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Research Article

The United Kingdom's New Immigration Laws: Forecasting Their Potential Ramifications for Family Life and Children's Rights

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The article pries the United Kingdom's newly developed immigration laws effected on January 2024 and thereafter, highlighting the implications they bear on families coupled with children's developmental, welfare, and protection rights. The article bases its analysis on findings gathered from various secondary sources of data, including the UK's Home Office website, policy position papers, and reports presented by the House of Lords. The article thus argues that the proposed immigration rules present themselves as a tragic betrayal of the golden yet binding rights of children, coupled with the conferred rights to existence guaranteed in the international and local legislative policy blueprints. These laws (at the international level) include Article 16 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948, Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, and lastly, Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship, and Immigration Act 2009. In the UK specifically, there is the Children Act 1989, Section 1, and Children Act 2004. The article also argues that these policies appear to be highly biased towards capitalistic, anti-poor, or anti-worker in scope, logic, and sense; this is as far as their psychosocial, emotional, and socio-economic stability and well-being are concerned. Therefore, it can be suggestively recommended that there is a need for immigration inter-agency policy review, re-consideration, and reform towards child-rights-friendly, worker needs-sensitive, pro-worker, and consistent policy change. This would eventually result in better, sustainable, smooth, improved, and collective cooperation between immigrant workers and their respective employers in the UK. This too, will improve children's plight and recognition of the family unit for better social cohesion and unanimous continuity.

Keywords
Immigration law, skilled workers, children's rights, dependents, family, policy reform, ramifications

INTRODUCTION

This article delves into a thorough scrutiny of the UK's recently implemented immigration laws in a bid to spotlight their potential ramifications or impact on children and families hailing from developing or economically disadvantaged countries. While these regulations were developed and introduced in January 2024, they out rightly signpost a crucial UK's immigration policy landscape shift. Thus, comprehending their accompanying effects seemingly becomes more critical than ever. The ongoing exegesis endeavours to establish an in-depth and holistic understanding of how these policy alterations might radically impact vulnerable children, who may be facing challenges in accessing essential services including, but not limited to education, health and psychosocial support. When exploring these policy regulations, it is highly paramount to also pry their practical, logical and feasible compliance and conformity with legally binding international human rights standards as well as local laws applicable within the UK. In this regard, the rights and welfare of families and children are critically pivotal and integral to this conscious investigation, triggering a plethora of queries as to whether these newly developed immigration policies flow in tandem with the child and human rights principles established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child among other human rights legislative blueprints. This article therefore closely delves into the magnitude length to which these policy shifts either supportively enhance or impede the rights and well-being of children in the context of harmonious or sacred existence of families; taking into cognisance diverse indicators: mental health, educational opportunities, and overall quality of life. Furthermore, relevant child development theories and concepts are integrated into this exploration to establish a nuanced understanding of the potential short and long-term ramifications of these regulatory immigration measures. Hence, by leveraging factual data and informed theoretical perspectives, this article lucidly pinpoints policy gulfs and advocate for changes that productively allows more effective, 'family-and-child-friendly' (humane) immigration regulations. Consequently, the key objective is to reinforce and enhance the socioeconomic and psycho-emotional outcomes for children and families impacted by these policy regulations; thereby establishing a more productive and equitable approach that values their rights and needs in the context of the broader immigration framework.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Africa, and the rest of the world, are today facing severe challenges in terms of geo-political, environmental, infrastructural, socio-economic, and epidemiological crises. These forces have significantly and negatively affected humans and the structures of society in multiple ways. One of the primary challenges faced by many families and people, especially in Africa, is the absence of access to improved life prospects, such as necessary social services and sustainable means of making a living (Flahaux and De Haas, 2016; Idemudia and Boehnke, 2020). Over time,

there has been a significant migration of highly skilled workers to Europe in pursuit of improved life prospects. The United Kingdom is considered to be one of the primary destinations. To control the immigration of these workers and their dependents (including spouses, partners, and children), the UK government has been actively involved in implementing many and consistently stringent reforms to its immigration policy framework during the previous ten years. The immigration rules in the UK have both beneficial and counter-productive or inhumane effects on various stakeholders, including immigrants, their dependents, and the government's socio-economic infrastructure. However, the process of entering the UK has always been challenging for many dependents, as immigration regulations have progressively become more stringent over time.

The UK government has implemented measures to regulate immigration, including skilled workers, to ensure security, order, and protection. The UK has placed significant emphasis on continuous immigration law reform in response to the substantial influx of individuals from various parts of the world. Studies indicate that about 26% of these immigrants are compelled to migrate due to limited job prospects, armed conflicts, and deteriorating socio-economic conditions (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2017). This phenomenon is notably apparent and widespread in Africa, Asia, and certain European nations, where conflicts, diminishing democratic freedoms, fragmented social welfare systems, and alarming levels of unemployment are observed (UNDESA, 2017; Idemudia and Boehnke, 2020). Due to its adaptable and favourable socio-economic, infrastructural, and political conditions, the UK has emerged as a prominent destination attracting a large influx of people. Proficient professionals such as social workers, care workers, medical physicians, nurses, and engineers, among others, are among the groups of individuals immigrating to the UK. Upon deeper examination of the UK's immigration rules, it becomes evident that there has been a consistent process of reviewing and modifying these laws to accommodate changing conditions over the previous decade. Undoubtedly, these developments have had both positive and negative consequences for immigrants and their dependents, especially children and the overall family structure. However, it is crucial to examine and emphasise these reforms individually in the next section to properly understand their impact on the family unit and the rights of children in relation to their well-being and safety.

LITERATURE REVIEW: GLOBAL CONTEXT

The logical intersection and practical bulge of (and between) children's rights and welfare, family existence, and immigration policies is a dire area of study. This is so because world over, countries are striving to balance the bio-psychosocial and economic demands and needs presented by skilled labour with the principles of family unity and children's rights. This brief yet comprehensive literature review focuses on the United Kingdom's immigration policies landscape to

determine their feasibility, compliance and conformity with the ethos and pathos of children's rights, wellbeing and family existence as endorsed in various pieces of human rights legislation. However, before that could follow, the review commences with a general yet comparative analysis of the nature of immigration policies currently governing the immigrants, their dependents and work conditions across Europe, Australia among other continental jurisdictions. This brief global literature overview spontaneously becomes imperative at this juncture, as it helps in identifying the gaps, drawing lessons and advocate for more productive, humane, child-friendly, family sensitive and sustainable immigration policies in the UK. In this context, considerable perspective of analysis of these policies are drawn from the immigration policies of the United States, Australia, and the few selected European countries (France and Germany) and thereby contrasting them with the new UK immigration laws of 2024.

In the United States, immigration policy has historically been shaped by economic needs while recognising familial ties. The U.S. immigration system includes pathways for skilled workers, notably through programs like the H-1B visa, which allows for a limited number of highly skilled professionals to work in the country. Importantly, these workers may apply for dependent visas for their spouses and children, allowing families to remain together. Research highlights the complexities faced by these families, including the precarious nature of dependent visas, which are contingent on the primary visa holder's employment status (Crawley and Jones, 2020). Furthermore, while children's rights under U.S. law necessitate access to education and healthcare, challenges remain, particularly for children of undocumented workers who may not receive equal protections (Bhabha and Abel, 2020). Australia's immigration policies are similarly structured to attract skilled workers through its points-based system. The Australian immigration framework allows skilled migrants to bring their immediate family members, facilitating family unity. This implies that the government has established specific provisions to safeguard children's welfare, ensuring they have access to education and health services while residing in Australia.

Research indicates that Australia's immigration policies have made strides towards inclusivity but still face criticism for the bureaucratic challenges that families encounter. Long processing times and stringent eligibility criteria can disrupt family cohesion, leading to emotional and psychological stress on children (Crawley and Jones, 2020). Countries such as Germany and Sweden have developed immigration policies that prioritise family reunification, particularly for skilled migrants. Germany's Skilled Immigration Act allows for the integration of the family unit, enabling spouses and children to accompany the main applicant (Smith, 2018). Sweden adopts a progressive stance on family immigration, promoting rights to residency for children irrespective of their parent's immigration status (Stalford, 2018; Bhabha and Abel, 2020). However, disparities exist within Europe. Immigration policies vary widely, and certain Eastern European countries offer less favourable conditions for

family reunification. Research indicates that children's rights, while generally upheld across the continent, face challenges tied to bureaucratic delays and differing national interpretations of children's welfare (Iusmen, 2021). The comparative global review highlights the consideration of family structures among skilled workers and the rights of their children.

The United Kingdom: Over A Decade of Immigration Law Reform

Just like the aforementioned European and continental states, the UK has also put in place some policies to inform and govern immigration processes and issues. The House of Lords (1st Report of Session 2022-2023, p.6) states that it has been ten years since the Coalition Government implemented significant reforms to the family immigration system. This reform was established through implementation a set of policy initiatives. The initial revision involved the restriction of the Adult Dependent Relative (ADR) pathway. The latter was frequently employed to facilitate the immigration of elderly parents to the UK for the purpose of family care so as to mitigate the problem of visa restrictions. The 2012 reform also included a new financial criterion known as the 'minimum income requirement'. This stipulation, as stated in the House of Lords (1st Report Session 2022-2023, p.6), thereafter restricts the capacity of British citizens or permanent residents to establish their life in the UK with a foreign partner. The duration of the 'probationary' period for wives and partners has been prolonged, requiring them to reside in the country for five years instead of the previous two years to attain settlement, commonly known as 'indefinite leave to remain' (House of Commons, 2015 quoted in the House of Lords Report, 2022).

As a result, the change led to an increase in the number of individuals who relied on human rights exceptions to stay in the country, granting them a 10-year period to become permanent residents. To ensure that individuals under immigration control have access to healthcare that aligns with their immigration status, the Government implemented a reform in 2015. This reform introduced the 'Immigration Health Surcharge', that is a misunderstood measure requiring most immigrants to make an annual payment to the NHS as an additional contribution. Specifically, postgraduate students and their dependents who enter the UK on a student visa are required to pay a significant amount of money (usually £470 per person) upon submitting their application (House of Lords Report, 2022). Once this payment is made, they are eligible to utilise the services provided by the NHS. Furthermore, they are also restricted from obtaining further public monies (House of Lords 1st Report of Session 2022-2023, p. 6).

From 2012 to December 2022, it is apparent that these policies had a negative impact on the family unit and children. While these measures were deemed necessary to alleviate the government's financial strain on social services, they have resulted in the separation of numerous families, with some choosing to relocate outside the UK to be reunited (House of Lords Report, 2022, p. 7). Citing the Scottish Government (2016) as referenced in the House of Lords Report

(2022, p. 7), it was projected that the 2012 revision of the financial criteria would prevent an estimated annual influx of 13,600 to 17,800 individuals of all age groups from entering the nation. Furthermore, the House of Lords Report (2022, p. 7) references the Children's Commissioner for England (2015), revealing that about 15,000 children were separated from a parent due to the financial requirement after three years of reform. Within this perspective, the UK's departure from the EU entails that the regulations regarding family migration will now be extended to encompass individuals from the European Economic Area and Switzerland. As a result, a greater number of families will be separated than previously expected. Similarly, statistical data indicates that the number of dependents, specifically the family members of immigrants (such as parents and grandparents), who were granted settlement has significantly declined from 2017 to 2021. Specifically, 11, 18, 16, 1, and 0 parents were able to successfully enter the UK, as reported by the Home Office in 2022 and noted in the House of Lords Report of the same year (p. 22). The UK is experiencing a substantial influx of skilled workers, resulting in increased difficulties for children and dependents to enter and re-join with their loved ones in the country. This is further exacerbated by the newly implemented immigration legislation set to take effect in January 2024.

THE NEW UK IMMIGRATION LAWS OF 2024

With the observation and justification that, the social service delivery system has been overburdened by immigrants especially dependents (children and family members), the UK government has reformed its immigration laws again. That is, on 4 December 2023, the Home Secretary, James Cleverly announced the changes to visa rules (more information was published on 21 December 2023) in what he described as a '***five-point plan***'.

- Firstly, it is stipulated that, social care workers would not be allowed to bring their dependents (partners and children) on their visa.
- Secondly, the baseline minimum salary to be sponsored for a skilled worker visa would rise from 26,200 to 38,700 pounds (but not for the health and care worker visa) that includes social care or for education workers on national pay scales. This rule was to be effected beginning April 2024.
- Thirdly, changes to the shortage occupation list to significantly reduce the number of jobs where it would be possible to sponsor overseas workers below the baseline minimum salary (that is the main purpose of the list). This rule was to be effected no earlier than April 2024.
- Fourthly, the minimum income normally required to sponsor someone for a sponsor or partner visa would rise in stages from 18,600 to 29,000 and ultimately around 38,700 pounds in early 2025.
- Lastly, the Migration Advisory Committee would review the Graduate visa, a 2-year unsponsored work permit for overseas graduates of British universities in January to late 2024.

At this juncture, it should be understood that, this new points-based immigration system ostensibly emphasises the need for skilled labour while offering a path for dependents; however, restrictions on the income threshold for family sponsorship have raised concerns about feasibility for many families. Critics argue that the UK immigration system prioritises economic contributions over social cohesion, potentially undermining family unity as many skilled workers may find it difficult to meet the financial requirements to secure visas for their children (Bhabha and Abel, 2020). Furthermore, while the UK has ratified international conventions on children's rights, implementation remains inconsistent, particularly concerning access to education and health services for children from immigrant backgrounds (Crawley and Jones, 2020). When comparing the immigration frameworks of the U.S., Australia, and selected European countries to the new UK immigration laws, several key differences emerge from firstly, the perspective of family reunification policies. That is, the U.S. and Australian systems are more conducive to family reunification for skilled workers than the new UK laws, which impose stricter financial thresholds. Secondly, from the angle of child rights**,** one might notice that, while Australia and countries like Sweden actively ensure children's rights and welfare are prioritised, the UK's recent reforms may compromise these rights by creating barriers to access for dependent children. Thirdly, from a dimension of bureaucratic processes, one can observe that, all nations face bureaucratic challenges; however, the extent to which these challenges affect family stability and child development varies, with the UK facing heightened scrutiny for its rigidity (Migration Advisory Committee, 2022). Lastly, when one looks at the economic versus social objectives, the U.S. and Australia balance economic needs with social aspirations, while the UK's approach appears to prioritise immediate economic contributions, potentially neglecting the social fabric that family structures represent.

METHODOLOGY

While predominantly qualitative in nature, the methodology adopted in this study revolves around an extensive systematic review of both primary and secondary data sources to establish a comprehensive examination of the newly enacted United Kingdom's immigration laws, effective January 2024. Particular focus was given to these laws' implications on family existence and children's rights. In this context, a systematic review of pertinent literature was conducted, drawing upon publicly accessible databases (JSTOR, Google Scholar), governmental publications, academic journals, expert commentaries and authoritative reports. In the same light, primary sources used included UK Home Office website, where official texts of the new policies are accessible, along with vital position papers coupled with legislative reports published by the House of Lords. All these sources provided critical insights into the legal frameworks and the political context surrounding these immigration laws in relation to how they impact family existence and children's developmental, welfare and protection rights.

Data collection thus, involved a thorough search of documents published prior January 2024 (to establish the contextual background and scope within which these laws were framed) and also post-January 2024, enabling the identification of key themes related to children's developmental, welfare and protection rights. This was followed by categorisation of information relevant to children's rights; while specific attention was paid to the alignment (or misalignment) of the new UK immigration laws with both international and domestic standards that safeguard these rights within the context of family existence. These laws include but not limited to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948: Article 16), the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 8), the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 3) and relevant UK statutes such as the Children Act 1989 and the Boarders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009.

To establish a comprehensive analysis, the study incorporated a comparative lens with other jurisdictions that have been confronted by similar immigration challenges, enabling an evaluation of best practices and potential models for reform in the UK context. To this end, the findings were synthesised to elucidate a lucid set of recommendations targeted at enhancing pro-family and child-sensitive immigration policies. More so, emphasis was stressed on the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration among various stakeholders encompassing policy makers, social workers and legal advocates. Consequently, this research not only advocates for a paradigm shift towards immigration policies that are sensitive to child welfare, protection rights and solidified family existence but also proposedly presents actionable recommendations for inter-agency policy review and reform. By striving for a nuanced understanding of these complex issues, this study aims to contribute meaningfully to on-going debates surrounding immigration law and children rights in the UK.

Implications of New UK Immigration Laws on Family (Unit) Existence and Children's Welfare and Protection Rights

For one to fully understand and gain an in-depth appreciation of the key arguments presented in the article for better and improved immigration policy adjustments and reform consideration, here are the eye-opening and attention-seeking questions:

- Are these laws consistent and in harmony with the international bills of human rights in as far as family and children's rights are concerned?
- Are these laws sensitive to the developmental needs of children in need of close parental and social care?
- Are these rules pro-workers or anti-family and 'selfishly capitalistic'?

These immigration laws should undergo a legal and social litmus test. That is, the 'legal' test refers to the assessment of compliance with the established international law, while the 'social' test pertains to the consideration of the unique yet diverse needs of children. From an international legal standpoint, it is evident that the recently proposed immigration law flagrantly violates the family rights provisions outlined in the international

human rights treaties. Article 16 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights 1948 states that the family is the inherent and essential unit of society and is entitled to protection from both society and the state. The UK's Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, emphasise the importance of family in his address outlining his priorities for 2023. He acknowledged that the concept of family has evolved and now encompasses various forms in today's world. According to the House of Lords Report (2022, p. 16), he stated that the specific nature of the tie is inconsequential as long as it is based on love.

However, in the realm of legal theory and practice, the newly formulated immigration regulations fail to align with this notion. Instead, they indicate a narrow-minded and hostile stance towards family units, favouring a traditional nuclear family structure consisting of a married couple and their children. This is further complicated by the fact that the concept of family is enveloped in significant ambiguity and inconsistency due to the profound changes brought about by modernisation and civilisation in the perception of the family as an institution. This pertains specifically to the UK, where cohabitation, along with other types of marriage, is considered as a family unit. In contrast, in Africa, the notion of 'family' often includes heterosexual unions with children, who are also considered part of the extended kinship family. Consequently, the absence of provisions in family law may contribute to the perception that immigration law lacks consideration for the importance of family as a cohesive entity.

The proposed immigration laws for 2024 are too restrictive and can be seen as a direct attack on family life and existence. This situation clearly contradicts international law. Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights 1998 clearly states that UK tribunals, courts, and government are obligated to adhere to the right to privacy and family life. Put simply, migrant skilled workers in the UK have the right to be reunited with their dependents, that includes children, partners, and spouses, provided they have established themselves in the UK. The migration process should be facilitated and customised to align with the imperative of preserving family unity, consistency, and stability. Contrary to that, the UK Home Secretary stated in his speech on 21 December 2022 that it is not practical for all individuals who desire to enter the UK to do so. He further emphasised that the UK does not possess an infinite ability to accommodate every individual facing hardships in their home country (House of Lords Report, 2022). Based on the latter statement, it can be inferred that children and other dependents who were left behind in their native country may have difficulties in reuniting with their family members who are working in the UK. This also constitutes a flagrant breach of section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009. The aforementioned legislation mandates that the government, in executing its duties related to immigration, asylum, or nationality, must prioritise the protection and advancement of the well-being of children whose guardians are residing in the UK.

The new immigration laws, characterised by stricter visa requirements and reduced

pathways for family reunification, are likely to disrupt family structures. Research by Crawley and Jones (2020) highlights that restrictive immigration policies often force families to separate, with one or more members being deported or denied entry. This separation can lead to emotional distress, economic hardship, and social isolation for affected families. The study emphasises that such policies disproportionately impact low-income families, who may lack the resources to navigate complex legal systems or meet stringent financial requirements. Furthermore, a report by Sumption and Walsh (2022) suggests that the new laws could exacerbate existing inequalities, particularly for migrant families from non-EU countries. The report argues that the emphasis on skilled migration and higher income thresholds may exclude many families from reuniting, thereby undermining the right to family life as enshrined in international human rights law.

The newly introduced immigration regulations pose a risk to the rights of children and their developmental requirements, as outlined in the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989, to which the UK has agreed to abide by. Article 3 of the UNCRC, in accordance with Section 1 of the Children's Act (1989), states that the primary focus in all cases concerning a child should be their best interests. The inclusion of stringent and costly financial prerequisites for visas in the recent immigration legislation contravenes the notion of prioritising the welfare of the child. This is because children often experience optimal cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological growth when they receive sufficient support and care from their parents. Attachment theory indicates that children form a significant bond with their parents, to the extent that separation, whether temporary or prolonged, can have adverse effects on their psychological, emotional, physical, and mental well-being, and other areas of their development. In this context, children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of restrictive immigration policies. According to a study by Bhabha and Abel (2020), children in migrant families often experience psychological trauma due to family separation, uncertainty about their future, and the stigma associated with their immigration status. The new UK laws, which prioritise immigration control over family unity, may further marginalise these children, depriving them of their right to a stable and nurturing family environment.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underscores the importance of protecting children's rights, including their right to family life, education, and health. However, as noted by Crawley and Jones (2020), the UK's new immigration laws may contravene these principles by creating barriers to accessing essential services for children in migrant families. For instance, the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' (NRPF) policy, which restricts access to welfare benefits, has been shown to exacerbate child poverty and limit access to healthcare and education. Consequently, their academic achievement, behavioural adaptation, and ability to meet basic requirements may be greatly affected by those they trust. Similarly, parents residing in the UK may experience

significant impacts on their concentration and emotional well-being, as they constantly worry about their children and partners.

The long-term ramifications of the new immigration laws extend beyond immediate family separation. Research by Spencer and Charsley (2021) suggests that restrictive immigration policies can have intergenerational effects, impacting children's educational attainment, mental health, and future economic prospects. The study argues that by undermining family stability and children's rights, the UK risks creating a 'lost generation' of children who are unable to reach their full potential due to the adverse effects of immigration policies. Moreover, the economic impact of these laws cannot be overlooked. A report by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) (2023) highlights that family migration contributes significantly to the UK economy, both through direct economic contributions and by supporting the labour market. By restricting family migration, the new laws may inadvertently harm the UK's economic growth and social cohesion. Moreover, they face the additional challenge of managing both domestic responsibilities and the high cost of living in the UK. Consequently, productivity and concentration at work may be impaired. Furthermore, extended periods of separation might result in divorce and permanent family estrangement, as long-distance relationships often encounter difficulties stemming from communication breakdowns and mutual suspicion and mistrust.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis provided above, it is increasingly evident that the recently instituted immigration laws are inflicting detrimental consequences on family units, particularly affecting the stability, existence, and welfare rights of children. The imposition of excessively stringent and financially prohibitive visa requirements for dependents represents a significant infringement upon the fundamental rights to family integrity and continuity, which are enshrined in both domestic legislation and international human rights instruments. Such policies not only contravene established norms regarding family life but also jeopardise the developmental opportunities and overall well-being of children. Moreover, the causal relationship between these immigration laws and the unintended promotion of familial separation underscores the need for a critical reassessment of their implications. These regulations project an image of insensitivity, prioritising profit motives over the protection of family units and the rights of workers. The resultant paradigm appears more aligned with economic exploitation than with fostering a secure environment for children and families. Therefore, it is imperative that policymakers undertake an urgent and thorough review of these immigration policies. A reformative approach is essential to safeguard familial structures, preserve vital relational bonds, and ensure the rights and welfare of children are upheld. The risks associated with the continued enforcement of these laws may lead to irrevocable disruptions in family dynamics, ultimately compromising not only the immediate welfare of affected individuals but also the broader societal fabric dependent on healthy, stable family units. Failure to act decisively in this regard could perpetuate a

cycle of disadvantage for children and families, undermining their fundamental rights and overall quality of life.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

To address the complex ramifications and policy challenges embedded in the UK's immigration laws, several ideas might be proposed for careful consideration. These recommendations aim to achieve more favourable, unified, and enhanced policy outcomes that prioritise the rights of workers, maintain consistency, uphold child rights, promote sustainability, and support those in poverty.

- The UK Home Office should seek to review again and align its immigration law with the dictates of international and family law; that is, the immigration laws should be modelled within the parameters of human rights and pro-worker sensitivity. This could be possible through consulting the UNHR (1948), ECHR (1998) and more importantly, Section 1, Children Act (1989) that emphasises the need for well-informed decision-making of the 'welfare checklist'.
- The Home Office should also model these laws with higher sensitivity to child-rights friendliness through recognising the 'best interest of the child' principle for improved plight of children in need of reunion with their parents. This principle should take primary consideration in all immigration process and proceedings as provided in the UNCRC and other local legislative policies applicable in the UK particularly Section 1, Children Act (1989).
- Immigration laws with regards to family life and existence would consciously require acknowledgement and recognition of diversity of family forms in this contemporary world; that is, step-mothered and step-fathered family units, extended family units and cohabitation units among others should also be harmonised by family law for improved plight of skilled workers who wish to reunite with their family loved ones.
- There is need for inter and multi-agency consultations for collective, sustainable, pro-worker, human-rights sensitive and robust immigration policy framework development that will benefit all.
- The Government to review and harmonise that dependents are, or are not qualified to enter and reside in the UK across the pathways of immigration as it also transparently establishes the reasons for any differences.

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