see around some guys were setting up the business relatively easily and making some money. When I need money, I can only ask my friends, because in our religion [Islam], it is not good or allowed to borrow money and pay interest on it. There aren't that many Islamic banks in this country (BAIE 07).

Community financial and moral support as a form of key motivational support was corroborated by an Ethiopian migrant who set up a restaurant business in Sheffield:

"We couldn't have started this business without the encouragement of our community, from supporting the idea to lending us significant and interest-free start-up capital to volunteering in decorating the place. The community is now as proud as we are. They regularly come to the restaurant with their families and friends from faraway places; London, Manchester and Leeds. They also constantly check that we are doing okay and are keen to offer any practical support to promoting the place" (BAIE 02).

Another participant (BAIE 08) shared insights about the extent of co-ethnic networks that have national and international dimensions from where business ideas, inspirations and motivation are drawn by immigrant entrepreneurs:

"We are all networked and talk all the time; what is better job and better pay, whether that is working in the factory or setting up your own business. We actually shared such information across our community not only in Sheffield or UK, but also in other countries such as in America to learn from their experience and the best business model that works" (BAIE 08).

This is another distinctive characteristic of immigrant entrepreneurs, that their community serves not only as source of motivation but also as a source of 'cheap and informal financial capital', partially overcoming the challenge of raising finance from formal financial institutions. However, there is no clear evidence whether such funds are readily available for all, across each community and what are the criteria, terms and conditions (reciprocities) that an entrepreneur ought to satisfy to qualify for it or indeed what happens if s/he fails to return the money.

Achieving higher level needs

Another interesting response to the question of motivation is the need for achieving higher level needs, a mission perceived by some respondents as far more than money and commercial gains that they are motivated to accomplish through business avenues, such as sense of duty, sense of purpose and meaning in life.

The following two quotes are from participants in different sectors, property investment and restaurant businesses respectively, and both are PhD holders. I found that these responses have some philosophical and spiritual aspirations over and above commercial gains which fit the above motive:

“Some of the challenges I am managing in my business are not because there is a need for my business or have the knowledge to do them, but they need to be resolved and I feel that I have the duty to solve those challenges, even sometimes outside the remit of my business. It is out of a sense of curiosity, responsibility and finding in them purposes. Yes, beyond necessity, out of curiosity, you develop a sense of duty and accomplishment, it is at your hand; the destruction, the construction of that business is at your own phase, at your own hand. You have to be extremely resourceful, you also become very tolerant of difficulties” (BAIE 03)

The same sentiment is echoed by another participant (BAIE 11) who asserted the following:

“I think I have always had a passion and interest in providing people with the best of what nature has to offer. Although I am a qualified medical doctor and I am still providing assistance to my colleagues at the A&E department when they need me, my focus is on providing good food to all people and races at an affordable price. I think this has some relevance to what I studied in my medical profession too. I believe good food doesn’t have to be expensive and shouldn’t only be for those who are privileged. So, I am here to fill that gap as a business, but more also I feel that I have a duty - perhaps it is God’s will for me to do this. I just enjoy satisfying people in what I do” (BAIE 11).

This is a particularly interesting trend - that the motive is over and above money, seeking for sense of belonging, self-actualisation, status and accomplishments that these individuals may not have been able to achieve through normal employment routes.

Opportunity recognition

Participants described a range of incidents and events, some specific to their particular business sectors, that triggered their entrepreneurial instincts which are the main motivation (catalyst) for starting their own businesses.

For example, two participants (BAIE 04 and BAIE 09) were second year university drop-outs, who decided to quit their university studies to pursue their own businesses. A female entrepreneur described an incident where a potential supplier had opened up a hair accessory shop in the neighbourhood and the prospect of a supplier being her next-door neighbour was the main stimulus for her entrepreneurial endeavours:

"I continued my school, then I went to college and university as well to study business courses. However, when the opportunity came to start my own business, I just decided to do that. I had a tenant next door who was selling hair and hair related products, so I assumed that if I opened a hair salon here, I thought that it will be easier, and I could also continue my study. But, it was very difficult to manage the business as I should. So, that was the main reason I dropped out from university and started this particular business." (BAIE 04)

The other participant, a male drop-out (BAIE 09), stated that his close network, knowledge and an informal survey within his own co-ethnic community which he refers to as '*my community is my literature*' was convincing enough for him to open a barber shop where he has been very happily operating for more than two years and has employed six staff, a decision he reported that he would never regret.

Other participants recognised the special skills and knowledge they possess and had identified gaps where their growing co-ethnic communities' special needs have not been met by mainstream businesses, and recognition of such niche markets was part of their motivation to explore business opportunities.

Job satisfaction, security and continuity, Education, experience and passion-led

Under the above two categories the commonly expressed appeal of setting up one's business emerged as job satisfaction. BAIEs reported that self-employment helped them to feel that they are empowered to decide and choose

what, when, and how they are doing and with whom they are dealing. Equally, BAIEs reported that business gives them the opportunity to materialise their dreams and passion, drivers that may be born out of education or general interest. The general perception of an employment route that emerged during the interviews was that it is hard to secure a good job that is interesting, matches their interest and desires and is relevant to their degree with good prospects of career progression and continuity.

Resilience

Resilience in terms of 'the advantage of being disadvantaged' is a very interesting phenomenon that appears to be distinctive to BAIEs' migration and is shaped and informed by prior exposure and experience both before migration and subsequently, when assuming the identity as 'immigrant' in the host country. The hardship and painful experiences that are endured through the act of forced migration, in particular, are a constant reminder that respondents are motivated to work hard and for themselves, not only to overcome the challenges but also to excel in their business ventures.

Although it may appear paradoxical, 'the advantage of being disadvantaged' is where BAIEs are motivated to transform misfortune into fortune. Most participants recounted that the difficult journey, the struggle to adapt in the new environment and challenges in the host country made them stronger and had left them feeling like they do not take life for granted. This shift in their mind-set has nurtured and shaped distinctive entrepreneurial characters and traits. Key characteristics or described actions that I interpreted as attributes of resilience included references to 'sheer determination'; 'being resolved'; 'having conviction'; 'stamina'; 'courage'; 'risk-taking'; 'survival'; 'problem-solving'; 'a virtue of hardworking'; and 'resourcefulness to successfully navigate the unknown terrains of a business adventure in a new environment'.

Resilience as an attribute emerged as a constant feature, as the source of entrepreneurial motivation, a means of overcoming life challenges and a source of opportunities. This attribute has been repeatedly cited as an attribute of entrepreneurship *per se*. However, in relation to the lived experiences of the BAIEs under study, I recognised resilience to be worthy of further exploration.

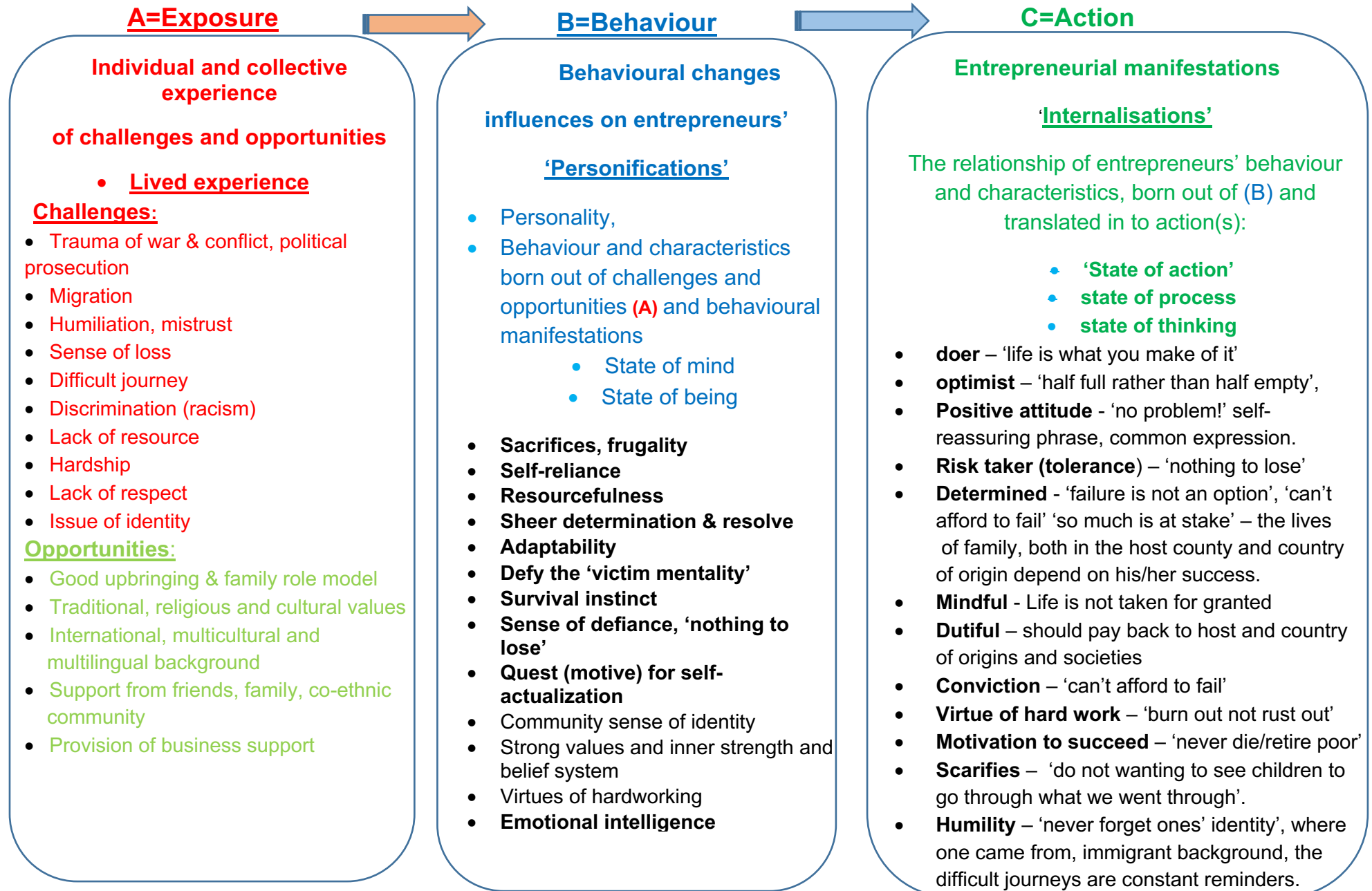
Thus, I have presented Figure 5.2.1 'BAIEs' resilience framework' building on the coding process and thematic analysis discussed in Chapter 3. This is an attempt to map out the relationships of BAIEs' distinctive entrepreneurial attributes born out of exposure and lived experience and to consider how that manifests itself in the behaviour (personification) and is ultimately nurtured and internalised into entrepreneurial actions, decisions and personalities.

It should be noted that Figure 5.2.1 is adapted from a BBC commissioned research documentary (Atkinson, 2003) '*Mind of a Millionaire*', the biggest survey of millionaires in the UK. This programme studied the behaviour and psychology of entrepreneurs and the secret of their success, which I understand is apportioned to their nurtured characteristics of resilience as summarised next. I believe that this postulation serves to corroborate the resilience conceptual framework that I use to make sense of BAIEs' nurtured distinctive entrepreneurial attributes arising from their lived experiences outside of entrepreneurship.

The study cited in the BBC documentary, conducted by Dr Adrian Atkinson, business psychologist and his expert team, asserted that there are over 70,000 millionaires in the UK, more than half of whom are from non-privileged backgrounds, and have often witnessed or experienced poverty, hardship, personal trauma, bullying, exclusion, sense of loss in their upbringing and lives which fuelled their determination to succeed, survive, take risk and overcome challenges. These ideas resonated with the stories that I had captured from BAIES in this PhD research inquiry.

I have therefore reflected and represented these attributes in terms of three phases and processes that I believe shape BAIEs: 'Exposure' (experiencing challenges and or opportunities), 'Behaviour' (personification) and 'Action' (internalisation). These ideas are illustrated in Figure 5.2.1. The resultant framework is used to make sense and look to find coherence in emergent data as explored next.

Figure 5.2.1: BAIEs' Resilience Framework



Source: (Author's own work)

Some of the participants shared their preparedness to sacrifice their family holidays for many years, others cited their willingness to work up to 16 hours a day or go without their 'entitled' benefit whilst building their business. These actions may be attributed to their resilience that is born out of their identities - through their personal, circumstantial and environmental experiences as immigrants.

One of the participants described his job-hunting experience in the UK as traumatic, humiliating, undignified and demoralizing even after he successfully obtained his PhD qualification in the UK. He narrated how he came to realise that as a Black African immigrant, it was very hard to secure employment in a professional career due to his 'foreignness' and the 'colour of his skin'; an admission by one of the 'administrative and sympathetic staff' who told him that *'he would not have any chance of getting a job with that kind of name'* [foreign name].

He has asserted his sense of determination and resolve in pursuing his business idea, summed up in the following quote after several attempts to gain employment in one specific organisation:

"Just that realisation has given me the strength. It cut me! I was not blaming anybody, I then said to myself, I will follow in my father's footsteps. Hence, I started my own business" (BAIE 03).

This particular BAIE is now worth over £2 million in wealth, and he acknowledges that it is because of his immigrant experience, rejection and background that he was driven to succeed in his business and he still believes that this is his constant motive and reminder.

The BAIEs' resilience framework presented in Figure 5.2.1 is applicable to some aspects of the push factors discussed in the next section (5.2.3) from which an entrepreneur is able to transform his/her experience into nurturing resilient entrepreneurial attributes, as is evident in the research findings that are outlined next.

5.2.3 Push-External motivation factors (necessity-driven)

Push or external motivational factors refer to reasons and circumstances described by BAIEs as influences that they perceived forced them to pursue their business idea, which otherwise would not have been their choice. These factors are considered to be 'external' as they are not within the immediate environment and control of BAIEs. The participants' responses have been categorised into three major factors, which are discussed, in turn:

- Survival - born out of necessity
- Poor payment and working conditions and job security
- Discrimination (racism) at the work place.

Survival

What is distinctively different from other entrepreneurs is that the asylum and immigration process was reported to take an average of six years before the BAIEs were granted a work permit to engage in business in the UK legally. This was considered to have been a source of enormous pressure and anxiety as the participants were driven to look for alternative routes to meet basic income needs for themselves and their families.

One participant (BAIE 01) recalled how he was caught as an employee working in a factory without an adequate work permit and was sentenced to imprisonment, where he spent many months away from his wife and children. Such strict regulation in the labour market pushed some of the participants to start their own 'informal' businesses from their houses and discrete locations by targeting loyal customers, mainly their own co-ethnic communities prior to being officially allowed to formalise and legalise their operations once they were awarded official UK work permits. Although it is equally 'illegal' to run businesses from their homes as it is to work in employment without a permit, they justified this behaviour by saying that taking such a risk was considered to be worthwhile in order to make the best of their bad situation.

The motive of BAIE 03 to set up his part-time business even after he secured full-time employment was to compensate for the prospect of a poor pension. Participant BAIE 16 also stated that the opening of his food store was due to the fact that the only such shop in town was closing down and he was unable to

find food supplies locally, so he decided to purchase this shop to meet the needs of his family and their community.

The following consecutive quotes from BAIE 01 and BAIE 03 sum up BAIEs' motives in setting up their own businesses which are born out of basic necessities and survival. The participants are an electronic shop owner and property investor respectively:

"The thing is we have three children, me and my wife and the children, tomorrow [in the future] they are going to need some help. They have got to go to school and they have got to go to the university and I have got to make money ready for them. Obviously, the government hasn't given me that opportunity to work. So, instead of the short [normal] way to work and earn money to help your family, you are forced to go around in a circle of the business to get money. So, whether it was supposed to take you one hour to earn that money you have to spend now 10 hours to earn an hour's worth of employment. But, I have to do it, because, like I say, if I don't do it, the children cannot get the help from me" (BAIE 01).

The participant had set up his own business initially from his house discretely repairing friends' laptops and personal computers before he moved to town in his wife's name, whose asylum status allowed her to work including self-employment. Thus, he was allowed legally to assist his wife without being paid. This technicality or loophole still puzzles him, but he took the opportunity to develop the family business that is now evolving and expanding into another enterprise as a coffee shop.

The other participant (BAIE 03), who is a property developer and investor, described the humiliation that he encountered during his job-hunting experiences as the principal factor which pushed him to set up his own business:

'When I went to the benefit office and registered myself as unemployed, I was so demoralised and belittled. I couldn't face going back to the benefit office again. I said to myself; I would rather die than take a benefit. Hence, I started to look into making a life for myself. So, I told myself, I am not going back there, [the benefit office]. I started then

thinking about what I could do so that I am not going back to the benefit office. And Indeed, I never went back. I started little ventures what I saw my dad was doing as a businessman when I was a young man in Ethiopia. His memory and experience has encouraged me to start my own business” (BAIE 03).

Poor payment, poor working conditions and job insecurity

The unfavourable situation in the labour market emerged as one of the main drivers for some BAIEs which pushed them to start their own businesses. Some of the key points findings relate to the fact that regardless of their skills and experience, they were paid the minimum wage and, in some cases, less than the minimum wage when ‘informal employment’ was secured through personal contacts and within a ‘co-ethnic business’ setting. Other participants pointed out that their employment status is temporary through agencies and there is no guarantee of a regular income to support their families. Above all, they stressed that the working conditions are very poor; jobs available to them are usually labour-intensive and manual labour, such as cleaning, construction and night shifts in the factories and warehouses that mainly migrant workers undertake out of desperation.

The following quote provides some insights into such experiences:

“I was employed in a warehouse but didn’t enjoy it at all. Some of the tasks were very dangerous, we didn’t have enough training in handling the machinery and there were some bad accidents. Night shift managers were careless, and they were worried more about the machine than our lives. We were called ‘temps’ and the pay was not sufficient to support our family. If you dare to complain, you lose your job, so I carried on for as long as I could and when I had saved some money, I left that bad place and set up my own barber shop” (BAIE 07).

Discrimination at the work place

Some participants recalled that they had been on the receiving end of blatant racist practices which discriminated particularly against Black African immigrant workers based on the colour of their skin where better jobs were reserved for white Europeans. Some detailed accounts of such unpleasant experiences were narrated as a reflection of 'institution-wide norms' in factories and cleaning jobs where job progression and promotions were experienced to not be based on merit but were based on race. In such cases a 'pecking order' was described regarding whom the better opportunities were awarded to: firstly, White British, then white Europeans or White others, then Black British and at the bottom of the pile, Black African immigrants.

So, the Black African immigrant workers interviewed in this study felt that they would not succeed in an employment position and, drawing on their negative UK workplace experiences, they believed that they had no other option but to look for alternatives, primarily self-employment.

One BAIE who had over ten years' experience working in various organisations presented his compelling case whilst justifying what motivated him to seek self-employment:

"The motivation for me is; when you are working for somebody there is no such thing called 'equal opportunity', I learnt the so called equal opportunity slogan on paper when I was working for companies for over ten years, but it never worked in reality. In my book, it doesn't work that way, I have seen it enough. This is due to the colour of your skin [black]. When I was working as a track driver at DHL, I used to train and support new drivers when they joined the company, and a few months, six to seven, down the line they [white employees] became my line managers or even higher because of their skin and race [white British or European]. If you dare to complain, you won't win, but you could easily lose your job and it can cause you lots of stress and pain. You know, I have seen people who were my friends for five weeks and then suddenly promoted to a higher level and giving us instructions. So, things of that nature pushed me to work harder and for myself" (BAIE 14).

From these stories, BAIEs explained that they were working hard and in difficult situations, but they asserted they were prepared to work even harder for themselves. This suggests that BAIEs did not choose self-employment because it was perceived to be an easier option, rather it is harder considering their very limited resources, but their difficult experiences including racism had triggered a sheer determination to take up even a difficult role, one for which they take the full responsibility.

The next section explores the challenges (barriers) of BAIEs in their entrepreneurial ventures.

5.3 What do BAIEs consider as challenges (barriers), and what are the implications of these for their businesses?

Challenges can be interpreted to have positive connotations in terms of their ability to motivate, stimulate, induce, inspire but in the context that they are examined here the emphasis is on challenges as barriers that present impediments, problems, obstacles, difficulties, constraints and risks to businesses.

This chapter presents the key findings relating to what BAIEs consider to be challenges (barriers) in their entrepreneurial pursuits. These key challenges are analysed from the BAIE interviews narratives relating to specific natural, circumstantial and experiential backgrounds and identities as immigrants and their experiences set within the historical, institutional, socio-political and economic aspects of the host country's regional and national contexts. Thus, the opportunity structure of the host country environment and BAIEs' resources, including human, social and financial capital are the central themes of these findings and analysis.

5.3.1 Summary of BAIEs key Challenges

BAIEs' responses about what they consider or perceive to be challenges may be broadly classified as 'internal challenges' and 'external challenges'. Table 5.3.1 presents a summary of BAIEs' shared challenges (barriers) emergent from analysis of the interview data. It can be seen immediately that most of the

challenges identified relate to external rather than internal challenges. However, both categories of challenge were noted to hold implications for BAIE businesses.

Table 5.3.1: BAIEs' key Challenges (barriers)

	Key findings
External challenges (barriers)	■ Work permit restriction
	■ Police slow to respond to urgent calls and lack of action
	■ Lack of business support and advice (lack of flexibility)
	■ Lack of trust and respect
	■ Lack of suitable business premises
	■ Authorities' (city council) heavy-handedness
	■ Banks' unfair lending policy and practice
	■ Institutional racism
	■ Lack of cultural sensitivity
	■ Racist customer attitudes (consumer racism)
	■ Stigma attached to immigrant
	■ Inherent inequalities
	■ Lack of access to finance
Internal challenges (barriers)	■ Lack of managerial and entrepreneurial competencies
	■ Cultural difference and lack of integration
	■ Lack of resource
	■ Lack of work-life balance
	■ Lack of self-esteem
	■ Low income (price sensitive) customer base

Source: (Author's own work)

Each type or category of challenge will now be considered, in turn.

5.3.2 External Challenges (barriers)

External barriers are those factors which are outside of his/her immediate environment and BAIEs may be recognised to have very limited or no control over them.

Work permit restriction

Respondents stated that the processing of their asylum claim applications on average has taken six years and they were not able to legally work or engage in self-employment during that time. They expressed their frustrations due to lost business opportunities. This was a common issue raised in the interviews, affecting their sense of control over their lives:

“My asylum application took over six years and, in the meantime, I was not allowed to work but was waiting idle, which I thought was a waste of time and I lost many business opportunities. I understand that I am an immigrant and I have to respect the rules. Regardless, six years of my life was on suspense” (BAIE 05).

The following participant also expressed frustration over missed opportunities, linked to a lack of belonging stemming from legal status:

“The immigration and asylum claim process and citizenship application takes a very long time and you never really know what to do. You feel that you missed so many chances due to your legal status” (BAIE 06).

It is apparent from the above examples that the lack of a work permit has affected BAIEs and their business aspirations due to an external circumstance that is beyond their control.

Police slow to respond to urgent calls and lack of action

In relation to their status also, a number of participants mentioned that the police were very slow in responding to their urgent calls when they were affected by crime. This was perceived to have affected the lives of BAIEs in many ways. Notably, it was felt that loss of business had arisen, levels of self-

confidence had been negatively impacted, the safety of staff and customers had been compromised; and their wellbeing had suffered. The following quotes are some examples in this regard from a restaurant owner, some electronics shop owner, a taxi driver and a property investor:

“The problem is when you have encountered a problem, drunken customers disturbing staff and other customers, we call the police, but they don’t come on time and this affects the safety of our customers, staff and our business reputation” (BAIE 02).

“The police took two and a half hours to arrive here when we called them, they are just across the road. They took all my details, but they did nothing” (BAIE 01).

In the latter case, the damage to BAIE 01's business was estimated at £3900, equivalent to his initial capital. He later learnt that the burglars were caught when committing a similar crime within the neighbourhood and jailed. The shop owner expressed disappointed that no effort had been made to retrieve any of his stolen items and restore justice. His experiences had resulted in BAIE 01 believing that the police are not keen to protect immigrants' businesses and that is why the police did not make any effort to retrieve his stolen items. A sense of being "othered" and not "belonging" was visible.

A self-employed taxi driver (BAIE 08) shared his experience of the police in action when he presented evidence and reported to the police that some drunken and abusive customers had vandalised his car and put his business out of action:

“When a Black African immigrant taxi driver is making a complaint against the abusive customers supported with CCTV evidence, the police do nothing, but when a white person makes an allegation against us [black immigrant taxi drivers], the police response is swift and exaggerated. Frequent humiliation and assault by abusive customers saying that 'you immigrants came to this country and are taking over, I don't pay you a penny'. Some abusive customers are very rude, and they refuse to pay after using the service, and lack of adequate protection or prevention against such incidents which causes big stress. Drunken

customers vandalize and spoil the car inside and outside which puts me out of work and is costly and the police did nothing to help me” (BAIE 08).

Other participants recognised that the police are under-resourced and over-stretched, and that their action and inaction may not be deliberate:

“I know that the police are under-resourced and over-stretched and are unable to respond quickly. They are very reactive, first round, but once that is gone, some of the cases that I had are permanent problems and the police won't come around, they will have no resources to address them” (BAIE 03).

Lack of business support and advice (lack of flexibility)

It is apparent that none of the participants had any significant business support though most felt that they would have benefited from expert advice. Only a few had visited the job centre through which they had access to training and courses, but a common complaint was that the service was very short-term focused and inflexible:

“The job centre put pressure on me saying that the training programme that I have been enrolled on is taking too much time, at least 18 months, which is three days a week. The job centre didn't agree with this, in fact they want me to quit, as they can only pay me job seekers allowance if the course that I am trying to study is less than six weeks. I then said, I am old enough to decide for myself. Because you are controlling my stomach, you are controlling everything about me including my future. I know you are giving me money which is about £50 a week, and if this is a problem, then hold your money I will sort out something by myself, because, I know how much effort it took for me to get this chance. You work here because of your qualification and you shouldn't be stopping me from getting one. This is how I ended up my support from the job centre to pursue my study” (BAIE 05).

The above participant was a final year engineering student at university, but he had been unable to complete his course and graduate due to war in his country of origin, Liberia. He is required by law to acquire an industry standard certificate to operate in a home improvement business in the UK. He had no option but to use up his business capital to support himself and the family whilst undertaking training.

Here, it is worth noting that the current UK government has made significant changes and restructuring to the policy and provision of business support at national, regional and local levels; organisations such as Yorkshire Forward, Business Link Yorkshire and Local Enterprise Agency have been made redundant. This may have had a big impact on BMEs and SMEs and their special needs as the participants noted little signposting to support apart from the job centre.

Another participant who has had a leadership role in BME shared his general experience and criticisms about fund providers in the UK as follows:

“They [support providers] are very short-term based programmes, they don’t necessarily integrate locally and that means they don’t really know the special needs of the people that they are trying to support. They also compete with each other for funding and resources rather than coordinating their efforts and that makes them inefficient” (BAIE 13).

Lack of trust and respect

BAIEs believe that trust and respect are very important not only in business but also in everyday life. Due to their immigrant backgrounds, they noted how they have experienced disrespect and mistrust by various institutions which has affected their confidence and aspirations in life.

The following quote was provided by a businessman and community leader who talked about his community’s shared experience of being a Black African immigrant:

“Firstly, our community [Somali] have been through a difficult journey, both physical and emotional, it was relatively easy to recover from the

physical journey but the emotional one still remains within us today. Even here in our destination some of us have been put through a humiliating journey where our thoughts and feelings were constantly being undermined and distrusted, after which some have unfortunately lost not only our natural confidence and ambition but also the will to live. It is not surprising if this made us expect little from any of our ventures. We look for and rely on any help usually within our community's limited resources including doing business. For us to make this transition into the mainstream, we have to see the green light towards the high street first and we have to believe in it, then we will make the move still at a different speed. In the meantime, our businesses remain fragile corner shops, maybe serving as meeting spots for the community” (BAIE 12).

The sentiments here suggest marginalisation and disempowerment, linked to a lack of "belonging" and a sense of being "othered" from mainstream UK society.

Lack of suitable business premises

Issues discussed relate to accessibility and lack of basic facilities such as car parking spaces in their business locations and safety concerns for their staff and customers. These issues were shared particularly amongst those BAIEs who have rented city council properties:

“Our restaurant location is not easily accessible; the city council won’t allow us car parking for us or for our customers which is hugely inconvenient” (BAIE 02).

“The area has a bad reputation for illegal activities including drugs; I and my customers don’t feel safe to come here, but so far no major problem and this is where we are” (BAIE 07).

The second quote above is taken from the interview with a barber operating in an area known colloquially as ‘rough’ where some criminal activities are taking place, such as drug dealing and widespread antisocial behaviour in the street and around the neighbourhood, which could put off potential customers from coming and using their services. He felt that *‘the police have turned a blind eye’*

as they do not see this as their priority. As mentioned earlier, perceiving that they lacked being taken seriously by the police, was observed to have impacted on the self-confidence of participants and contributed to feelings of marginalisation and discrimination.

Authorities' (city council) 'heavy handedness'

The BAIEs also recounted examples of feeling that they had experienced 'heavy handedness' from authorities. This was described through the perceived disproportionate nature of actions and over-reactions by authorities against innocent mistakes and minor non-compliances which, BAIEs felt, should have been forgiven rather than pursued.

Some participants expressed their disappointment that the authorities were 'checking on them' and felt that 'they are out to get them' and 'they are on a fault-finding mission to catch them'; these feelings had become a source of anxiety and stress. The following account captures some of the views expressed in this regard:

"The council is very notorious when they want you to do something. They threaten you with court action, for a small amount of money that a small business may owe them. They threaten you for a mere £10 and £20 they will threaten you over court action and bankruptcy just to get that money out of you. If you miss it, you are in trouble, because their solicitors' sole purpose is to take you to court. If, however, they owe you money, it is almost impossible to get it back from them. It is extremely unfair. I think the government is aware of this, and by the way Banks are also the same, they are big compared to small business and I think they should be able to give room and understanding for small businesses. For example, if you are behind in your council tax, there is no need to rush to bankruptcy. Because once the council force bankruptcy against businesses, they send letters to banks and banks react too. I think this is what is happening to lots of businesses. The big banks, councils, they don't act in a manner that is helpful for small businesses, they rush you beyond reason. So, this a common problem experienced by most small businesses.

I think locally lots of businesses are very frustrated by the way the council reacts. They are very slow at responding for business's needs, but they are quick disproportionately accusing business, pointing fingers and making you bankrupt. That is one thing, that quite a few numbers of my friends have been bankrupted” (BAIE 03).

Banks' unfair lending policy and practice

Almost all participants with the exception of two replied that they did not have access to bank loans. This lack of access to bank loans or other facilities including overdrafts has been identified as a significant barrier for BAIEs' access to finance their start-up capital, business development and expansion.

This trend, that bank loans have been declined, applies not just to new starters but also to more established businesses, as the experiences of participants and their respective stories illustrate. A quote from the following participant identifies banks as a potential source of BAIE "othering":

“Almost all banks see us [BAIEs] as second-class citizens. When we approach them for a loan, they don't take us seriously. The intimidate us by asking totally unrelated questions about citizenship status, insurance and collateral availability” (BAIE 06).

A second participant (BAIE 13) suggests that there is institution-wide culture and practice that BAIEs are 'not taken seriously' or perceived as 'greater risks' than other potential customers:

“You see, these institutions do not take my ideas and proposals seriously, banks and financial institutions see me as high risk rather than a potential customer, which makes me feel distrusted and a second-class citizen” (BAIE 13).

In contrast, a third participant, who is a well-established business owner, believes that since the 2007-8 financial crisis, banks have changed their lending policy and are making it very difficult for all people seeking loans. In this context, it is believed that BAIEs will have no chance of securing any loan from banks, not for reasons of social status linked to race or ethnicity but rather

because of increased risk aversion *per se* from banks as lenders. He presented detailed accounts of his experience from which the following extracts have been quoted:

“Since the 2007/08 financial crisis, the banks’ lending policy is unfair, because, I am not drawing a salary, I have been rejected for a relatively small loan regardless three decades’ relationship, excellent track record and above all over £2 million properties as collateral which the bank holds on my behalf in their lock. Since the financial crisis, banks don’t have sentiments and are inflexible; they have now a set rule - anybody who wants to buy a property, and if they are self-employed like me, no matter what it is, they should show a net positive accumulation (balance) on their account annually, showing a profit. Well, if I find it very difficult as a mature businessman now, I have assets, I have collateral, I have cash, and still they could not give it to me. So, God knows how new starters get one. There is no insight, and there is no foresight anymore. It is a shame! It is very worrying, the trend for small businesses. What they are saying and what they are doing is not the same. God help them for the young ones” (BAIE 03).

Institutional racism

One of the participants shared his personal and frustrating experience of not being taken seriously in his business dealings when he felt that he was perceived as a ‘risk rather than a customer’ by his bank’s ‘unfair’ lending policy. He also drew on his experiences and observations in his role as a community representative in the city. He stated that he had the opportunity to work across various organisations where he had witnessed similar behaviour that various institutions are disadvantaging BMEs through the nature of criteria imposed that discriminate against BMEs and BAIEs:

“I have been trying to participate on public procurements, but they [local government] are making it very difficult for businesses with BME background participating, with bureaucratic and unnecessary mandatory

measures which are disadvantaging us. For example, by demanding so many years' experience, track record, references and other demands" (BAIE 13).

A self-employed taxi driver also provided a similar view that institutions such as the police and council treat BAIEs disparagingly as compared to their white counterparts. He also referred to the council which, he felt, has a much stricter and 'unfair' standard for black drivers:

"They [council] are not consistent. They are disproportionately harsh in their scrutiny towards immigrants' cars. I have a reasonably new car, but they failed it due to some colouring quality, which is unheard off. I have never passed any check-up, it always costs me money. The decision seems always unfair and they don't give us an adequate reason when we ask them why" (BAIE 08).

Lack of cultural sensitivity

The idea of BAIEs having different needs due to the nature of their identities as displaced, transient, immigrants, asylum seekers and ethnic minorities also emerged as an issue in relation to a perceived lack of cultural sensitivity in the provision of support for BAIEs:

"Some of them [support providers] lack training about cultural sensitivities and are ignorant of religion's influence in business" (BAIE 13).

BAIE 13 highlighted the special needs of some Muslim BAIEs which, if unfulfilled, can prohibit profit-making. In addition to this, the participant highlighted that some professionals need to be aware of cultural sensitivities regarding gender and ages which may be different from the mainstream societal and cultural norms.

Racist customer attitude – 'consumer racism'

I have reintroduced the following quote indicated earlier under police's inaction as it appears relevant to this contextual issue:

"Frequent humiliation and assault by abusive customers saying that 'you immigrants' came to this country and taking over, 'I don't pay you a penny!'. Some abusive customers are very rude, and they refuse to pay after using the taxi service and the lack of protection or prevention against such incidents stresses me big time" (BAIE 08).

"Drunken customers vandalize and spoil the car inside and outside which puts me out of work and is costly. The police are slow in responding to our calls and are not doing anything to protect us and the city taxi operators are not doing much to blacklist and prevent such abusive customers from using the service in the first place. So, we feel very vulnerable every time we are going out to work" (BAIE 08).

The above comment is from a self-employed taxi driver who described customers' racist attitudes and actions which affect his confidence and business. He recounts a number of incidents where he felt such abusive behaviour had been emboldened due to police negligence or unwillingness to follow investigations even when CCTV evidence has been presented.

A restaurant owner-manager recounts his experience of customers' attitude who question his professional capability in running a restaurant business in the predominantly white neighbourhood:

"People [mainstream white British customers] really do not believe that you can actually make or are capable of making goods and services. So, racism is number one and the biggest barrier. From what I have experienced and heard from other people, for a black African and Caribbean person setting up his/her business or doing business in the UK, racism and prejudice is the biggest barrier" (GO 11).

The above participant is referring to customers' reactions when he approached customers in the neighbourhood to promote his restaurant businesses. He observed that these residents behave suspiciously and are unsure about the quality of his food and hygiene in the kitchen from some of the comments he has had in person and comments made on his website.

I later discovered that the restaurant had been closed by the Health and Safety Authority and he has been forced to be relocated into another ethnically diverse part of the city. In his place, an Italian restaurant is now operating.

He believed that this was due to the fact that some people who did not like him and his race [Black African] had been campaigning to get rid of him and give way to an Italian owner who used to have a small cafe next door. Although this may be difficult to prove, the participant feels very strongly that is the case and since he has been relocated to the ethnically diverse location in the same city, he has noticed a difference in customers' attitude and revenue.

Stigma attached to immigrant

The growing political discourse against 'immigration' and reports of increased resentment, harassment and, on occasions, blatant racist actions and views about the rights of immigrants to live and work in the UK was reported to have had a profound impact on BAIEs' aspirations and levels of self-confidence.

Comments made by (BAIE 08) under 'Racist (negative) customer attitudes' would equally apply here in relation to attachment of stigma to BAIEs:

"Frequent humiliation and assault by abusive customers saying that 'you immigrants' came to this country and taking over, 'I don't pay you a penny!'. Some abusive customers are very rude, and they refuse to pay after using the taxi service and the lack of protection or prevention against such incidents stresses me big time" (BAIE 08).

The following quote from a businessman and community leader reveals the community-wide experience of what it means to be immigrants; the journey, the asylum process and the challenge of settling in in the new environment also applies here as an illustration of social stigma:

"Firstly, our community [Somali] have been through a difficult journey, both physical and emotional, it was relatively easy to recover from the physical journey but the emotional one still remains within us today. Even here in our destination some of us have been put through a humiliating journey where our thoughts and feelings were constantly being

undermined and distrusted, upon which some have unfortunately lost not only our natural confidence and ambition but also the will to live. It is not surprising if this made us expect little from any of our ventures. We look and rely for any help usually within our community's limited resources including doing business. For us to make this transition into the mainstream, we have to see the green light towards the high street first and we have to believe in it, then we will make the move still at a different speed. In the meantime, our businesses remain fragile corner shops, maybe serving as meeting spots for the community” (BAIE 12).

It is also the case among BAIEs that, acknowledging that they do not want their children to endure such evil of societies, they report that they encourage them to do something else. Some participants spoke of the dilemma of knowing that the employment world is no better than the world of self-employment as a means of avoiding stigma and discrimination. The root of the issues faced was recognised to be much deeper within social systems and social ordering.

Inherent inequalities

The identity of being Black minority ethnic and Black African was recognised as influential on the lived experiences of the BAIEs. This aspect of their overall identity as a BAIE was not pinpointed to relate to being immigrant or a business owner but to disparities and inherent inequalities associated with being BME:

“I do recognise the challenges of running and managing a business for everyone; however, it is even harder for BME communities as there have been inherent inequalities throughout successive governments in this country. It is not just individuals, but BME business communities collectively who have inherited poverty or were born into disadvantageous situations. It collectively lacks role models and representation to inspire others in order to break this vicious circle or to address the root cause of the problem. Throughout BME businesses' existence there has always been a chronic lack of access to finance which denies investment opportunity for business growth. This and many other disparities in life, including education and training, are more likely

to make BME business managers less equipped to effectively and competitively manage their business” (BAIE 13).

The above response is from a businessman and former BME community leader who, from experience and observations, believed that BAIEs are not operating on a level playing field and this that this is linked to the wider community being at a disadvantage, something that reflects historical, political and socio-economic contexts.

Lack of access to finance

“Finance is the number one issue which restricts our ability to import authentic and traditional supplies from abroad” (BAIE 06).

The above quote shows how important finance was perceived to be as a facilitator of business growth and international operations.

Equally, the following quote indicates the impact of finance for strategic and operational matters of businesses such as diversification, upgrading business features and managerial skills:

“We are unable to diversify our products and services to the mainstream due to lack of finance, suitable business premises, and experience and training” (BAIE 12).

Whereas BAIE 13 points out that this is a chronic problem across BME businesses that affects investment and potential growth:

“Throughout BME businesses’ existence there has always been a chronic lack of access to finance which denies investment opportunities for business growth. This and many other disparities in life, including education and training, are more likely to make BME business managers less equipped to effectively and competitively manage their business” (BAIE 13)

In addition to participants’ comments regarding specifically the banks' unfair lending policy, the above quotes highlight wider challenges in accessing finance through commercial channels or government funding initiatives or other means.

It is evident that there are blurred boundaries and overlaps between the emergent themes in relation to external challenges faced by the BAIEs. In particular, these appear to relate to race, ethnic and immigrant statuses and identity perhaps more so than they relate specifically to entrepreneurial identity.

5.3.3 Internal Challenges (barriers)

Internal barriers are those factors within the entrepreneur's immediate environment, family and co-ethnic community with which the business has close associations, where BAIEs possess some degree of control, relatively speaking. As acknowledged in the introduction to section 5.3, the challenges discussed here are about BAIEs' personal qualities, attributes and their immediate environment including their co-ethnic communities. Some internal barriers are attributed to a lack of individual managerial and entrepreneurial competence and resources, whilst the poor purchasing capacity extends to core customers, co-ethnic national and the wider ethnic minorities. Once again in this sub-section of 5.3, there are some notable intertwined factors or themes that were noted. This has meant that the results do not always sit neatly under single headings.

Lack of managerial and entrepreneurial competencies and experience

Cultural difference and lack of integration

Participants responded that their lack of managerial and entrepreneurial competencies and prior experience have affected the effective running day-to-day operations of their businesses and the strategic decision-making process. They noted that they are operating businesses in a new environment, culture and social system but are feeling that they are required to adapt and integrate quickly.

The main internal challenges identified by the participants were around their abilities to manage customer expectations, effectively communicate and negotiate, handle difficult customers and adapt to and integrate with different

dining habits, etiquettes, cultures and systems. In short, these related at least partly to factors of assimilation.

A restaurant manager recounted his managerial and entrepreneurial challenges as follows:

"I am an electrician by trade and we didn't have training, prior knowledge or experience of running a restaurant business. So, the main challenge was, none of us did have managerial experience. We struggle communicating with authorities, negotiating with suppliers and managing staff which we have to learn on the job quickly" (BAIE 02).

A similar sentiment was echoed by a beauty salon owner regarding her lack of managerial experience and cultural differences, in managing staff, handling consumers' expectations and dealing with difficult customers:

"I was in my twenties when I set up my business and especially managing staff older than myself, managing customer expectations and dealing with difficult customers' behaviour were the most problematic challenges I faced due to my lack of managerial experience. Due to cultural differences, I was not able to confidently talk to customers and it took me some time to understand the system and customer service culture here" (BAIE 04).

Another participant, also a restaurant owner, pointed out that adapting to dining etiquette and culture has been and still remains a challenge:

"Here [in the UK] dining-in is not part of the main culture, especially in the daytime, but mainly take away culture, and our food [African] is not designed for that. It has been a challenge to adapt to that and I am still struggling" (BAIE 11).

Integration challenges were identified by a participant who was a training and transport business manager and community leader:

"Settling in a new country with a different culture, tradition and language means, people are less integrated with local people [mainstream British,] and that has meant they lost their opportunity of employment or education. People just stick together, speak their language and practise

their tradition here and have very limited outside experience which is a problem by itself. Outside, organisations are trying, but it is taking time and effort to address these challenges” (BAIE 12).

- Lack of resources
- Lack of work-life balance
- Lack of self-esteem
- Low income (price sensitive) customer base

Due to a lack of their own resources, most of the BAIE participants were unable to engage in high capital-intensive industries and business sectors, but instead were involved in high labour-intensive sectors where they relied on working for very long hours. They admitted that this has a big impact on the quality of their lives and their families, including negative impacts on their productivity in the long term. The following direct quotes sum up some of the dilemmas faced as a result of their capabilities.

A self-employed taxi driver remarked on the challenge of ‘long working hours and lack of work life balance’:

“We work long hours, up to 14 and 16 hours, and this means we have a very poor quality of life, no time to socialise, relax, but working all the time. We have no other choice” (BAIE 08).

A shopkeeper who regularly drives across the UK not only agreed with the challenges of working long hours but also highlighted his need to sacrifice family holidays for many years in order to build his business, and feels that the business had come at a personal cost:

“Travelling two, three times a week to and from London and Manchester on motorways can be dangerous and being away from family. There are also many sacrifices in business, for example, we have never been on a family holiday for over three years” (BAIE 14).

The following quote highlights the implication of the 'immigrant experience' and its damaging impact on BAIEs entrepreneurial aspirations and self-esteem:

"Even here in our destination [Sheffield/UK] some of us have been put through a humiliating journey where our thoughts and feelings were constantly being undermined and distrusted after which some have unfortunately lost not only their natural confidence and ambition but also the will to live. It is not surprising if this made us expect little from any of our ventures" (BAIE 12).

Whilst a barber recognised that his business was forced to keep service fees at a constantly low price as his core customers are mainly his co-ethnic community members with low disposable incomes and high price sensitivity, thus, his business choice and clientele were noted to limit the growth of his business:

"Our customers have very limited income and we are not able to increase price and all of us in this and other sectors are competing for the same customers. So, we keep the price unchanged for years even though the cost of many things has increased. Competition is intense" (BAIE 09).

Undoubtedly, BAIEs face far more challenges (barriers) as evidenced from data that explores their lived experience which is born out of complex historical, societal, economic and political circumstances, although it is apparent that recent immigrants are markedly different, being well educated, experienced and developing some strong entrepreneurial attributes of resilience born out of their exposure and experience, which are key in creating and exploring opportunities. However, this is not without an opportunity loss and unnecessary pressure on the part of BAIEs in expending time, resources and effort to overcompensate for the shortcomings from the opportunity structure and ethnic resource.

5.4 What do BAIEs consider as opportunities, and what are the implications of these for their businesses?

This section presents what BAIEs consider to be their opportunities (advantages and strengths) that enhance their entrepreneurial achievements and personal goals which take into consideration the host country context and BAIEs' resources, referred to in section 5.3. The key findings as BAIEs' supportive and enabling attributes are linked to the internal and external environmental factors and associated stakeholders. At an individual entrepreneur level, 'resilience' has emerged as one of the key attributes for BAIEs' resourcefulness, risk taking and determination, whilst at immigrants' societal (co-ethnics) level, 'social capital' has been identified as the source of 'real capital' a unique phenomenon not fully explored by the existing body of social capital literature.

Aspects of opportunity attributes from immigrant communities and government policy are explored in more detail in parts 5.5 and 5.6.

BAIEs' Opportunities

Opportunities are interpreted within the context of this research as positive, favourable, conducive, advantageous and enabling factors of internal and external environmental factors.

Key findings are mapped out from wider external and internal factors to specific institutions, policies and practices and are indicated in Table 5.4.1.

These internal and external supportive and enabling factors have been further categorised into BAIEs' societal and individual levels (co-ethnic, family and entrepreneur). External enabling environmental factors are also divided into governmental (public) and private institutional levels which drill down to specific factors (government policy and business culture, city council, job centre, statutory bodies and banks).

Then, key findings provide the summary of specific factors which have been aligned under institutional, societal and individual entrepreneur categories based on participants' responses regarding what they consider as opportunities in their respective businesses.

Table 5.4.1: Summary of BAIEs' opportunities

External Supportive and Enabling factors	Governmental and Public institutions	Government policy and business culture	Key findings
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business freedom ■ Business support ■ Absence of bureaucracy ■ Transparent system ■ Education
		City council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Access to information and assistance with business premises (rent)
		Job centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Access to training and education
Internal Supportive and Enabling factors	Societal, individual and Entrepreneur	Statutory bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rule of law – providing protection ■ providing information
		Banks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Business loan - Lending policy and practice
		Friends & co - ethnic communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Loyal customer base ■ Source of capital, labour, moral and practical help ■ Niche market competitive advantage ■ Cosmopolitan and diversity ■ Increase in demography
		Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Upbringing, heritage and role model (value & inspiration) - Financial, practical and moral support
Internal Supportive and Enabling factors	Societal, individual and Entrepreneur	Entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resilience: -The advantage of being disadvantaged! optimism, determination, risk taking, problem solving, conviction and resourcefulness born out of migration, adaptation and personal life experience. ■ Necessity, sacrifices and survival ■ Knowledge, motivation and positive attitude ■ International and multicultural background and heritage ■ Self believe, pride and ambition

Source: (Author's own work)

External supportive and enabling factors

These are discussed in turn in line with Table 5.4.1.

■ *Born out of Government policy and business culture*

Four themes have been identified as key factors under the government's and public institutions' related government policy and business culture in the UK and locally in South Yorkshire: 'business freedom'; 'business support'; 'absence of bureaucracy'; and 'transparent system'.

Relative to their countries of origin, participants identified and described these as 'opportunities'. The following quotes are typical examples of acknowledgments of these aspects of government policies and business culture, even if the BAIEs were not currently the full beneficiaries:

"Where I came from [Eritrea] you don't have a place to run, because of the government, you know, it doesn't let you do many things. But, here you can do anything. In fact, there are plenty of opportunities in this country if people wanted to do business" (BAIE 01).

Whilst the other contrasting example is that in BAIE 07's country of origin, corruption practices were noted, in contrast to the UK:

"I didn't get any [business support/advice] but I heard that the government in the UK supports small business. But where I came from [Sudan], they don't do that, instead they ask you to pay a bribe to get a licence" (BAIE 07).

(BAIE 02) acknowledged the practical business advisor's input into his business, whilst others referred to the rule of law, business culture, accessibility of information and education in general as good sentiments. However, it is worth noting that these comments are made in comparison to their countries of origin where corruption, nepotism and favouritism have been noted to exist (and persist) in most part of Sub-Saharan African countries (Transparency International, 2016).

Access to information, training, education and the rule of law

The observations made about public institutions are routine activities and basic duties that most citizens in the UK would expect and which are taken for granted. However; BAIEs regard them as 'opportunities' due to the contrast to their countries of origin where information, training, education and the rule of law are not readily available or accessible.

Although none of the participants had been the recipient (beneficiary) of these factors, at least in principle they view the role of institutions as potentially positive knowing that in the future, they could be able to take advantage of the opportunity.

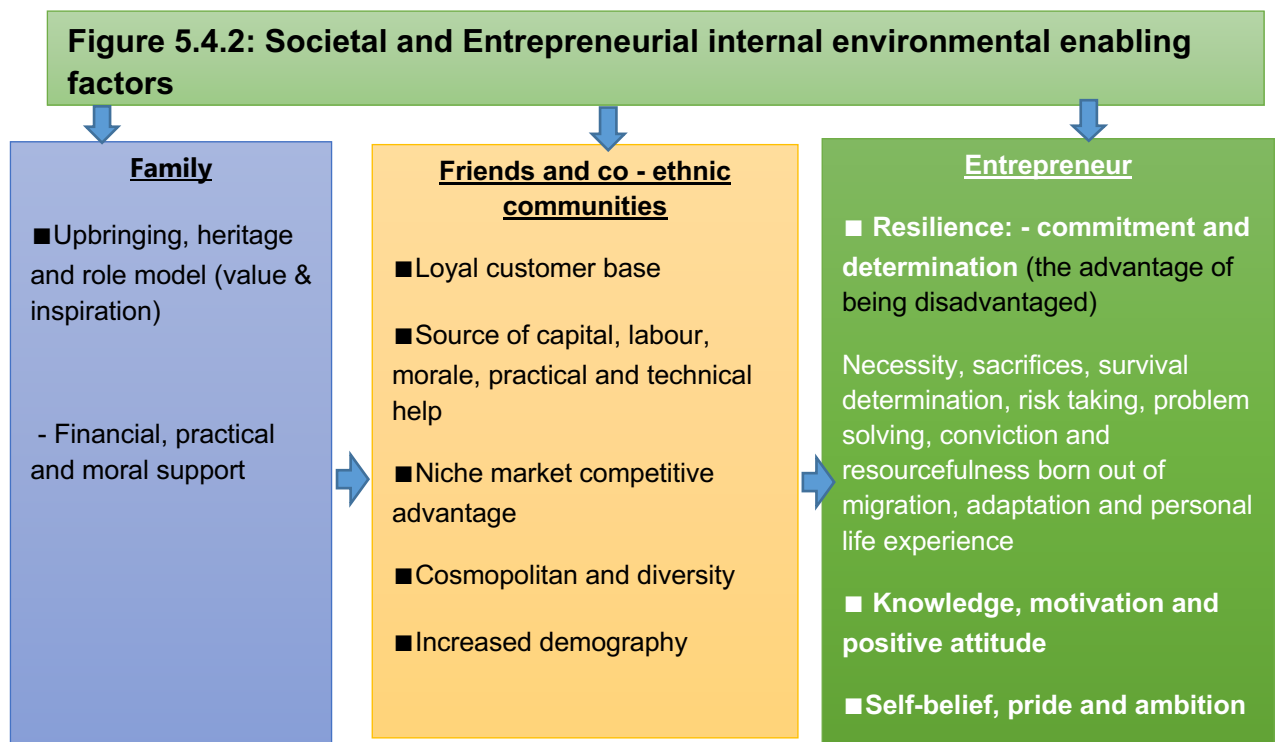
BAIEs' accounts of, relationships with, and levels of satisfaction with identified institutions are discussed in Sections 5.7 and 5.7.1 under the 'Provision of business support and degree of satisfaction'.

Business Loans

Access to a bank loan is the least considered opportunity for BAIEs, with the exception of two participants who have acknowledged that they had a one-off business loan for their start-up businesses in early 1990s. This is an issue that has already been explored in relation to external challenges faced by the BAIEs (section 5.3).

Internal supportive and enabling factors

Figure 5.4.2 presents the key opportunities recognised in association with 'Societal and Entrepreneurial' internal environmental enabling factors'.



Source: (Author's own work)

BAIEs expressed with great emphasis and through the use of examples that their societal and individual entrepreneurial internal factors are the central source for their businesses' inception, survival and growth.

Almost all of the participants recognised that their family, friends and co-ethnic community are critical and remain influential in their personal and entrepreneurial ventures.

The following quotes are compelling examples of how family, upbringing, and co-ethnic communities have defined their businesses profoundly.

A beauty salon owner commended her family, upbringing and heritage as the 'secret ingredient' for her success:

"Most things I learn for my business are from my family in my early childhood and much needed support from my father once I started my business. For example, according to the Ethiopian family tradition, I learnt humbleness and humility which I found has been both my strength and weakness. I still clean the salon and do everything. Most staff respect and appreciate these qualities. When customers say they don't have money with them, I will accept any amount; some try to exploit this,

but others respect and appreciate this and become loyal customers” (BAIE 04).

The participant’s successful business was acknowledged to be born out of her early exposure to the tradition and values that she asserted as a strength by being humble, which earns her respect whilst others are tempted to exploit (abuse) it. On balance, she believed that the advantage is far greater.

A restaurant owner highlighted a multitude of types of support, financial, moral and practical, without which he might not have started his business:

“We couldn’t have started this business without the encouragement of our community, from supporting the idea to lending us significant and interest-free start-up capital, to volunteering in decorating the place. The community is now as proud as we are. They regularly come to the restaurant with their families and friends from faraway places; London, Manchester and Leeds. They also constantly check that we are doing okay and are keen to offer any support to promote the place” (BAIE 02).

The following two brief quotes equally echo the same sentiment, demonstrating how much the co-ethnic communities were perceived to be crucial for BAIEs:

“I am lucky that I have my community support here” (BAIE 07).

“At the moment, I am relying on my family, friends and my good God to stand by my side” (BAIE 11).

Most things identified and discussed here are also recognised to align to the motives for BAIEs in starting their own businesses in the first place (section 5.2).

It was particularly noticeable that participants expressed their recognition of business opportunities that contributed to their respective communities, with profound passion, emotion, dedication and sense of purpose as demonstrated in the above quotations. Here, there appeared to be a sense of "belonging" that proved to be motivational. Additionally, on a practical level, BAIEs also recognised their co-ethnic communities' diverse and cosmopolitan backgrounds and increases in demography as new business opportunities within their ethnic niche markets.

■ *Entrepreneur (opportunities at entrepreneur level)*

Opportunities at an entrepreneur level were found to relate to factors that may be grouped into four areas: resilience; internalised opportunities; knowledge, motivation and attitude; and self-belief, pride and ambition.

Participants recognised and expressed that the principal agents who materialise these opportunities are individual entrepreneurs themselves. The themes of responses largely related to being an immigrant or immigrant identity. This was observed to influence the nurturing and development of a resilient attribute that combines natural, circumstantial, experiential and environmental characteristics, personified in BAIEs, alongside international and multicultural heritages that have been identified as the most critical and central factors, as reflected next.

Table 5.4.2 presents a series of quotations capturing some of the key findings. From the context of the responses, it may be interpreted that these assertions are constructed through the prism of the migration experiences of the BAIEs. Narratives of these experiences offered by the BAIEs refer to overcoming challenges, surviving difficulties, adapting to new environments and situations and a key self-identified strength of the BAIE participants related to their transformation of disadvantage into advantage through their respective business ventures. This has been mentioned earlier in section 5.2.

Table 5.4.2: Interpretations of opportunities as attributes (assets) of Resilience

Quote	Attributes of Resilience
<i>"An entrepreneur needs strong determination in order to overcome challenges and present business with opportunities. Look at the beautiful swan swimming at the surface of the pond, but her legs underneath are very busy all the time supporting her afloat. So, when you see a business, developed and matured working well, the owner must have gone through a great deal of tough challenges. The core of anybody's success in life is to be proud of what you do! Don't sit and moan! Another thing I cannot bear is moaning. Life is too short, and also 'half full is better than half empty'. I have attitudes that always have to be grateful for what you have, because you are alive, and you can do something" (BAIE 03)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determination ▪ Problem solving ▪ Hardworking ▪ Pride and optimism
<i>".. there exist vast opportunities, the sky is the limit as long as one knows what and where to look. Opportunity is what you create, one must offer something that people demand and that way you get the job and money" (BAIE 05).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optimism ▪ Create own opportunity ▪ Sky is the limit
<i>"Opportunities are to be created, but not there for grabbing, you have got to take that big risk, it is like gambling with your money, your time and your own life and probably with your family's lives" (BAIE 09).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk taking ▪ Opportunities are created
<i>"It takes lots of hard work, determination and perseverance to make your business a reality, whether you are in Sheffield or in London"(BAIE 11)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hardworking ▪ Determination ▪ Perseverance
<i>" Opportunity for me is that I am able to work long hours up to 14 and 16 hours to earn more money that most white people are not ready to work for this long" (BAIE 08)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working long hours
<i>"My main strength is to enjoy every situation I am in, my main strength is to adapt to any situation. The other strength is the ability not to give up. my final strength is my passion and confidence" (BAIE 16).</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adaptability ▪ Determination ▪ Passion and confidence

Source: (Author's own work)

BAIEs' responses in regard to opportunity, recognition and the creation of their own businesses highlight that the fundamental impetus or drive is located within themselves and is achieved through deeply embedded values, passion and actions, the reward of which extends beyond absolute commercial objectives. Here, identity and self, shaped through personal experiences and social reactions appears to hold relevance.

What BAIEs consider as opportunities in their entrepreneurial activities may be recognised to sit within their internal and external environments, as summarised in Table 5.4.1. Although BAIEs see potentially supportive and enabling opportunities from the external environmental factors including government policies and organisations' practices, the critical factors that create and nurture real opportunities appear to reside within the entrepreneurs themselves, their family, friends and their co-ethnic communities. More importantly, the development of BAIEs' resilience as an entrepreneurial attribute may be uniquely shaped by their identities as Black African immigrants as well as their identities as entrepreneurs.

5.5 Who are BAIEs' employees, core customers and key supporters?

This section explores BAIEs' employees, core customers and key supporters and provides an analysis of the inter-dependent and intrinsic nature of the migrant communities as co-ethnic and co-national, demonstrating how BAIEs' human capital, social capital and network capital translate into tangible and intangible capital.

This is aimed at identifying who the target customers, employees and key supporters are in an attempt to learn about the BAIEs' business models and strategies, scope of operations, diversification and their potential for entering mainstream markets and gaining visibility in local economies.

Participants were asked to declare the number and identity of their employees (by ethnicity), their core customers and key supporters. Responses have been collated and summarised in Tables 5.5.1 to 5.5.4.

Employees

Most businesses (7) provide between 1- 5 employment opportunities, followed by four BAIEs employing 6-10, whilst four BAIEs are sole traders. Thus, the majority of BAIEs (11 out of 16) provide employment opportunities for up to 10 employees per business. However, the data does not provide information about the terms of employment including pay, holidays and working conditions, which offers scope for further research.

Table 5.5.1: Number of employees in BAIEs' businesses

Number of employees	Number of businesses
1 - 5	7
6 -10	4
Self employed	4
Undisclosed	1
Total	16

Source: (Author's own work)

Table 5.5.2 details the number of employees by ethnicity.

Table 5.5.2: Number of employees by ethnicity

Co-ethnic (co-nationals)	Other ethnic minorities	UK and EU (white-Caucasian)	Self-employment	Total Employees
36	4	7	16	63
57.14%	6.35%	11.11%	25.4%	100%

Source: (Author's own work)

It is apparent that most employees (36 i.e. 57.14%) are drawn from the respective co-ethnic communities of the BAIEs whilst 4 (6.35%) employees come from the wider ethnic minority and 7 (11.11%) are from EU/UK social groups. The significant number of employees including the self-employment of the BAIEs where (56 out of 63, i.e. 89%) are from immigrant (ethnic) minorities. This may be due to community networks and the informal nature of employment terms where pay, working hours and working conditions are negotiated (sometimes outside of legal frameworks with the agreement of both parties, including avoiding taxes) as highlighted in Chapter 2 by Ahmed (2008) about plight of new immigrants working in an illegal economy in Chapter 2. However, in this particular research no clear evidence has been presented to make any conclusion from these findings about such arrangements.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that the BAIEs interviewed in this PhD study have created a total of 63 employment opportunities, most notably

employing new immigrants who may be unable to secure employment in the mainstream labour market. Thus, it might be asserted that BAIEs contribute to combating social exclusion and represent a 'safe landing pad' and offer 'bridges' for new immigrants to build their experience and confidence, which in return benefits local communities and the local economy on a broader scale.

Core customers - Customer segmentation

Most of the BAIES (12 out of 16) identified that their core customers are co-ethnics (nationals) and other Black African immigrant communities, whilst only 4 out of 16 stated that their customer segments are diverse. Furthermore, 3 out of the 4 BAIEs with a diverse customer base explained that this was due to the nature of their business and its operations, as their respective businesses operate in property investment, furniture design and taxi transport services for which there is no specific customer base, at least in terms of ethnic social groups. However, the fourth respondent is running an African restaurant, but has achieved a diverse customer base due to the location of his restaurant, where the majority of residents are mainstream [white British] residents and a multi-cultural student population.

The phenomenon of this particular participant (BAIE 11) has a unique experience that is worth explaining. Although it is not conclusive, I would like to draw attention to the critical nature of the core customer base and its implications for businesses. The particular business offers ethnic African and Caribbean food, but his business has been located outside the proximity of his co-ethnic and other migrant communities.

During the interview, the participant expressed his grave concerns about the location of his business due to grievances that had been raised by some of his core customers [white]. He perceived these grievances to be 'hateful acts' which had reached the attention of the authorities, whereby his restaurant business has subsequently been closed on the grounds of hygiene.

The owner expressed his frustration and disappointment with those customers that had complained to environmental health; he perceived their behaviour as 'irrational' and motivated by racism. Subsequently, he has relocated his

business to another part of the same town, to an ethnically more diverse location. He reported that he felt that he has been welcomed and supported by the community in the new location. Aspects of the participant's interview have been discussed earlier under the theme of 'consumer racism'.

Although one obvious explanation as to why BAIEs' core customers are co-ethnic communities, or Black African immigrants, relates to market-driven demand for specific products and services, it should be noted that BAIE products and services are not necessarily exclusively designed to meet specific ethnic needs and can be consumed by a wider customer base. On the other hand, there are few BAIEs who have a diverse customer base due to the nature of the industry (products and services) where their businesses are located.

It is also worth noting that few BAIEs have two categories of customers - users (consumer side) and suppliers (supply side) including labour and materials - and in both categories customers are predominantly from their co-ethnic migrant communities, though the supply side shows marginal diversification.

Key supporters and types of support

Participants were asked to identify who their key supporters were and the types of support that they receive in their entrepreneurial activities. The responses of these findings have been collated and presented in Table 5.5.3.

Key supporters are identified as three major groups; family; friends; and co-ethnic community. The types of support provided are financial, moral, practical (labour) and technical. Additionally, some supporters were recognised to show commitment through their purchasing capacity by becoming loyal customers.

Table 5.5.3: Key supporters and types of support

Key supporters	Types of support
Family	Finance – as ‘gift’ for start-up capital Act as loan guarantor
Friends	Interest-free loan Rotating credit finance, moral, social, practical, technical and core (loyal) customer base
Co-ethnic community	Moral, social, practical, technical and core customer base.

Source: (Author’s own work)

The financial contributions made by friends were reported to be either interest-free loans from their personal savings or, by forming rotating credit facilities, as discussed in 5.5.4 as the main source of start-up capital. Immediate family financial support in this research has been referred to as a lump sum of money (usually non-refundable gifts) for start-up capital. The latter option needless to say was limited to only a few BAIEs whose parents were in business themselves or enjoyed a high level of income and wealth.

Almost all of the participants acknowledged that the support provided by family, friends and co-ethnic communities was critical and comes in multiple forms - as moral support, practical advice, labour, finance, customer loyalty and role model inspiration. The immediate family members (wife and husband) are considered to be part of BAIEs' businesses, have a vested interest in the business venture and are a critical part of the day-to-day running of the business. This includes sharing the risk and other family commitments and providing space and time for the partner to focus more on their business.

Friends and co-ethnic communities were cited as equally critical stakeholders on so many levels; from approving his/her business idea, providing an interest-free loan as start-up capital that can last for a number of years, as well as becoming core customers. They were also recognised to offer a source of labour and had made practical contributions including, promotion of the business, technical support and sharing their experience, knowledge and wisdom. In return, the community expects its needs to be met adequately which have not been accommodated by the mainstream businesses network of

exchange and social capital. Such community members take pride in the community successes and they use these venues not only as a place of business transactions, but also as social and networking platforms. This is a physiological contract between the entrepreneur, friends and co-ethnic communities.

Table 5.5.2 provides additional evidence how the co-ethnic communities are critical as core customers for the existence of BAIEs businesses, with the exception of a few who are not operating in ethnic community niche markets.

On the other hand, Table 5.5.4 provides specific focus regarding the source of funding for BAIEs' start-up capital, in which the co-ethnic community and in particular family and friends play a critical role.

BAIEs' Source of start-up capital

Table 5.5.4 presents the findings about the source of start-up capital as alluded to above.

Table 5.5.4: Summary of BAIEs' Source of start-up capital.

Source of start-up capital	Remarks
Own savings	15 respondents named this as their main source
Family and friends	7 cited family and friends in addition to own savings
Bank loan	Only two cited a bank loan as the source of finance. Where BAIE 04 acknowledged that in addition to her father's cash deposit as a gift, bank loan was secured as subject to her father serving as a loan guarantor. Whereas; BAIE 16 didn't provide any detail.

Source: (Author's own work)

Almost all BAIEs' start-up capital (with the exception of two) came primarily from their own savings, while some used a combination of family and friends as the source of their start-up capital. From the above data, there is only two

exceptions, participants (BAIE 04 and BAIE 16) who had access to a bank loan where for one of them her father who has an established business and a good working relationship with banks was able to act as a guarantor in securing a bank loan.

A rotating credit facility was also indicated as one source of start-up capital, where a group of friends (usually 12) set up a voluntary credit association similar to a Credit Union. Group members contribute regularly (weekly, fortnightly or monthly) whereby one member collects an amount of money (interest-free) which is taken in turns by individual members over a period of time (usually 12 months or 24 months) depending on the number (12 or 24) of members. The administration and the policy of such an association is drawn by members in consensus. This practice is adopted from these entrepreneurs' country of origin as a traditional way of raising funds. This tradition is used not only as a means of raising start-up capital, but also as a means of generating further working capital in order to grow and expand their businesses.

In Figure 5.5.4, I have attempted to illustrate the strands of BAIEs' sources of start-up capital.

Figure 5.5.4: BAIEs Source of capital

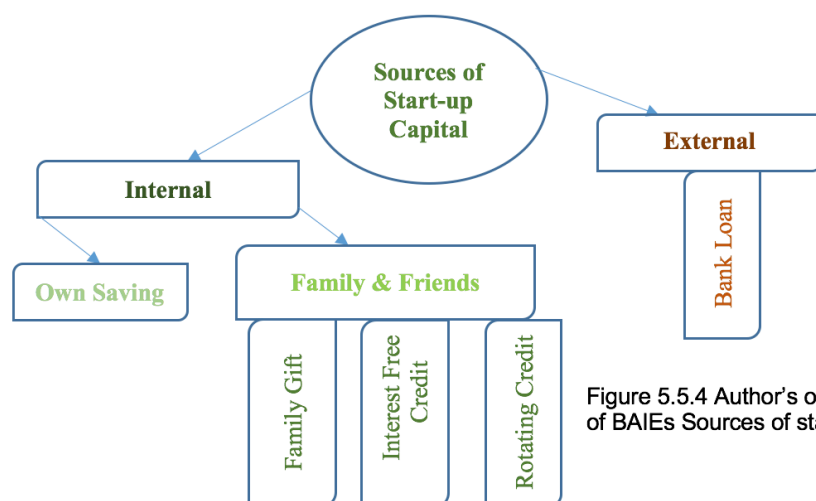


Figure 5.5.4 Author's own illustration of BAIEs Sources of start-up capital

It is very critical that BAIEs have access to raise finance through informal routes considering that there are challenges through formal institutions as has been discussed in 5.3.1. However, though the rationale of support from friends and family is relatively obvious, it is worth investigating the sustainability,

effectiveness and transparency of such arrangements across ethnic groups and how it evolves, including the expectations (reciprocities by communities). Provision of support could tap into this model, perhaps as community investment to make it mutually beneficial and sustainable. The next section investigates the provision of business support by various service providers and experience of BAIEs.

5.6 What are BAIEs' experiences regarding provision of support?

This presents BAIEs' awareness and engagement with local, regional and national institutions and organisations which provide business support and services. It also reveals the effectiveness of provision of support and services, if any, in addressing BAIEs' business needs.

Identified support and service providers, types and degree of satisfaction

This section refers to institutional or organisational support and service providers for small businesses and 'disadvantaged groups' as a matter of policy provision or standard services at local, regional and national levels.

Participants were asked to identify any institution from which they may have had any support or business service and were prompted to describe the quality of the service in addressing their particular (special) business needs. The responses are presented in Table 5.6.1.

Nine of the participants replied that they had had some contact with city council, police, job centre plus and banks on operational matters and on limited occasions. The degree of their satisfaction was described as basic, good and satisfactory, disappointing, problematic, frustrating and unfair. On the other hand, seven participants responded that they did not have any kind of contact from any of the organisations at all and thus were not aware of any business support initiative locally, regionally or nationally.

Table 5.6.1: Key Support and service providers and degree of satisfaction

Identified support and service providers	Effectiveness (Quality of services) and recipient BAIEs
Job Centre Plus	<p>Accessed by three participants and described as;</p> <p><i>“basic and satisfactory”</i> (BAIE 02)</p> <p><i>“not flexible”</i> (BAIE 05)</p> <p><i>“not impressed”</i> (BAIE 08)</p>
Local government (city council)	<p><i>“Good or satisfactory”</i> (BAIE 02; BAIE 12)</p> <p><i>“Disappointing, slow to respond on administrative matters; biased, problematic, heavy-handed towards small businesses, do not deliver what they promise”</i> (BAIE 03)</p>
NHS Trust	<p>Accessed by one participant and described as <i>“good”</i> (BAIE 10)</p>
Statutory bodies: - Police, Health and Safety, Fire and Rescue services Business Support Providers.	<p><i>“Police service is disappointing and slow to respond to urgent calls and are generally ‘uncooperative’ to minorities’ needs and requests”</i> (BAIE 03; BAIE 08)</p> <p><i>“Health and Safety, Fire and Rescue Authority are satisfactory in providing information”</i> (BAIE 06)</p> <p><i>“Business support providers are short-term, not integrated, and are not aligned with the needs of the BMEs, but for their own funding agenda, and lack cultural sensitivity”</i> (BAIE 13)</p>
Banks	<p><i>“Putting too much pressure”</i> (BAIE 04)</p> <p><i>“Unfair lending policy and practice”</i> (BAIE 03)</p> <p><i>“Disappointing; disrespectful to BAIEs”</i> (BAIE 13)</p> <p><i>“Stereotypical views; mistrusting and mistreating BMEs as they see them as high risks rather than customers”</i> (BAIE 13)</p> <p><i>“Treat us [Black African migrants] as second-class citizens”</i> (BAIE 06)</p>

Source: (Author’s own work)

As indicated in Table 5.6.1, nine participants identified some institutions and have had some short-term or one-off engagement, where most expressed their 'dissatisfaction' about the effectiveness (quality) of services, whilst a few describe them as 'basic, good or satisfactory'.

The next part provides further analysis on each business support provider with specific contexts and examples.

Job Centre Plus

The Job Centre was identified by three participants who have had access to different services; training, education and business advice. The quality of service was described by key phrases; 'basic and satisfactory', 'not flexible' and 'not impressed' which are mixed perceptions, whilst the dissatisfaction seems to be more overriding.

Local government (City Council)

Two participants cited their local governments (city councils) in an affirmative confirmation 'good and satisfactory', based on assistance in accessing business support and leadership training workshop. The two participants complained based on their experiences, describing the Council as 'disappointing, slow to respond on administrative matters, problematic, heavy-handed towards small businesses and do not deliver what they promise' (BAIE 03) whilst (BAIE 08) described them as 'unfair and biased' whilst referring to his taxi MOT experience.

NHS Trust

One participant (BAIE 10) acknowledged that NHS Trust had been providing specialist training support for her new recruits in providing care services for elderly patients under the NHS. The degree of satisfaction is expressed as 'good'; she has not however disclosed whether the service provider is charging fees or providing free services.

Statutory bodies

The remaining one participant acknowledged local statutory bodies (the police, fire and rescue services and health and safety) as 'satisfactory', occasional visiting his restaurant and providing him with information and advice on operational matters.

Regarding the level of satisfaction, three support providers (NHS Trust, City Council, Job Centre Plus) were described as 'good/satisfactory' whilst the others expressed their frustration and disappointment due to lack of flexibility, lack of cultural sensitivity, relevance of the service and long-term commitment.

Business support providers

One respondent (BAIE 13) acknowledged his knowledge of some business support providers, without mentioning them specifically, through his community leadership role, but was very critical about the nature and quality of the service, describing it as being 'short-term, not integrated, and are not aligned with the needs of the BMEs, but for their own funding agenda and lack cultural sensitivity'.

Banks

There were only two participants (BAIE 04 and BAIE 16) who have had access to bank loans where one (BAIE 04) described that she was under huge pressure from the bank though she had her wealthy father serving as a backup and guarantor, whilst BAIE 16 did not provide further details.

The remaining four were very critical about banks' policy and practice as indicated in Table 5.6.1, describing them as

- "Putting on too much pressure" (BAIE 04)
- "Unfair lending policy and practice" (BAIE 03)
- "Disappointing; disrespectful to BAIEs" (BAIE 13)
- "Stereotypical views; mistrusting and mistreating BMEs as they see them high risks than customers" (BAIE 13)
- "Treat us (BMEs) as second-class citizens" (BAIE 06)

Most of what has been described above has already been identified and discussed as BAIEs' challenges, under BAIEs' barriers (5.3); this triangulation exercise has confirmed again their consistent experience with institutions including service providers.

It is clear from the data that there are very limited interactions (engagements) between BAIEs in South Yorkshire and business support providers. Seven BAIEs have had no contact or even awareness of such business support providers whilst nine BAIEs have either limited knowledge or a one-off contact with local organisations. On the other hand, the degree of support or service by and large is described as 'unsatisfactory, inflexible, disappointing and basic', with a few exceptions indicated as 'satisfactory or good'. The support and advice referred to are mainly routine administrative and information matters by local statutory organisations, City Council, Job Centre Plus, police, NHS etc., with the exception of banks, which are recognised by BAIEs as having unfair lending policies, discriminatory practices and stereotypical views about BMEs, most of which are negative.

What is startling is that none of them identified any dedicated professional and specialist service provider to address fundamental and strategic challenges and opportunities.

Needless to say, business engagement is a two-way street and both parties need to be on the lookout and meet half way, at least in principle. However, BAIEs as new immigrants may be unaware of such help or, as some put it, they do not think their business is important to others, other than themselves or their communities. Thus, this gap could have been addressed by more outreach work on the part of the support providers, if indeed such provision of support and advice exists, capable of nurturing, developing and enhancing BAIEs' competitiveness locally, regionally and nationally, which could have a multiplier effect within the immigrant communities, the wider society and economy.

5.7 What are BAIEs' future plans and aspirations?

This section presents the key findings of BAIEs' future plans, aspirations and strategies which link back to their motivations and ascertain the justifications of

adopted strategies; diversification and consolidation. Internationalisation between the host country and their respective countries of origin is a commonly shared vision in their medium to long-term vision, where for some becoming 'diaspora entrepreneurs' is the next natural progression.

Participants were asked to describe their future business plans, aspirations and strategies in regard to their entrepreneurial activities. The responses are collated and summarised in Table 5.7.1, whilst individual responses are indicated in Table 5.7.2.

The key findings from these responses have been categorised under diversification and consolidation strategies which will be analysed next.

Diversification and consolidation strategy

The responses regarding BAIEs' future strategic business plans, aspirations and strategies identified two major categories; diversifications and consolidation. Responses regarding diversification also revealed three strands; product/service, customer and geography. Consolidation refers to either maintaining the *status quo* or incremental and operational activities. Table 5.7.1 presents the summary of BAIEs' plans, aspirations and strategies; (diversification and consolidation) strategy, while Table 5.7.2 presents the specific activities of each participant in regard to their plans, aspirations and strategies.

Although business plans, aspirations and strategies could be interchangeable, in the context of this research, an attempt has been made to distinguish them, as 'plan' refers to specific and clear responses regarding activities that are taking place currently or in the near future as part of the future strategic plan, whilst aspirations more general desires and intentions. In this research context, plans are relatively imminent actions, whilst aspirations are long-term goals and are subject to many variables both in personal and commercial objectives.

Table 5.7.1: Summary of BAIEs' business plans, aspirations, diversification and consolidation strategy

Business plans aspirations and strategies		Key findings
	Product-Service diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ New (unrelated) products/services) ranges ■ Additional related product/service ■ Move into a new business venture
	Customer diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach out to mainstream customers
	Geographic diversification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ International operations ■ Knowledge Transfer and sharing experience
	Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maintain status quo ■ Make incremental improvements

Source: (Author's own work)

During the interviews, six participants had already been implementing some of their business plans, while ten of them only expressed their aspirations (desire) to apply them with varying degrees of accuracy in regard to the timing and activities (see Table 5.7.2). Among BAIEs with international diversification strategies, two participants described, currently or in the short term, how they will be consolidating current activities by focusing on operational matters, such as upgrading and improvements without any major undertakings.

I have interpreted BAIEs' responses and appreciated that most BAIEs have forward-looking and positive entrepreneurial plans, aspirations and strategies recognising the need for adaptation in order to meet their personal and commercial objectives by addressing the demands and challenges of the national and international business environment, which will be analysed in detail.

Product/service diversification

Seven respondents were planning to diversify their products and services, among which five were interested in complimentary and unrelated products and services while others are switching to new industry products and services: for example, from electronics shop into café, from barber to café, from food store

into property investment and from food store into car dealership. Some of these changes (switchovers) represent shifts from labour-intensive to capital-intensive investments, as BAIEs are acquiring sufficient experience and resources to invest, such as from food store to property investment and from food store to car dealership. As part of their diversification plans, BAIEs are changing across a range of industries vertically or horizontally, based on their personal preferences and market demands, such as from restaurant to food store and from barber to cafe.

The emerging trends that inspire these related and unrelated product and service diversifications are driven by a combination of changes in BAIEs' personal interests, circumstances, resources and local specific market demands.

Customer diversification

Only three of the participants aimed to diversify their customers by reaching out to the mainstream customer base by promoting their 'adapted/customised' products and services. The reason for the customer diversifications has been justified in that it is based on market-led commercial decisions and a business growth and expansion strategy.

Geographic diversification

Six of the participants were aiming to diversify their business ventures in geographic contexts, among which two of them are imminent and relocating within the UK regions on personal grounds, whilst the remaining four are international and long-term aspirations. The motives for international diversification are expressed as sharing knowledge, expertise and resources, mainly between their respective countries of origin and the UK. The commercial objectives have not been clearly articulated, but these interests are born out of personal objectives and a sense of duty to pay back to communities through their business ventures.

Table (5.7.2) presents individual BAIEs' specific plans, aspirations and strategies.

Table 5.7.2: BAIEs specific activities regarding their future plans, aspirations and strategies

BAIEs	Diversifications			Consolidation
	Product / Service	Customer	Geography	
BAIE 01	Closing down electronic shop and moving into café. More new products and services are under consideration and trial, such as ice cream and breakfast menu		Consolidate with Italian coffee partner. Discussion is also taking place with Malaysian tea supplier	
BAIE 02		Diversifying customer base by reaching out to mainstream residents		
BAIE 03	"I have now more time and pick up my part-time hobby, engage more with international stock market"		"I have now more time and pick up my part-time hobby, engage more with international stock market"	"I consolidate my property business and make the business sweat more, but not me anymore"
BAIE 04			Internationalise the business operation to her country of origin, Ethiopia	"Right now, I will just focus on my beauty salon by closing down the massage and therapy service upstairs"
BAIE 05			Plans to internationalise his operation to his country of origin, Liberia, in order to share his skills and knowledge with young people	
BAIE 06		Promotion to attract mainstream customers		Maintain system improvement
BAIE 07	Plans to diversify his business into café		His long-term plan is to engage in international business between his country of origin, Sudan, UK and China	

BAIEs	Diversifications			Consolidation
	Product / Service	Customer	Geography	
BAIE 08			Intends to venture in international business between his country of origin, Ethiopia, and UK (not specified)	
BAIE 09				No specific plan; but optimistic about current and future trends
BAIE 10			Grow into other regions and towns	
BAIE 11	Moved from restaurant into food store business			
BAIE 12			Relocation to another town for personal reason	
BAIE 13				Maintain good level of service, but no major plan, for now
BAIE 14	Selling his current food store business and moving into property investment			
BAIE 15	Extending to other legal services; to the wider BME communities.	Reaching out to the wider BME communities		
BAIE 16	Selling (closing down) the food store and expanding the car dealership business			

Source: (Author's own work)

By and large BAIEs are engaged in diversification strategies, with the exception of a few who are focused on consolidating their current operations, as presented in Tables 5.7.1 and 5.7.2. Partly these changes are possible due to the flexible (mobile) nature of their businesses, whilst some of the BAIEs' business diversification strategies are natural progressions, which are

achievable as and when they have accumulated sufficient experience and capital. On the other hand, some of the diversifications are market (demand) led, whilst others (especially geographic dimensions) are due to personal and family related factors.

Long-term aspirations (ambitions) and strategies remain unclear at this stage, as most of them lack resources, capacity and clarity as to how this can be achieved. What is interesting is that the trend and the route for BAIEs' breaking out of the ethnic niche market into the mainstream are through accumulation of financial and human capital.

5.8 Chapter Summary

The research has identified that most of the BAIE participants may be identified to be relatively new, having migrated to the UK between the 1990s and 2000s, with an average of 10-15 years lived experience. The main causes of their migration were noted to impact on their motivations for self-employment, together with their social status that ensued. Thus, their life histories prior to becoming entrepreneurs were noted to play a pivotal role in their lived experiences and identities as BAIEs.

Pursuing life in the UK, most BAIEs have engaged in entrepreneurial activities motivated by intertwined dynamics of push and pull factors as indicated in Table 5.2.1. Among their internal and external motivational factors for entrepreneurship, 'resilience' emerged as a distinctive motivational attribute in the context of their adaptation to life in their host country, the UK.

BAIEs were noted to face disproportionately high internal and external challenges (barriers), linked to their racial and ethnic identities as well as their immigrant status impeding their entrepreneurial potential.

The participants were found to be predominantly operating in an ethnic niche market (forming ethnic enclaves) in response to their situation, where co-ethnics (co-nationals) are core customers, employees, suppliers and supporters, recognised to be a key source of the provision of business opportunities (internal enabling factors). One of the distinctive features of the BAIEs sampled in South Yorkshire is that they are highly reliant on their respective co-ethnics

(co-nationals) and they are 'less established', 'transient' and 'price sensitive' which restricts the potential for their business growth and expansion. This, coupled with the BAIEs being relatively new to the societal norms and the business culture of the host country, presents some compounded challenges.

The research has identified BAIEs' current engagement with business support providers to be very poor by all accounts, as indicated in Section 5.6.

On the part of the BAIEs, most of them are attempting to deploy diversification strategies and have aspirations, with respect to their business operations, of breaking out of community enclaves and the ethnic niche market once they have accumulated sufficient experience, aspirations and strategies. However, the success of such strategies and transition depends on BAIEs' human capital, financial capital, provision of support and, needless to say, the business environment.

Chapter 6 discusses the results relating to life histories, adaptability and resilience, social status, and cultural integration in line with the underpinning theories and concepts relating to entrepreneurship and immigrant and ethnic minority identities pinpointed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Chapter 6: Discussion of BAIEs' lived experience - key findings

This chapter aligns to Research Objective 4 of the study, outlined in Chapter 1:

- To critically evaluate the lived experiences of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Yorkshire against currently known experiences of entrepreneurs and immigrant entrepreneurs *per se* with a view to considering the distinctiveness of BAIEs as a discrete social group

As such, the chapter considers the key results presented in Chapter 5 against the literature presented in Chapter 2.

In the reflective summary of Chapter 5, 4 'big' issues were highlighted that had emerged through the presentation of the interview results pertaining to the research sub-questions of the study. Those big issues form the focus of this chapter and each is considered in turn with a view to addressing the final research sub-question presented in Chapter 1 of this thesis:

- To what extent are the experiences of BAIEs commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs?

This chapter of the thesis therefore discusses the results relating to life histories, adaptability and resilience, social status, and cultural integration in line with the underpinning theories and concepts relating to entrepreneurship and immigrant and ethnic minority identities pinpointed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

6.1 Life histories

BAIEs have identified a range of key factors that motivate them to pursue business careers in South Yorkshire which can be broadly categorised into pull (internal) and push (external) factors. As immigrants, it is apparent that they have faced many challenges externally from regulatory, institutional and societal environments on many fronts, such as asylum constraints, discrimination in the labour market and racist societal attitudes. These characteristics are partially in line with literature of 'disadvantage theory' (Light and Gold, 2006) embedded in structural approach with emphasis on the opportunity structure of the environment. On the other hand, internal motivational factors include the

individual's own desire, support and encouragement from the immigrant community, family and friends as equally powerful forces that propel (push/pull) BAIEs to engage in entrepreneurial activities. Again, an aspect of this analysis is in line with the findings of prominent authors, (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Ram *et al.*, 2013; Bonacich 1988), where entrepreneurship for immigrants and ethnic minorities is identified as the catalyst for combatting unemployment and a means of economic independence and upward social mobility (Hamnett *et al.*, 1994) in most Western urban societies. Burns and Dewhurst (1989) describe self-employment for immigrants as not only a commercial goal, but also as a means of recognition and self-expression.

For Black African immigrants, life histories include experiences prior to, during and after the process of immigration. The data shows that, due to the lengthy legal asylum application process, which on average took six years, this is perceived by BAIEs as a lost opportunity during which they were idle and felt that this is beyond their control, unfair and the result of a politically motivated government policy, which is hard on immigrants with the intention of curtailing the number of immigrants into the country. The recent discourse in the media and public domain has had a big influence in the rise of far-right groups on political stages across Europe and North America which has bred negative sentiments, racist attitudes, discrimination and lack of trust towards immigrants. BAIEs' experience suggests that these incidents have been reflected in institutional practices and societal views which ostracise BAIEs to further isolation and restrict their integration and breakout into the mainstream society and markets. For example, work permit restrictions, the police's uncooperative attitude, banks' discriminatory lending practices and authorities' heavy-handedness are among 'institutional racist' barriers as recognised in the literature as structural barriers to immigrants and ethnic groups as defined by the Institute of Race Relations UK (2017). In the literature, it is indicated that the extent of institutional discrimination is significantly higher against BAIEs where these groups are called '**minorities within minorities**' (Omar *et al.*, 2006), whilst Fraser (2005) describes the '**ethnic penalty**' based on the disproportionately high level of rejection in accessing finance.

At a societal level, BAIEs have identified incidents that are racist, abusive and damaging, ranging from verbal assault to physically vandalising their shops,

cars and not paying for used services, which are criminal acts. However, no support or action was taken by the police even when BAIEs approached them with evidence; BAIEs perceive that institutional racism has lent itself to consumer racism by condoning and emboldening such criminal acts. These incidents have restricted BAIEs' potential breakout into the mainstream and restricted them within their ethnic enclaves which have limited scope of growth potential due to their demographic size, the purchasing capacity of the immigrant communities, cut-throat competition and the undifferentiated characteristics of services and goods in niche markets and business sectors. This phenomenon has been discussed in the literature as 'consumer racism' by Shimp and Sharma (1987) and Quellet (2005) based on US and Canadian consumers' attitudes of boycotting and intimidating behaviour towards Latin American migrant businesses. In the UK, this has been corroborated by the findings of Ishaq *et al.* (2010), who described the experience of ethnic minority small businesses particularly of South Asian entrepreneurs in the retail sector in their effort to serve the mainstream, but who became victims of harassment and hostility by consumers causing them serious health problems (depression, fear, anxiety, anger and inferiority and embarrassment).

6.2 Adaptability and resilience

The role of immigrant communities, family and friends has been identified as one of the key pull factors for BAIEs, contributing moral, practical and financial support, a phenomenon associated with Social Capital theory, confirming the findings of Bonacich *et al.* (1977) with respect to South Korean immigrant entrepreneurs' success in Los Angeles and Bizri's (2017) study of Syrian refugees' entrepreneurs in Lebanon. Co-ethnic community factors were identified to be of interest in this PhD research study, conceptualised to act as 'pull factors' in Figure 3.7. However, the influence of a co-ethnic community in the host country of the BAIEs may be recognised to be perhaps much more significant in that it provides a means of support for the adaptability and resilience of the BAIEs in the UK. This, it may be argued, is something that differs from the experiences of the entrepreneur per se but is in common with the experiences of immigrant and ethnic minority entrepreneurs (Bonacich *et al.*, 1977; Light, 1980; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Porters and Manning, 2008).

'Resilience' has emerged as the distinctive motivation and an attribute born out of the BAIEs' exposure and lived experience which has fuelled their entrepreneurial spirit, as illustrated in Figure 5.2.1 'resilience framework' and further analysed in section 5.4 in relation to BAIEs' key opportunities, specifically in Figure 5.4.2 and Table 5.4.2 and the source of start-up capital in section 5.5, Chapter 5.

BAIEs are exposed to high risk and their survival response includes migration, which has equipped them with a high tolerance to risk and uncertainty. For most of the BAIE participants in this research, the main reasons for their migration have been identified as due to war, conflict, political persecution and lack of security in their countries of origin as summarised in Table 5.1.2 of Chapter 5. On the other hand, BAIEs' adaptability to constant changes in the new country, culture and language has helped them to cope, survive and thrive in business. BAIEs' cultural predisposition has also attributed to their 'resilient' characteristics displaying a high propensity towards self-employment according to the culturalist approach of entrepreneurship in the literature. Masurel *et al.* (2004) as proponents of the culturalist approach suggest that some immigrants and ethnic minorities have high entrepreneurial attributes born out of their cultural heritage and family upbringing, such as dedication to hard work, frugal life style, risk taking, ability to network and nurturing solidarity among co-ethnic groups.

In this research BAIEs have displayed some attributes that are born out of their culture, upbringing, lived experience as demonstrated on Figure 5.2.1 and equally learning from their environment in navigating through structural, societal and institutional challenges.

However; in this research, as I stated in the conclusion section of 'Entrepreneurship theories' 2.3.2, the entrepreneurial personalities of some individuals are significantly recognised; these are not necessarily predetermined by innate attributes 'in the DNA', but equal attention and study should be given to potential attributes gained from learning and developing within the entrepreneur's specific contexts. In other words, there is no evidence to suggest that such 'entrepreneurial attributes' are preconfigured in individuals' DNA coding as argued by Fisher and Koch (2008). For the purposes of this research, I endorse the position of McClelland (1995) that characterisation of

entrepreneurs' traits is learned and influenced by culture and developed against the constraints of the opportunity structure.

Supporters of the culturalist approach believe that immigrant groups have culturally determined features leading to a propensity to favour self-employment (Masurel *et al.*, 2004).

A similar assertion has been made by Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2002), as cited by Nwankwo (2005) that Africans have the highest total entrepreneurial activity index (TEA):

Africans are five times as likely to be involved in an autonomous business start-up compared to Whites and other population subgroups. It states that African people are the most likely to see good business opportunities and have the highest total entrepreneurial activity index (TEA) overall of all ethnic groupings. The TEA index for African men is 50 per cent compared with 14.6 per cent amongst Caribbean men and 11.3 per cent amongst Asian men (Nwankwo, 2005, p.127)

The development of BAIEs' entrepreneurial attributes and enabling factors including 'resilience' have been illustrated in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.7) and Chapter 5 (Figure 5.2.1 and 5.4.2 and Table 5.4.2) as already indicated in the introduction to this section (6.2.3). BAIEs have faced disproportionate and multiple challenges as summarised in Table 5.3.1 of Chapter 5, ranging from external regulatory, institutional, societal challenges to BAIEs' internal lack of resources, support and competencies. Despite these barriers, BAIEs remain resilient in pursuing their entrepreneurial ventures, though it is undeniable that they could have achieved much more successes.

Resilience has been explained in the literature as the ability to absorb and rebound from difficulties more resourcefully and strengthened (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003; Mallak, 1998; Egeland *et al.*, 1993). Resilience from the entrepreneurship perspective is about fostering learning and preparedness to encounter challenges, ordinary adaptive processes that promote competence, restore efficacy and encourage growth. The attribute of resilience in these research findings is corroborated by Dothan and Findikoglu (2017) on minority Arabs running businesses in Israel and minority-owned Jewish businesses in Turkey, the case studies of which allow them to draw the conclusion how each minority group in the respective host countries is able to adapt and evolve,

displaying these resilience attributes in the face of disadvantageous opportunity structures in each host country.

Resilience has been identified as the key feature, described as the 'advantage of being disadvantaged' to illustrate the irony of BAIEs' stamina, resistance, courage and tolerance to risk in navigating the complex dynamics of business operation which provide them with a competitive advantage, as illustrated in Table 5.4.1 and Figure 5.4.2 of Chapter 5.

However, it is not yet clear whether this attribute would allow BAIEs to effectively compete outside the ethnic niche market, as the research findings in both cases are based on minority groups who are predominantly operating in their respective ethnic enclaves.

BAIEs' challenges and opportunities are identified under two major categories, external and internal (refer to Tables 5.3.1 and 5.4.1). The external challenges range from regulatory, institutional and societal levels whilst BAIEs' internal barriers are associated with lack of resources, competences and experience. The research explains that these factors are born out of complex historical, economic, social and political phenomena nationally and regionally.

In the same way, BAIEs' opportunities are primarily residing within the entrepreneurs themselves, recognised as 'resilience' nurtured from their lived experience and enabling attributes not only to survive, cope and adapt to challenging environments, but also overcoming and thriving whilst advancing their entrepreneurial ventures. This research explains that BAIEs' opportunities exist within themselves and their immediate environment where entrepreneurs are able to mobilise and organise resources in the form of human capital, network and social capitals.

The resilience framework adapted in this research (Figure 5.2.1) in order to make sense of BAIEs' lived experience can be considered as a knowledge contribution to the advancement of entrepreneurship from the particular social group's lived experience perspective and informed by culture in agreement with the long-standing view of McClelland (1965).

This research extends the resilience attributes of BAIEs born out of lived experience from distinctive social groups' perspectives further to the culturalist

approach, which recognises that culture contributes to greater entrepreneurial predisposition, high propensity and preparedness to entrepreneurial activities and self-employment (Masurel *et al.*, 2004). Basu and Goswanmi (1999), adding to Nwankwo's (2005) and GEM (2002) research of ethnic minority groups' indicator of high total entrepreneurial activity index.

From the data findings summarised in Tables 5.3.1 and 5.4.1 of Chapter 5, BAIEs are facing challenges and presented with opportunities respectively as indicated in the literature; Volery (2007) asserted that 'the restructuring of the Western economies post industrialisation has brought both opportunities and challenges to ethnic minorities'. What BAIEs perceive as challenges are barriers that impede their business activities emanating from both the external environment discussed in section 5.3.1 and the internal environment in section 5.3.2 respectively. Opportunities are understood as favourable, advantages, conducive and enabling factors both internally and externally as perceived by BAIEs.

Although some of these challenges are shared experience of BAIEs in London, as corroborated by the findings of Nwankwo (2005), Ojo (2013) and Daley (1998), the extent of challenges is significantly higher, and opportunities are limited for these recent immigrants living outside big cities, such as in South Yorkshire urban centres (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield) with less established and transient immigrant communities. The disproportionate level of barriers that new Black African immigrants and ethnic minorities face is a well-documented historical trend corroborated by other researchers in the US, Europe and UK as indicated in the literature by Light (1984), Waldinger (1988), Waldinger *et al.*, (1990), Ward and Jenkins (1984) and Bonacich (1980).

6.3 Social status

BAIEs are unable to identify successful entrepreneur role models locally and regionally outside London to take inspiration and mentorship from and learn from their experience. In addition, most ethnic supplies are sourced from big cities such as London, Birmingham, Manchester and Leeds, adding cost and time in coordinating supply chain and logistic operations. This is a relatively distinctive challenge for BAIEs living and doing business outside big cities.

On the other hand, lack of purpose-built amenities for BMEs' social, cultural and spiritual needs, such as mosques, churches, shops and restaurants, are among the main reasons for internal migration of immigrant communities to major cities and has a big impact on BAIEs. This confirms early research findings of The BME White Paper (2003) commissioned by Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council in the South Yorkshire region.

"Othering" and "belonging" are adopted as a sociological theoretical framework to effectively explain BAIEs' lived experience as deeply rooted cultures, systems and structures in Western society.

This research reveals that BAIEs are excessively disadvantaged, facing barriers in accessing critical resources, markets and opportunities, and are "othered" on the basis of their group-based identities as 'Black Africans' and 'Immigrants'. This has been explored under the discussions of 'consumer racism' as 'unfair societal prejudice' born out of deeply embedded culture and narratives that 'stigmatise' foreigners, more particularly immigrants and Black Africans and the discourse under 'institutional racism' explains how this has been reinforced through institutionalised structures and systems denying BAIEs access to critical resources and market opportunities impeding their success.

Powell and Menendian (2016) argue that "othering" and "belonging" encompass a clarifying framework for many expressions and experiences of prejudice on the basis of group identities. The authors recommend this framework as capable of revealing a set of common processes and conditions in propagating group-based inequality and marginality that are more enduring and systematically expressed. Thus, in this research, I have adapted this framework in exploring BAIEs' lived experience.

The findings of this particular research, in Chapter 5 presents compelling data, examples and evidence demonstrating that BAIEs' lived experience in South Yorkshire exemplifies that they are the subject of the sociological phenomenon "othering" and "belonging" in agreement with (Powell and Menendian, 2016; Brons, 2015).

This chapter articulates the findings of this PhD research inquiry with the underpinning theoretical and conceptual framework of "othering" and "belonging" explored in Chapter 2 (2.6 to 2.7). Thus, the aforementioned section

in Chapter 2, presents the relevance and justifications of “othering” and “belonging” as underpinning theoretical and conceptual framework to explaining the lived experience of ethnic and minority groups in Western societies, such as Black African Immigrants in the UK (South Yorkshire).

The framework demonstrates that the root cause of inequality and marginality for ethnic minority and immigrant communities is based on their group-based identities or differences, (race, nationality, ethnicity, sex, religion, etc.). On the basis of this knowledge and understanding, findings relating to “othering” and “belonging” are more evident in direct quotes from the research participants.

It is apparent that BAIEs’ key challenges (barriers) against their entrepreneurial activities are due to disproportionate inequalities and marginalities, being “othered” on the basis of their ‘race’ and ‘socioeconomic status’, as ‘Black Africans’ and ‘immigrants’.

Chapter 6 (6.3) has presented the key summary and analysis of BAIEs barriers as strong evidence of “othering” experience at **regulatory, institutional and societal levels** which has caused profound impact to their businesses. The following four bullet point summary highlights the extent of “Othering” derived from **deeply embedded culture, structure and system** causing sustained impact on BAIEs’ enterprises according to prominent scholars, (Powell and Menendian, 2016; Tilly, 1999; Rudd, 2015; Gaarber, 2015 and Parkinson, 2017) whose extensive research cover these complex social relations between ‘ethnic minority and mainstream communities’, systems and structures, in North America, Europe and UK.

- BAIEs face high regulatory restrictions hurdles that hinder their entrepreneurial activities due to their immigrant status which has resulted in opportunity losses.
- BAIEs are being penalised due to ‘institutional racism’ through discriminatory practices in accessing finance and resources.
- Authorities are perceived to be heavy-handed towards BAIEs’.
- BAIEs suffer from societal stereotypical views and prejudices including ‘customer racism’ which affect their health, moral, integration and growth potential into the mainstream markets.

There are examples and evidence of “othering” at structures and systems levels and how that affect BAIEs entrepreneurial activities.

For example, for most BAIE participants in this research, the asylum and naturalisation processes have taken an average of six years, during which period they are not allowed to engage in any self-employment activities, which BAIEs consider a wasted opportunity, whilst for some it was a humiliating, dehumanizing experience that involved imprisonment or being constantly monitored and interrogated by immigration officers including the threat of deportation. This has affected their morale, self-confidence, sense of belonging and feeling of being second-class citizens even after they have been granted citizenship status.

Among BAIEs, there is strong perception that this systemic and institutionalised “othering” has resulted in the black and ethnic minority communities inheriting poverty, inequality and disadvantages, as one local BME leader and participant in this research (BAIE 13) put it:

It is not just individuals, but BME business communities collectively who have inherited poverty or are born into disadvantageous situations.

Table 5.3.1 has identified 13 key challenges (barriers) from the external environment, (including ‘work permit restrictions, institutional racism, consumer racism, stigma attached to immigrant, inherent inequalities, banks’ unfair lending policy, lack of trust and respect), all of which are examples of structural “othering” where individual participants’ accounts are well-documented in this research.

Thus, this may be argued to be a complex sociological phenomenon deeply rooted in the culture of British society, reinforced by institutional structures and systems; overcoming it requires the nurturing and harnessing of “belonging” through society’s cultures and institutional structures.

As acknowledged in Chapter 1 of this thesis, there have been various research endeavours and recommendations made to successive governments to address these societal, systemic and structural imbalances. However, the provision of support in the UK has been criticised for not tackling the root cause of the problem, as discussed in Chapter 2. The lived experiences of BAIEs presented in Chapter 5 indicate that currently there are significant gaps in the

provision of business support and its effectiveness in meeting BAIEs' needs; this finding is in agreement with the criticisms made by Waldinger *et al.* (1990), Van Delft *et al.* (2000), Deakins and Freel (2003), Levent *et al.* (2003), Generation Report (2006), EKOS (2007), DTI (2007) and Deakins and Freel (2012).

On their part, when BAIEs are being marginalised, alienated and denied access to resource, opportunities and integration, or in other words being “Othered”, they are forced to adopt various defensive survival strategies. These strategies may be seen as ‘resilience’ tactics and sometimes involve making ‘disparate choices’, forming ‘ethnic enclaves’ forging a sense of belonging as a temporary solution and means of escaping and independence from discrimination (Aldrich *et al.*, 1981; Jones *et al.*, 1992; Storey, 1994; Jones and Ram, 2013).

Whilst historically, unsuccessful attempts including segregation and or assimilation have been made as a means of resolving social tensions and conflicts, the best response to “othering” is arguably not ‘segregation’ or ‘assimilation’, which amount to ‘white-washing’, but “belonging” that is genuinely inclusive and harnesses harmonised diversity in agreement with (Jean, 2016 and Joseph, 2012) as explained in section 2.6.3.

Therefore, I argue that in contemporary British society in order to counteract “othering”, “belonging” must be more than just an expression. It should be an institutionalised concept where systems and structures ensure access to resources and critical institutions to disadvantaged groups. On the basis of this argument, I recommend that more access for BAIEs to existing resources may not be sufficient; access of opportunity will need to be reinforced through special and proactive accommodations, through the provision of support and advice that meets the special needs of BAIEs. This includes: equal and strategic representations that give voice to minority needs; a vision of society that fosters inclusive, shared identities and narratives through structures and systems ensuring the well-being of everyone; and inspires all citizens in their endeavours, including entrepreneurship which pays high dividends to society's investment. This is timely and very much in line with the region's Sheffield City Partnership board 2018 inclusion agenda.

The deployment of strategic bodies alongside community representatives is fully-justified in redressing historical inequalities and disparities, in allocating and accessing resources and opportunities which should not be left to the mechanics of free market entities. It is the responsibility of governments and strategic bodies to intervene through policy provisions and business practices that foster “belonging” in order to raise the productivity of all citizens and enhance the competitive capacity of “othered” groups, such as BAIEs.

6.4 Cultural integration

As stated in the concluding remarks of section 6.6 and 5.4.1, BAIEs have acknowledged the UK’s overall business environment as a potential opportunity (key findings are summarised in Table 5.4.1 of Chapter 5). However, their friends, family and co-ethnic immigrant communities are critical to the inception, development and survival of their businesses. Most of them, with the exception of three, are supplying ethnic goods and services. They have identified that their co-ethnic (national) immigrant communities serve as their core loyal customer base and as a source of inspiration, moral and financial support for start-up capital; in addition, their employees comprise their respective co-ethnic immigrants, as illustrated in Table 5.4.1 and Figure 5.4.1 and Tables 5.5.2 and 5.5.3 in Chapter 5 - this accords with Social Capital theory and the findings of South Korean immigrants in Los Angeles by Bonacich *et al.* (1977) and Syrian refugee entrepreneurs' experiences in Lebanon (Bizri, 2017). Thus, this finding is in line with research that relates to the identities of other ethnic minority entrepreneurs.

The BAIE business model relies heavily on ethnic niche markets, clustered within close geographic proximity, the characteristics of which are known as ethnic enclaves in the literature and align to enclave theory (Portes and Manning, 2008, 1990; Portes, 1987). This is explained as a business strategy pursued by ethnic groups who feel abandoned at the bottom of the social ladder to reaffirm their identity and their interests, who started to compete for a position of advantage by mobilising resources within the ethnic groups (Despress, 1975). Waldinger *et al.* (1990) comment that it is only natural and provides a competitive advantage for ethnic entrepreneurs to cater for immigrant

communities whose demands have not been met by the mainstream. However, for the ethnic enclaves to survive and thrive, there needs to be a substantial number of immigrants - in other words, sufficient demand - allowing immigrant businesses to grow. The successful examples of Jewish communities in New York, Koreans in Los Angeles and Cubans in Miami are discussed by Porters and Manning (2008), Light (1980) and Bonacich *et al.* (1977).

However, there is a danger when there is not a sufficient number of consumers - a **critical mass** - according to Porters and Manning (2008) and every new ethnic business replicates the same model, creating a detrimental cut-throat struggle for survival; thus, the need to access new markets and diversify is critical. It may be questioned if BAIEs in South Yorkshire have reached saturation point and whether or not local Black African communities are unable to sustain more businesses; on a wider scale, the general trend of migration to the UK has fallen following Brexit and strict immigration policies across Europe (The Guardian, 2017).

Additionally, existing immigrants are moving into big cities for better opportunities once their asylum application is complete due to lack of purpose-built amenities for BMEs' social, cultural and spiritual needs. This trend is equally acknowledged by the BME White Paper (2003) that reported that young and educated British born immigrants are leaving South Yorkshire to big cities for better opportunities (as indicated in Figure 4.2). It is apparent that, on the part of BAIEs, there is insufficient preparation and no realistic contingency plan in regard to the ethnic niche market dilemma. There is too much reliance on a decreasing number of consumers and the realisation that their business is in danger. In the literature, some analysts suggest that 'ethnic enclaves' are a transition phase and a temporary phenomenon for immigrants before they evolve or even move into a mainstream market (Terzeno, 2014). On the other hand, other commentators argue that there is a dilemma and even danger that, once immigrants are immersed into this strategy, they will further entrench and develop a 'separatist mentality' with resistance to integration with the mainstream markets (Safran, 1991; Abubaker, 2005). Ram and Hillin (1994) urge that ethnic enclaves could be a trap, jeopardising ethnic business development growth and frustrating attempts to breaking into the mainstream arena. The harshest criticism comes from Nwankwo (2005) about Black African

Entrepreneurs operating in niche markets, characterising it as a predominantly informal sector that is unsustainable:

Much of the activities in this sector [ethnic niche markets] comprise basic personal survival activities that create little in the way of sustainable employment or wealth (Nwankwo, 2005, p.124).

Due to a lack of their own resources, most BAIEs are engaged in business sectors and ethnic niche markets that are less capital-intensive and very labour-intensive, with cutthroat competition and fewer value-added sectors which limits their business growth. In the literature Volery (2007) has characterised the typical ethnic niche market as low capital, low education, low qualifications, low scale production, highly labour-intensive, low value added and with cutthroat competition. Although some aspects of Volery's assertions may be true, recent African migrants are highly educated and qualified, as confirmed in the literature by Oliveira (2006), IMI (2008), Nwanko (2005), Daley (1998) and Deakin and Freel (2012) which is the dilemma of ethnic enclaves from opportunity, to isolation and stagnation. Most BAIEs arrive in the UK under desperate circumstances and have very little finance of their own and face many difficulties in accessing financial support from formal institutions, as already discussed. Therefore, they have to rely on informal sources of finance from their immigrant communities, which may have some influence on their choice of investment and business sectors, limiting themselves to the ethnic niche market which is understood by the communities and stakeholders as being relatively predictable and low-risk, with a low return on investment.

The findings suggest that there is very limited interaction and engagement between BAIEs in South Yorkshire and business support providers at all levels. This is due to a lack of awareness, trust and confidence on the part of BAIEs, whilst on the part of support providers, it is due to lack of resources, policy changes and restructuring which curtailed their size, scope of operations and impact. Nearly half (seven) of the participants who did not engage with any support providers would have benefited from outside professional interventions but felt that it could be costly or that their business was not worthy of anybody's attention other than themselves, a perception deep-rooted among ethnic minorities, who mistrust authorities. Some of BAIEs' avoidance of authorities (government offices) in their business ventures is due to their perception,

painful experience and reminder of intimidating asylum investigations which requires bridging (healing) in their new life as legal residents. On the other hand, even those who have had one or more contacts with local business support service providers are not fully satisfied; rather, they are disappointed, describing the service by and large as unsatisfactory, inflexible, disappointing and basic, though a few indicated satisfactory for basic administrative duties and information services.

Whilst it is true that engagement is a 'two-way street', outreach work has been constrained by lack of resources on the part of service providers, and several regional organisations such as Business Link Yorkshire, Yorkshire Forward and BME Forum have been closed down, leaving gaps in provision.

I would like to make clear to the reader when discussing the provision of business support for BAIEs, that this does not necessarily mean indulging them with free services, or treating them more favourably, but it is about understanding that this social group is susceptible to face 'discrimination, harassment, lack of opportunity' and this impacts on their ability to effectively operate in the mainstream market. This has been considered in the literature through 'institutional racism', 'consumer racism' and 'stereotypical views in the host society'.

Discriminatory attitudes, practices and policies against Black African immigrants and ethnic minorities have been well documented and evidenced by various researchers and their respective works (Rex, 1986; Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Light, 1984; Waldinger, 1988; Ram, 1993; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Ram *et al.*, 2013; Deakins and Freel, 2012; Hamnett *et al.*, 1994; Ishaq *et al.*, 2010, 2006; Fraser, 2005). For example, Fraser's (2005) findings showed UK ethnic minorities and in particular Black African-owned business face significant barriers, as 37.4% of them were rejected outright by banks when asking for business loans, as compared to 10.4% for white-owned businesses.

Various governments are aware of these 'ill realities' and efforts have been made to address them, but with varying degrees of success. For example, the US promotes 'positive discrimination' by favourably treating 'minority enterprises' eligibility for government initiatives in order to raise competitiveness (Sonfield, 2005). Europe and the UK adopt a '**non-discriminatory policy**' but

do recognise disparities and promote various policy initiatives to minimise these barriers.

So, the most sustainable and long-term support provision for BAIEs in South Yorkshire is not short-term 'tokenism' but creating a level playing field for all entrepreneurs of all backgrounds to have equal access, opportunity and recognition. This can be initiated and enforced by the government through legislation that all stakeholders in the private and public sector adhere to, whilst in the short term, confidence building, outreach work and liaison representation of BAIEs at city strategic level is a key to voice their concerns. Lack of representation, recognition and equal opportunities are among the challenges of BAIEs and the wider Black and ethnic minority groups in the region (EKOS, 2007; Legi, 2006, Migration Yorkshire, 2017; Census, 2011; John 2002; YHRMP, 2009).

The cost of supporting BAIEs will have a multiplier and long-term benefit as return on investment, economically and socially with the strategic agenda of the region in producing productive and participative citizens. Supporting BAIEs' competitiveness at all levels (locally and regionally) will have a great benefit to immigrant communities, the wider society and the economy, outweighing the cost of investment towards the provision of business support. This has been discussed in the literature under 2.5.5, arguing that the British government's policy intervention to small businesses and disadvantaged groups is lacking in comparison with US and European practices and experience according to various research in this regard, (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Van Delft *et al.*, 2000; Levent *et al.*, 2003; Generation Report, 2006; EKOS, 2007; DTI, 2007; Deakins and Freel, 2003, 2012).

The key weaknesses of the UK's support policies are in line with the findings of this research; the policies are driven by government and are target-led, are not flexible, and focus on start-ups, but less on follow ups, and some initiatives (ERDF) are aimed at relatively big businesses with a turnover of £100,000, thus excluding small businesses. On the other hand, duplication, inconsistency, lack of integration and lack of cultural sensitivity to minority groups are additional barriers.

The findings have also pointed out that ERDF, LEP, Business Link Yorkshire and Yorkshire Forward have been closed down and that there is a need for informed policy interventions to address a gap; BMEs are achieving less in South Yorkshire as compared to the UK national average, and this trend is likely to continue or even worsen, damaging community cohesion, exacerbating the marginalisation of the disadvantaged groups and incurring high long-term socio-economic costs. Thus, it might be asserted that well-informed policy interventions including enterprise activities are crucial to enabling minorities to realise their full potential to become integrated and productive citizens.

6.5 To what extent are the experiences of BAIEs commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs?

The four 'big' issues highlighted in this chapter as headline findings under which the results of this PhD study can be situated are: life histories; adaptability and resilience; social status; and cultural integration. These headings could be used to frame the analysis of any group of entrepreneurs. However, it is through the consideration of the extent of "othering" and "belonging" in a host country environment that the lived experiences of BAIEs may be argued to be commonly shared and distinctive from other groups of entrepreneurs.

Black African Immigrants are a relatively small percentage of the total population of South Yorkshire, approximately (3%) with limited employment opportunities; unemployment is 12%, which is 3% more than the national average, whilst self-employment is 6% which is 3% less than the national average total of all ethnic groups according to Census (2011). This is due to structural barriers and limited access to resources as corroborated both in the literature review and these research findings. Thus, BAIEs are facing multifaceted challenges including discriminatory attitudes and practices at institutional, societal, regulatory levels due to their immigrant status in addition to their limited, or lack of, knowledge and experience about the host country's regional and national business environment, business system and culture. The immigrant communities inherit inequalities, live in deprived inner cities limiting their economic power and consequently affecting the entrepreneurial growth potential of BAIEs, who are primarily operating in ethnic niche markets. Most immigrants have escaped war, conflict and political persecution which is

traumatizing in itself, whilst facing further barriers and hostilities from the host country's national and regional environments. EKOS' report (2007) and Census (2011) predicted that these trends are likely to continue or even worsen, further reinforcing social division, poor community cohesion and marginalisation of these already disadvantaged groups and making the long-term social and economic costs very high unless these are addressed adequately.

The research has explained BAIEs' background, their entrepreneurial activities, the challenges they face and potential opportunities within the immigrant communities and external environment through policy interventions and professional and practical inputs to unleash the entrepreneurial potential of BAIEs to benefit themselves and contribute to the wider economy and society, thus enhancing community cohesion in the four urban centres of South Yorkshire; Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield.

6.6 The influence of the geographical context of the research

This PhD research inquiry was situated in the geographical context of South Yorkshire. It is therefore important to consider the relevance of South Yorkshire as a place to live and do business for BAIEs prior to drawing conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 7.

Black African immigrants predominantly live in big cities, primarily in London and Birmingham, due to the patterns of their migration to the UK. Gradually they have dispersed into the outer regions and many urban areas, (Daley, 1998; YHRMP, 2009; Migration UK, 2017). It is apparent that Black African immigrant communities in South Yorkshire are relatively small in size and among the less established social groups (See Table 4.3.1 in Chapter 4 - this is in line with the findings of Regional Migration Partnership Yorkshire and Humberside (2017), Census (2011) and Migration Yorkshire (2017). Relatively for most recent migrants 13(81%) in this research sample who have migrated between 1990 to 2017 into the UK and subsequently to South Yorkshire as their place of destination to live and do business is not out of their choice, but due to forced relocation from big cities, primarily London, while their asylum applications are being processed according to the Asylum Act 1999. The findings suggest that there has been a significant reverse shift (internal migration) of immigrant

communities and entrepreneurs from relatively small towns including Barnsley, Rotherham and Doncaster to bigger cities such as London, Manchester, Birmingham and Sheffield, seeking better opportunities and social networks, making BAIEs distinctive and transient entrepreneurs.

BAIEs face both challenges and opportunities as a result of regional variations in entrepreneurial attitude, activity, culture and their responses to adapt and evolve with their environment.

Regional and national differences in entrepreneurial attitude and activity are born out of historical, demographic, socio-economic development and institutional factors as established in the literature (GEM 2016-17; Hofstede, 1991; Deakins and Freel, 2009; Ram, 1993) which are critical for the success or failure of enterprises.

The development of clusters, supportive social capital, entrepreneurial support services as well as actively engaged research universities are attractive conditions for the establishment of entrepreneurial culture especially for new entrepreneurs adapting to a new environment and have significant implications in setting the tone on entrepreneurs' motivation, managerial practice and business performances (Autio *et al.*, 2012; Ojo, 2013; GEM, 2016-17).

Chapter 4 provides the historical and background context about South Yorkshire's demography, economy, geography and social perspectives supported by empirical evidence. The region's economy was historically dominated by heavy industry - mining, textiles, agriculture and steel - which declined in the 1980s due to fierce global competition (Legi, 2006). The region has restructured its economy into high-tech, financial and service industries. However, this has caused the loss of many jobs which has forced many people, including Black and ethnic minorities, away from the region into big cities. The legacy of these job losses and economic hardship and social challenges resonate to date across South Yorkshire's neighbourhoods as residents engage in small business activities. The challenges and opportunities that followed post-industrialisation in the UK have been explained by Aldrich *et al.* (1981), Jones *et al.* (1982) and Storey (1994); this is an era where self-employment, following on from major job losses and in particular for ethnic minorities, self-employment

has been considered as a means of social mobility and economic independence.

On the other hand, different regional investment focuses and variations in economic activity in the UK have been explained in the literature by specific examples and impacts when the UK government shifted its funding policy and priority of £21bn as 'credit easing' measures towards larger, high growth orientated firms at the expense of small enterprises. Such a policy means redirecting resources to regions where there is high entrepreneurial activity. Ram (1993) has identified significant regional variations in entrepreneurial activity in the UK where the South East (bigger urban cities) has the highest concentration of business activities benefiting from high investment and better infrastructures.

Such discrepancy is markedly higher, particularly for ethnic minorities, in big cities such as London, where they achieve greater entrepreneurial success compared to those in the outer regions and cities including South Yorkshire, providing those BAIEs in big cities great advantages in mobilising ethnic resources (social, network, intellectual and financial capital) from well-established immigrant communities who are recognised as critical mass phenomena, as established by prominent researchers (Porters and Manning, 2008; Light, 1980; Bonacich *et al.*, 1977; Deakins and Freel, 2009; Despres, 1975).

BAIEs' entrepreneurial activities in South Yorkshire show some aspects of this phenomenon and its distinctiveness that emerges from the dynamics of the opportunity structure and its resources as 'transient entrepreneurs' due to the mobile nature of their investment and business portfolio.

However, it is important to note that BAIEs have recognised and acknowledged the overall business environment in the UK, such as business freedom, business support, transparency, access to information, rule of law etc. as potential opportunities, even though currently they are not the full beneficiaries of these opportunities, as summarised in Table 5.4.1 of Chapter 5.

6.7 BAIEs under-researched, less visible and under-represented

BAIEs in South Yorkshire are under-researched, less visible and under-represented groups who have been operating as fragmented units whilst engaging in various entrepreneurial activities in the face of many challenges and with limited resources at their disposal. The lack of data, information and knowledge about these groups makes it difficult for potential BAIEs to tap into any existing business experience, knowledge and practice. In addition, due to under-representation, they have not been able to voice their concerns, special needs, access to support and services in their respective cities, but struggle through learning from their experiences which are at times costly. Their experience and knowledge remain within their tightly-knit communities due to lack of outreach activities by stakeholders. Furthermore, because of the very limited level of research that captures the lived experience of BAIEs, with the exception of regionally and nationally held statistics, there has been a lack of knowledge and understanding about them and they have been unable to contribute to managerial practice in the field. Thus, the level of institutional engagement as regards entrepreneurial activities is very poor with the exception of general housing, health, employment and integration activities to the wider ethnic communities, as corroborated by EKOS (2007), Migration Yorkshire (2017), Legi (2006), Census (2011), John (2002), YHRMP (2009) and Omar *et al.* (2006).

However, as BAIE numbers are growing in recent years, they are forming geographically distinct 'ethnic enclaves' in the cities of Sheffield and Doncaster, whilst in Rotherham and Barnsley there are ethnic networks for information and coordination of supplies and community support. These enterprises have become the source of employment or self-employment for new immigrants and supplying ethnic goods and services for their respective co-ethnics (co-national) and the wider immigrant communities with very little attention from local, regional authorities, professional bodies and research institutes. This is partly due to BAIEs' lack of knowledge and effort to engage outside their immediate communities, lack of trust, language and confidence. The support providers and other professional bodies are unable, due to lack of resources, effort and interest, to reach out, an issue explored in more detail under the provision of support. BAIEs' disengagement with formal institutions is a shared experience,

as acknowledged by similar research in London by Nwanko (2005), Daley (1998) and Ojo (2013, 2017), but the degree of disengagement is significantly higher in South Yorkshire.

6.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has considered the results of the study under 4 'big' issues: life histories; adaptability and resilience; social status; and cultural integration. It has explored the lived experiences of BAIEs in South Yorkshire in line with the underpinning theories and concepts relating to entrepreneurship and immigrant and ethnic minority identities pinpointed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

The chapter has presented South Yorkshire's regional, socio-economic, historical and entrepreneurial culture contexts as advantages and disadvantages for Black African Immigrants. In particular, it deals with changes and trends in migration to the region and from the region in agreement with Migration Yorkshire (2017), Census (2011), YHRMP (2009) and the implications for the opportunity structure of Black and ethnic minorities, following on from the restructuring of the regional economy since the 1980s from heavy industry to high-tech, finance and service industries due to the forces of globalisation as reported by the Local Economic Growth Initiatives (Legi, 2006) and the findings of EKOS (2007). It has also discussed theoretical explanations for regional entrepreneurial activity variations; that they are influenced by government investment policies, the existence of economic clusters, research centres, institutional and social capital factors in line with the research findings of GEM (2016/17), Hofstede (1991), Deakins and Freel (2009) and Ram (1993).

The discussion further consolidates the rationale for this region-specific research that BAIEs are under researched and under-represented and there is very limited knowledge about their lived experience, in particular about those recent migrants (first generation identified in this research) who are living in the outer regions such as South Yorkshire where there is a lack of role models and supply chain and community amenities relative to big cities. These are among the key factors that influence ethnic minorities' long-term residence, as confirmed by the BME White Paper (2003).

The chapter has further analysed the complex dynamics of entrepreneurial motivational factors beyond 'push and pull' reasons as commonly referred to in most literatures by observing that participants' responses, characteristics, actions and experience in pursuing their enterprises in the face of a challenging and sometimes hostile environment are attributable to some unique sets of qualities, recognised as 'resilience', that fuel BAIEs' entrepreneurial spirit. BAIEs' 'resilience' of entrepreneurial attributes is developed through their exposure to difficult migration and survival experiences through learned adaptive skills (cultural predisposition) that equip them with competencies that are transferable to entrepreneurial managerial decision-making and tolerance to high risks and uncertainties to a constantly changing and challenging business environment. I have adapted and explained the concept of 'resilience' in the literature as the ability of individuals to absorb and rebound from difficulties more resourcefully and strengthened, in agreement with Sutcliffe and Vogus (2003), Mallak (1998) and Egeland *et al.* (1993). From the entrepreneurial context, the findings of Donan and Findikoglu (2017) corroborate this research position, based on the experience of minority Arabs running businesses in Israel and minority-owned Jewish business in Turkey in the face of challenging opportunity structures. On the other hand, the discussion of BAIEs' cultural predisposition and entrepreneurial preparedness has been explained with the position of a culturalist approach (Masurel *et al.*, 2004) and Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2002) as cited in Nwankwo's (2005) findings that some ethnic minorities, in particular Black Africans have a high propensity to total entrepreneurial activity index.

In regard to the challenges of BAIEs in South Yorkshire, the discussion articulates the restructure of Western economies, the birth of self-employment, challenges and opportunities Volery (2007). Whilst this research discussion acknowledges some shared experience of BAIEs by previous researchers (Nwankwo, 2005; Ojo, 2013 and Daley, 1998), it differs in highlighting the experience of BAIEs in South Yorkshire from the regional specific contexts as explained through this thesis and argued rationale in undertaking this research in the first place. Among these are that recent Black African immigrants are facing additional and different challenges due to the change in socio-political and economic changes regionally, nationally and internationally in addition to well documented historical barriers in the US, Europe and UK by various

authors (Light, 1984; Waldinger, 1988, Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Ward and Jenkins, 1984 and Bonacich, 1980).

This thesis has presented regulatory, institutional and societal challenges (barriers) as external factors, and lack of resources, competences and experience as internal factors. Moreover, the dilemma of ethnic enclaves (ethnic niche markets) evolving from opportunity, to isolation and stagnation as real prospects of BAIEs is explained in the literature according to the enclave theory (Portes and Manning, 2008, 1990; Portes, 1987) and associated dangers in line with Safran (1991), Abubaker (2005), Ram and Hillin (1994) and Nwankwo (2005).

BAIEs' strategies of diversification (product, customer and geographic) and consolidation potential and limitations have been discussed within the limiting scope of ethnic enclaves and regional context, and it has been argued that the need to break into the mainstream would be enhanced by well-informed policy intervention. On the other hand, currently there are gaps in the provision of business support and their effectiveness, in line with the criticisms made by Waldinger *et al.* (1990), Van Delft *et al.* (2000), Levent *et al.* (2003), Generation Report (2006), EKOS (2007), DTI (2007) and Deakins and Freel (2003, 2012).

The long-term and sustainable provision of support is about ensuring a level playing field for all entrepreneurs including BAIEs to compete freely by combating racist, discriminatory and unfair practices through government policy intervention and enforcements. In the short term, confidence, trust and relationship building are critical through representation, liaison and outreach works that encourage minority groups to break into the mainstream markets, a successful practice that would enhance minority groups' competitiveness in the US, as discussed by Sonfield (2005).

The socio-economic and political benefits of investment towards supporting minority groups and small businesses in the long term is a well justified argument to making productive, integrated and 'belonged' citizens with a multiplier effect to themselves, the immigrant communities and the wider society and economy.

I hope that this research contributes to understanding the root cause of "othering" as a sociological phenomenon engendering inequalities and

marginalities due to deeply embedded societal culture, reinforced through structure and systems and responses to address these challenges should prescribe “belonging” as an ‘antidote’ in order to build inclusive and cohesive communities that are equally competitive and productive.

“Othering”, is vicious circle that has trapped generations of disadvantaged social groups (Black Africans and Immigrants) in particular preventing them from realising their full potential in their lives, including entrepreneurial activities. This phenomenon may cause direct and immediate harm, but in the longer-term society is impacted by losing productive capacities, and this should be looked at not just as merely a moral question, but as a societal concern with greater implications for the economy and social, political and practical realities. It thus requires scholarly activities to bring issues to society’s consciousness and to critically evaluate failed attempts to bring about changes that effectively address this dilemma.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter concludes the thesis. Firstly, it highlights the contributions of the research and identifies implications for the further development of theory and practice in line with Research Objective 5:

To identify implications for the further development of theory and practice.

The chapter also reflects on the significance of the research for South Yorkshire, the research approach, the research journey in undertaking this PhD and, finally, the scope for further research.

7.1 Research contributions

Table 7.1 presents the key contributions and implication of this research in four major areas: empirical; theoretical; methodological; and practical.

The research has made its contributions on many levels; by broadening the research scope outside of major cities, by its region and context-specific approach, and by adding methodological diversity, new empirical data and evidence due to the researcher's embeddedness within the community and shared background, the discussions of which are presented in detail under contributions to knowledge, management and business practices.

These contributions may be collectively considered as contributions to knowledge and contributions to policy and practice as illustrated in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Summary of the Key contributions and implications of the research.

Empirical Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extends the geographical scope with regional focus and contexts • The study focuses on particular social groups (BAIEs) and with clearly identified countries of origin • Captures recent immigrants' lived experience (asylum seekers and refugees) • Rich data due to researcher's embeddedness
Theoretical Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides original contribution to theory, "othering" and "belonging" as a framework for BAIEs' experiences of prejudice on the basis of group identities as 'Black Africans' and 'immigrants' • Advances knowledge of diversity in entrepreneurship • Explores 'distinctive entrepreneurial attributes' and introduces (illustrates) a 'resilience conceptual framework' • Examines the impact of regional opportunity structure • Examines the dilemma of ethnic niche markets (enclaves) • Fills the critical gap in literature on immigrant and or Black and Ethnic Minority • Recommends the need for the provision of tailored business support • Contributes to the scholarly discourse by 'e-publishing' two full conference papers at ISBE and one abstract at MDE • Serves as stepping stone for further research • Provides recommendations of scope for future research
Methodological Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds to methodological diversity through qualitative research output of 'phenomenological' enquiry. • Offers detailed research operationalisation; interview criteria, coding processes, systems and templates
Contribution to Policy and Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers strategic recommendations on managerial practices, experience and solutions • Aids policy makers and professional practitioners to inform practices • Reinforces Sheffield City Partnership Board 2018 strategic vision for inclusive and sustainable city.

Source: (Author's own work)

Contributions to Knowledge

This research has made contribution to knowledge in three major strands:

1. **'Othering' and 'belonging', a sociological framework** explaining the underlying structural and system level contemporary context of alienation against BAIEs on the basis of their group identities as **Black Africans and**

immigrants. This approach demonstrates the constraints of their entrepreneurial potential, as corroborated by prominent sociologist Powell & Menendian (2017) and Brons (2015) who studied the relationships of ethnic minorities and immigrant communities with their hosting countries in the western nations.

2. **Phenomenological Research methodology** is an added contribution by diversifying our perspectives on the existing body of knowledge which, by and large, are drawn from regional and national statistics (quantitative data) which may not fully explain the complex and subtle social reality as corroborated by (Moustakas, 1994 and Gray, 2017).

This thesis has revealed BAIEs' lived experience with their specific contexts and perspectives through the underlying assumption that reality is socially constructed, and social reality is a creation of individual consciousness and investigation of this reality has given deeper meanings and knowledge about BAIEs' entrepreneurial engagement.

Furthermore, this approach has introduced a new ontological perspective in studying BAIEs and the wider Black and Ethnic Minorities.

3. **Resilience** as a key entrepreneurial attribute and attitude, explaining the ability of BAIEs to survive and thrive in the face of a challenging and sometimes hostile environment, by manifesting high tolerance to risk and high propensity towards self-employment. The thesis explains these entrepreneurial attributes and trends that are born out of prior experience, cultural predisposition for self-employment and how BAIEs perceive and value their businesses over and above commercial objectives. Thus, BAIEs identify in their business a sense of purpose, a means of preserving identities, a means of self-expression, upward social mobility, self-realisation, self-actualisation and a sense of freedom. This enhances our knowledge and understanding about the diversity within entrepreneurship regarding the motives of Entrepreneurs.

As reiterated throughout the thesis, Black African Immigrants are the least studied social group among visible ethnic minority groups in the UK and very

little is known about their entrepreneurial venture (Nwankwo, 2005; Ojo, 2013). This research investigates the lived experience of BAIEs in the South Yorkshire region, and sheds light on recent immigrants' contexts, which is a valuable addition towards advancing knowledge of entrepreneurship from particular social groups' perspectives, region and context-specific study. It is not surprising there is an acute shortage of data and research in regard to Black African Immigrants and their entrepreneurial activities in the UK, as the Black African census category was introduced only in the 1990 census Daley (1998). On the other hand, previous research on UK ethnic minorities tends to combine together Black Africans and Caribbeans into an ethnic category as 'Afro-Caribbeans' (Daley, 1998; Nwankwo, 2005) failing to recognise the distinctiveness in their migration history, background, characteristics, approaches to enterprise. The problem of identifying Black Africans as a social group exists to date. This issue has been highlighted in Chapter 4. The contribution made in this research by identifying a variety of countries of origin of BAIEs as indicated in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 is a step forward in providing the focus and clarity about participants' backgrounds alongside history, patterns, years and reasons of migration in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

The thesis in its literature review has identified the absence of context-specific and regional studies of Black African immigrant businesses, where most of the previous research has mainly concentrated on major cities, primarily London. This fails to capture the experience of outer regions and recent immigrants' experience.

This research also contributes to knowledge by adopting the sociological concepts of "othering" and "belonging" as a critical lens in the analysis of BAIEs' lived experiences and clarifying subtle and complex relations that engender marginalities and inequalities as deeply rooted sociological phenomena manifested at societal, institutional (structural) and system levels.

In regard to methodology, I consider that I have made contributions in a number of ways, adding depth, breadth and diversity of understanding. Due to my embeddedness within the community and shared background, I have gained the trust of BAIEs, thus gaining greater access and insight into the Black African communities who are acknowledged by some researchers as '*notoriously difficult to penetrate for research purposes*' Nwanko (2005), whilst characterise

African communities as and '*hard to reach groups*' (Fadahunsi *et al.*, 2000). However, as explained above, I have gained access to a diverse sample of Black African immigrants which has resulted in very rich empirical data (evidence) and new knowledge about BAIEs' entrepreneurial ventures from their lived experiences. This, I argue, provides additional methodological perspectives in advancing knowledge of entrepreneurship which scholars and practitioners could tap into. This has been possible due to meticulously profiling potential participants, in agreement with Gray (2017), Symon *et al.* (2012) and Bryman and Bell (2011) and designing the criteria, process and systems which accommodate the needs of BAIEs as indicated in Chapter 3.

I have adopted a phenomenological research approach within the qualitative research paradigm which allowed me to effectively capture human experience (Moustakas, 1994; Gray, 2017) whilst most ethnic and migrant entrepreneurship researchers in the past have relied heavily on quantitative data that has deficiencies in fully capturing the complexities and subtleties of social science research. The quantitative approach of reducing and codifying human experience 'objectively' into empirical data can only diminish the 'sense-making human role' of a researcher. As Gray (2017) asserts, social reality has to be grounded in people's own experience of that reality, and phenomenological study seeks to understand the world from the participant's point of view.

In social science inquiry, the researcher's prior experience, biography and insider knowledge is recognised as an advantage point in making better sense of participants' perspectives Denzin (1986) and the ability to relate to their lived experience in line with phenomenological methodology.

To this end, due to my prior knowledge, experience and social embeddedness, I am not merely reporting, as an act of thin description (Denzin, 2001; Guba and Lincoln, 1994), but am able to interpret the narrative, actions, motives, meanings, contexts and circumstances of my research participants in as lifelike a manner as possible to understand their experience as they feel it or live it, in agreement with Ely *et al.* (1991).

The research links immigrant and ethnic entrepreneurship with the general domain of entrepreneurship whilst highlighting some gaps in regard to BAIEs' distinctive entrepreneurial attributes. I also argue that contributions have been

made through attempting to draw conceptual and theoretical frameworks to demonstrate relationships as acknowledged as 'author's original contributions or adaptations'.

As a research-active educator, I am contributing to the advancement of knowledge at various conferences and seminars and through publications. Particularly, I have been a guest lecturer for the last five years in delivering 'Diversity in Entrepreneurship' for all strategic groups at Sheffield Hallam University in the UK. Internationally, I was guest lecturer on two occasions, (2013 and 2015) in Germany at the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University where I presented aspects of my research progress in regard to the contribution of Immigrant Entrepreneurs to the UK and European economies.

Thus, this research has already made an impact in the sphere of education, filling the gap in current literature regarding BAIEs' distinctive entrepreneurial attributes and characteristics; 'resilience, high tolerance to risk and uncertainty, adaptability, cultural predisposition and preparedness towards enterprise'. In this research those attributes and characteristics may be concluded to be born out of exposure (migration and life experience) and prior knowledge and life lessons. This is in agreement with Sutcliffe and Vogus' (2003, p.95) assertion in regard to resilience as '*the maintenance of positive adjustment under challenging conditions*' and it concurs with McClelland's (1995) characterisation of entrepreneurs' traits as things that are learned and influenced by culture and developed against the constraints of the opportunity structure.

I therefore argue that these research findings continue to serve as a platform of knowledge and further discourse of scholarly engagements. Government departments would greatly benefit from these research findings by having a better understanding in order to inform their business support policy, which could alleviate barriers within the business environment. Secondly, the research highlights the lack of BAIE representation at city level in strategic bodies to voice their concerns for policy makers to learn and adopt policy recommendations. This would in return promote social cohesion and better integrate immigrant communities in terms of bridging trust and confidence for BAIEs to break out from limiting their operations within the ethnic niche market into the mainstream markets. Finally, professional practitioners in the field of business advisory and consultancy services could equally align their products

and services in line with this knowledge that highlights the challenges and opportunities.

At institutional level, scholars at SHU who are research-active, and educators could tap in to this research by adopting research-informed teaching and research engagement in furthering more research regionally and locally, in line with the university mission and strategic agenda of 2020, 'building a great university' - that is, 'leading locally and engaging globally' as stated in the university leadership and mission statement (SHU, 2017).

Contributions to Policy and Practice

Enriched by the knowledge gained from these research findings about the challenges and opportunities of BAIEs in South Yorkshire, government officials regionally and locally are able to inform their managerial practices in the provision of business support and practical implementations. The provision of business support in the UK has been heavily criticised for its lack of engagement with the very people that it claims to support. Subsequent governments in the UK have recognised the challenges that some disadvantaged groups are facing, and substantial resources have been invested under various provisions of business support. However, research shows that these programmes and initiatives have not been able to address the challenges (barriers) effectively, particularly for Black and ethnic minority businesses, as these programmes are driven primarily by government targets rather than business needs (Deakins and Freel, 2003, 2012; EKOS, 2007; Generation Report, 2006).

The provision of business support evolved through various phases between 2000 and 2010, as indicated in the literature review; most of these initiatives no longer exist, which demonstrates a lack of continuity of knowledge and practice. For example, in the Yorkshire and Humberside region, Business Link Yorkshire, Yorkshire Forward and Local Enterprise Agency (LEP) have all been closed down, which has left significant gaps in the provision of support for ethnic minority and small businesses. Currently, at local city council level, there are general business advisory services, but with very limited resources, and they are not fully engaged with BAIEs as this research confirms (see 5.6 and 6.7

sections). Tapping into this finding would allow practitioners such as local city councils business advisors, managers and sub-contractors (partners) to ensure that the services and products are designed directly relevant to the needs of BAIEs. Managers of business support providers and professional bodies, consultants, business lawyers and accountants exist in principle to provide technical and expert advice and support to BAIEs and small businesses, but these parties would greatly benefit from this research and fine tune their services according to the needs of these potential customers. Business engagement is a two-way street and this research encourages BAIEs and local business support providers to **reach out and engage by raising awareness, building bridges, confidence and trust against ignorance, isolation and prejudice**. From this research Black African immigrant communities and potential entrepreneurs are able to learn from others' lived experience and will be better informed and prepared in their business and managerial decisions, thus minimising the cost of learning on the job which could have been detrimental. By making this research accessible at public libraries, BAIEs are able to seek support and assistance in time and, with the intervention of informed professionals, BAIEs not only enhance their competitiveness in the niche market but also maximise their chance of success by breaking into the mainstream markets, as demonstrated in the US, where minority-owned businesses have grown and evolved, engaging with non-minority individuals and breaking into mainstream markets (Sonfield, 2005).

7.2 Significance of the research for South Yorkshire

In a regional context, the research is well-positioned in line with the strategic vision of the region's major city, Sheffield City Partnership Board launched in 2018, to become an inclusive and sustainable city with renewed commitment to its diverse residents addressing many challenges at all levels; economically, socially and politically.

Thus, the following extract from the Sheffield City Partnership Board Report (2018) in regard to inclusive and sustainable growth consolidates this research's policy intervention recommendations to supporting BAIEs for **better integration with the mainstream communities**, ease legal hurdles and

barriers whilst facilitating access to resources and new markets to make them more productive citizens contributing to the economy and society.

The idea of 'inclusive growth' also emphasises that prosperity and wealth which is more evenly shared within and across communities will be more durable, and it recognises that 'inequality not only has a social cost, but that it also hampers long-term economic performance'. Inclusive growth is an economic issue, but it centres around an acknowledgement that the economic cannot be artificially separated from social as 'good social policy is good economic policy, and the reverse should equally be the case' (Sheffield City Partnership Board, 2018, p.94).

Generally, entrepreneurship is a multifaceted discipline which has been the subject of research by various academics and practitioners, each looking at it through their lenses and contributing diverse perspectives in advancing knowledge and practice in the field. Within the contemporary context of globalisation, entrepreneurship has emerged as a popular academic discipline with its own theories and controversies attempting to explain the intensified economic and business activities in the 21st century (Deakins *et al.*, 2012).

Kalkan and Kaygusuz (2012) also acknowledge the ever-increasing significance of research on the subject of entrepreneurship since the 1980s, due to its global prominence in setting global trends and influencing global agendas in all aspects of human endeavour as a result of the dominance of the market economy (globalisation) and expansion of neoliberal ideology.

In contrast, the debates and discourses seeking to define the concept of 'entrepreneurship' itself have not yet reached any consensus, according to Gartner (1990), due to the complexities of the concept that demand continuous research. Bruyat and Julien (2001) and Jones *et al.* (2011) concede that producing a unified definition of entrepreneurship has been a challenge and doubt whether there is a need for a single definition other than working towards establishing an integrated and coherent theoretical framework in order to advance knowledge of the concept.

This particular research study has focused on the 'lived experience of BAIEs in South Yorkshire', focusing on four urban towns (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield) where the number of immigrant communities, particularly from African countries, has increased over the last two decades

according to Migration Yorkshire (2017) and Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership (YHRMP, 2009). This follows on from the Home Office's decision to relocate recent migrants outside UK major cities according to the Immigration and Asylum Act (1999), to ease the burdens of accommodation and social services. Another reason for an increase in the number of BAIEs in the region is mass migration as refugees and asylum seekers enter the country. This is identified in this research as being prompted by war, conflict and political instability in the African continent which has presented both challenges and opportunities, socially, politically and economically, across Europe, as acknowledged by the International Migration Institute (2008).

Thus, this research is all the more necessary in view of the fact that previous research fails to capture recent BAIEs' unique set of circumstances and region-specific contexts and entrepreneurial culture, which are recognised as **'opportunity structure attributes'** with significant repercussions for entrepreneurial success (GEM, 2016-17; Hofstede, 1991; Deakins *et al.*, 2009). Black Africans in the region are relatively less established (transient) immigrant communities whose history, demography and economic background are explored in Chapter 4 and section 7.2 in this chapter generally and South Yorkshire regional contexts.

7.3 Reflection on research approach

The decision to adopt "othering" and "belonging" as a lens and critical framework for this research is not a random, self-fulfilling prophecy or default position, but one that has emerged after deep reflection and question on the part of the researcher as to why Western societies are 'mistreating' its most vulnerable members of the community (Black and ethnic minority groups and immigrants) as the compelling data and evidence would suggest.

After all, most Western countries and societies have been practising democratic governances for many years, upholding the rule of law, pledging high moral standards and caring about human rights, life and nature. So, it is puzzling to reconcile on one hand, these high values, morals and principles and on the other hand, compelling evidence on the ground that reveals 'unfair,

undemocratic, discriminatory' practices and policies that clearly favour some but not others.

The quest for an explanation has led to the sociological and other related research works and perspectives by Powell and Menendian, 2016; Brons, 2015, Burnett, 2016; Parkinson, 2017; Blumer, 1958; Garber, 2015; Jean, 2016 and Joseph, 2012 identified in this research. These authors have been studying Western societies' relationships with minority groups including those in the sphere of entrepreneurship. The findings and explanations are profound in some respects and yet equally basic in terms of 'human predisposition' as it indicates people's 'instinctive social behaviour' that is subject to conditioning to 'socially constructed' group identities and differences. Thus, it behaves favourably towards those it perceives as "belonging", whilst it disassociates and treats others unfavourably, (othering) whom it considers don't "belong" due to socially constructed group identities and differences, such as race, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, nationality etc.,

These studies suggest that such socially constructed group identification has evolved over time, from its 'tribal and brutal nature' where groups were huddled together for 'safety in numbers', reassuring its 'in-groups', whilst alienating or even openly demonising and dehumanising others. In the contemporary context, this phenomenon is taking place in a more complex and sophisticated dimension where on the surface society may present itself and even preach 'fairness and equality', whilst the same or more effective "othering" is evident through carefully designed policies and practice, usually exploited by elite groups for political power.

Once this sociological phenomenon of "othering" and "belonging" has been instilled in a deeply rooted societal culture, reinforced by institutional structures and systems, it becomes part of society's 'taken for granted assumptions', values and practices perpetuating "othering" and "belonging" which explains this vicious circle as demonstrated in this research about the lived experience of BAIes in the UK (South Yorkshire).

Critique of phenomenological approach

My critical reflection on the adopted phenomenological approach and its limitations are associated with the challenges of qualitative research vis a vis

conventional standard of reliability, validity and replicability that are advocated by quantitative researchers (Burns, 2000). However, the qualitative research approach is about appreciating subjective knowledge aimed at exploratory investigation and gaining deeper understanding, whilst adequate effort has been made to ensure credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability as discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.6) and chapter 6 (section 6.8).

7.4 The research journey

This is further to my statements made earlier in Chapter 3, section 3.3.4 and 3.6 about 'setbacks, challenges and action learnings' practical and technical issues and 'limitations' respectively whilst this section is aimed at providing an overview and reflection on my personal learning and experience whilst undertaking this research project.

Throughout the development of this research project, I have met many BAIEs, the wider immigrant communities and visited local amenities (churches, mosques, cafes, restaurants, etc.), which has given me greater insight into the lives of the social group whose lived experience I set out to investigate.

I consider myself as an insider, with shared experience and background, and undoubtedly this has given me **privileged access and trust** to BAIEs' lived experience. I have learnt a great deal about their migration journey, families, communities and businesses. The lesson I gained from the social group has enriched my experience both as a scholar and as a person. BAIEs are more than just the subject of studies, whose stories I found to be very compelling, inspiring, humbling, and this has given me a renewed interest and commitment in pursuing my research career further.

At a professional level, I feel that I have made a contribution to knowledge of diversity in Entrepreneurship by highlighting BAIEs' distinctive entrepreneurial attributes, motivations, challenges and opportunities from specific social groups' lived experience and perspectives, which I hope would attract further research interest among scholars to advancing knowledge and inform practices. Based on my preliminary findings, I have produced two full conference papers at the Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (ISBE) and an abstract to Migration and Diaspora Entrepreneurship (MDE). I have also been a guest

lecturer on Diversity in Entrepreneurship for the last five years at Sheffield Business School.

The networks that I have built up over the years and the knowledge I have gained would allow me to pursue further research in to this social groups.

Needless to say, the research journey has been challenging and has required personal discipline, commitment and tremendous hard work, but has been intellectually stimulating and ultimately fulfilling with a greater sense of accomplishment.

7.5 Scope for further research

As noted in this thesis, Black African Immigrants are the least studied groups among visible ethnic groups in the UK, in agreement with other researchers on the subject of Black and ethnic minorities studies (Ojo, 2013; Nwankwo, 2005; Daley, 1998). It has been reported that these social groups were only recognised and introduced as census categories during the 1990 Census (Daley, 1998). Thus, there is some potential for further research directions and focus, whilst I have identified the following four areas of further research focus some of which have been discussed within the context of this thesis. These potential areas are: Black African Female entrepreneurship (**gender dimension**), BAIEs and other social groups **comparative studies**, studies by **countries of origin**, and **provision of business support**.

Black African Female entrepreneurship - Although the focus of this study is looking at BAIEs' shared experience, I recognise that there are gaps in the literature about Black African female entrepreneurship as an area to explore, e.g. whether being a female Black African immigrant is a compound challenge or indeed an advantage. In this thesis sample, a high proportion of interviewees were males and even when the business is owned by couples (wife and husband) and I requested for the female partner to take part in the interview, there seemed to be an agreement that the male partner was the preferred individual to represent the business. A similar phenomenon has been corroborated by Nwankwo's (2005) research in London. This has not been an

issue for the purpose of this particular research, but it has triggered curiosity and a question as a potential area of future research as indicated in Chapter 3, section 3.4, 'gender' discussions.

Comparative studies - it would be useful to have comparative studies among the UK's visible ethnic groups in regard to their challenges and opportunities within the current socio-political, economic and migration, in particular in regard to 'Brexit' contexts. Previous comparative researches (Fraser, 2005; Omar *et al.*, 2006; Ram *et al.*, 2002; Deakins and Freel, 2009; Oliveira, 2006; Bank of England, 1999; Ram *et al.*, 2002) have focused more on access to finance, and it would be insightful to investigate the implications for entrepreneurial activities by various social and ethnic groups within the current national and regional environmental and opportunity structural' contexts.

Research study by countries of origin – as has already been reported, in the UK 'Black African' as a census category was introduced only in the 1990 Census (Daley, 1998), but the demographic category still remains confusing and overlapping as 'Black/African/Caribbean/Black/British/mixed' including on the latest census (2011) which has been highlighted in Chapter 4 and section 4.3 'demography' of this thesis. Moreover, previous researches seem to lump together Black Africans and Caribbean people, failing to recognise the distinctiveness in their history, migration and backgrounds. This research investigates BAIEs' shared experience and background both in their host country (UK) and their Black African shared cultural heritages, reasons of migration and educational backgrounds that may have contributed to their entrepreneurial activities. However, there is room for further investigation into whether different countries' national culture, political system, education, history and other specific factors may influence BAIEs' entrepreneurial activities. Previous researchers (Ojo, 2013, 2017; Nwankwo, 2003, 2005) have undertaken such research mainly based on Nigerian entrepreneurs in London, but it would be worthwhile to extend this research to other major countries from where most immigrants are coming into the UK.

Provision of business support – as discussed throughout this thesis and in particular in the Literature Review, Chapter 2, section 2.5.5 and Chapter 5 'findings and analysis' in regard to the provision of support in the form of policy interventions, practical and professional inputs to supporting disadvantaged and

small businesses have been confirmed as important in these research findings and as demonstrated by various researchers in the US, Europe, and UK experiences (Waldinger *et al.*, 1990; Van Delft *et al.*, 2000; Levent *et al.*, 2003; Generation Report, 2006; EKOS, 2007; DTI, 2007; Deakins and Freel, 2003, 2012). On the other hand, it has been also reported in this research that the UK's provision of support has been criticized as driven by government targets rather than the needs of businesses, and is inflexible, short term, less-integrated and lacks resources (Deakins and Freel, 2003, 2012; EKOS, 2007; Generation Report, 2006). In the UK, provision of support has gone through several restructurings where many service providers at national and regional level, including Yorkshire Forward, Business Link Yorkshire and Local Enterprise Agency (SENTA), have been closed, leaving gaps whilst limited services are being offered at local city council level, but with very reduced resources and capacities. However, it would be useful to research into the implications of the limited capacity, resources and absence of such policy provision to small businesses and black and ethnic minority enterprises.

This is in line with the recommendation of Ram *et al.* (2017) that the focus of future research in the UK and Europe should be embedded locally, working with local agencies aimed at providing practical support to new immigrant businesses. Ram *et al.* (2017) emphasise that future emphasis should be on how research should inform and influence policies and practices by recognising the importance of the multiplicity of contexts in which migrant entrepreneurs are embedded.

Therefore, it would be fruitful to study the role of provision of business support and services in the UK to raising competitiveness of disadvantaged groups, Black and ethnic minority enterprises and small businesses in national and regional contexts whilst learning from other countries' examples and practices, including the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) experience in the US.

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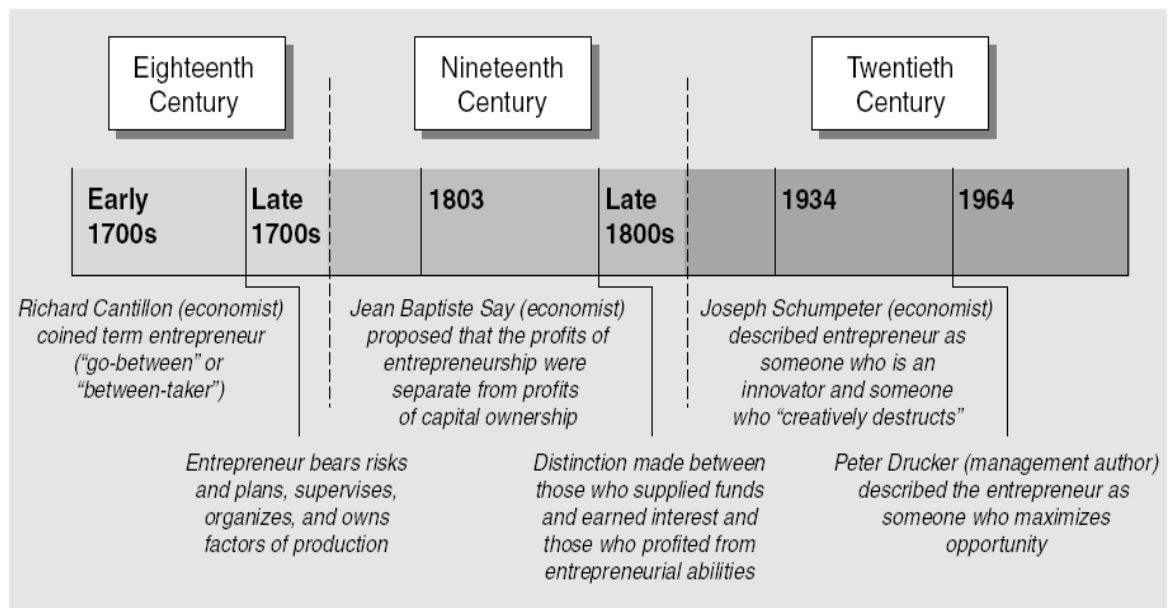
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9 Appendix

1.1 Chronology of Entrepreneurship Theory



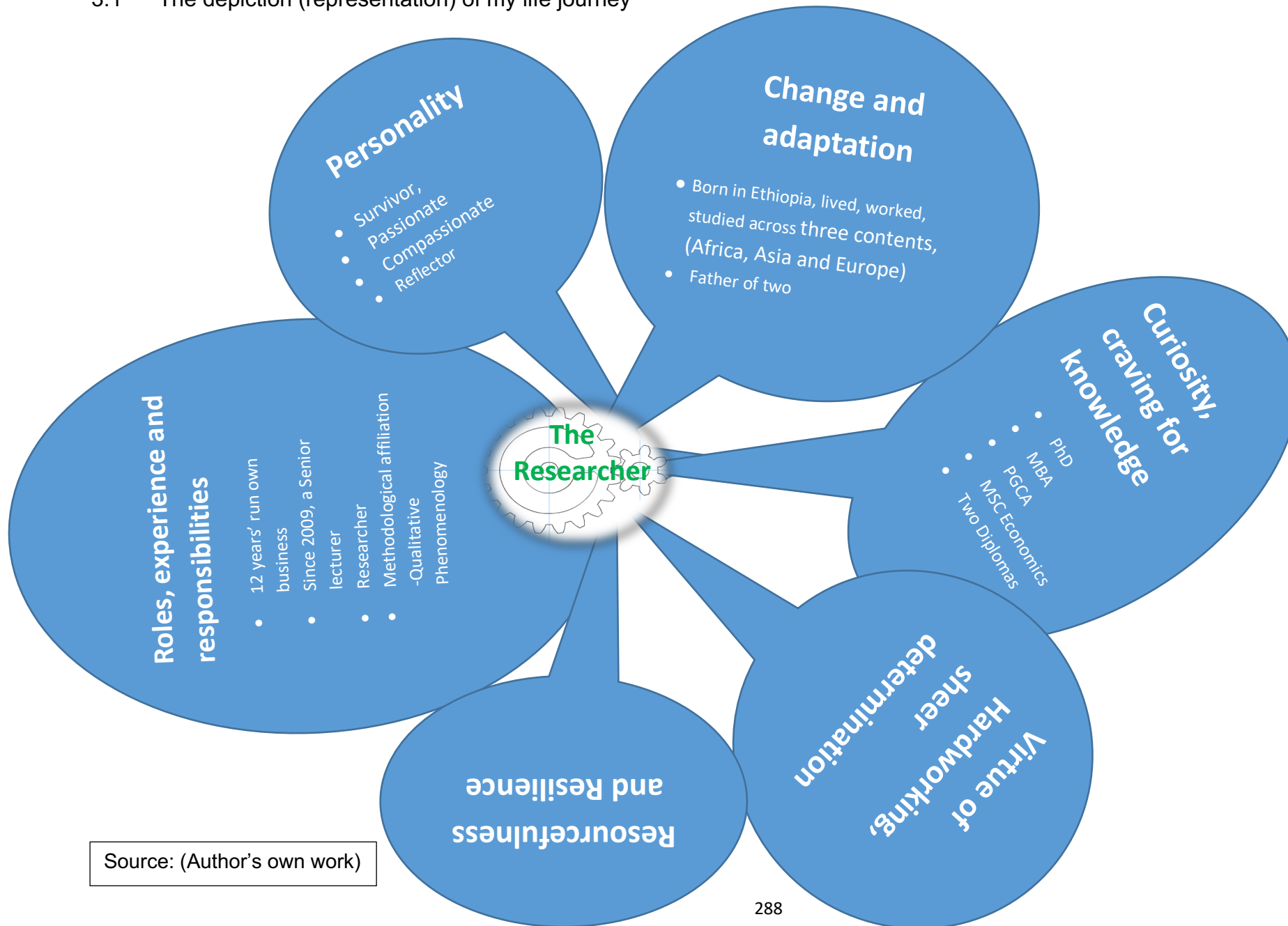
Source: Cerukara and Manalel (2011)

2.2 Entrepreneurial Personalities (characteristics)

1. Self-confidence	22. Reliability
2. Constancy	23. Prevision
3. Being active and energetic	24. Honesty
4. Skill	25. Commonality
5. Risk taking	26. Being profit-minded
6. Dynamism & Leadership	27. The Ability of Learning from mistakes
7. Optimism	28. Desire for Power
8. Ambition	29. Good personality
9. Versatility	30. Self-centeredness
10. Creativity	31. Courage
11. The ability of Manipulation	32. Imagination
12. The Ability to Communicate with people	33. Understanding/Sympathy
13. Initiative	34. The Tolerance against uncertainty
14. Flexibility	35. Aggression
15. Intelligence	36. Satisfaction
16. Focusing on Clear Objectives	37. Advantage
17. Being competitive	38. Being promising
18. Independency	39. The Ability to rely on employees
19. Sensitivity to critical situations	40. Sensitivity
21. Being Decisive	42. Maturity

Source: Kuratko & Hodgetts, (1998)

3.1 The depiction (representation) of my life journey



Source: (Author's own work)

3.2 Researcher's background, prior exposure and research framework

THE IMPACT ON RESEARCH OF PHILOSOPHICAL, SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND PRACTICAL DILEMMAS



3.3 Themes of semi-structured interview questions (discussion themes) with BAIEs in South Yorkshire

1. Please tell me about your background:

Who are you? (Identity, race, citizen,...)

Where did you come from?

When? Why?

What is your line of business? (product/services)

How long have you been in business?

Size (employees, turnover...,)

2. Please tell me about the main reasons (incentives/drivers) for setting up/running your own business. Why are you in this line of business (sector/industry)?

3. What kind of training, qualifications, skills and knowledge do you have relevant to business or otherwise?

4. Reflecting on your own experience to date, what are the main challenges and barriers you have been facing (if you have any at all) in running your business?

What do you think are the main challenges and barriers that other businesses (BAIEs) are facing in South Yorkshire specifically and in the United Kingdom generally?

How do you describe (explain) how these challenges and barriers affect your business? (explanation, examples and evidence)

5. What do think of or identify as opportunities here in South Yorkshire and in the UK to run your own business? (Business environment, laws, customers, institutions, family/friends, agencies,)

6. What do you think or suggest are the solutions to these challenges and barriers?

7. Who provides you with the most support and why? (in regard to finance, practical support, advice, encouragement, loan, ...)

8. Who are your main customers and why? And who are your suppliers and why?

9. Do you know about any business support agency and what is your experience about the quality of their service? (what? why? and how?)

10. What are your product/service assortments? (mainly ethnic, local communities or the wider society)

11. How do you describe your business relationships with local authorities and institutions? (Banks, tax office, health and safety, police, Chamber of Commerce, local enterprise agency, BME forum...) and why?

3.4 Sample letter sent to participants in the research enquiry (hand delivered)

Date:

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my research. I am very grateful for your participation as I feel that you will have some very valuable views on the subject.

As stated in the information sheet sent to you regarding the research, I would like to carry out an interview. I anticipate that the interview will last approximately one hour, maybe a little longer, depending on your interest and participation.

I can confirm that the information from the interview will be completely private and confidential. It is my intention to record the interview using digital recorders. This is so that I can give you my undivided attention and negates the need to try and take notes of everything that is said, although I may make one or two notes during the interview. I will also request that you sign a consent form for the use of recorded material (this is normal practice). I alone, as the researcher, will have access to the interview recordings and I will keep these secure. You will also have the right to withhold information and can withdraw from the interview at any time.

Furthermore, in reporting the work I will ensure that all participants remain anonymous. I may also need to attach your job/title role to comments/statements and these may be used in my final research dissertation and possibly in future academic-type papers and presentations. I will also send you a transcript of the interview copy in order for you to confirm that this is a true reflection of what took place. Finally, I will make you aware when the research is completed.

With your agreement, I intend to carry out the interview in a private room (or office if that is more suitable) so that we can talk without being disturbed.

In order to start the research enquiry process, I have attached with this letter some suggested dates and time slots when the interview might take place

[Date1, _____, Time_____, Date 2, _____, Time:_____)

I do appreciate that you are busy, but I would be very grateful if you could indicate which of the time slots is the most convenient for you. Once I have received back your availability (by phone as suggested), I will organise the interview session and confirm this with you.

As previously stated, should you have any questions or concerns regarding the interview and the research enquiry then please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you once again for your participation in this research and I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Kind regards,

Tilahun Mekonnen [Contact details]

3.5 Consent Form for the Use of Recorded Material

<p>Date:</p> <p>I(name)</p> <p>Address.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>give my consent to(name)</p> <p>to transcribe, and use the data which has been recorded by him/her</p> <p>The researcher has explained to me that the transcribed material will be used in the following context: Dissertation, academic papers, presentations.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>and I will be given/ made aware of the results when the research is completed.</p> <p>The researcher has explained to me that I can withdraw from the recording session at any time and that I can ask for my contribution to the data not to be used.</p> <p>Signature.....</p>

4.1 Electoral Calculus Copyright Permission

On 14 Mar 2018, at 19:53, Martin Baxter <martin@electoralcalculus.co.uk> wrote:

Dear Tilahun,

Ok. On behalf of Electoral Calculus, I give permission for you to use the region map for the academic purpose you describe, as long as you give a visible picture credit to Electoral Calculus such as "©Electoral Calculus, reproduced with permission".

Good luck with your project,

Martin

Martin Baxter

Founder and CEO

Electoral Calculus Ltd

www.electoralcalculus.co.uk

Tel. (+44) 020 3627 8141

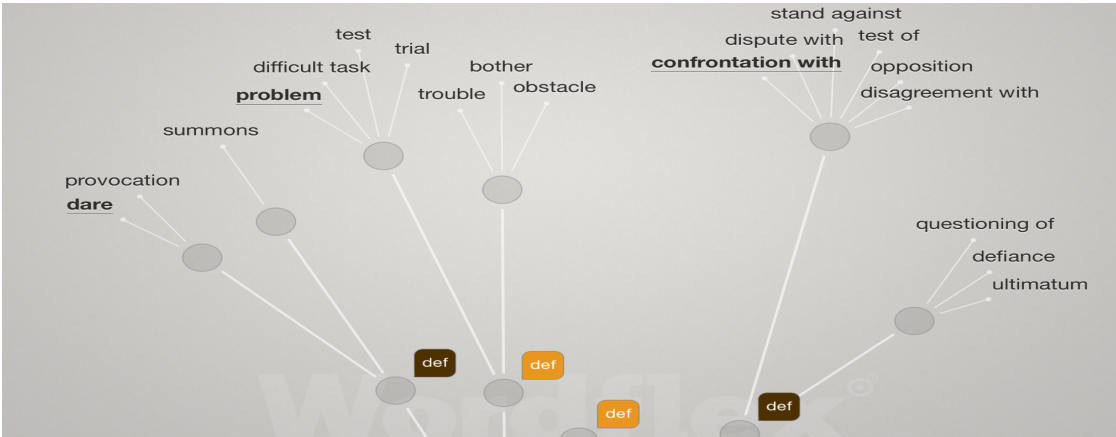
5.1 Synonyms of challenges with negative and positive denotations

Dictionary.comThesaurus.com

Thesaurus.comsynonymschallenge

objection
noun. argument, disagreement

cavil	difficulty	doubt	protest	scruple
censure	disapprobation	exception	protestation	shrinking
challenge	disapproval	grievance	question	squawk
counter-argument	discontent	gripe	rejection	stink
criticism	disesteem	hesitation	reluctance	unwillingness
declination	disinclination	kick	remonstrance	
demur	dislike	niggle	remonstrations	
demurral	displeasure	odium	repugnancy	
demurring	dissatisfaction	opposition	revilement	



Challenges

Thesaurus.comsynonymschallenge

challenge ★ [see definition of challenge](#) show all

More words related to challenge

kindle
verb. excite, incite

agitate	challenge	get smoking	rally	turn on
animate	egg on	induce	rouse	wake
arouse	enkindle	inflame	sharpen	waken
awaken	exasperate	inspire	stimulate	whet
bestir	fire up	key up	stir	work up
burn up	foment	provoke	thrill	

Source (wordflex, 2012; Thesaurus, 2016)

5.2 Synonyms of opportunity

Dictionary.com Thesaurus.com Opportunities Synonyms, Opportunities Antonyms | Thesaurus.com

Thesaurus.com synonyms opportunity

opportunity ★ [see definition of opportunity](#) show all

fair shake hope odds prayer workableness

privilege
noun. right, due

advantage	benefit	concession	freedom	perquisite
allowance	birthright	entitlement	grant	prerogative
appanage	boon	event	immunity	right
appurtenance	chance	exemption	liberty	sanction
authority	charter	favor	license	
authorization	claim	franchise	opportunity	

resort
noun. alternative, recourse

chance	expedient	possibility	resource	surrogate
course	hope	reference	shift	
device	makeshift	refuge	stopgap	
expediency	opportunity	relief	substitute	

Dictionary.com Thesaurus.com

Thesaurus.com synonyms opportunity

opportunity ★ [see definition of opportunity](#) show all

alternative	determination	evaluation	opportunity	substitute
appraisal	discretion	extract	option	variety
choosing	discrimination	favorite	pick	verdict
cull	distinction	finding	preference	volition
cup of tea	druthers	free will	rating	vote
decision	election	judgment	say	weakness

contingency
noun. chance happening; possibility

accident	event	incident	pass	uncertainty
break	eventuality	juncture	pinch	zero hour
chance	exigency	likelihood	predicament	
crisis	fortuity	occasion	probability	
crossroads	happening	odds	strait	
emergency	if it's cool	opportunity	turning point	

convenience
noun. spare time

chance	leisure	one's own sweet time	preference	whenever
freedom	liberty	opportunity	spare moment	
hour	occasion	place	suitable time	

Source Thesaurus (2016)