

**WOMEN LABOR MIGRATION, REMITTANCES, AND GENDER  
TRANSFORMATION IN POKHARA, NEPAL**

**A Dissertation**

Submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of  
Tribhuvan University for the Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

in

**SOCIOLOGY**

**Submitted by:**

**ANCHALA CHAUDHARY**

T.U. Reg. No.: 6-2-38-1342-2005

Tribhuvan University

Kathmandu, Nepal

July 2024

## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

We certify that this dissertation entitled “**Women Labor Migration, Remittances, and Gender Transformation in Pokhara, Nepal**” was prepared by Ms. AnchalaChaudhary under our supervision and guidance. This Dissertation is hereby recommended for the final examination of the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University to meet the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.

---

Supervisor

Professor Dr. BiswoKallyanParajuli

Date: 2024/..../....

---

Co-Supervisor

Professor Dr. Youba Raj Luintel

Date: 2024/..../.....

**APPROVAL LETTER**

This Dissertation entitled “**Women Labor Migration, Remittances, and Gender Transformation in Pokhara, Nepal**” was submitted by AnchalaChaudhary for final examination to the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology. I, hereby, certify that the Research Committee of the Faculty has found this dissertation satisfactory in scope and quality and has therefore accepted for the degree.

.....

.....

Dean and Chairperson

Research Committee

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Ph.D. dissertation “**Women Labor Migration, Remittances, and Gender Transformation in Pokhara, Nepal**” is a completely novel effort and contains no resources previously published except those cited. The results presented in this dissertation have not ever been presented or submitted anywhere else for the award of any degree or any other purposes. Acknowledgments have been made to all authors and sources whose ideas and information have been used. I am solely responsible if any evidence is found against my declaration.

AnchalaChaudhary

Date: 2024/ /

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I am extremely grateful to all the people whose advice and encouragement have been instrumental to bringing this work to fruition. Firstly, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my supervisor Professor Dr. Biswo Kallyan Parajuli for his unwavering guidance and support has encourage me to explore different ways of understanding women labor migration and gender relations. I am particularly grateful to you for understanding all my personal and professional problems; and all your encouragement made me become sociologist. I also want to thank my co-supervisor Professor Dr. Youba Raj Luintel for his incredible support and direction to complete this research work. I also owe enormous gratitude to all external examiners: Professor Dr. Kailash Nath Pyakurel, Professor Dr. Menuka K.C., Ass. Prof. Dr. Tika Ram Gautam, Ass. Prof. Dr. Sukraraj Adhikari for their insightful feedback and comments on my work. Their advice has been very helpful in clarifying my ideas and strengthening my arguments. I also want to express my immense gratitude to Professor Dr. Ganeshman Gurung, Chancellor of Gandaki University for his continuous support in my academic career. I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Professor Dr. Surendra Mishra and Professor Madhusudan Subedi for their insightful support in my academic career. I'd also like to thank all of the members of the research committee for their valuable and essential advice in my thesis.

Furthermore, I am deeply indebted to all of the respondents to complete this research work. I am grateful to all those individuals who trusted me to share migration experiences, including joys, losses, and challenges. Their kind approach and eagerness to engage inspired me to collect trustworthy data in an intelligent manner. Additionally, I would like to thank Mrs. Sharda Parajuli for her unbounded helps and support in Pokhara. I also appreciate the invaluable support and expertise provide by

Mr. Kanchan Mani Dixit for his diligent language editing. I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science at Tribhuvan University for granting approval to undertake this research endeavor.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone in my family who has stood by me. Of them all, my mother and father had long dreamed of completing my PhD. that pushed me to this day. I must mention my daughter Shreya and son Shreyansh, who simply understand what their mother has been doing. Last, but not least, I must thank my husband, ShreedharPokhrel, for his boundless commitment during the journey. It was not easy for him to look after the two small children and do household tasks while I was doing fieldwork and engaging in the writing process. By putting my theories on migration, households, family, and gender into practice, he managed everything perfectly and assured me that things were on their own way. And all his strong academic support in fieldwork and the writing process made my PhD journey easy and on the right track. I do not have enough words to express my gratitude to him, but I can only say that without him, this Ph.D. would be a dream for me.

## ABSTRACT

The study has investigated and analyzed the effects of the global capitalist market, particularly women's labor migration, on gender transformation. It has been shown by many previous studies that women's labor migration has multifaceted effects on the economic, educational, health, and social development of the families left behind. The Nepali government, on the one hand, discourages female labor migration due to the rise in physical assault in foreign lands; on the other hand, the patriarchal ideologies attached to gender limit women's participation in the public sphere and decrease their empowerment ratio. This study has been carried out among the slum community in Pokhara, Nepal, to investigate the reconstruction of traditional gender practices due to the accumulation of various capitals in transnational space.

In Nepal, there have been increasing trends of women's labor migration in the last ten years, i.e., from 8595 in 2008/2009 to 20578 in 2018/2019, as per the Nepal Labor Migration Report 2020. The mobility of women's migration doesn't only boost national income but also increases family income. Thus, women's labor migration has multifaceted effects on the families left behind as well as on national GDP growth. The study has been guided by Marxian theory, structuration theory, and feminist standpoint theory, which explain the role of migration and remittances in the social construction of gender roles. Gender as a global and continuing socio-cultural process can be changed by the economic, social, symbolic, and cultural capital that migrants acquire in transnational space. Marx agrees that change in the breadwinner role of women not only emancipates women from patriarchal practices but also empowers them. Migration is the process of structuration in which macro- and microstructures interact with one another to affect social actors' agency, which in turn affects the

structures. Data from secondary and primary sources, i.e., the field survey, was used to support these arguments. A total of 198 households of women who had migrated at least three years before the survey were selected for the study. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used.

The findings revealed a changing scenario of gender transformation in all three types of households: pre-migration, during migration, and post-migration. During migration and post-migration, migrant women became the key breadwinners of the family and became part of the decision-making process. In the pre-migration period, these women were bound by traditional patriarchal roles. In post-migration households, many women have to pass through readjustment problems, both in families and communities. The long-term physical absence of women from home raises a subject of dignity, leading to mental suffering. Either these women knock on the door of the next migration or they are involved in some type of income-generation activity. The new power and attitudes gained through migration are one dimension of gender transformation. The underlying household structure has been modified, with women as breadwinners and other family members, especially men, becoming supportive hands for her. In addition, the social organization of a household's relationships, tasks, and responsibilities has changed, with women and girls proving themselves as resource providers. This is a watershed moment in gender transformation, manifested in various forms in the everyday private orbit of life. Women as breadwinners of the family replace the traditional patriarchal norms and values and become the central pillar of development. Thus, this study focuses on changing traditional gender roles and responsibilities in transnational space in relations with various forms of capital formation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>APPROVAL LETTER</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>ACRONYMS</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background of the Study	1
1.2 A Brief History of Migration in Nepal	6
1.3 Migration Patterns	9
1.4 Migration by Gender	10
1.5 Countries of Destination	14
1.6 The Impact of Social, Cultural, and Economic Capital in Nepal	19
1.7 The Hidden Impact of Female Migration on Families Left Behind	22
1.8 Statement of Problems	29
1.9 Research Questions	33
1.10 Objectives of the Study	34
1.11 Importance of the Research	35
1.12 Chapter Outline	37
1.13 Conclusion	38
<b>CHAPTER II: TOWARDS AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: MIGRATION, REMITTANCES AND GENDER</b>	<b>41</b>

2.1	Introduction	41
2.2	Social Change	42
2.3	Patriarchal Gender Roles	44
2.3.1	Marxism in Relation with Capitalist Patriarchy	45
2.4	Gender	48
2.5	Gender Roles	50
2.6	Theories Related to Migration	52
2.6.1	Economic Theories	52
2.6.2	Structuralist/Dependency Theory	53
2.6.3	Transnationalism, Social Networks, and Structuration	54
2.6.4	Structure and Agency in Migration Theory	59
2.7	Remittances	60
2.8	The Absence of Gender in Mainstream Migration Theories	62
2.9	Can Migration be Used to Reshape Gender Roles?	64
2.10	Interplay of Migration, Remittances and Gender	68
2.11	Analytical Model	71
2.12	Conclusion	73
	<b>CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>74</b>
3.1	Introduction	74
3.2	Methodological Considerations	74
3.3	Ontological and Epistemological Concerns	74
3.4	Reflexivity in Research	75
3.5	Description of the Field Work	79
3.6	Research Procedures	81
3.7	Sampling Technique	84
3.8	Sample	85
3.9	Research Methods	88

3.9.1 In-depth Interview	88
3.9.2 Case Study	89
3.9.3 Survey Questions	90
3.10 Pilot Study	91
3.11 Field Notes	91
3.12 Ethics	92
3.13 Data Handling	93
3.14 Data Analysis	93
3.15 Limitations of the Study	95
3.16 Conclusion	96
<b>CHAPTER IV: SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC SETTING OF SLUM</b>	
<b>COMMUNITY</b>	<b>97</b>
4.1 Introduction	97
4.2 The Slum Community of Pokhara	97
4.3 Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents	100
4.3.1 The Household	101
4.3.2 Research Participants/Respondents	103
4.3.3 Religion and Ethnicity Composition	106
4.3.4 Education Level of the Respondents and Migrants	108
4.3.5 Marital Status	110
4.3.6 Respondent's Relationship to Migrants and Decision for Foreign Migration	111
4.3.7 Destination of Migrants and the Reasons	113
4.3.8 Types of Family and House Ownership	115
4.4 Mode of Communication	115
4.5 Remittances and their Various Aspects	117
4.6 Households' Responsibilities and Decision-making Process	118
4.7 Motives for Women's Migration	119

4.8	Conclusion	123
<b>CHAPTER V: HOUSEHOLDS FORMATION AND GENDER PRACTICES</b>		<b>125</b>
5.1	Introduction	125
5.2	The Status of Women in Nepal	126
5.3	Household Formation and Migration	132
5.3.1	Ownership and Decision-Making Process	133
5.3.2	Roles and Responsibilities in Household Domains	146
5.3.3	Substitution of Migrants in Transnational Space	151
5.3.4	Trust and Obligation over the Relationship	157
5.3.5	Involvement of Migrants in Household Activities	160
5.3.6	Conjugal Relationships in Transnational Space	164
5.3.8	The Communication Process in the Household's Management	167
5.3.9	Mother as a First Choice: Alternative Manager in Household Affairs	171
5.4.	Conclusion	180
<b>CHAPTER VI : POWER STRUCTURES AND IDEOLOGIES IN POST-MIGRATION HOUSEHOLDS</b>		<b>181</b>
6.1	Introduction	181
6.2	Challenges and Opportunities for Reintegration in Post-Migration	182
6.2.1	Opportunities Acquired by Returned Workers	183
6.2.2	Access to Education	186
6.2.3	Freedom of Mobility	187
6.2.4	Decision-Making Power	189
6.2.5	Financial Independence	191
6.2.6	Living Standards and Uses of Assets	192
6.3	Challenges for Reintegration in Post-migration Households	193
6.4	Migrants' Association in the Post-Migration Period	198

6.5	Gendered Relations and Household Organization	206
6.5.1	Alternation in Post-migration Households' Domains	207
6.5.2	Returnees' Role in the Decision-Making Process	211
6.6	Conclusion	214
<b>CHAPTER VII: ROLE OF REMITTANCES IN RECONFIGURING GENDER PRACTICES</b>		<b>216</b>
7.1	Introduction	216
7.1	Proxy Manager in Remittance Management	217
7.2	Remittances, Household Expenditure and Coping Strategies	223
7.4	Socio-cultural Influences on Gender Roles	229
7.5	Conclusion	235
<b>CHAPTER VIII: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION</b>		<b>236</b>
8.1	Introduction	236
8.2	The Role of Actors in Household Formation	237
8.3	The Role of Capital in Gender Transformation	238
8.4	The Organization of Pre and Post Households Gender Relationship	240
8.5	Restructuring the New Order in Households	243
8.6	Theoretical Implication	245
<b>APPENDICES</b>		<b>250</b>
	Appendix-I: Case Studies	250
	Appendix II: Questionnaire for HHs Survey	259
	Appendix III Questionnaire to Returnee	268
	Appendix IV: Checklist for Focus Group Discussion	269
<b>REFERENCES</b>		<b>270</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1	Women Migrant Workers Renewing Labor Approvals (by country of destination)	17
Table 4.1	Age and sex of the respondents	104
Table 4.2	Marital status and age of migrants	105
Table 4.3	Religion and ethnicity	107
Table 4.4	The education level of the respondents	109
Table 4.5	Education of the migrants	110
Table 4.6	Marital status of the migrants	111
Table 4.7	Decision-making process in the migration process	112
Table 4.8	Means and frequency of communication	116
Table 4.9	Migrants marital status and decision makers for migration	122
Table 5.1	Education and Decision-making for migration	134
Table 5.2	Chi-square Test for Education and Decision-making	135
Table 5.3	Migrants' Marital status and decision making for migration	136
Table 5.4	Chi-Square Tests for marital status and migration	137
Table 5.5	Relationship to migrant and decision-making process	137
Table 5.6	Chi-square Test for Migrants and Decision Making	138
Table 5.7	Saving and decision-making	139
Table 5.8	Chi-square test for saving and decision making	140
Table 5.9	Types of family and decision-making process	141
Table 5.10	Chi-square test for decision-making process and types of family	141
Table 5.11	House ownership and decision-making process	142
Table 5.12	Chi-square test for house ownership and decision making	143
Table 5.13	Relationship to migrants and changing roles in Households	147

Table 5.14	Means of communication used by Migrants	168
Table 5.15	Marital status and Remittance	172
Table 5.16	Marital Status and Remittances	178
Table 7.1	Chi-Square Tests for migrants' relationship to remittance receivers	220
Table 7.2	Chi-Square Tests for prominent sectors of remittance expenses	223
Table 7.3	Strategy mechanism for handling everyday problems	225
Table 7.4	Chi-Square Tests: Decision maker's relationship to migrants	228
Table 7.5	Chi-Square Tests for uses of communication in everyday life	231
Table 7.6	Means of communication	233

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	New Labor Approvals Issued	9
Figure 1.2	New and Renewed Labor Approvals Issued	10
Figure 1.3	Migrant Workers (2019/20–2021/22) (by age and sex)	11
Figure 1.4	New Labor Approvals Issued (by emerging countries of destination)	16
Figure 1.5	New Labor Approvals Issued to Women (by province)	18
Figure 1.6	Remittance received in Nepal (in billion NPR)	19
Figure 2.1	Conceptual Framework of Women's Labor Migration and Gender Changes	72
Bar Chart 4.1	Place for migration and reasons for migration	114
Bar Chart: 5.1	Daily Activities Performer and relationship to migrants	148
Bar Chart 5.2:	Types of family and remittances receiver	163
Bar Chart 5.3	Marital status of migrants	179
Bar Chart 7.1	Ownership of Migrants Over Remittances	218
Bar Chart 7.2	Remittance Receiver and Relationship to Migrants	219
Bar Chart 7.4	Decision-making process and relationship to migrants	227

**ACRONYMS**

DFID	:	Department for International Development
DoFE	:	Department of Foreign Employment
FDI	:	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	:	Gross Development Products
GNI	:	Gross National Income
HHs	:	Households
ILO	:	International Labor Organization
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organization
NHRC	:	National Human Rights Commission
NLSS	:	Nepal Living Standard Survey
NPC	:	National Planning Commission
NRB	:	Nepal Rastra Bank
NRS	:	Nepalese Rupees
ODA	:	Official Development Assistance
SSSA	:	SukumbasiSamashyaSamadhanAayog

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

More people are moving around the world than ever before, which has assisted in the accumulation of social, cultural, symbolic, and economic capital<sup>1</sup>. About 3.4% of the world's population (or 258 million individuals) reside in a nation other than their place of origin (IOM, 2020). They support their families left behind by sending forms of capital by selling their physical labor and intellectual minds in foreign lands. Migrants frequently maintain strong contact with their relatives and transfer ideas, behavior, identities, social capital, and knowledge that migrants acquire during their residence in another part of the country or abroad (Levitt, 1998). In a similar vein, migrants send their income back to their home countries. Since 2015, apart from China, remittances have been the main source of foreign financial flows to low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) (Ratha, 2023). Remittances to LMICs have exceeded the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) for over ten years, and in 2023 they surpassed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows to low-income countries by more than USD 250 billion, even though remittances are private funds and cannot consequently replace public spending (ibid). Therefore, migration played a crucial role in population change and the diversification of livelihoods in many developing nations for at least the past century (Agesa&Agesa, 1999).<sup>2</sup>

Due to conflict in the home country and global economic, political, and cultural development, migration patterns have persisted throughout history in various forms. Castles and Miller (2003) have identified several tendencies regarding migration in

---

<sup>1</sup> Capital: In this research capital refers to remittances earned by labor migrants working abroad.

<sup>2</sup> Migration: Migration refers to seasonal or temporal labor work in abroad.

their book, "The Age of Migration." First, as more nations participate in migratory movements, one can speak about the globalization of migration. Second, while movement speeds are accelerating, migration is accelerating. Third, various people migrate for different reasons, which makes migration different. The fourth is the feminization of migration, which has increased the number of women who migrate for economic reasons. Fifth, the migration issue is becoming more politicized as governments work more to control migration flows by implementing laws (ibid).

Gender is one of the most significant elements influencing migration.<sup>3</sup>

According to Deshingkar and Grimm (2005), young men make up the majority of migrants. However, a smaller but growing proportion of women are following the migration trend (Chant & Radcliffe, 1992). However, the ratio of men to women in the migration pattern varies by region. For instance, although young adult males are primarily those who migrate to sub-Saharan Africa, young adult females are primarily those who migrate to the Philippines (Zhao, 2003). These women move to urban areas as independent workers in search of employment, primarily in the unorganized sector (ibid). Men and women experience migration in different ways, and a large part of the disparities can be attributed to the roles, behaviors, and interpersonal interactions that society assigns and expects of a man or a woman in both the place of origin and destination (Oppong, 1983). Most women in developing nations experience socioeconomic challenges because they have limited access to money and natural resources like land and capital (Fernandez-Kelly, 1981, p. 57). When women migrate

---

<sup>3</sup> Gender: In this research gender has been defined as the difference roles and responsibilities performed by men and women in their respective societies.

themselves or receive remittances, women become more powerful in terms of resources and making household decisions.<sup>4</sup>

Men and women play a significant role in transnational space as they are agents of change makers in host and home countries. These migrants are responsible for taking care of families left behind by sending various forms of capital by selling their labor in the international market. A discussion about gender and its roles in the new paradigm is being opened by an increasing number of female migrants alongside male migrants. Migration has changed the roles and responsibilities of men and women. In areas with little to no discrimination, women easily took the tasks and responsibilities of male members. In some societies, when males migrate, the women left behind appear to relish their freedom and improved access to and control over home resources in the absence of their spouse (Acosta, 2006). Such adjustments may eventually lessen the gender wage gap and contribute to a reduction in gender inequality. However, in cultures with stricter gender norms and without a partner, women's actions are the subject of social scrutiny. To maintain their reputation as "nice spouses," women may seek to reduce their appearances in public (McEvoy et al., 2012). Decades ago, the experience of Nepalese women fell into the second category who are watched over by the community people when their husbands are away. Today, however, this trend is reversing, and women are free to migrate and conduct household tasks as well as outside activities without difficulty (Chaudhary, 2015). This study focused on the evolving gender roles in families in the wake of global societal change. In particular, it will add to the conversation about migration and the social construction of gender.

---

<sup>4</sup> Resources: in this research, resources are defined as money and the land.

Migration has altered the composition of household formation and household members' roles in terms of power and labor. In a nuclear family, the wife is the de facto head, oversees all childcare and domestic duties, and takes on additional financial obligations. Therefore, while these changes would give women more autonomy and bargaining power at home, they might also make women's lives stressful with the potential of facing new obstacles in addition to being migrant spouses and single moms in a patriarchal society (Haas & Van Rooij, 2010). Women who live in large families lose their independence and must live under the authority of their in-laws or other senior family members. In addition, women who live in extended families lose their status and influence within the family and constantly find it difficult to express their thoughts due to living under the authority of their in-laws or other senior household members (Desai & Banerjee, 2008). Additionally, when men migrate, women experience more independence and relief, especially in circumstances where their husbands may have been violent or demanding.

Understanding women's experiences during men's migration depends on recognizing power imbalances among family members based on factors including age, sex, education, and employment level, as well as gendered social norms. While some women would have more negotiating power and access to resources, others might be under more stress due to growing responsibility and physical mobility restrictions. A woman who is the head of the household and receives remittances may have a very different experience than a woman who lives with an extended family and receives remittances from her in-laws. Women in Pakistan, for instance, who were left in charge of senior (typically male) household members and had little access to remittances, experienced higher levels of stress than women in Egypt and Turkey, where women had more autonomy and better access to financial resources while their

husbands were away (Palmer, 1985). This shows that a key to understanding the effects of migration can be found in the socioeconomic and cultural norms that are unique to a given location.

Similarly, when women migrate, the husband's status is diminished. Studies have demonstrated that women migration might lead to their husbands bearing the home responsibilities by handling daily tasks like cooking and cleaning (George, 2000). These alterations are causing a new phenomenon known as the "huswife" or "house band" to house band; these changes have profound effects and put into question the core tenets of conventional gender roles and obligations, particularly the relationship between power structures within the domain of the household (Lan, 2006).<sup>5</sup> For instance, Mexican Home Town Associations in the US offer degraded homes as an alternative location for the household's lost power (Goldring, 2003). Task sharing in the households of migrant returns is more gender equitable than in families without migrants according to a study done in Greece among repatriated German women contract workers (Sakka et al., 1999). This study concludes that this scenario is influenced by both economic independence and the acculturation process in the host country.

This study focuses on migration and a patriarchal social structure in research. Both labor and educational migration have become an integral part for formation of Nepali society and culture (IOM, 2019). As per the initial results of the 2021 Census, there are about 2.1 million Nepali nationals residing outside the nation, signifying 7.4% of the total population (CBS, 2022). Men make up 81.3 percent (or 1.8 million) of this migrant group and the remaining are women. Thus, migration is one of the key

---

<sup>5</sup>Huswife: Men contribution to households' affair is very limited. Particularly, after women migration, husbands are more responsible to take care of households activities along with their own tasks.

features of the country's current economy and social structure. For example, in 2021, the receipt of USD 8.2 billion (ca. NPR 1.06 trillion) as remittances equaled 23.8 percent of Nepal's GDP (the tenth highest globally on that score) (Ratha et. al., 2022).

Over the past three decades, there has been a significant increase in labor migration of Nepali citizens due to multiple factors such as poverty, a lack of employment opportunities at home, conflict and other social, environmental, and political factors, as well as the demand for both skilled and low-skilled migrant workers from host countries. In the case of women migrants, the existing social and cultural circumstances fueled by patriarchal social norms, gender inequality, the stigma surrounding women's work and mobility, and escape from violence, including sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) from husbands and others in the family are the major causes for their migration (McCarthy, 2021). Thus, migration has created both opportunities and challenges for both migrants and non-migrants nevertheless, a strong impact is seen like gender transformation. This research was envisioned because of the strong presence of gender discrimination in the nation's socioeconomic sectors, the increasing migration trend, and the reconstruction of gender roles.

## **1.2 A Brief History of Migration in Nepal**

It is difficult for academics, researchers, and development professionals to pinpoint the precise date and location of the first Nepalese historical movement. As politics and the environment changed, the migration patterns of Nepalese also changed. The military-based migration was driven by the Anglo-British War (1813–1815), and the seasonal migration in the Darjeeling, India tea estate was driven by the advent of democracy in 1951. After the 1970s, the Middle Eastern oil boom played a part in the influx of unskilled and semi-skilled labor. Similarly, during the Maoist insurgency, migration to other nations was acknowledged as migration caused by a

conflict (1996–2006). People are moving in pursuit of a better quality of life and job opportunities. The first recorded travel to and from Nepal was during the Trans-Himalayan commerce between India, Nepal, Tibet, and China, dating back to 500 BCE (Sijapati&Limbu, 2012). Many people, including Tibeto-Burman, came to Nepal between the fifth and tenth centuries. Similarly, Indo-Aryan people, particularly Brahmins and Kshatriyas, came to Nepal between the ninth and thirteenth centuries (Adhikari&Gurung, 2009). Following the Nepal-British India conflict, formal labor migration began in 1814–1816. After the war was over and the Treaty of Sugauli was signed in 1816, 4,650 young men from Nepal were enlisted in the British military as a British-Gurkha regiment (Khnaduri, 1997). In the latter half of the 19th century, Nepalese migrated for employment in the Darjeeling tea estates and the Assam jungle in India (New Era, 1981). The 1950 Nepal-India Treaty of Peace and Friendship exempted requirements for formalities like passports and visas when traveling between the two nations. Later, the British extended travel permission to the northeast and northwest, such as Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore (Upreti, 2002).

The Nepali migrants spread to other countries during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including Bhutan, Burma, Malaysia (formerly Malaya), Thailand, Bangladesh, and Tibet. People with experience growing rubber, sugar, and palm trees on plantations moved to Malaysia, while those who worked for purposes moved to Bangkok (Kanskar, 2005). The oil boom in the early 1970s encouraged economic migration to the Middle East from South Asia and other regions, including Nepal (Nath, 2006). The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw many Nepali migrants to Burma for agriculture, dairy farming, trading, and other economic activities. In the late 19th century, Nepalese migrated to Bhutan to farm in the country's unoccupied southern portion (Sijapati&Limbu, 2012).

The shift in migration trends to countries outside India after 1981 and the creation of the first Foreign Employment Act in 1985 upheld the government's liberal stance on international migration. For Nepal, global labor migration is a relatively recent phenomenon with a 30-year history, primarily in the Gulf States, Malaysia, and other Southeast Asian nations. Unexpectedly, the development of foreign labor migration has led to a transition in Nepal's agriculturally-based economy toward a remittance-based economy (DoFE, 2014).

Every year, more Nepali workers leave their homes searching for opportunities abroad. According to an official statistic report published by MoLE (2014), 527,814 Nepali citizens—men and women combined—left the nation in the fiscal year 2013–2014, which ended in mid-July. Comparing this data to the previous fiscal years, it is up 16.4%. (ibid). This data, however, does not include migrants seeking overseas employment illegally. The patriarchal nature of Nepalese society imposed by sexual division of labor, gender inequality, and stigma surrounding certain women's work and mobility, and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) from husbands and others in the family are the major causes for women migration. Similarly, an increase in the demand for female labor in international migration today are dominating factor for women's migration. This form of international employment also empowers women to think freely, contribute to home finances, and increase the country's GDP (Sijapati&Limbu, 2012). Although the statistics indicate that men mostly migrate for work, during the past 20 years, the number of female migrants from Nepal has climbed by 5%. In 2018-19, a decline in the number of male migrant employees led to an increase in the share of female migrant workers to about 8.5%. The report published by MOLESS (2020), showed that the ratio of women labor migrants will be

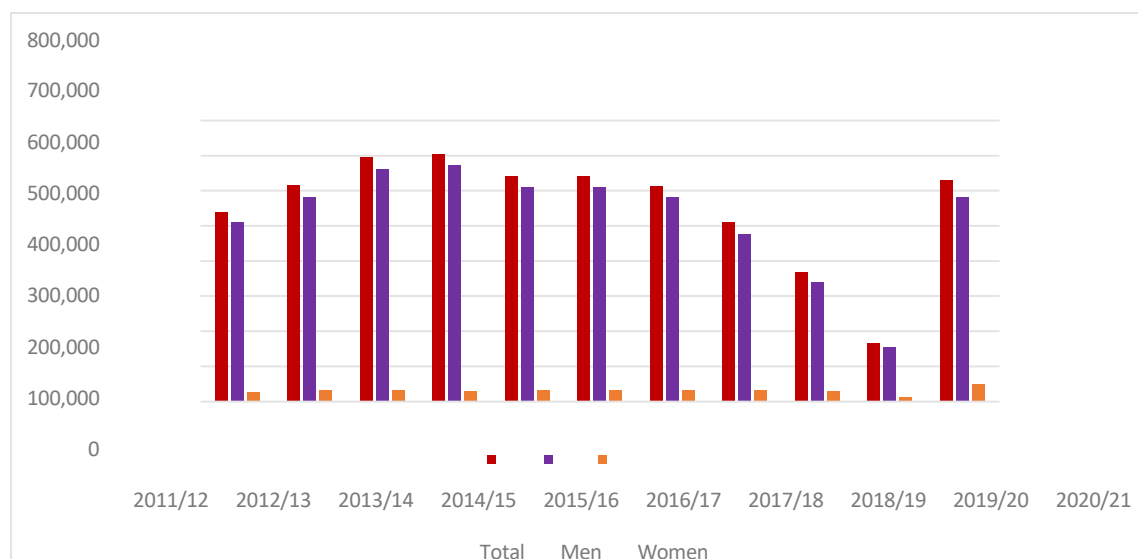
increased by eliminating vulnerabilities, including excessive working hours, physical abuse, and economic exploitation international labor market.

### 1.3 Migration Patterns

The annual number of labor migrants increased from 3,605 to 106,660 between 1993/94 and 2003/04, according to data from the Department of Foreign Employment, and it reached 527,814 by 2013/14. Between 2008/09 and 2021/22, more than 4.7 million new labor approvals were issued to Nepali migrants wanting to work abroad. These numbers increased consistently, reaching a peak in 2013/14, when more than half a million new approvals were issued (Figure 1.1).

**Figure 1.1**

New Labor Approvals Issued

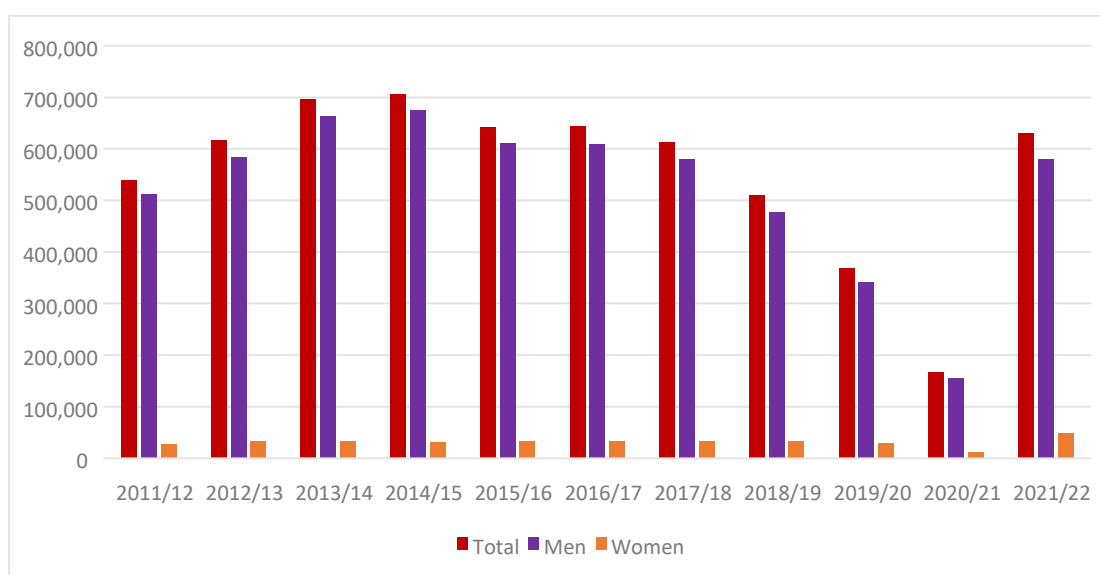


The number of workers requesting additional approvals decreased in the years that followed. On the whole, however, the annual range of 500,000–600,000 for labor approvals received by workers remained roughly comparable (Figure 1.2). This is due to the fact that, starting in 2011, the government permitted workers who wished to return to their place of employment and job after their approvals expired to do so by

renewing their approvals, as opposed to giving them new ones. Due to this, the migrant workers were able to sign up for the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund and insurance during their extended contract time. Since 2011–12, almost 1.8 million migrant workers have extended their labor permits, demonstrating the desire of Nepali migrant workers to carry on working overseas.

**Figure 1.2**

#### New and Renewed Labor Approvals Issued



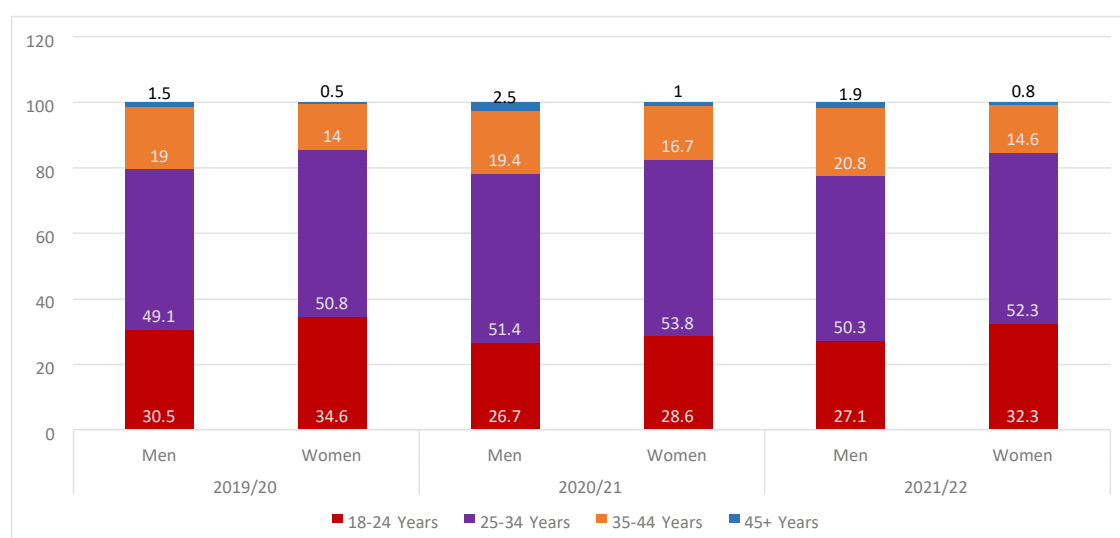
#### 1.4 Migration by Gender

Labor migration is a phenomenon dominated by men with women accounting for less than 6 per cent of the total number of new labor approvals issued between 2008/09 and 2021/22. However, perhaps indicating what the trend is likely to be in the future, in the three years, 2019/20–2021/22, the proportion of women has consistently been close to 10 per cent. That, of course, does not take into account a significant number of migrant workers who would have migrated through irregular channels and thus remain undocumented. As a result, a substantial proportion of migrant workers, particularly women migrant workers, are not included in the

Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) data.<sup>6</sup> Nearly all migrant workers from Nepal are young adults and from the economically most productive age group of 18 to 44 with half between the ages of 25 and 34 years in the three reference years. The median age of migrant workers was just 28.

**Figure 1.3**

Migrant Workers (2019/20–2021/22) (by age and sex)



Many men and women travel through unofficial channels, especially through India; therefore, this figure may vary. The above figure showed that an increase in female migrants increases among age group of 18 to 24 while there has been drastic decrease of women migrant age group of 35 to 44 in the year 2021/22. Nevertheless, the figure showed that labor migration is still primarily dominated by men, showing disparities in labor migration from Nepal based on gender (MoLESS, 2022).<sup>7</sup> The reasons behind the disparity can be found in the patriarchal nature of Nepalese

<sup>6</sup> The data provided by the DoFE is the only 'authentic' data on labor migration in Nepal. However, these figures indicate only the number of documented labor permits taken by migrants who use legal channels to migrate to destinations beyond India.

<sup>7</sup> Note again that the figure only includes migrants who have taken government permit to migrate. Since it is suspected that a lot of women migrate through irregular channels and through India, the numbers here could be huge underestimates of the actual number.

society, where males are still viewed as the primary breadwinners and migrate to earn a living while women are restricted to caring for their families and handling household tasks, contributes to the low participation of women in overseas employment.<sup>8</sup> Since women are seen to be more vulnerable to the risk of sexual assault abroad, the government regularly regulates their emigration. Employers have abused migrant workers from Nepal and engaged in fraudulent employment contracts, as well as an exploitative recruitment process. In many of the countries where they are employed, migrant workers who are women are particularly susceptible to abuse and violence. Between 2019/20 and 2021/22, the FET received more than 1300 new instances pertaining to this type of fraud, abuse, and exploitation (ibid). For instance, in 2012, women under 30 were temporarily prohibited from moving to the Gulf region, and in 2014, this prohibition was expanded to include women of all ages. Even if the minimum age for migration was lowered to 24 in 2015, most destinations still demand rigorous regulation of women's migration (ILO, 2015). Such laws are inspired by patriarchal ideologies that limit women's bodily movement to "protect" them (Bhadra, 2007). Contrarily, men are not subject to these limitations. As a result, governmental policies have consistently encouraged men to migrate while discouraging women left behind. Additionally, then brokers who mediate labor agreements between migrants and their employers at the destination are hesitant to hire women since they run the risk of being held accountable for any sexual assaults committed against them there (NIDS, 2011). Despite these limitations, the number of women migrating for employment has increased over time, and it is believed that the

---

<sup>8</sup> The formation of Nepalese society is based on patriarchal ideology that men have more power, dominance and privilege than women. In Nepalese society, men hold positions of power in both the public and private spheres, where women holds less privilege position .

government bans have served to stimulate migration through unauthorized means (Clewett, 2015).

Male-dominated migration is a common phenomenon because of the prevalence of the notion of the male breadwinner and female homemaker, cultural limits on women's movement in public spaces, and, in some circumstances, legislative prohibitions. Male-dominated migration is a common phenomenon in most South Asian countries due to the dominance of the paradigm of the male breadwinner and female housewife, cultural limits on women's mobility in public settings, and, in certain cases, government prohibitions. Not in the majority of Asian countries. The need for labor in the destination countries is gendered, with many jobs in West Asia and Southeast Asia, except, as in 2010, roughly half of the labor migrants were female. Between 70 and 80 percent of Sri Lankan labor migrants throughout the 1990s were female. Most of these women work as low-paid domestics on a contract basis at their destination (Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka, 2013). Asia, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and Indonesia have more female migrants than male migrants (Asis & Piper, 2008). The gender gap in migration from South Asia has also been exacerbated by the beginning of male-dominated industries in East Asia, including construction, security, driving, and manufacturing (Piper, 2009). While there is a growing need for women to migrate for domestic work in East Asia and the Middle East, most of these jobs are taken by women from other countries, who have stronger networks of women migrants at the destination and superior abilities to Nepalese women. However, due to a decline in the overall number of male migrant workers, the share of female migrant workers was only about 8.5 percent in 2018–19. Regulation of the domestic work industry, which employs a substantial proportion of women, aims to eliminate vulnerabilities, including long working hours, physical abuse, and

economic exploitation, which may be one of the reasons for the low rate of female out-migration (ILO, 2020).

### **1.5 Countries of Destination**

Migration is a cycle that never ends. People all over the world have started moving abroad in search of work and rely on local networks to get to their destinations as ties to migrants living in destination countries grow and awareness of overseas jobs rises (Casteneda, 2013). Such networks have played a key role in promoting migration from Nepal, as existing and former migrants help newcomers by sharing their knowledge and experiences about the destination, fostering migrant networks, and raising awareness of the procedure and potential of international migration (DoFE, 2015). Migration decisions may be influenced by the desire to retain social standing. Following the 2015 Gorkha earthquake, there has been an upsurge in the trend of international migration, with the major drivers being the need for greater resources to help people rebuild their homes and mitigate catastrophic losses (Bellman, 2015). Although the quake's devastation has increased the demand for construction jobs and development projects within the nation, the government's incapacity to effectively deploy development money and begin the reconstruction process has forced people to go outside (Sijapati et. al., 2015). Status-enhancing modifications in immigrant families, such as constructing a new home or displaying things purchased abroad, may occasionally stimulate additional migration (Adhikari&Hobley, 2015).

With interim restrictions in place for Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, the Government of Nepal has authorized labor migration through recruitment agencies to 111 countries (DoFEn.d.-g). After receiving individual labor clearances, Nepal is are

also permitted to go abroad. The bulk of Nepali migrant workers are hosted by Malaysia and the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Since 2013–14, these seven nations have continuously employed over 80% of Nepali migrant laborers; also, these are the nations from which Nepali laborers are most in demand (MoLESS, 2022).

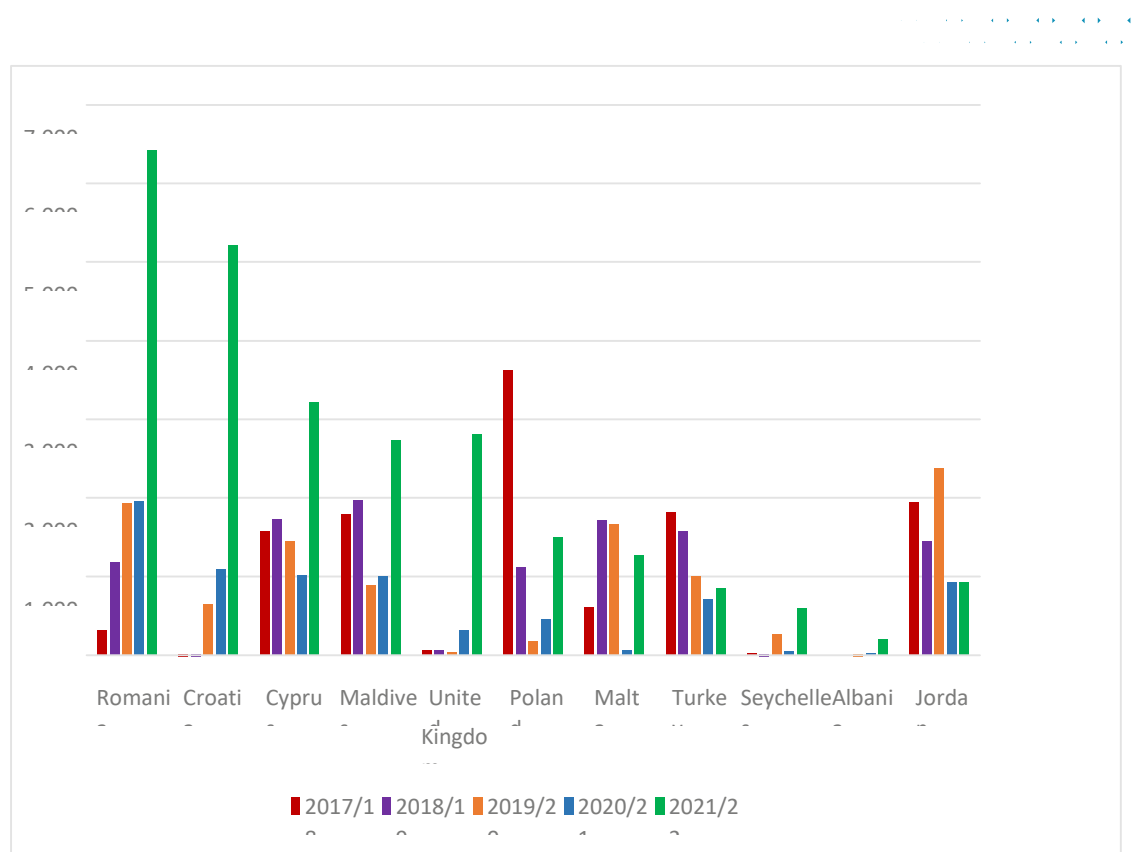
Over time, there has been variability in the quantity of Nepali migrant laborers heading to the GCC nations. The GCC countries received 336,614 new labor approvals in 2015–16, marking a peak for this figure (MoLESS, 2020). As shown in Table 3.2, the number of new approvals for those nations fell to 272,018 in 2016–17 (MoLESS, 2018) and even more in 2017–18 and 2018–19. However, those numbers are deceptive since they don't account for the labor approvals that are renewed for the same locations. By factoring in the latter, the total number of labor approvals in 2017–18 and 2018–19 is raised above the 400,000 mark.

Nepali migrant laborers to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries decreased sharply in 2019–20 and 2020–21, but increased in 2021/22. A 16-month pause in Nepali migration to Kuwait due to the epidemic resulted in a sharp drop in labor permissions for individuals traveling there in 2020–2021 when compared to other GCC countries. More recently, a number of nations have become well-known as destinations for Nepali migrant laborers. These include Cyprus and Turkey in West Asia, as well as Albania, Croatia, Poland, and Romania in Central and Eastern Europe (Figure 1.4). For the Maldives, the total number of labor permissions granted climbed from 2450 in 2017/18 (including 1789 new approvals) to 6591 (including 2735 new

approvals) in 2021/22.<sup>9</sup> There has also been a noticeable rise in the number of Nepali migrant laborers traveling to Jordan and Malta. The policy implemented by DoFE in 2022 to grant individual labor approvals to workers wishing to migrate to nations like Albania, Croatia, Poland, and Romania, among others, may be the reason for these destinations' growing popularity, provided that they provide a self-declaration that both the country and the worker.

**Figure 1.4**

New Labor Approvals Issued (by emerging countries of destination)



The trend for migrant workers differs for men and women in more recent destinations. The reference period's data (2019/20–2021/22) reveals that while the GCC is the primary destination for Nepali women migrant workers, women are more

<sup>9</sup>These include both individual labor approvals and approvals received via recruitment agencies.

likely to travel to Cyprus, Jordan, Turkey, Romania, Croatia, and Malta than men are (Table 1.1). Cyprus and Jordan are predominate destination for women.

Comparatively speaking, less than 1% of male migrant workers traveled to Cyprus in 2019–20, 2020–21, and 2022–22, whereas 7.2%, 12.7%, and 8.6% of women migrant workers did so. The UAE is prominent in the renewal trend for female migrant workers; from 2017–18 to 2021/22, the UAE accounted for over half of the labor approval renewals for female migrant workers. The information also emphasizes how crucial nations like Cyprus are to female migrant workers when choosing their destination.

**Table 1.1**

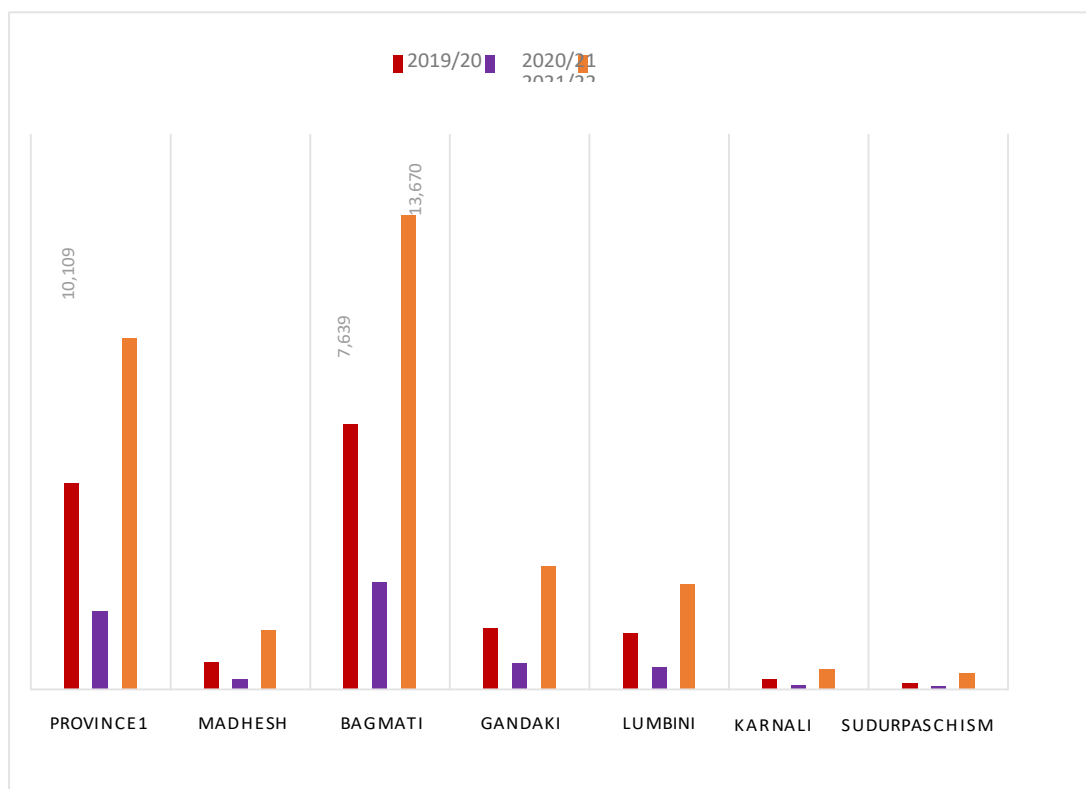
Women Migrant Workers Renewing Labor Approvals (by country of destination)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
UAE	5,562	6,140	5,081	2,724	8,211
Qatar	1,029	1,185	1,180	389	2,790
Kuwait	908	689	1,040	168	1,633
Malaysia	996	1,078	723	12	206
Cyprus	468	576	497	218	826
Saudi Arabia	317	446	375	123	518
Bahrain	290	312	251	135	369
Israel	388	367	230	21	214
Maldives	145	206	160	111	263
Oman	160	144	181	112	263
Other	284	402	509	265	773
Countries					
Total	10,547	11,545	10,227	4,278	16,066

A distinct picture has been created by women's labor migration, with the majority of these workers coming from Bagmati and Province 1 (Figure 1.5). The share of women from Madhesh is only around 4 per cent. This is likely the result of strict gendered norms among Madhesis, less access to socio-economic capital, and feminisation of agricultural work with so many men having migrated (Gupta et. al., 2022).<sup>10</sup> In case of Gandaki Province, the ratio of women labor migration seen increasing in the year 2021/22 and the most popular destination was Saudi Arabia (MoLESS, 2022).

**Figure 1.5**

New Labor Approvals Issued to Women (by province)



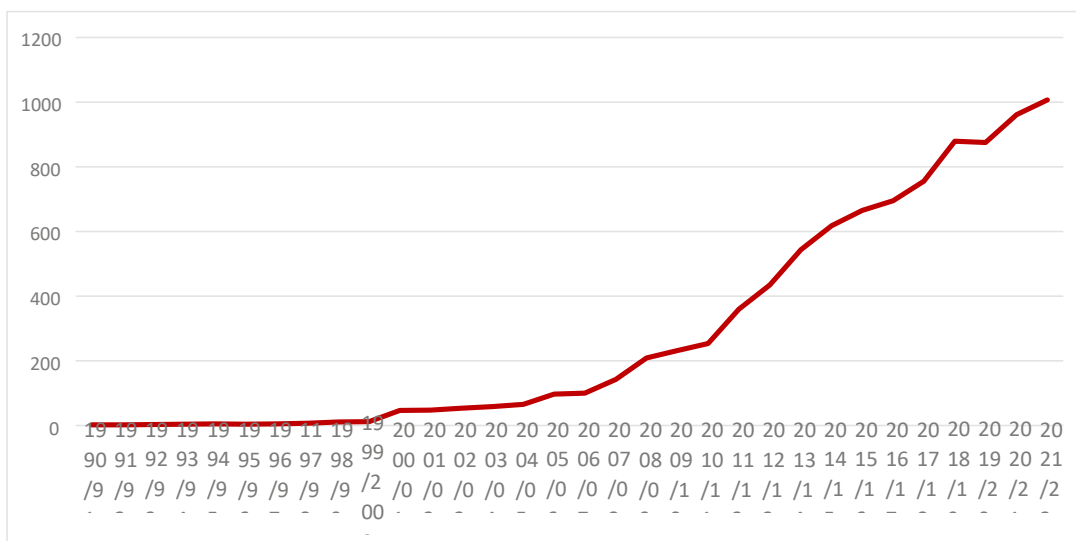
<sup>10</sup> In this research feminization of agriculture refers to the maximum involvement of female workers in agricultural tasks

## 1.6 The Impact of Social, Cultural, and Economic Capital in Nepal

Economic, social, educational, and symbolic effects have been identified as one of the forces bringing about changes in the lives of those left behind during migration. Around 25% of the nation's economic output is made up of foreign remittances. When compared to its GDP, Nepal is the seventh-largest beneficiary of remittances worldwide (World Bank, n.d.-g). Remittances received by Nepal have grown exponentially in tandem with the number of migrant workers leaving the country; from NPR 2.1 billion (about USD 16 million) in 1990/91 to a staggering NPR 961 billion (around USD 7.5 billion) in 2020/21 (NRB n.d.-g) (Figure 1.6). As a result, remittance inflow has maintained its position as one of the pillars of Nepal's economy and is the primary source of the country's foreign exchange reserves. However, remittances as a percentage of Nepal's GDP steadily decreased from 27.6 percent in 2015 to less than 2 percent in 2016, despite continuing to rise in absolute terms.

**Figure 1.6**

Remittance received in Nepal (in billion NPR)



Foreign remittances are received by a large number of households in Nepal. Remittances have helped households access improved housing, health care, education, and nutrition, which has increased consumption levels (NRB, 2020). Remittances substantially helped to lower the percentage of people living in poverty from 42% in 1995 to 25% in 2010, according to the National Statistical Office (CBS, 2012). According to Sharma et. al. (2014), remittances have facilitated capital formation for investment purposes in addition to consumption. However, it has been suggested that the number of anticipated remittances could be larger because there is no one way for migrants to send money back to their home country; instead, they use informal methods like handing over cash or using hundi systems (Seddon et. al., 2002). Both official and illegal routes are used to send money to Nepal. Banks, financial institutions, and domestic and international remittance service providers make up the former group. A Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) report states that banks and other financial institutions receive the remaining 40% of remittances transmitted through formal channels, with remittance service providers (RSPs) receiving 60% of the total (Dahal, 2019). At the moment, 42 RSPs with licenses are in operation in Nepal (NRB n.d.-g.). Regarding banks, money can be sent both inside and outside of Nepal through Class A commercial banks, certain development banks (Class B banks), and other financial organizations (Government of Nepal, 2017).

According to research by NIDS (2011), remittances have increased Nepal's foreign exchange reserves, assisted in maintaining the country's balance of payments, and served as a more reliable source of foreign capital for the economy. Due to migration, it is possible to improve living conditions in one's own country because people's earnings are unaffected by economic ups and downs. The impacts of

migration can be detrimental to the labor market and the dearth of skilled and educated workers in Nepal, therefore they are not always beneficial to persons seeking a better life. Men's migration has resulted in higher wages and labor shortages in sectors like construction and agriculture that particularly depend on male labor (Maharjan et. al., 2013). Furthermore, even though the nation has a high demand for trained workers, a large number of educated and skilled people migrate every day. Increasing numbers of individuals are leaving the country every day in search of better opportunities abroad, while on the one hand, the brain drain brought on by a lack of jobs and opportunities within the country adds to the underdevelopment of the nation (Kharel, 2011). According to Taylor (1999), Nepal's growth and productivity may have been hindered by the outflow of skilled and unskilled labor force, if the value that the migrants would have created back home outweighs the value of the remittances they send. Additionally, because migration is the backbone of Nepal's economy, changes in the labor market in the countries where migrants settle have an impact on the country (ILO, 2010). The 2008 global financial crisis caused many Nepalese workers to lose their employment and return home. Many of those who requested to migrate were unsuccessful in finding work, which made the unemployment problem at home worse (NIDS, 2011). Apart from the aforementioned economic implications, men's migration also has diverse effects on non-economic aspects of everyday life and the socio-cultural setting at the source.<sup>11</sup>

Migrants transmit social and cultural capital as well as financial wealth through their relationships with family. Since they are engaging in a variety of income-generating activities following training in specific disciplines,

---

<sup>11</sup> The families left behind especially, the women are also working outside the home i.e. actively participated in deciding the education and health seeking facilities of the children including some income generation activities.

Chaudhary(2014) claims that women who are left behind are exerting their autonomy both inside and outside of the home. These women had complete responsibility for the children's education and for making decisions about other activities because of their cooperation with migrants who sought to bring them independence. Furthermore, through transmitting knowledge and culture from the destination, social remittances have the potential to change cultural attitudes at home (Levitt, 1998). For example, Hadi (2001) claims that because men are impacted by the customs of their new homes, the migration of men to Bangladesh has resulted in a decline in the practice of dowry. Nevertheless, migrant males, commonly referred to as "gulf boys," demand larger dowries due to their higher family status and potential wages, according to Gulati's (1986) research on India. The remaining portion of this dissertation looks at how gendered migration has affected women's roles in the household and community in Nepal. In order to provide an explanation for conducting this research, I will first discuss the contributions that this study has made and point out the gaps in the literature.

### **1.7 The Hidden Impact of Female Migration on Families Left Behind**

Literature on the impacts of international migration mainly focuses exclusively on household or national economic issues (Boyd & Greico, 2003). The studies focus on the impact of remittances on household well-being, poverty levels, inequality, changes in the labor market, or the country's balance of payments, trade, and growth indicators (Acharya & Leon-Gonzalez, 2012). The labor migration from the Global South to fill shortages in the Global North and the flow of remittances and expertise from the North to the South were positive processes contributing to convergence in economic growth throughout the 1960s (Kindelberger, 1967). Between 1970 and 1980, the academic discourse on migration was associated with

increased inequality in the country of origin, dependence on destination nations, and brain drain (Adams, 1969; Myrdal, 1957). The discourse on migration assumed an optimistic tenor once more in the 1990s, when it was framed as a process of co-development in which the countries of origin and destination could jointly foster growth by establishing networks of knowledge and remittances through labor exchange (Maimbo&Ratha, 2005). This strategy led to the inclusion of a new pillar in the growth of migration theory that fosters a new concept of migration, namely transnational migration, which advocates that even when migrants do not return to their country of origin, they still contribute to its development through diaspora knowledge networks and hometown associations (Castaneda, 2013). Although these theories offer intriguing insights into the macroeconomic effects of migration, they have been criticized for treating it solely as an economic process and ignoring the difficulties posed by the historical, social, and political environment in which the movement takes place (Asis& Piper, 2008). These studies implicitly assume that men are the main migrants and frequently presume that households are stable units with pooled income and a household leader who genuinely wants to enhance the utility of the entire family (Stark & Lucas, 1988). As a result, they do not address disputes within the house caused by changes in the household's structure brought on by some members' migration.

Men and women in households are engaged in conflict over issues, but women generally come out on the short end since they have less negotiating power.<sup>12</sup> Studying migration from a gendered perspective can help shed light on how changes in intra-household power connections affect women's position and how men's movement directly affects women's ability to advocate for their interests. According

---

<sup>12</sup> In patriarchal society, the breadwinner power holds by men so, the major decisions are taken by them and women has to depends upon them..

to academics studying how it affects families and communities left behind, men's migration may profoundly alter gender relations and sociocultural assumptions that underpin long-standing gendered behaviors (Cohen et. al., 2008). Male migration affects women's socioeconomic and structural issues, resulting in both advantages and losses for them. Some scholars offer a more optimistic viewpoint, arguing that since women have greater autonomy and decision-making power than men, they are better off without them (Durand & Massey, 2004). Remittances from migrants could help women improve their standard of living for themselves and their children by reducing their financial difficulties and expanding their access to resources like finance, healthcare, and education (Haas & Van Rooij, 2010). Women are frequently more likely than men to invest in their daughters' education and well-being, so it may benefit girls when women manage home finances (ibid). Male migration may occasionally lead to labor shortages (Lipton, 1980) and higher female employment rates, which will empower women by reducing their reliance on men for financial support.

In the household, there have been arguments between the men and the women, but with the less negotiating ability of women they lose out. When migration is studied from a gendered perspective, it becomes clearer how women's positions are affected by shifts in intra-household power dynamics and how men's movement impacts women's capacity to stand up for them. Men's migration may significantly alter gender relations and societal presumptions that underlie long-standing gendered practices, according to scholars researching how it affects families and communities left behind (Cohen et. al., 2008). According to a review of the pertinent literature, the impacts of male migration on women vary depending on the specific socioeconomic and structural aspects of the instance under investigation. Since women have more

flexibility and power to make decisions than men, some academics argue that women are better off without them (Durand & Massey, 2004). By easing their financial struggles and increasing their access to resources like finance, healthcare, and education, remittances from migrants could assist women in raising the standard of living for themselves and their children (Haas & Van Rooij, 2010). Girls may benefit when women handle household finances because they are typically more willing than men to invest in their daughters' education and well-being (ibid). Male migration may occasionally result in labor shortages and increased employment rates for women, which will empower women by lowering their reliance on males for financial assistance (Lipton, 1980). According to the literature, increasing women's independence and negotiating power can increase capacities and close the gender gap in access to social and economic opportunities. Although women may be taking on more responsibilities without significantly shifting where they sit in the household hierarchy, other studies claim that the changes that men's migration brings about to women's family lives and their social and economic position are frequently detrimental to their well-being (McKenzie & Menjivar, 2011). These studies claim that while males continue to be the primary breadwinners and decision-makers, there may not be a change in women's position. Increased demands for childcare and household tasks are frequently shown to cause these studies' growing stress levels (Brown, 1983).

Males' migration may also restrict women's freedom of movement in public areas due to increased scrutiny of their movements when their spouses are abroad or because women may be more susceptible to harassment from other men who think there is no one to defend them when their husband is away (Adhikari & Hopley, 2015). Such restrictions on mobility could deter women from working in the market and

keep them dependent on their husbands (Acosta, 2006). Furthermore, emotional depletion caused by extended family separation may contribute to family instability and increased divorce rates (McEvoy, 2012). A third body of research reveals conflicting effects of male migration on women's well-being. These studies highlight that although women may experience higher levels of stress and anxiety due to increased workloads during men's migration, they may also gain independence and self-confidence by taking on tasks like managing household finances, supervising land, managing bank accounts, and going to the market. According to a study conducted in Morocco in 2004 by Sadiqui and Ennaji, women's responsibilities and dependence on their husbands both rise when men are gone. Still, they also experience a greater degree of freedom and grow more resilient due to having to deal with social exclusion and power struggles in the new environment. According to Khalaf's 2009 study on Lebanon, women may experience more freedom and a sense of empowerment when their husbands are away. Still, they may also be subject to several limitations because they must continue to rely on their husbands for financial support and put up with constant in-law interference. Desai and Banerjee (2008) studied the case of India and found that when men migrate, women in nuclear families enjoy higher autonomy but also experience increased workload. In contrast, women in extended families don't notice much of a change in their workload but lose their autonomy independence. These findings are consistent with those of Desai and Banerjee. Remittances may give women more access to resources. Still, other studies suggest that they may also make women less motivated to work in the market and more reliant on their husbands for financial support (Acosta, 2006). Some academics contend that women's changes may only be temporary and that the advances in autonomy made while males were absent may be lost if they return

(Elbadawy&Roushdy, 2010). Others assert that women learn to handle things on their own independently and negotiate a different place for themselves within the family and society. At the same time, males are absent; at least some lasting change in women's status may be observed (Yabiku et al., 2010). These discrepancies in results might be partly explained by differences in the economic, social, and cultural systems of the regions under study, as well as individual and household characteristics. Women need access to the funds and the power to spend them to benefit economically from remittance reception. Higher levels of freedom in the absence of men require socioeconomic circumstances and domestic power structures that permit greater engagement of women in socioeconomic spheres and domestic decision-making. Additionally, while women in nuclear families may benefit from taking on the role of household heads when their husbands migrate, women in extended families living under the leadership of other family members may see a reduction in their negotiating power (Desai & Banerjee, 2008). Norms regarding women's participation in social and economic realms also impact women's decision-making abilities. Women are probably less constrained in reaching a higher standard of living for themselves and their families in areas with less restrictive gender norms than they are in areas with greater gender inequality. Studies on migration from Nepal tend to concentrate on the advantages of migration, such as decreasing poverty through remittance inflows and easing labor market pressures through worker outflow (Acharya& Leon-Gonzalez, 2012). To address the current economic issues, the government has prioritized making migration easier while paying little attention to social reforms.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Labor migration from Nepal increased drastically with the liberalisation of migration policies which also coincided with the growth and the shortage of labor in the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The scholarly literature and migration-related policy making have largely ignored the gender component of migration from Nepal. A World Bank study by Lokshin and Glinskaya (2008) is the only one that uses quantitative analysis to examine the gender effects of migration at the country level. Using data from the Nepal Living Standard Survey 2003–2004 (NLSS–II), this study examines the impact of male migration on women's labor market participation and discovers that women in remittance-receiving households participate less in the labor market than women in households that don't receive remittances. However, the study assumes that a household would serve as the unit of analysis. It ignores the impact that shifting intra-household power dynamics brought on by men's relocation may have on women's motivation or capacity to work. The study also ignores variations in women's experiences brought on by household structure and sociocultural norms. Additionally, by concentrating exclusively on market involvement, the study skips past changes in women's overall workload when men aren't around. Other research on this topic in Nepal focuses on qualitative analysis using smaller samples in particular areas of the nation. Kasper (2005), for instance, looks at how gender relations have changed among the Gurungs in the Kalabang village in the Kaski district. She finds that women's overall workload and decision-making power rise during men's absence, with the increase being bigger for women in nuclear households. Her findings are based on semi-structured interviews with women in the 36-inch region. In a different study, Maharjan et al. (2012) examine the cases of two districts, Syangja and Baitadi, and discover that women's experiences vary depending on remittances: women receiving high remittances may see a decrease in workload (as they may be able to hire help) and an increase in decision-making, whereas women receiving low remittances may be burdened with more work and less ability to make decisions.

According to Adhikari and Hobley (2015), while men's migration causes women's domestic labor to increase, the effects on their economic and social engagement are less evident because they may depend on the women's caste and income group. The study also highlights that although women may experience some increases in autonomy when men are not around, home decision-making is still mostly in the hands of males. These studies offer fascinating insights into the status of women in particular areas. Still, they don't provide much information about the variations in women's experiences in areas with various socioeconomic conditions. Since all three of these studies are centered on districts in Nepal's Hill, they cannot demonstrate how the vastly different gender norms in the Hill and Terai regions affect women's experiences. Additionally, because these studies mostly use qualitative methods for analysis, it is challenging to extrapolate the results to the rest of the nation and suggest concrete policy changes (Maharjan et. al., 2012). There is a lack of comprehensive research on gender experiences and the socioeconomic aspects affecting women's well-being during migration, including quantitative and qualitative analyses. This study aims to contribute to changing gender roles in traditional Nepalese society in connection to power dynamics, decision-making responsibilities, the absence of women in the home, and the pre- and post-migration eras.

### **1.8 Statement of Problems**

There are an estimated 150 million migrant workers globally, making international migration a global phenomenon (ILO, 2015). Economic globalization and the evolving sex labor market serve as major driving forces behind migration (Benach et. al., 2011). The feminization of labor migration is a recent trend that has seen an increase in women migrants, who now make up approximately 45% of migrant workers (ILO, 2015). As more women migrate to work, they are contributing

to the feminization of low-skilled industries like manufacturing, household work, and childcare (Thimothy&Sasikumar, 2012). According to Lim and Oishi (1996), this trend has been most pronounced in Asia, particularly in countries like the Philippines and Indonesia, where respectively 60% and 65% of migrant workers are women (Piper, 2005).

In a similar situation, the state of Nepal has seen an upsurge in female migration over the past few years. According to official statistics, only 161 women emigrated<sup>14</sup> between 1985 and 2001; by 2014–2015, that number had risen to 21,421. However, these figures do not account for migration through unofficial channels and across borders to India (Government of Nepal, 2014). Nepal has the biggest proportion of migrant women—70%—in southern Asia, with Saudi Arabia and India serving as their primary destinations (United Nations, 2019).<sup>15</sup> Due to Nepal's extreme poverty, unemployment or lack of prospects, and greater earnings in host countries, the number of women leaving the country is on the rise (Thimothy&Sasikumar, 2012). Due to rising life expectancy and decreased fertility in destination countries, the majority of Nepalese women work in low-skilled service industries, typically in the domestic sector (ibid). This claim sparks several discussions regarding how gender norms, roles, and duties are evolving in Nepal.

The patterns of global migration have sparked several conversations about the rebuilding of gender roles. However, the literature demonstrating the link between global migration, remittances, and gender relations has been disregarded. A large portion of earlier research has concentrated solely on migration, its trends, remittances, women's empowerment, or the effects of migration on women's mobility.

---

<sup>14</sup>Emigrants: An emigrant is a person who emigrates or leaves a country.

<sup>15</sup>Note again that the figure only includes migrants who have taken government permit to migrate. Since it is suspected that a lot of women migrate through irregular channels and through India, the numbers here could be huge underestimates of the actual number.

According to Acharya and Gonzalez (2012), the government of Nepal places a high value on remittances because they aid in reducing poverty and the pressures caused by out-migration and unemployment. Few studies have been conducted in Nepal that examine the relationship between migrations, remittances, and gender because the majority of them exclusively consider either males or females. Quantitative analysis is used in the study for the World Bank to determine the relationship between migration and gender at the national level (Lokshin&Glinskaya, 2008). The study examines the effects of male out-migration on women's labor market engagement using data from the Nepal Living Standard Survey II (NLSS-II), which only shows the enrolment level of women in receiving remittances and their home tasks. The family structures and sociocultural norms associated with women's participation are not given much prominence, and by placing a lot of emphasis on market relations, it neglects changes in women's overall burden while males are absent. In a similar vein, Kaspar (2005) focused her study among the Gurung population in the Kalabang hamlet of the Kaski district on qualitative research and only focused on the workload and decision-making of women in the absence of their male counterparts. A further study by Maharjan et al. (2012) compares the roles and duties of women that are anticipated to alter in the absence of male family leaders in two districts in the mid-hills of Nepal—Syangja and Baitadi. Only the changes in women's workload, the expansion of their roles, their ownership and access to productive resources, and their involvement in household decision-making are examined in this study.

Adhikari and Hobley (2015) conducted a second study to look at the Khotang and Udaypur districts in Nepal, utilizing both primary and secondary data. Then they chose the two VDCs of the research district using the purposive sample method, and they quickly surveyed every household in each to see how welfare had changed over

ten years and the causes of its decrease, improvement, or consistency. Rajkarnikar's study (2017) employed a mixed-methods approach that included quantitative research using data from the Nepal Living Standard Survey 2010/11 (NLSS-III) and the Nepal Demographic and Health Survey as well as qualitative analysis based on fieldwork observations in four Nepalese districts: Syangja, Rolpa, Chitwan, and Siraha (NDHS, 2011). These studies offer fascinating insights into the status of women in particular areas, but they don't offer much information about the variations in women's experiences in areas with various socioeconomic conditions. According to Gartaula's (2009) research, male-out migration has altered gender norms and feminized communities that were previously primarily male-dominated and caste-based Hindu societies. A large number of young people are displaced by migration from agricultural jobs and into non-farm activities, which shows alterations to Nepal's conventional patterns of livelihood structures.

Thus, a large portion of the body of current literature demonstrates that women's migration has been underrepresented and that most migrants are assumed to be men. The importance of family reunification flows and the rise of foreign hiring in the service sector, particularly in domestic services, has, however, caused a recent adjustment in the situation. As a result, with an emphasis on gender roles, there has been a significant increase in interest in the roles of migrant women and men. It is also being thought about how immigrant women specifically contribute to remittance flows and how they are used (World Bank, 2007). Even though this emerging literature sheds light on the growing position of women in migration and their remittance flow to their origin countries, there is still a paucity of literature on how gender roles of women, particularly in patriarchal origin societies like Nepal, shape remittance flow. Like many Asian societies, Nepalese culture is largely structured

along a patriarchal line, with men controlling affairs and masculinity linked with productive roles and responsibilities that are distinct from those of women in reproductive roles. These responsibilities and functions reflect societal standards and widely held beliefs about what kinds of roles are gender-appropriate. As a result, when people migrate from one country to another, the gender roles that are expected of them may change. While there have been modifications to the patriarchal structure of gender roles, on the other hand, this may very well impact women's abilities in every area of life. Consequently, this research adds to a comprehensive understanding of how Nepalese gender roles are evolving in relation to the global capital market. Additionally, this study aims to clarify how men and women manage their family tasks in the new environment to retain and legitimize their newly acquired roles and responsibilities in the absence of their counterparts and traditional gender roles that have been shifting.

### **1.9 Research Questions**

The study emphasizes on family members who are left behind by male migration, particularly wives and kids who are the proactive operators continually planning their interactions with families and communities. This circumstance is part of a larger process involving developing identities, shifting attitudes, and shifting familial and social norms that have resulted in the reconstruction of gender meaning in Nepalese contexts. Therefore, there is not necessarily a cause-and-effect link between migration and gender, where migration helps women become strong decision-making actors with limited resources, and males become the primary breadwinners and dominant key actors in sociocultural space. The migration has left men's social attitudes, behaviors, and other traits like assertiveness in a static position. In light of these two key developments, studying how female migration has affected

the families is equally important. First, migration modifies authority and power inside the household, impacting control mechanisms. Each family member's position and standing are subsequently affected by this, especially the spouse. Secondly, the home needs to devise novel approaches to suit the customary responsibilities and roles of women who migrate. Therefore, this study has attempted to assess the process of contemporary social change in Nepalese society by pulling arguments from literature, including contemporary sociological theories of gender and migration. This study aims to understand specific gender development processes brought about by migration. The following research questions have been developed by the overarching objectives:

1. What types of the relationship exists in between household formation and gender practices in transnational space?
2. How does gender norms, ideologies, and power structures are evolving in post-migration households?
3. How does remittances affects the reconfiguration of gender roles and responsibilities in households domain?

### **1.10 Objectives of the Study**

The families left behind—especially the spouses and children of migrants—are the subject of this study since they have taken on different lives in order to conform to the prevailing societal norms.<sup>16</sup> Desperate to find better chances in foreign lands, the migrants bitterly leave behind their families. However, the migration process has also led to changes in the conventional gender roles of husband and wife. This study

---

<sup>16</sup>Migrants refers to women labor migrants who went for unskilled work in foreign country and these women left their families behind the migration process.

covers changes in work and emphasizes shifts in gender roles and power and how those changes affect daily lives. The study has, thus, focus on three main goals:

1. To explore the relationship that exists in between household formation and gender practices in transnational space?
2. To analyze the evolving gendered power relations in post-migration household's formation.
3. To describe the role of remittances in reconfiguration of gender roles and responsibilities in households domain.

### **1.11 Importance of the Research**

Remittances to origin nations have also gained prominence in the discussion of migration, gender, and the potential benefits of migration for both origin and receiving countries. In recent years, the stereotype that men predominate in international migration has given way to a more nuanced viewpoint that gives equal focus to women's movements and activities in destination nations. A lot of literature suggests that women tend to send more remittances to their home countries than men do. However, men are considered to be "the breadwinners" in Nepal, which is predominantly a patriarchal country, while women are expected to perform more household duties. The study aims to do a thorough desk review of the literature by talking about the gender roles of Nepalese migrants and the families they leave behind, as well as how remittances work as a catalyst for changing women's gender roles. As a result, the study would add to our understanding of the gendered aspects of migration and remittances.

The majority of rural Nepalese communities only have a few income-generating opportunities. However, the remittances are opening up a wider range of

options. Both professional and unskilled workers are drawn to foreign countries by the dearth of job prospects and high earnings in their home countries. Remittances are viewed as a development tool in such circumstances; therefore, the study aims to comprehend the methods used by households to pursue the level of living and sense of well-being they aspire to. As a result, there may be discernible shifts in how patriarchal culture constructs gender roles. Remittances have an impact on how people choose their means of subsistence. Remittances are more than just financial because emigration can result in social transfers of information, attitudes, and practices that have both positive and negative effects on those who are left behind. Social remittance exchanges take place when migrants visit or return to reside in their native country. According to Levitt and Lamba (2011), what migrants bring and continue to get from their home nations influences how they experience the countries where they settle. Therefore, the contributions that migrants make to their sending families and communities will be undeniable because they enable non-movers to demand high pay, take advantage of new opportunities like access to education and better healthcare, and reject the status quo (Cohen, 2011). Galvan, for instance, thinks that women who stay behind must manage their household responsibilities as well as outside activities like joining a grassroots organization and taking part in community events, in addition to raising and educating their children (Galvan, 2015). By embracing new ways of doing things, migration has been shown to help people who stay behind have better lives. Therefore, this study would look at the wide variety of remittances used, how new households are formed during migration, and how structural changes occur in patriarchal societies.

## 1.12 Chapter Outline

The dissertation has been divided into eight chapters, followed by an appendix and references. The introduction and study context have been outlined in the main topics of this first chapter. The chapter presents the introduction of the study, which deals with the background of the study, the statement of the problem, research questions and research objectives, the importance of the study, and the limitations of the study.

The second chapter provides a review of the pertinent literature and conceptual framework. A literature review includes an overview of general migration theory, concepts, and the relationship between migration and gender theory. It also provides the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. Several research gaps in the literature are identified, including areas that require further research attention.

The research technique is described in detail in Chapter 3, which also demonstrates how the current study generally adheres to the epistemological positions of "soft realism" and "mild constructivism." This chapter also demonstrates how I decided to do my field study using a mixed-methods strategy that incorporates quantitative and qualitative techniques. The procedures, tactics, and structure of field research are presented, along with issues like negotiating access, sampling, and data-gathering methods. Additionally, this chapter describes the field dynamics related to concerns with guaranteeing permission, confidentiality, rapport, trust, and departure from the field. Chapter four deals with the social demographic process of the study area with major focus on slum community of Pokhara metropolitan city. The discussion and synthesis of the primary data gathered and the evaluated literature are presented in chapters five, six and seven. The research's key conclusions are summarized in chapter eight, which also analyzes its more extensive applications

from a methodological, analytical, and substantial standpoint. The chapter outlines the key findings about the research questions that guided this study and connects them to the theoretical relevance of the research, which will have an impact on similar studies in the future.

### **1.13 Conclusion**

As a result of the ease of living brought about by globalization, migration, and remittances can be viewed as components of larger livelihood plans for the upkeep and continuation of the migrant's family. Migration causes changes in people's daily lives, whereas remittances help the economy of the migrant's country and their household. The migration of both men and women forces copartners who are left behind to assume home leadership roles, make more decisions, handle financial problems, and handle all childcare duties independently. On the one hand, the migration of men increased the burdens placed on women, empowering them and giving them a greater capacity for decision-making. On the other hand, the migration of women forces men to assume the position of househusband.<sup>17</sup> In addition to navigating gender relations, women must deal with the changing socioeconomic realities brought on by the absence of men in a culture that has historically restricted women's freedom and kept them in domestic roles. On the other hand, men have to handle all the household duties left by migrant women and play both gender roles to maintain social equality. By examining the changes in women's and men's employment obligations, their role in household decision-making, and their participation in social activities, this study examines the effects of global migration on both women's and men's lives. A woman's ability to care for her family, the well-

---

<sup>17</sup> Men living in nuclear family assumes to perform all the roles and responsibilities performed by women in patriarchal society so, a men become a good husband as he manage his outside work along with take care of children in their wives absence.

being of her children and other household members are directly impacted by the experiences she has while her spouse is far away from home. In a similar vein, when wives are away home men's become more responsible at home and break all patriarchal roles and responsibilities assigned to them being a male member of the society and performed all the households duties along with outside activities.

Consequently, as the rate of migration rises, it is critical to comprehend the implications on men and women and to provide them with the resources they require to address these challenges. Women entering in labor market don't only increases their breadwinner power but also empower them financially. Simultaneously, when women absence from home, the responsibilities and roles that males perform gives rise to a new dialogue in the realm of gender mainstreaming. On the one hand, the increased mobility of both men and women boosts remittances at the national level and within the family. Still, on the other, the diminished division of labor between the sexes may be observed in their daily activities. In reality, this is only half of the story; the other is that the migrant's companion, who was left behind, must simultaneously fulfill both roles. It may help if policy-level actions are made by the government to lessen the division of work based on gender, ensure that men and women receive equal compensation, increase women's access to resources, and respect men in their cultural roles while performing home chores. Because it provides insights into shifting roles and responsibilities in the postmodern era, which assumes that nothing is static and everything is influenced by migration. The historical roles and responsibilities allocated to men and women should be examined and explained from a sociological perspective, and the issue preventing changes in these roles should be investigated by identifying the core causes. Literature on migration and remittances reveals that people experience changes in their regular interaction processes while transferring

different forms of capital from host to home nation using economic, social, and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Migration has significantly altered not just the lives of migrants but also their families who stayed behind, particularly for the copartners who had to engage in indoor and outdoor activities.

## CHAPTER II

### TOWARDS AN ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK: MIGRATION, REMITTANCES AND GENDER

#### 2.1 Introduction

For a long time, feminism<sup>18</sup> was the sole source of social scientific understanding of global migration and gender relations. As a result, the critical claim is made that the gender of migrants has altered migration, remittance patterns, and traditional gender relations. This study's main objective is to examine how gender roles and duties alter as women migrate for foreign labor. It aims to understand how remittances are used back home and the change in the social position of men and women. The main sociological theories related to migration, remittances, and gender were reviewed, as well as the study's objectives. Here, Zimmerman's and West (1987) ideas that gender is a routine accomplishment rooted in daily interaction serve as the main source of inspiration for how I see shifting gender roles in transnational space. The process by which societal members acquire the necessary categorical equipment and other abilities to become gendered human beings might be reconsidered to start from the beginning when bringing the social production of gender under empirical scrutiny. The way Zimmerman conceptualizes gender helps me get closer to thinking of gender display as a result of systemic social changes in society.

In the larger framework of a patriarchal gender-based society, this chapter explores major theoretical concerns pertinent to understanding and assessing the function of migration and remittances in shifting gender roles. Two key elements are highlighted by the amount of research this chapter explores to help us better

---

<sup>18</sup> Feminism: It is the belief in social, economic, and political equality of the sexes. It is largely originating in the west and is manifested worldwide and is represented by various institutions committed to activity on behalf of women's rights and interests.

understand various aspects of migration and remittances. In the beginning, it claims that migration has a catalytic effect on the evolution of gender roles and responsibilities. The second claim makes the research of capital creation a helpful field to explain how gender roles are evolving. It claims that remittances have a significant role in transferring power, authority, and decision-making capacities of the various facets of gender roles and how they relate to migration and remittances. Instead of being master identities that apply to all situations, like the sex category, roles are situational identities that are assumed and let go as the occasion requires. Gender has no particular site or organizational context, unlike other positions, such as nurse, doctor, patient, or professor and student (ibid). However, these positions are gendered, i.e., they are a result of social behaviors based on sex that date back a long time (ibid). As a result, migration and remittances are crucial to the ongoing transformation of gender and the sexual division of labor.

## **2.2 Social Change**

The heart of sociology is the study of social structure, social institutions, and social change. However, the issue is how social transformation should be defined and how it should be connected to migration and gender. Since the time of Comte and Durkheim, classical sociologists have disagreed on how to explain it, and there is still a lack of a unifying and cogent framework of analysis. The character of social change in terms of gender and the migratory process is therefore emphasized in the next section, notably in the theory put forth by Norbert Elias (1994).

Two schools of thought exist regarding social change: the functionalist school of thought, which favors progressive changes with their own pace and pattern over a long period, and the Marxist school of thought, which focuses on changes in historical class. The question of what should represent the core locus of a meaningful

understanding of social change is still being debated. However, Norbert Elias (1994) believed that social transformation should concentrate on both "increasing difference and integration" and "decreasing differentiation and integration." In a broader historical context, social change is a process of structural change that interacts with personality structures. Elias uses the term "sociogenesis" to describe the idea that society is constantly evolving and that we are always in the middle. As a result, sociogenesis lacks distinct beginnings and ends. These processes always entail people interacting with one another in networks of interdependent relationships and connecting to other people both directly and informally. The natural order of social life and the foundation of society might also involve disorder and violence in social structures and organizations to bring about change in the social sphere.

To better understand the modern societal change in gender formation caused by migration, this study focused on the dynamics of changing gender roles in patriarchy. According to Elias (1994), the type of social change the current study concentrates on is not linear. "A concept of social change that does not distinguish clearly between changes that relate to the structures of a society and those that do not, and further, between structural changes without a specific direction and those that follow a particular direction over many generations, for example, toward greater or lesser complexity, is a very inadequate tool of analysis," he writes (Elias, 1994, p. 184).

In contrast to Elias, who sought to understand the process of state creation and civilization building, I am not focusing on change over "many generations" to find "a figuration change" (ibid). Instead, I attempted to investigate the structural social shifts in the slum community of Pokhara due to migration to detect a figurative shift in gender roles and responsibilities. In doing so, I have strongly emphasized examining

how the dynamics of a contemporary civilized society undergoing a higher speed of transition interact with migration and gender. I agree with Elias that examining gender roles in patriarchal societies in the context of structural social change will be less effective if such changes are not considered in the context of their articulation with more significant processes, such as the growth of the capitalist market and its effects on everyday life. In the following part, I briefly discuss the history of gender roles in patriarchy and how they relate to the capitalist market.

### **2.3 Patriarchal Gender Roles**

The basic foundation of sociology lies among the patriarchy defining the sexual division of labor about the origins, timing, and purpose of female subjugation. Naturally, the standard answer to the first question is that male domination is a fundamental feature of all human communities. This argument provided a religious justification for the sexual division of labor between men and women, arguing that because God created sex differences, women should be submissive to men because he made them. Women are, therefore, given reproductive responsibilities, whereas men are considered productive (Lerner, 1986). Before 150 years ago, female subjugation was limited to this. The conservative justification for women's inferiority became "scientific" in the nineteenth century as the persuasiveness of the religious argument waned. Women are lower and more submissive due to their biological makeup and maternal function, which is why they engage in less public life. However, the Marxist theory of female subordination contests the universality of female subordination and proposes an earlier phase of either matriarchy (female rule) or gender equality for women and men. The causes of this subordination are explained by Marxist materialism and economic determinism.

### **2.3.1 Marxism in Relation with Capitalist Patriarchy**

Understanding the changing gender roles in transnational society, which are themselves a result of the global capitalist market, requires an understanding of capitalism and patriarchy. Marxist analysis is crucial because it gives us the means to comprehend all gender and power dynamics inside the capitalist patriarchy. The historical and dialectical methods are completely useless. Marx's core ontological framework comprises all forms of exploitation, alienation, and oppression that women have experienced throughout history. In "The German Ideology," Marx and Engels address the family as a legitimate and authorized institution for the first division of work, i.e., based on the sexual division of labor where the wife and kids are made the husband's slaves. This is where the patriarchal role has been allocated, with women being responsible for bearing and raising children. According to Engels in "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State," the social structure of society is defined by production and the family." He also maintains that the relationship between production and family, which defines the slavery of women in the home, is shaped by historical economic paradigms and that men predominate in the decision-making and production processes. As a result, according to Engels, "the emancipation of women will only be feasible when women can take part in production on a large social scale and household labor no longer claims anything but a negligible percentage of her time" (Engels, p. 84). When they are connected to global migration, the context and concepts that apply to shifting gender roles in capitalist society also apply.

I contend, in line with Marx and Engels, that we should place more emphasis on the sexual division of labor, in which the male position is superior in terms of

having power and economic privilege. Sex roles are seen as mechanisms of power and oppression, with women's positions originating from patriarchy and being more deeply based on biological truth than in economic or historical reality (Eisenstein, 1999). Since the foundations of patriarchy are found in women's reproductive selves, this is all expressed through male power and dominance (ibid.). Thus, it is important to look for a relationship between capitalism and patriarchy regarding the division of labor. In "Psychoanalysis and Feminism," Mitchell (1974) defined patriarchy as an ideology in great detail. When a child with a bisexual inclination is exposed to human society, they eventually learn the right cultural expressions of femininity and masculinity, and she talks about patriarchy as the father's symbolic law. She went on to list the fundamental pillars of women's helplessness, including production, reproduction, sexuality, and child socialization, all of which lead to women's exclusion from the workforce and public life.

There is production activity both inside and outside the family; however, the output done by women is not counted in the same way as that of men. My point is that once a man or woman enters the global capitalist market, remittances may modify their social and cultural roles, though varying degrees, depending on whether they are male or female. Additionally, remittances take on social, cultural, and symbolic forms in addition to their economic ones (Bourdieu, 1986). As both men and women had the opportunity to experience power, authority, freedom, the accumulation of economic capital, the acquisition of knowledge, and awareness, the degree to which these capitals were utilized differed. Transnational migration proved to be a bridge to close the gender role gap. A sociologist should now use a perceptive lens to establish the relationship between these variables. Since this is a crucial area, the current study seeks to make an impact there.

According to Veronica (1979), the term "patriarchy" has a variety of meanings. For some, it refers to male dominance and the power dynamics in which men dominate women (Millet, 1969); however, for Marxist feminists, it relates to the connection between women's subordination and the structure of various modes of production. Veronica claims that patriarchy is present in specific social structures. Patriarchal dominance was present in the domestic economy, where women were ruled by their husbands within the family and subject to capitalist rule when they started working for pay. I believe that due to the intervention of the global capitalist market, which is perceived as a process of migration, we might anticipate finding that conventional patriarchal roles for men and women are shifting in various institutions. The definition of gender relations—power dynamics between men and women that impact economic results in many ways—will be expanded in the following section. Gender is revealed not only in ideas and representations but also in ideas and representations that attribute women and men to different abilities, attitudes, desires, personality traits, behavioral patterns, and other characteristics that are not only universal but also not uniform across societies. Therefore, it is important to address how gender inequality is perpetuated and how it might evolve. Gender ideology includes social perceptions, norms, and practices in particular. Women's economic circumstances are also restricted by domestic responsibilities that limit their job options, cultural norms of appropriate female behavior, barriers to women joining unions, employer presumptions about women's abilities, and other factors besides their knowledge, education, and skills (Agrawal, 1997).

## 2.4 Gender

It may be argued that gender "both supports and constrains us" (Glover & Kaplan, 2009). It is a part of who we are, or our "selves," but it puts pressure on us to adhere to a complicated system of standards that, in some ways, are the product of socialization. It may be more appropriate to refer to those terms in the plural: femininities, masculinities, and genders, because of the varied interpretations of femininity and masculinity (ibid.). Connell (2002) asserts that the word "gender" was borrowed from grammar. "It derives from an old Indo-European verb that meant "to produce," from which terms for "kind" and "classes" were created. However, in grammar, "gender" is employed to categorize nouns as either male, female, or neuter (Bradley, 2013). It is unknown who originally utilized the notion of gender in the way it is currently used in the social sciences. Being a highly charged political notion, its applications and interpretations are still changing (Bradley, 2013). Sex, the social construct as opposed to biology, is frequently used in explanations to contrast gender. Oakley, who released *Sex, Gender, and Society* in 1972, is credited with being the first to introduce the notion of gender into sociology. The "first significant feminist reutilization of the 42 existing grammatical terms" is found in Oakley's book (Bradley, 2013). The phrase "gender is a visible fact most of the time; sex is not" was created by Oakley, who also claimed that sexual identity is not only founded on biological and psychological differences (Bradley, 2013). The author claimed that while women are seen as primarily dependent on their male counterparts, men's societal standards predominate in society (Oakley, 1972). Furthermore, Oakley asserted that the labels male and female are equivalent to the sex categories and masculine and feminine to gender. As a result, it is believed that gender behavior reflects people's views on gender, masculinity, femininity, and sexuality. The

concepts of sex and gender were crucial to the formation of feminist philosophy, as shown in the following quotation. To challenge the still-common belief that gender differences are "natural," resulting from genital and genetic variations, and as such, unavoidable and impossible to change, the distinction made by Oakley and others between sex and gender was vital (Bradley, 2013). In more recent times, the concept of "doing gender" has gained attention as a means to consider how men and women actively participate in "gendering," i.e., how they create their gendered selves by dressing and acting in a certain manner, for example (Zimmerman, 1992; Bradley, 2013). In this view, the gendered self is a result of the structural context created by gendered socialization, and people express their agency through their behavior and wardrobe choices. However, the institutional context (such as jobs, schools, and stores) and certain expectations associated with this context limit their ability to act in certain ways. According to Bradley, the formation of gendered structures at the macro, or social, level is fueled by these institutional processes (2013, p. 26). These consequently impact paid work, family care work, and the sexual division of labor, all of which differ among cultures and nations (Zimmerman, 1992). So, gender could mediate structure and agency. The endeavor to maintain gender categories also maintains the relationships between them, which maintains the disparities and harm they cause (Connell, 2002, p. 5).<sup>43</sup> The majority of people, it might be argued, "Frequently appreciate the gender polarity" (ibid., p. 4) and may even proudly engage in the presentation of their femininity or masculinity (clothes, behavior). According to Connell (ibid., p. 5), the majority of people "combine masculine and feminine features in variable blends rather than being all one or all the other," according to a psychological study. Connell adds that "gender mixing" (Connell, 2002) is so prevalent that it has garnered a lot of attention, especially from more conventional,

conservative people. The recent response of the Polish Church to gender disputes may serve as one such example. However, some people do not fit into one of the genders (hermaphrodites), while others (transvestites) prefer to "display" a gender that is inconsistent with their sexual orientation and/or physical characteristics, and still, others (transsexuals and transgenders) undergo medical treatment to conform to their gender identities (Bradley, 2013). Third-sex categories are notable because they question and problematize the idea that the sexes and genders are essentially different from one another (i.e., men vs. women).

## **2.5 Gender Roles**

John Money reportedly made the first mention of the idea of "gender roles" in 1955 (Money, 1994): "In truth, there was no understanding of gender as a human attribute" before that year (ibid., p. 163). "Sex roles," now more generally known as "gender roles," reflect gender and gender categories: Males and females are forced into various molds by our culture in their early upbringing, education, and adult careers (Oakley, 1972, p. 156). These roles might be considered "situated identities," which are highly dependent on context and less stable than identity itself (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 128). Doing Gender's writers contend that social contact is the primary way gender is socially constructed and reproduced. Our "fundamental natures," which correlate to what we want to convey to others, are masculinity and femininity. Gender roles and sex roles are so linked that when one knows one, the other is assumed. It might be argued that gender is a process and not a trait that people possess; rather, it is something that people "do" (ibid). "Doing gender" is using subtle yet recognizable mannerisms that can be recognized as representations of femininity or masculinity when used in social interactions. It's important to remember that "doing

gender is inevitable" (ibid). Sex-role socialization sets off the process of doing gender, and boys and girls quickly discover that they are forced to participate (ibid.). When analyzing the division of labor, gender appears to be important because women frequently find themselves in charge of the "emotional labor" that is supposed to reflect their "essential" femininity (Hochschild&Machung, 1989). A powerful ideological tool that "produces, reproduces, and legitimizes the choices and constraints that are based on sex category," gender designates more than just an aspect of an individual. It also impacts gender relations (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 147). It might be argued that because gender is a social construct formed and perpetuated by humans, it can be altered and the status quo overturned (Titkow, Duch-Krzystoszek, & Budrowska, 2004). In other words, since people's agency and the structural context interact, the former can partially change the latter (Morawska, 2001). Gender may mediate agency and structure (Hoang, 2011). This is especially true for the study at hand, whose overarching goal is to examine how migration affects Polish immigrant women's gender roles and gender-based "responsibilities" regarding childcare and work. For this study, it is crucial to highlight the disparities between men and women while advocating for equal opportunity for both groups (Lister, 2003). Women and men can be equals despite their differences; difference does not imply inequity. Because of their subordinate mothering functions, women have historically been excluded from culture; nonetheless, "a woman is the one who bears the people... women are highly significant." Since women carry offspring, they are like God (Oakley, 1972, p. 139). Women appear to be at a disadvantage because of the straightforward, unavoidable, and priceless reality that they are responsible for the human race's reproduction. However, in the age of global capitalism, where both partners are expected to sell their labor power, what was once thought of as the

"natural division of labor" is rather outdated (Lister, 2003). Change is arguably necessary because women seem to be starting to give up on having children, as evidenced by dropping birth and fertility rates (Plomien, 2009).

## **2.6 Theories Related to Migration**

### **2.6.1 Economic Theories**

Push-pull theory, or economic modernization theory, derives from neoclassical economics and is based on the rational choice factor, mobility, and wage differentials (Castles & Miller 2003). The theory is predicated on the idea that migration should be understood in connection to both push and pull forces, with the idea that pull factors draw people to receiving countries. In contrast, push ones compel them to leave their home regions. People migrate from areas with high labor availability but poor earnings to regions with low labor availability but high incomes. The remittances sent by migrant's initiates to lessen the wage gap and eventually support economic growth in sending and receiving (host) countries. The notion also holds that people travel voluntarily and judge where to go. This idea has the drawbacks of being individualistic and ahistorical (ibid). There is enough reasoning to explain the obstacles that restrict labor mobility, why certain countries have high outmigration rates while others, although having identical structural characteristics, do not, or why particular categories of people move and where they move (Arango, 2010). Because it just explains one area, this kind of justification misses the fundamental reasons why individuals move, which go beyond economic considerations. Analysis of historical and modern migrations reveals that nations significantly influence originating, forming, and regulating movements (Tyner, 2000). Other significant determinants of migration and migrant behavior include family, the media, social networks, and other

societal organizations. While high wages are a significant motivator for people to migrate, many non-economic factors influence them. The new economics of labor migration is an improvement over the neo-classical approach, and it sees the return as a success if the immigrant can realize their goals, as seen by the remittances to her family or household (Cassarino, 2004). This perspective sees migration as a transient phenomenon, and the length of time a migrant works abroad depends on the requirements of the household or family they are leaving behind. This approach can explain the experiences of some of the men and women in my study who can send remittances. However, it is still constrained because it does not take into account how remittances are used, how the return is impacted by the social, political, and economic environment existing in the home country, or—more importantly—the socio-cultural impact of migration and return on the individual migrant, her family, and the community.

### **2.6.2 Structuralist/Dependency Theory**

Immanuel Wallerstein, other world systems theorists, and Marxist ideology are the key influences on the structuralist approach (Castles & Miller, 2003). This is all about how inequalities between the many layers of the contemporary global and international market—such as the core, semi-periphery, and periphery—are what separate them. Exploiting the periphery to advance the center indicates colonial and neocolonial interactions. Migration, specifically "brain drain"—the relocation of the most productive and educated employees, typically from developing countries, to meet the demands of rich countries—is thought to play a catalytic role in fostering such differences (Goss & Lindquist, 1995). The structuralist perspective "frequently regarded the interests of capital as all-determining and gave insufficient attention to

the motives and actions of the persons and organizations concerned" (Castles & Miller, 2003). According to this idea, migrants are passive recipients of manipulation from the global capitalist system rather than active agents. Particularly, immigrant women are portrayed as victims, devout mothers, or daughters. The economic or neoclassical approach emphasizes and favors individual rational economic factors while ignoring social factors that drive migration. As a result, the structuralist perspective emphasizes social and political factors while ignoring the role of the individual actor (Stahl, 1995). In the current study, I try to investigate how the responsibilities of migrants are filled by family members who remain behind and how different forms of capital are influencing these newly transformed roles.

### **2.6.3 Transnationalism, Social Networks, and Structuration**

An integrative approach has been developed to address the gaps between the historical-structural approach and economic modernization theory. Many theories have been produced in the historical paradigm of migration theory. Still, an integrated approach combines the individual's action with economic, social, and political institutions across geography and time by including both meso- and macro-level analyses (Kofman, 2004). Integrative approaches try to avoid the idea that migrants migrate in a straight line from sending to receiving countries and instead think of these movements as fluid connections between two or more nations. In addition, the incorporation of networks and institutional structures, relationships between sending and receiving countries, and families and households has elevated migration to broader socio-cultural fields. The methodology also aims to perceive migrants as social actors, as agents, and not just as passive victims while also considering the social, political, and economic constraints that limit their agency (Zontini, 2004).

The concept of transnationalism enables us to understand how migrants are increasingly able to build their lives across borders by engaging in economic, social, political, and cultural activities that enable them to maintain their nationality in both the country of immigration and the country of origin (Salih, 2013). Such migration creates and maintains numerous connections with the home nation rather than uprooting people and forcing them to reintegrate into a new society and culture (Markley, 2011). However, transmigrants—people who live in a transnational social environment and form identities about their home and host countries—are better understood as migrants (Glick-Schiller et. al., 1995). They consequently concurrently belong to two societies (Levitt, 2005). They integrate themselves into the institutions and routines of the nation in which they live while also maintaining relationships, creating institutions, carrying out transactions, and impacting regional and global events in the nations from which they migrated (Glick-Schiller et. al., 1995). As a result, transmigration affects those who migrate and those who remain because migrants leave but do not return to their home country (Levitt, 2005).

Transnational migration refers to people who move from one country to another while maintaining a variety of ties—political, social, economic, and emotional—with their native country as a result of the globalization process. According to Salazar (2011), the process of transnational migration is continual and involves constant human movement, social relationships, and cultural expressions. Accordingly, the transnational perspective places a strong emphasis on networks of kinship relationships and national sentiment among people who share a religious or ethnic identity in their home country and their adopted country (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004) while also imagining other kinds of lives and places (Salazar, 2011). According to this definition of the social field in the transnational sector, those who migrate and

those who stay behind the migration process are connected by "interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed" (Salazar, 2011). As a result, both national and transnational social fields require people to follow various laws and regulations as they engage in various spheres of life, such as social, religious, cultural, political, economic, and so on. This is how a person creates a global way of being while engaging in real social relationships and practices and how, simultaneously, while doing so, they become conscious of the components of their identity development.

According to the researchers mentioned above, there are several changes in social life, family life, and kinship boundaries, which eventually aid in creating class, gender, and race. Micro-level family and kinship relationships and behaviors impact larger social processes, particularly gender relations. According to Carling's (2005) analysis, relationships between migrants and non-migrants are characterized by three inherent asymmetries. First, regarding transnational moralities, migrants and non-migrants are in distinct positions. Second, in the transnational social sphere, information access is not equally available to migrants and non-migrants. Third, there is an imbalance in how resources are distributed between migrants and non-migrants. We observe numerous contradictions as a result. When migratory women earn a living and achieve greater equality with men, it can be freeing (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2001).

However, the other side shows that gender distinctions are occasionally strengthened and reimagined to establish hierarchies that are more strict and "traditional" than in the homeland and safeguard women from what is seen as a hostile and immoral society in the receiving country (Alumkal, 1999). This intricate web extends beyond the family unit as women go to work (something they may not have done at home), join community organizations, or get involved in their churches. Women must find a

way to balance the various, contradicting messages they are given in both their homeland's public and private spheres and the context in which they are being received (Pessar & Mahler, 2003). State laws governing voter registration, welfare, child care, maternity leave, and other matters that impact how men and women might exercise multiple memberships reflect the gendered dimension of migration (Caglar, 2013).

While other family members take care of reproduction, socialization, and other forms of consumption in transnational households, one or both parents may be earning a living elsewhere. The study conducted by Zontini in 2004 on Filipino immigrant women highlighted the changes that migration brings about in the makeup of the family and in the roles that women play within it. As a result of relocating to various and distant geographic regions, new ways of articulating family ties, particularly marital and maternal ones, emerge. She argues that women must concurrently participate in productive, kin, and care work to maintain family ties and secure community survival. As a result, they experience new pressures and concerns related to being transnational mothers, such as the commodification of connections with their children such that money becomes a priority. Transnational mothers fundamentally dismantle the strongly gendered physical and temporal boundaries between family and work by taking up child rearing and domestic responsibilities on behalf of others. When men leave their homes and migrate abroad to work, they are expected to fulfill responsibilities to their families and traditional breadwinner tasks. The women are perceived as starting a radical gender-transforming journey that separates them from their homes, children, and communities of origin (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila 1997, p. 552) and forces them to deal with stigma, guilt, and judgment from others in the process. Definitions of motherhood are changing to reflect that conventional care

giving responsibilities can best be carried out through revenue generation by supplying children, including breadwinner that may involve long-term physical separations. Definitions of motherhood are being changed to include the possibility of long-term physical separations from one's children and the idea that it is best to carry out conventional care giving duties by working to generate money to give children better nutrition, clothes, and educational opportunities (ibid).

Rather than using transnationalism as a framework for research, my study examines how migrants—both men and women—transfer money and resources back to their native countries and maintain relationships with their families. Consequently, their travel is not circular, and their settlement is not adhoc (ibid). Additionally, they had a strong sense of belonging to their home country because they had left their families behind and were aware that the immigration and labor laws in the country where they were working, which primarily applied to unskilled and domestic work, would prevent them from being reunited with their families. As a result, the structural constraints and limits of their gender roles dominate the conversation. My research focuses on how motherhood has been redefined during the migration process and, in turn, how this has shaped the role of men in the absence of their wives and what kinds of feelings and emotions are associated with them. This is similar to transnational motherhood, which was critiqued by Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997). However, my work has focused on the social and cultural implications of long-term female migration for the husband who remains at home. My research also focuses on Meso-level analysis because, in contrast to male migration, which is primarily motivated by the need to increase economic resources, female migration is primarily driven by the need and desire to boost the welfare and well-being of the family. Migrants spend a

significant amount of time away from home to meet basic needs, and thus, the family left behind has been reorganized and reconfigured accordingly.

#### **2.6.4 Structure and Agency in Migration Theory**

According to Bakewell (2010), the structure and agency argument is still essential to migration studies. It needs to be used to create a comprehensive, integrated theory of migration that many theories have disregarded. According to Bakewell, the theory either focuses on human agency while ignoring structures or focuses on the structural environment while partially ignoring migrants' agency (Bakewell, 2010). To bring structure and agency together in the current study, I have used practice theory to some extent (O'Reilly, 2012). It is used to connect the two ideas as they relate to migration. This will make it possible to analyze migration as a process framed and shaped by social networks, migration legislation, and migrants' decisions about these factors. Therefore, it is thought that the migrant is neither a perfectly rational decision-maker nor the victim of factors at play that are out of control. Here, it is understood that migration results from individual agency that is aided or restrained by the particular environment in which it takes place. In addition, a theory of practice defines practice as: "the continuing processes involved in the formation of social life; it does not support subjectivism or objectivism but instead seeks to comprehend the interactions between structures and acts at the meso level" (O'Reilly, 2012). Structure and agency are reconciled in this study using practice theory, which acknowledges that they cannot be distinguished from one another and that the middle ground should be given priority. The self-perpetuating nature of agency and structure, which both impact one another, is perhaps reflected in Morawska's (2001) structuration model. According to Morawska (2001), migration is

a process of structuration in which macro and micro structures interact with one another to affect social actors' agency, which in turn affects the structures.

The structures that permit movement can exist on two levels of the Nepalese migratory trend. At a macro level, a sizable portion of people leave Nepal every day due to the expansion of the global market and changes in government policy for both male and female migration. Transnational networks of migrants serve to change the patriarchal societal roles associated with gender at a more intimate or micro level. Gender, things related to it, and gender roles may make moving around and making decisions easier. Hoang (2011) contends that while migrants are frequently perceived as being gender-neutral, their identities as men or women affect the choices they make. Internal Vietnamese migrants and their agency in the face of particular gendered systems were the focus of research. The concept of agency is closely intertwined with that of power. She observes that traditional gender norms are still prevalent in Vietnam, much like in Poland. She emphasizes that gender and marital status are the two elements most influencing how men and women perceive migration (Hoang, 2011).

## **2.7 Remittances**

The linkages between movers and non-movers are particularly strong in the global context since both groups engage in processes of economic, cultural, political, and social interaction (Markley, 2011). As a result, migrants are involved in the movement of commodities, money, and ideas and expertise to their friends or family back home. According to Levitt (1998), migrants sent home social and economic remittances. She defines social remittance as the transfer of social capital, customs, and norms from and to the sending nations of migrants. These types of remittance exchanges occur when migrants visit or reside in their hometowns and use other

forms of communication, such as letters, videos, cassettes, emails, blog posts, and phone calls, or when visitors from outside the receiving country pay visits to those who are migrants in those countries (Levitt, 2001). According to Markley (2011), remittances should be discussed separately from other issues and without regard to the context because they go beyond financial transfers and indicate that migrants are sending various things at once. According to Levitt and Lamba (2011), migrant experiences from their home countries significantly impact how they integrate into the new community, which affects the money they eventually send back home. Therefore, in this thesis, I frame remittance (economic and social) activities as one of the tools to construct the connection between the lives of movers and non-movers.

Different forms of capital can manifest itself in three basic ways, depending on the field in which it operates. Economic capital, is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; cultural capital is convertible into economic capital under certain conditions and may be institutionalized; and as political capital, which is convertible into economic capital under certain conditions and may be institutionalized (Bourdieu, 1986). A person traveling internationally is, therefore, involved in transferring social and economic remittances. For instance, economic remittances are used to finance household needs, the education of immediate family members, and agricultural costs rather than long-term capital investments in homes and land (Bohara, 2013). Similarly, Thiemes and Wyss (2005) explain that enhanced social capital, education of the children, migration-specific knowledge, and increased financial capital are the primary outcomes of migration. It shows that children's education is supported to a significant extent by the economic remittances of migrant workers. Thus, ever since migrant laborers arrived, migration has had a big impact on kids' education. The ethnographic

research by Levitt (2001) between Jamaica Plain, a neighborhood in Boston, and Miraflores, a village in the Dominican Republic, explores the strong familial, religious, and political ties between migrants and the families they left behind. According to Levitt, migration creates a separation between the offspring of migrants and non-migrants. She argues that some kids don't have or even can't afford the uniform or equipment needed to play the game, while others do have finer clothing, fancier book bags, and a full set of school supplies (ibid.). In this instance, migration can produce greater funding for education, enabling families to keep their kids in school longer than non-migrant families' kids.

Similarly, Levitt offers a thorough account of how transnational migration disrupts family and professional life, challenges migrants' conceptions of race and gender, and impacts those who remain behind equally. In addition to bringing money home, migrants also bring ideas and behaviors that encourage the women they leave behind to think creatively, engage in outside activities, and connect with social services, healthcare facilities, and educational institutes. Levitt explores the idea that once the wife leaves home, men and women behave equally when making decisions and caring for household duties (ibid). She also talks about how younger women, unmarried, had greater incomes, were more independent from their spouses, and were more open to new ideas and behaviors. Therefore, both social and economic remittances penetrate both migrants' and non-migrants' daily lives in an equal manner, influencing their behavior, attitudes, and values in the transnational realm.

## **2.8 The Absence of Gender in Mainstream Migration Theories**

As one of the earliest factors influencing human existence, gender also has an impact on migration and the lives of migrants. However, during the past century, scholarly studies on international migration have frequently ignored gender

(Pessar&Mahler, 2003). But today, it's widely acknowledged that migration is gendered (ibid.). Although women are essential to migration, according to Morokvasic (1983), they have historically been "socially invisible, despite being numerically and socially present," their existence was only finally recognized when they entered the waged labor market. Male scholars received the majority of funding in the years following World War I as a result of the dearth of female academics and the lack of money for initiatives promoting social change; but, in the 1960s, "scholarly interest in migration reemerged alongside feminism" (Donato et. al., 2006). In the 1970s and 1980s, feminist work was perhaps readily rejected as being exclusively female-focused and thus only addressing half of the migratory population (ibid.). According to Zlotnik (2003), before the 1970s, most studies and writings on global migration were exclusively geared toward male migrants, whereas women migrants were viewed as followers.

Traditional gender norms and the premise of a male breadwinner family model have dominated classic migration ideas (Ackers, 1998). Female migrants first appeared in the literature around the middle of the 1970s. Recent research has shown that they are active decision-makers, contrary to earlier stereotypes of them as "following, dependents, unproductive persons, lonely, illiterate, and ignorant" (Kindler &Napiera, 2010). Social scientists "moved toward gender analysis largely as an intellectual approach for ending the marginalization of women-centered work" in the late 1980s, it might be claimed (Donato et. al., 2006, p. 14). This study examines the prevalent economic model of migration that emphasizes male breadwinner power and profit maximization.

According to Morokvasic (1983), migrant women from developing countries use paid employment opportunities in the developed world as a means of escaping the

oppressive (patriarchal and other) customs in their own country. For many migrant women, migration was the catalyst for their transition from unpaid work in the household to a paid job in the labor market (Phizacklea, 1983). Women exposed to the workforce frequently develop a sense of self-respect, acquire the resources to become independent, and develop the confidence necessary to demand a change in the gendered division of labor. According to Kosack (1976), moving may be a "move towards freedom." Consequently, economic and social remittances may favor women's gender roles or how they are seen (ibid). Conversely, migration may lead to a "feminization of women's roles," in which case, after migration, women consent to accept even greater responsibilities (Ho, 2006). It has been agreed that further research is needed on migrant women's gender negotiation tactics for paid employment and unpaid informal family caregiving (ibid). As a result, this study aims to support shifting gender roles in international contexts.

## **2.9 Can Migration be Used to Reshape Gender Roles?**

It is evident from the language in the preceding section that gender is viewed as a matrix of identities, behaviors, and power relations that are created by a society's culture by sex. Additionally, different communities have different ideas about what comprises the actions, ideals, and displays of masculinity and femininity. Gender is not fixed but rather fluid; as a result, it is both socially and historically formed. Two issues presented by the feminist interpretation of gender as a "social construction" have dominated research on women and migration during the past ten years. The first concerns patriarchy, the structures of authority, dominance, and control that men use to reign over women (Findlay & Williams, 1990; Chant, 1992). Feminists worry that patriarchy offers men preferential access to societal resources, which affects men's people's ability to move or their willingness to do so. The second worry is how men

and women interact with one another and how migration affects how women relate to their partners and other family members and their reproductive and productive obligations (Pedraza, 1991; Kabeer, 1994). A variety of economic and non-economic processes and connections to the study of migration are addressed in feminist scholars' new thinking on migration (Kanaiaupuni, 2000). It contributes to our understanding of how people from specific groups are kept out of the immigration process based on their gender (Bridge, 1994). Chant's (1992) research on gender relations and migration demonstrates that gender relations and the division of labor in rural households, as well as power dynamics and decision-making processes, impact migration. Understanding the pattern of migration across many regions, social groupings, and families as a process rooted in various social processes, structures, and relationships is made easier by the new migration arena. This covers the expectations for the division of sexual labor and balancing complementary sources of income in Nepalese culture. This study seeks to determine if transnational women's migration adds to their empowerment and how these women succeed in establishing a sustainable lifestyle.

While some studies contend that migration improves the lives of women left behind, others contend that migration can hurt women's lives. According to Chant and Craske (2003), women may have more opportunities due to male out migration since they may have greater access to and control over resources. As women take on new tasks and responsibilities, the argument goes, gender relations are fluid, not set (Mahler & Pessar, 2006). As a result, the previously ingrained gender notions regarding the roles and obligations of women are also changing throughout time as a result of societal change. And finally, there has been a change for the better regarding women's standing and empowerment (Chant & Craske, 2003). The burden of work for

the women left behind, who must actively participate in households, farmland, or other operations, is the opposite of migration-related changes. These women participate in household decision-making, but only when their male counterparts are not around; as soon as the migrants return, the women lose all influence. Elson (1992) notes that if women are still dependent on men to gain access to and mobilize resources, then the increase in female-headed households is not a sign of "emancipation from male dominance" (p. 41).

Therefore, defining the ideas of status and empowerment is essential, considering the favorable and unfavorable effects of migration on women's lives. One's position or social rank and the prestige that goes along with it are referred to as one's "social status" (Giddens, 1984). Social roles and the gendered division of labor are intimately tied to social rank. The fact that distinct jobs are given to different genders strengthens how society views certain statuses, as noted by Lorber (1994), who also observes that "the higher the status, the more prestigious and esteemed the profession, and the bigger its rewards" (p. 30). "People's ability to make strategic life decisions in an environment where this ability was previously denied to them," according to Kabeer (1999), is what empowerment is (p. 437). Even though empowerment is a vague term, it is frequently operationalized by considering factors like negotiating strength, access to and control over resources, personal freedom, and autonomy (Kabeer, 1999). Pessar and Mahler (2003) evaluate several studies on the effects of male emigration on the status and empowerment of women. They discover this research to be ambiguous. Connell (1984) noted that reviews with mixed results indicated three probable outcomes. First, remittances, more freedom in decision-making, increased autonomy, and a more flexible view of gender roles can all benefit women's positions. Second, despite changes in the gendered distribution of work,

women's status can continue to be the same since gender ideals have not changed.

Thirdly, a decline in women's standing may occur. This can be due to men's elevated position as wealthy or cosmopolitan migrants, or it might be the result of men being excluded from the greater community. Male emigration has both beneficial and negative consequences for the women left behind in the South Pacific, according to Connell (1984). Some women tend to their coffee gardens and make money by selling coffee. Women gain status and decision-making authority as a result. However, disputes about money ownership occasionally prevent women from keeping the money they make. "On the one hand, women may acquire independence, autonomy, proficiency in new skills, and status, whether they are their migrants or remain in communities as household heads after male relatives leave," writes Connell in her conclusion. On the other side, they might lose their position and independence, suffer from worse health and welfare, and submit to men (p. 975). Chant and Craske (2003) concur that when the husband migrates and takes up his position as the earner, the wife sometimes becomes more dependent on him, while in other situations; women left behind may become more assertive and independent. Women from migrant homes had better decision-making skills in a rural Mexican case study. Similar findings were made by Bever (2002), who discovered that women from migratory households had more power over decisions, control over the household budget, and responsibility for purchasing. Chant (1997) states that although Chant and Craske (2003) concur that women typically have more personal independence and decision-making authority, this is not always true. According to her, the wife's decision-making and freedom are not necessarily increased by the husband's absence. Men make many domestic decisions. In certain circumstances, women are also afraid that other members of the village may spread rumors about their "moral propriety" if they go to the fields or the

town (Chant 1997, p. 16). Gledhill (1995) also observed that when women's husbands are not there, their behavior is more strictly "policed." In conclusion, little research has been done on women left behind when their husbands move (Pedraza, 1991; Posel, 2001). Additionally, current research on the effect on women's status and empowerment is equivocal (Connell, 1984; Pessar & Mahler, 2003). This case study was created to fill these literature gaps and answer the demand for social scientists to collaborate with other academics using various analytical scales (Chant, 1991).

### **2.10 Interplay of Migration, Remittances and Gender**

The family member who takes on the role of chief decision-maker for the family is usually the recipient of money transfers from migrants. It was believed that women received the majority of remittances and transmitted a bigger percentage of their salaries (Levitt, 2001). Women's social status is enhanced by remittances sent by women migrants back to their home. Thus, women act as both senders and recipients and have control over resources and play crucial role in decision making power. Nevertheless, this is not always the case, which maintains the gender hierarchy, since men also commonly send remittances to other male family members (Jolly & Reeves, 2005). Patriarchy, gender, transnationalism, empowerment, and remittances are among the crucial concepts that were previously mentioned and are constantly connected. When it comes to explaining how gender influences migration and remittances, they are all very important. But, the situation has changed since, although women used to migrate mostly to be with their family, now days they also do so for economic reasons. Worldwide about half of the 185 million migrants are thought to be women. As a result, this feminization of migration has changed how males are positioned in transnational families because the left behind must participate in domestic and extracurricular activities (Sorensen, 2004). On the other hand, these

women can still have less influence over home tasks and less freedom (Jolly & Reeves, 2005). This results from socially imposed roles and obligations placed on both men and women (Reeves & Baden, 2000).

The household livelihood strategy and expectations of contributions through remittances may impact this even when women migrate alone (Jolly & Reeves, 2005), which may put a lot of pressure on the female migrant from her family (IOM, 2011). Women are frequently more affected than men by balancing work and family obligations (ibid). For women, migration can be more dangerous than for men since they are more likely to experience sexual, verbal, and physical abuse when traveling (ibid.). Migrant women frequently experience double prejudice in the job market because they are both women and foreigners (ibid.). On a global scale, remittances sent home by male and female migrants are roughly equal. Women typically make less money than men. Women contribute a larger percentage of their income more frequently for longer periods (ibid). The existing economic problem faced by the families forced women for foreign migration to overcome the existing social, educational, health and economic problems (IOM, 2011). Female migrants are more likely than male migrants to work in lower-skilled positions in the domestic and care industries, as well as in entertainment, catering, agriculture, and the sex business, all of which are characterized by subpar working conditions, low earnings, and the possibility of exploitation.

Transnational networks are altered by economic, social, or cultural remittances and by the context of both their sending and receiving. Gender and class are also changed by remittances (Bailey, 2007). According to Jolly and Reeves (2005), migration may undermine established gender roles. Through migration, either by themselves or their men, women may acquire greater freedom, economic

independence, and self-assurance. However, they may also be harmed by the additional job load, the need to pay remittances when they have moved, or by having to take on their husband's duties and responsibilities when they have moved. However, the abilities women acquire allow them to take on new responsibilities within their families and take over as the primary breadwinners when their spouses have moved away. However, men may get depressed, start drinking alcohol, or become more violent against women in both public and private as a response to these changes (Jolly & Reeves, 2005). Because they impact families' everyday lives, remittances can potentially change gender norms in both the host and home communities (Wong, 2006). According to numerous studies, women are mostly responsible for receiving remittances. According to the IOM (2011), giving women more control over remittances is essential for emancipation. When their husbands migrated, women might take over as the head of the household and decide how to use the remittances (IOM, 2011). With education, age, and length of marriage, women's ability to make judgments about how to spend remittances typically increases (Debnath&Selim, 2009). According to a study, "How Moroccan women's roles changed when their husbands moved abroad," they primarily felt more constrained and less free when their spouses moved away (De Haas & Van Rooij, 2010). Women are being urged to take on all of the family's responsibilities and get involved in areas and functions previously beyond their purview. Because it is not always a free choice, it should not be assumed that this new function automatically equates with independence. Their spouses assume their roles as patriarchs as soon as they return, so the increase in power is primarily transient (ibid). Male migrants want to return home more often than female migrants do so because male mobility often results in status loss, whereas female migration may offer more flexibility (IOM, 2011). According to universal consensus, women who send and receive remittances can influence gendered power dynamics by participating in decision-making and achieving

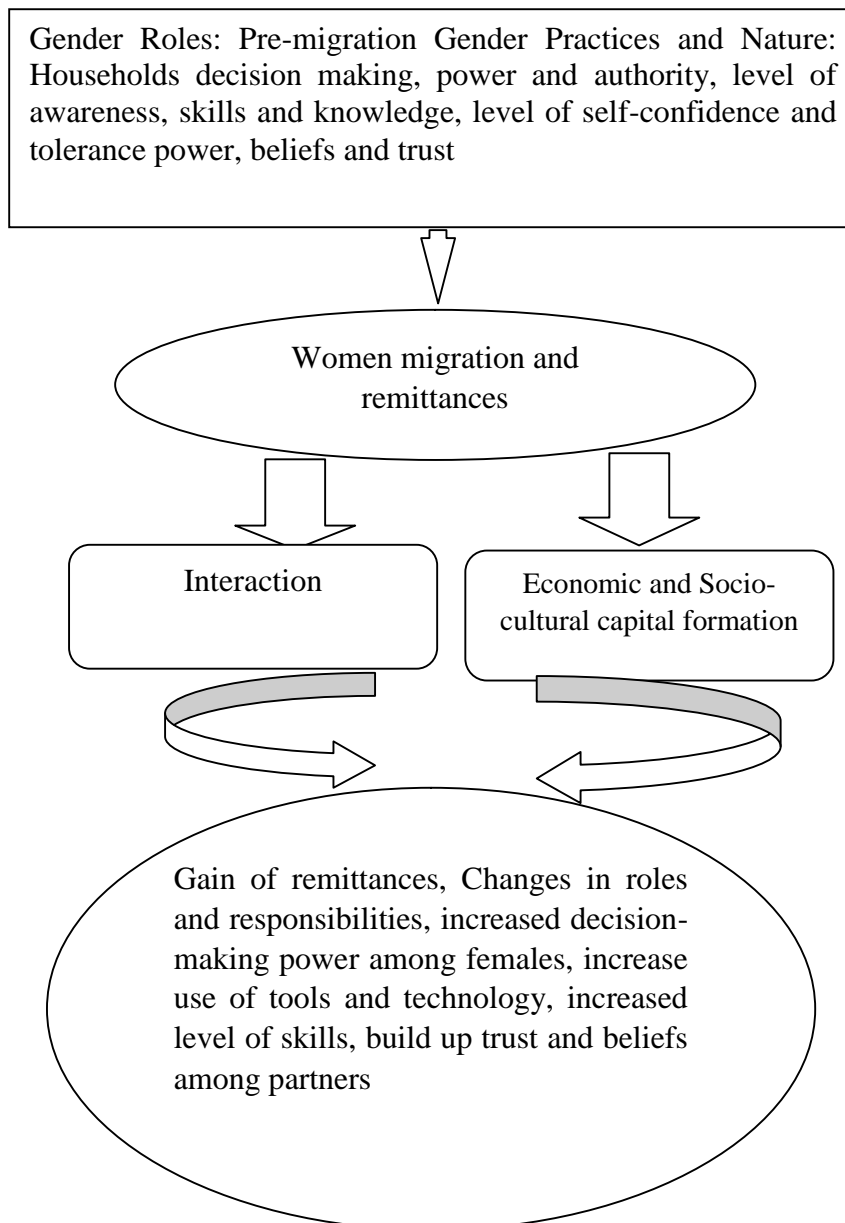
economic status through participation in the labor market. While the women who migrate take on a new role as the family's major breadwinner, the women who stay behind may also assume greater responsibilities and autonomy in managing the home. Economic remittances are not, however, necessary for a woman's standing in society; sociocultural factors like education and religion also play a significant role.

### **2.11 Analytical Model**

Like a theory, an analytical model is a collection of explanatory ideas that help describe a certain phenomenon, circumstance, or activity. This presents certain angles on the problems. Analytical frameworks highlight many questions and how they relate to various issues, with the option to emphasize a certain concern. The debate about gender, migration, and remittances has provided a framework and model that may be utilized to analyze the research problem that is shown in the figure. The model makes it easier to explore this study by integrating several theories, including those on migration and the reconstruction of gender roles in Nepalese societies. To establish the relationship between migration, remittances, and gender practices, the economic and sociocultural remittances that migrants send will be viewed as relating to the causes and factors that induce new types of life practices and change traditional notions of work tied up with gender division. The conventional forms of livelihood, such as farming, raising cattle, looking for a government job, and so forth, are changing due to the rising trends in transnational migration due to the economic and sociocultural remittances supplied by the migrants. These types of migration allow the families who remain to start new, sustainable businesses with cutting-edge equipment and technology. The migrants are observed to be active in as they play the role of breadwinner as well as take concern about the household's management. The main goal of this study is to examine how women's labor migration affects gender roles and responsibilities and how the returnee women migrants readjust in their family's life.

**Figure 2.1**

Conceptual Framework of Women's Labor Migration and Gender Changes



Thus, once women enter in labor market she has chance to accumulate various forms of capital such as: economic, social, and cultural which she transfer to their families through different means of sources and in doing so , migrants aren't only empowered but also become a parts of decision making process in the households level.

Nonetheless, the long term physical separation away from home raises a trusts and obligation towards the families.

## **2.12 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed and discussed the theories of patriarchy, gender, international migration, and remittances. Based on various academic works, the mechanism by which gender roles evolve is discussed. It is concluded that migration and remittances may operate as intervening factors in the social construction of gender roles. A gendered perspective on migration was presented, emphasizing the male bias among migration theorists and acknowledging the marginalization of women in migration. Gender, in my opinion, is a global and continuing socio-cultural process that can be altered by the economic, social, symbolic, and cultural capital that migrants acquire in the context of international exchange. A few important issues are highlighted by the amount of material discussed in this chapter. It makes the case that patriarchy and the roles it assigns to men and women are deeply ingrained in societal norms and customs. According to the literature, migration may have a variety of effects on gender roles, ranging from emancipation to the strengthening of women.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers the study methodology and procedures for gathering empirical data. This chapter aims to thoroughly describe and justify the processes involved in data collection and analysis and tie them to philosophical and methodological viewpoints. The chapter is organized in the following manner: Ontological and epistemological perspectives are presented first. The next section discusses my role as a researcher and my reflexivity during the research process. Then the research approach is explained, and the research questions are provided. It is followed by a discussion of the research techniques adopted for this study, including a literature review and qualitative interviews. The pilot study, finding possible respondents, the sample size, and its characteristics are then discussed, followed by a discussion on field notes and ethical issues. The data management, transcription, and analysis processes are then described. Finally, research constraints are taken into account, and findings are offered at the end.

#### **3.2 Methodological Considerations**

This section examines the chosen methodological approach. Research positionality and reflexivity are examined after an explanation of ontological and epistemological choices.

#### **3.3 Ontological and Epistemological Concerns**

Different elements of the social world are represented depending on the ontological perspective. The researcher's role and list of the elements that, in the researcher's opinion, was crucial for the study. Social actors, emotions,

understandings, interpretations, motivations, perceptions, attitudes, and experiences may all be components of social reality (Mason, 2002).

The research has used mixed methods for data collection. The most popular position as the philosophical foundation of mixed-methods research is the pragmatist position. This approach assumes that knowledge, as a result of person-environment interaction, is both constructed and founded on mind-independent reality and emphasizes the instrumental role of theories in inquiry (Shan, 2022). According to the pragmatic viewpoint, both the mind-independent physical world and the constructed social and psychological world exist, and reality is complex and multifaceted (Creswell & Creswell, 2018); social scientific research is used to solve problems (Teddlie&Tashakkori, 2010, pp. 17–18). The quantitative research approach is often associated with the postpositivist position, while the qualitative research approach is usually coupled with the constructive/interpretivist position. My research moved in between both of these positions, so I chose mixed methods for designing and conducting the research. It helps in a better understanding of the phenomena being studied.

### **3.4 Reflexivity in Research**

Whether researchers choose research topics free of theoretical or ideological biases or leanings is debatable. While researchers are somewhat biased observers, social reality is altered throughout the study, leading to the presentation of findings in a biased manner. Therefore, it is essential to consider how the researcher fits into the research procedures. This highlights that researchers are inherently influenced by their background, including their experiences, opinions, culture, and history, which consequently affects the study they conduct (Yuval-Davis, 1997; Creswell, 2013). No research is value-free, and to maximize transparency, the researcher should regularly

consider their social position and its impact on the studied topic. The researcher is a product of his or her society's social structures and institutions, just like the person being researched or the participant (Hesse-Biber, 2014). Therefore, reflexivity is crucial in all studies (Gawlewicz, 2016). I have considered this and put it into practice in this study.

I am from Pokhara, with a different cultural background; therefore, even though I am an unproblematic "cultural insider" to most participants, I am not. I had to balance the research because I am a researcher and a member of the Madhesi community who has lived here for the past thirteen years. One could argue that I was a "familiar stranger" in this study. I was similar to the research participants (in terms of certain characteristics, such as nationality, gender, immigration status, sexual orientation, and frequently also age, class, and marital status), making me feel like an "insider" and "familiar." At the same time, I was a "stranger" in that I assumed the role of a researcher compiling data on a completely distinct culture, who would have had very different experiences in understanding the way of life and interpreting their meaning. As experts on their own lives who participated in the interview as a "co-construction" of meaning, I identified the research participants. I sought to compare reports from the "inside" and the "outside," acting as an expert and an insider (i.e., contrasting the participants' perspectives with what is known from academic literature). Even though this community is frequently referred to as being difficult to reach, I can say that, in part, because I am a member of the Madhesi community in the eastern part of Nepal, I had little trouble finding migrants' families left behind who were willing to participate in the research. In every interview, the two sides, "insider and outsider," are likely to be similar in some ways and distinct in others. The former is based on similarities, but the latter makes any disparities obvious. There is a chance

that the researcher will always be somewhat different from the research participants while simultaneously sharing things in common. An interview is, thus, a chance to investigate and continually renegotiate these during the research process.

I was upfront about my roles and background right away. I introduced myself and provided my background information to the participants at the start of each session. This activity could help the study participants get closer, have lower hierarchies, and build rapport among one another. Additionally, it highlights certain similarities in their post-migration family lives. The interviewees could select pseudonyms, which might have increased their sense of ownership over the research. In qualitative research, especially with a feminist or gendered alignment, reciprocity is essential (Hesse-Biber, 2014). I offered to provide any pertinent research outputs to the research participants and the interview transcripts to anyone interested because I strongly believe in giving back. Decide whether to conduct research on, for, or with people before considering the relationship between the researcher and the study subjects.

I wanted to do all three with this assignment. To improve the participants' situations, I would have preferred to be a thoughtful and cautious partner, but this was not possible because of the methodological choices mentioned above. This was accomplished, in my opinion, by giving them a voice and the chance to be heard, adding more balance to the body of literature already written on the gendered lives of migrant families left behind. To prevent one side from exerting power over the other, as is required when adhering to feminist principles, I made every effort to maintain the power relations of the interview interaction at a level that was convenient for both parties (i.e., the interviewer and the respondent). I acknowledge my "fallibility" and want to blend my expertise with the research participants. I was quiet and took notice

of their experiences, which I recognized as similar to mine when they were asked personal questions about their sentiments, emotions, and how they felt without their counterparts. Since I shared sex, ethnicity, nationality, native language, and a frequently wide age range with the respondents, it is believed that the interviewer effect was negligible (Denscombe, 2010). However, this cannot be confirmed. I made an effort to be considerate of the research participants' socioeconomic, religious, and cultural backgrounds. I made sure to maintain my modesty, wear casual clothing, and always speak in normal terms. This is not done to disparage the research subjects but rather to acknowledge that I did not want to come across as a dominant, authoritative figure. I merely desired to be recognized as "one of them," part of the immigrant community, emphasizing similarities rather than differences. Notably, several of the interviewees must have felt at ease in my presence because they frequently used words like "we," "us," "you know how it is," "you have gone through this," etc. This could imply that they saw me as "one of them," which was also often the case for me. This is accepted as a manifestation of our shared sense of belonging. However, this presumed similarity of experiences must be considered and challenged rather than taken for granted (i.e., probed further). Otherwise, the research risks being opaque since certain data may be lost due to erroneously assuming that experiences are universal. In this study, I and the respondents were often thought to be similar or different. The shared origin, spoken language, and experience of living alone spark conversations and improve interpersonal relationships frequently. By emphasizing my migration "adventure" at the start of each interview, I got the subjects to "open up." At the same time, it occasionally seemed as though this supposed sameness was a restriction. This was the case when the woman assumed I would instantly understand particular circumstances or cultural contexts because we shared the traits mentioned

above. I realized on multiple occasions that I was emotionally invested in the study. Thus, I was interested in the outcome because I wanted to conduct a careful study for my degree and professional development and worried about how gender is portrayed due to migration. To prevent my background from tainting the research findings, I had to continually consider my roles as an insider (a woman married in Pokhara) and an outsider (a researcher). Although this could contradict what I previously said about the researchers' backgrounds being considered as evidence, I believe this should be considered cautiously to preserve the empirical contributions.

### **3.5 Description of the Field Work**

The main goal of my fieldwork was to learn about the experiences that men and women in migrant homes had due to their relationship to the migration process. Semi-structured interviews with migrant families that were left behind were conducted during the research. The fieldwork was conducted in Pokhara Metropolitan City of Gandaki Province in Nepal, where 13.8% of all migrants leave their families behind. The UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Malaysia are the most common destinations for these migrants (MoLESS, 2020). Pokhara, the capital of Gandaki Province, is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the nation in terms of area. With 518,452 residents in 101,669 houses in 2021, it will be Nepal's second-most populous city after Kathmandu (CBS, 2021). The city also houses the Kaski District's administrative center. Two hundred kilometers (120 miles) west of Kathmandu, the nation's capital, sits Pokhara. Due to internal migration from neighboring districts seeking opportunities for better education, health, market facilities, transportation, a good standard of living, and many other things, the population density is high, and more people live outside the valley area. The desire of migrant families to adopt a contemporary lifestyle that ensures a high level of living is a driving motivation

behind internal migration in rural areas of the nation. Pokhara was chosen as the study area for several reasons, but its diverse ethnic population is the primary factor since it makes the city ideal for addressing my research issue and attaining the study's goals. Male and female migrants who have left their families behind and are living in good socioeconomic conditions, enjoying complete autonomy, and feeling self-satisfied are prevalent in Pokhara.

To achieve the study's goals, I selected the Slum community in Pokhara. The neighborhood itself is an example of an urban lifestyle. The entire population is still denied access to urban amenities because of the scattered communities in the city. Unskilled and illiterate people travel to the city due to rising urbanization, regional imbalance, and the need for employment, security, and education. The government's absence of a plan and policy for managing slum dwellers contributes to the population growth that occurs each year. Due to unplanned migration and a shortage of social housing programs, people have been forced to live in semi-urban housing circumstances, leading to squatter communities. In addition, as cities continue to grow and modernize, people from rural areas are drawn there, hoping to take advantage of the increased opportunities. However, due to poverty, low-skilled jobs, illiteracy, a language barrier, a caste issue, and other issues, the desire to live in a city region with a good standard of living does not fully materialize. They have consequently been barred from city life's social, cultural, economic, and political domains. The study concentrated on how this community has used global migration to address daily issues and how the patriarchal structure of society is changing due to the movement of various types of capital. The primary goals of selecting the slum community are to comprehend the family composition of those left behind and how changes in the flow of capital affect their life aspirations.

### 3.6 Research Procedures

This research has been conducted using a feminist research technique. Gender is a fundamental organizational concept in feminism that powerfully influences our consciousness, abilities, institutions, power and privilege distribution, and the specific circumstances of our lives (Wambui, 2013). "Feminism poses us with challenging issues that make us consider what it means to be a woman in our society, whether we want to change that meaning, and if so, how, as fully conscious human beings, we struggle with the paradoxes of our existence," the author said (Marshment, 1997, p. 151). Feminism, in the words of Liz Kelly, Sheila Burton, and Linda Regan (1994, p. 28), "is for us both a theory and a practice, a framework that guides our lives." Its goal is to understand female oppression so that we can put an end to it. Feminist research, therefore, entails the duty of bringing about change and freeing women from oppression and subordination, as well as being an essential component of the process of discovery and understanding. According to Liz Stanley and Sue Wise (1993, p. 32), women's feminist consciousness is anchored in the everyday experiences of being and being treated as a woman. They claim that research conducted by women is essential to feminist scholarship.

Furthermore, Stanley and Wise (1993, p. 43) contend that feminist research has a "unique value orientation" and a "different perspective on reality." To study gender relations, one must be concerned with reflexivity—turning inward, or a process of self-reference (Davies, 1999, p. 4)—and with reflecting on, critically evaluating, and analytically examining the nature of the research process. Her background plays a role in how knowledge and conclusions are arrived at because the researcher is also a topic in the investigation.

However, the feminist approach is also attacked for its excessive focus on gender, use of human experience rather than scientific technique, rejection of hierarchy, and emancipation as a study objective (Hammersley, 1995). Hammersley specifically contends that emphasizing gender excludes other components of the phenomenon being studied, that emancipation is a universal objective, and that placing more emphasis on direct experience than method is predicated on the notion that women have particularly valuable insights. I contend that women do have particularly valuable insights rooted in their everyday experiences as women and derived from their feminist consciousness. Furthermore, emphasizing experience as a method does not exclude being accurate, precise, and rigorous; rather, interpretive frameworks created from experience contribute to creating high-quality information. According to Ramazanoglu (1992, p. 208), feminist techniques are not exclusive approaches to reality but diverse investigations of the veracity of knowledge derived from many perspectives, manifesting a political commitment to women's empowerment. In addition, according to Smith and Immanuel (1992), no single social standpoint is preferable in all knowledge domains. What matters is our capacity to consider our social position and its implications.

I argue that by using gender as an analytical category and a social construct, we can better understand why male copartners who are left behind find themselves in a vulnerable position when it comes to upholding the male identity that society has assigned to them. According to Lourdes Beneria and Martha Roldan (1987), gender entails classifying qualities, activities, attitudes, and behaviors. Generally, those associated with men or their roles are given a higher value. Because of these imbalances, men are privileged, and women are subordinate. In addition, I contend that even though the subject of my research is migrant copartners—both wives and

husbands—gender remains the primary analytical tenet when it comes to analyzing how the copartners are positioned within socioeconomic power structures and institutional frameworks in their families. However, I understand that to provide a more thorough study of power, gender must be integrated with other axes of differentiation, like race, age, class, and ethnicity. We can create a framework that covers every aspect of women's lives by combining gender analysis with knowledge of power structures and patriarchy.

The semi-structured interview followed by a case study is a highly effective qualitative technique used in feminist research. The techniques exposed me to the respondents' perspectives and actions toward the subjects. They assisted me in understanding the roles, obligations, and duties as well as the sociocultural, economic, and political decisions made in their circumstances in the absence of their counterparts. However, I discovered that these qualitative methods are typically based on tiny samples from particular areas, and the conclusions may not be generalizable to a larger population. As a result, I frequently adopt a quantitative approach to overcome the limitations of qualitative methods. As a result, I think that to adequately answer my research question—which falls short of offering insights into the study subjects' views and experiences—I had to use both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Additionally, when using simple quantitative approaches to analyze socioeconomic processes, a lot of important information may be overlooked because statistical indicators are only simple windows into complicated processes (Carr, 1994; Choy, 2014). Therefore, mixed methodologies have been used in this research to solve the issues provided in the previous chapter. Research integrating qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection, analysis, and interpretation is generally

called "mixed methods research" (Tashakkori& Creswell, 2007). Mixed techniques are thought to be very helpful for recognizing the advantages and disadvantages of the two ways and enhancing each other to strengthen the study analysis (Jick, 1979; Choy, 2014). This study has offered a more comprehensive understanding of gender experiences during migration by utilizing mixed methodologies. Given the nature of the study issues, which are highly susceptible to interference, as stated in Chapter 1, direct interaction with family members left behind by female migrants, as well as returnee migrants who had been affected by the migration process, seemed critical for this study given the everyday lifestyle and personal difficulties, as well as the socio-cultural practices in Nepal. So, from May to August 2022, I conducted fieldwork in Pokhara Metropolitan City. Fieldwork was essential to properly frame my research questions, comprehend the sociocultural norms at the research locations, and evaluate the findings of my quantitative research. However, I could not determine if the results from my fieldwork could be applied to the rest of the country due to the time and resource limitations for performing extensive fieldwork.

### **3.7 Sampling Technique**

In this study, the purposive sampling technique was used for the data collection. When attempting to contact those people who meet the sampling requirements and are thought to have the ability to contribute significantly to the field of study and have something to offer, this sampling strategy is very suitable. Because the sampling criteria were so detailed, this sampling approach was also pertinent to this investigation. Purposive sampling aims to produce a meaningful range of contexts or phenomena that will allow you to draw informed conclusions and perhaps cross-contextual comparisons, allowing you to construct a solid case. In this instance, the

sample is intended to capture a pertinent range relative to the larger universe but not to directly reflect it (Mason, 2002, pp. 123–124).

Snowball or chain sampling was used to include a variety of people in the study after first ensuring that they were suitable and could improve the findings (Ritchie, Lewis, and Elam, 2003, p. 94). I took samples from the slum community of the Pokhara Metropolitan in western Nepal. Due to the growing tendency of women to migrate, this area of Nepal was selected for the study because no previous research had been done there. The community was picked because residents of the city area were uprooted from their villages as a result of the Nepalese Maoist uprising in quest of better prospects and to satisfy their fundamental necessities. However, due to the urbanization issue and the lack of employment prospects, individuals are looking for another location to meet their fundamental needs and have begun to migrate to other countries. There has never been a viable solution for their family and community to solve their problem due to the expanding slum population and their incorrect placement by the government. Thus, the current study has focused on how a slum community interacts regularly when female residents are not there and how they contribute to the process of gender change. The snowballing approach was used to find suitable people who met the requirements for inclusion in the sample. I questioned each member of the immigrant's family to see if they knew anyone who had emigrated earlier than three years ago, leaving their family behind in Pokhara, and if so, if I could add them to the list of responses.

### **3.8 Sample**

Family members of female migrants and returning female migrants made up the sample of respondents. This study project focuses on spouses to understand gendered power interactions in households and outside the home. Additionally, this helps one

understand the types and patterns of the ideologies, power structures, and gendered practices they develop when their wives are not there. On the other hand, the returnee migrants contribute to raising awareness of the shifting roles and responsibilities during and after the migration process. Both the relatives of the migrants and the returnee migrants themselves were requested to participate in the study, given the goals and aims of the study as described in Chapter 1. A total of 198 interviews were conducted. The sample includes people with various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds who have at least ten years of residence in Pokhara and live with or without their parents due to the migration process. The fact that the female household members of the research participants had migrated for work within the past three years was another crucial need. For this study project, three years is deemed the minimum time required to transform gender roles and responsibilities. Its makeup was frequently examined to produce a sample that was as diversified as possible. I took care to invite as many different types of people as I could.

This should allow people with various demographic traits to express themselves, capturing a wide range of viewpoints and creating a balanced sample; approaching a cross-section of people with various traits allowed for this (e.g., age, occupation, education, number of children, current work; living with or without parents). Due to the involvement of the same range of individuals, snowballing may affect the sample composition and capture similar opinions. Thus, I routinely considered the sample composition to prevent this. Convenient or purposeful sampling is used in this situation because there is no precise number of records for female migrants from slums, and the sampling frame is unavailable. Cohen (1963, p. 75) has developed the equation to produce a representative sample when the

population size is unknown and the targeted population is very large. The following method is used to determine the required size for the sample study.

$$n_0 = \frac{Z_x^2 p q}{e^2}$$

The parameters used in the formula have the following explanation

"e" is the margin of error

"p " is the proportion of success

"q" is the defined as 1-p. In other words, it can be started as a proportion of failure.

Z<sup>2</sup> is the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts off an area & at the tails (1-& equals the desired confidence level, e.g. 95%, 90%). This is also termed a critical value which can be calculated using a z-table.

Computation:

$$Z^2 P Q = (1.96)^2 (0.85) (0.15) \dots \dots \dots 1$$

$$= 0.489804 \dots \dots \dots 2$$

$$Z^2 P Q / e^2 = 0.489804 / (0.05)^2 \dots \dots \dots 3$$

Sample size (n) = 196

$$n_0 = \frac{Z_x^2 p q}{e^2}$$

$$Z^2 \quad \quad \quad 3.8461$$

$$P \quad \quad \quad 0.85$$

$$Q \quad \quad \quad 0.15$$

$$e^2 \quad \quad \quad 0.0025$$

$$Z^2 * P * Q \quad \quad \quad 0.489405$$

$$Z^2 * P * Q / e^2 \quad \quad \quad 196$$

As a result, 196 people will make up the indefinite sample size predicted by the formulas above. However, I had chosen 211 participants for the study. During fieldwork, I discovered roughly 13 non-respondents during the field study who didn't want to participate, couldn't be reached at home despite multiple visits, and didn't react to the research questions. Since non-response can result in bias and cause a drop in the sample's true size, increasing variance, I had to reject those samples from my research. The actual sample size of the study is 198. Thus, the researcher used snowball sampling to collect the necessary data from the relevant respondents to achieve the study's goals.

### **3.9 Research Methods**

#### **3.9.1 In-depth Interview**

As the chosen research method, qualitative, in-depth interviews were used to collect data (see the attached interview topic guide as an appendix). They were chosen to provide depth of information, allow for casual conversation, and, when and where appropriate, formulate new questions in response to the interviewees' comments (Creswell, 2013). This approach may be especially useful when discussing more delicate subjects (such as domestic sexual division of labor), as the researcher can customize her questions to the circumstance and the subject she is interviewing. Because of their more flexible form, interviews have a better chance of describing social phenomena than standardized surveys. They were also preferred to focus groups because the subject can be too delicate to discuss in a group environment (e.g., discussing personal familial arrangements). Additionally, because of the flexibility and depth of understanding that can be attained through interviewing, it was a good choice for this qualitative research study (Babbie, 2004). In this instance, the interview is viewed as a dialogue (Oakley, 1981) between two (or more) fellow men

and women who each have something significant and fascinating to offer and want to listen to one another and share experiences. According to Oakley (Oakley, 1981) speaking with and interviewing women may be more fruitful than doing the same thing with men because they both identify as women.

A total of 55 in-depth interviews were performed, with an average duration of 50 minutes, including 48 in-depth interviews with respondents older than 30 and 7 respondents who were typically the children of migrants (aged 20 to 30). Particularly, during the interviews, the husbands and children were urged to discuss their roles and responsibilities, decision-making authority, financial responsibilities, decisions regarding their children's education and health, mobility, career, financial independence, and other aspects of general quality of life. In unmarried or single-migrant families, the parents and siblings of the migrant were taken into account to achieve the study's goals because their viewpoints on the shifting nature of gender roles were observed in the migrant's absence.

### **3.9.2 Case Study**

A typical qualitative method that permits the use of numerous techniques or triangulation, case studies indicate an effort to understand a topic under study thoroughly. A case study, according to Yin, is an empirical investigation that looks at a current phenomenon in its actual setting, particularly when the distinctions between the phenomenon and the setting are not immediately apparent (1994, p. 13). The significance of developing rapport, trust, and confidence with the respondents has guided me as I've conducted my research. I've also included them in contextualizing the questions, exploring different situations in their lives, evaluating the accuracy of the interview notes, and identifying gaps. Every situation is unique in and of itself, complete with its complexity, inconsistencies, and ambiguities. I tried to record the

experiences, knowledge, and viewpoints of the returnee women migrants in 15 additional unique cases, regardless of gender. The feminist reconstruction of our understanding of the world depends on listening to men's and women's voices and learning from their experiences. The construction of a gendered self-identity, the interaction between the individual and society in the establishment and maintenance of gender norms, and the dynamics of power relations between women and men are just a few of the aspects of gender relations that are illuminated by these people's narratives. Although gender social constructs affect the individual, they are also the product of human action.

### **3.9.3 Survey Questions**

The appendix contains the survey questions I utilized during my fieldwork. To establish household characteristics regarding demographics, migration, assets, and livelihood activities, 125 migrant households were chosen for the survey study. I often begin the interviews by outlining my study's goals and obtaining both men's and women's consent to participate. Then, I gathered background data from the participants, including their age, education, occupation, household setup, ownership of land, and other assets, as well as details about their destination, employment, length of stay, and frequency of visits.

I explained to them how the movement of their partners had changed their work duties, capacity for making decisions, and involvement in social and economic realms. Regarding the chances made available, the obstacles encountered, and the methods used to overcome them, I asked about these experiences. Although I adhered to the general style of my survey questionnaire, I kept the interviews semi-structured and informal to give the respondents more freedom to speak about their experiences than if I had required them to use a question-and-answer format. Through their

perspectives, as well as their experiences and perceptions of their daily lives, I gained a greater understanding of their experiences. 3 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with community members were held to address the shifting trends in the breadwinner position and power in households and the reasons behind the rising trend of women's migration in their community.

### **3.10 Pilot Study**

After receiving ethical clearance, pilot interviews were conducted. Pilot interviews let me determine whether the questions were correctly comprehended or needed to be changed or rearranged (Bazeley, 2013). Ten pilot interviews with returning migrants and their families were conducted. This method was very helpful in selecting real respondents who would match the study's objectives by serving as a topic guide for the interview. Regarding the duration of the interviews and the degree of attentiveness of the interviewees, the five interviews with returnee migrants varied greatly. Despite this, the interview guide had no significant flaws; the questions were clear and elicited the right amount of detail. I decided to replace several phrases with more general ones that are more likely to be used by those who are not familiar with more technical language (for example, "migration" was changed to "moving" and "traveling"). After more consideration, I decided to employ more questions to produce more detailed responses that specifically address the concepts of gendered experiences and welfare. Ten pilot interviews were also included in the data examination.

### **3.11 Field Notes**

Field notes were made throughout each interview and/or immediately afterward to capture the respondents' early impressions and/or any relevant categories and

themes for data analysis. The field notes included observations of the interviewer's body language, gestures, breaks, and early impressions of how well the interview went and how receptive the subject was. However, they are not confined to those topics; I took notes on everything I believed I could need later in the investigation. The field notes offered extra information on the first themes for analysis, or the breaks taken, for example, aided the data analysis. Additionally, the field notes proved valuable to the fieldwork and offered a wonderful chance for reflection.

### **3.12 Ethics**

The study complied with Tribhuvan University's guidelines for conducting ethical research. In the first year of the Ph.D., a proposal was created and presented for approval to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences under the Department of Sociology. Throughout the research, I kept any potential ethical dilemmas in mind. Informed permission and confidentiality were the two guiding principles used in the research and data-gathering process (Olsen, 2012). Before the interview, potential participants were informed of the research's broad goals and objectives. At any point during the research procedure, every participant was allowed to inquire about the study or withdraw (without a good cause). Each participant was asked if they consented to having their voice recorded. It was clarified that I use the digital voice recorder to keep eye contact and ensure no information is lost during transcription. I shall be the only one who listens to the recordings, as was also noted. Anonymity and confidentiality were promised to all participants, subject to any restrictions set by harm minimization. All participants had to select a pseudonym to maximize confidentiality and foster a sense of research ownership among respondents. The interview subjects were informed that the study's findings would be presented at national and international conferences, published as a Ph.D. thesis, and published in

scholarly journals. I also ensured I was safe by having a phone with me and telling at least one person where the interview would take place.

### **3.13 Data Handling**

Data handling is the focus of this section. The transcription process is first described. Second, problems with multilingual research and translation are examined because they might present new difficulties. The interviews were transcribed verbatim. This sort of transcription is arguably one of the most valuable and appropriate because it covers both verbal and non-verbal occurrences and enables analysis of the entire "conversation with a purpose" (i.e., interview). Each interview was translated in English. Transcription was done concurrently with the interviews to identify a data saturation point and prevent conducting interviews that would be redundant because no new data would be gathered. Many research participants were eager to learn more and receive the completed thesis, journal articles, and other materials.

### **3.14 Data Analysis**

The acquired data's qualitative and quantitative elements underwent close examination before being cleaned, coded, and analyzed. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) from International Business Machines (IBM) was used to analyze the quantitative data. Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) from International Business Machines (IBM) was used to analyze the quantitative data. Tables, frequencies, and charts were used to further analyze, interpret, and arrange the IBM SPSS results. The responses were transcribed, with some catchy words preserved in their original versions and settings as extracts or excerpts, and the qualitative data were analyzed using the manual thematic technique. The data

collected during the fieldwork was analyzed thematically. Because it is an interpretive process that works well with the chosen ontological and epistemological viewpoints, this style of analysis was especially well suited.

Qualitative data analysis involves organizing data, immersing oneself in the data, interpreting data, coding, generating themes/categories or identifying patterns, and presenting the analysis to an audience (Emerson et. al., 2011). The following strategies are employed in the data organization process: (1) separating different types of data (keeping each interview and associated field notes and other documents in one folder), (2) maintaining data in chronological (or alphabetical) order, (3) organizing data according to topic or document type, and (4) creating a logbook (Esterberg, 2002). To become familiar with the data and make sense of it, field notes, interviews, and other pertinent documents were read numerous times, from beginning to end. First, open coding and second, focused coding were utilized to code the data. Open coding allowed the discovery of novel, unforeseen themes, and categories in the data. Open coding allowed the discovery of novel, unforeseen themes, and categories in the data. The researcher should concentrate on what is in the data and attempt to comprehend the themes and categories we observe rather than using pre-established classifications. Following the completion of open coding, recurrent themes or categories were found, and the data was subjected to focused coding.

The coding strategy used a combination of codes created from the collected data and cross-referenced with larger topics prevalent in the literature. It may be argued that researchers start coding at the beginning of the project and continue until its very conclusion (Gibbs, 2002). Each transcript was carefully read several times, and important themes were highlighted in the text's margins. After reading through every transcript, the initial overall themes became apparent. Inquisitiveness, economic

factors, education, friends and family networks in the home and host countries, partner-following, gendered expectations, a sense of limited opportunities, and the welfare state were among these. Throughout the study, I considered several overarching issues, including decision-making authority, paid and unpaid work, work/life balance, gender roles in various industries, and general quality of life. These themes were afterward divided into more digestible codes and contrasted with the interview information. The themes that emerged from the interview data were further discussed, extensively examined, and contextualized in the broader literature in the empirical chapters. However, the concepts and ideas related to the evaluated literature and the research questions impacted the analysis.

### **3.15 Limitations of the Study**

The study examined how gender relations changed during migration regarding socioeconomic factors, decision-making, and social participation in various spheres of public and private life. Using various research instruments and approaches, each of the components of the family left behind was examined using quantitative and qualitative methods. The research didn't include the perspective of male migrants because it only included the families of women migrants who had moved abroad for international labor migration within the previous three years. However, it is acknowledged that immigrant families provide in-depth information about shifting gender roles, so the research gave them more attention. The research covers only a small part of Nepal, i.e., in Pokhara, due to resource constraints. Another restriction is that the research methodologies were chosen with a specific purpose, which prevents generalization. However, the researcher tries to reduce bias by using quantitative approaches.

### **3.16 Conclusion**

This study's focus on migrated spouses and the families who remain behind during the migration process and their gendered roles after migration makes it distinctive from other similar studies. As mentioned in the preceding chapters and demonstrated by the literature, it can be said that studies taking into account the gender roles played by men and women in the post-migration period are rarely conducted in the Nepalese setting. This chapter explored any topics pertinent to this qualitative research study and explained issues relating to the methodology selected. The philosophical presumptions that support the research were presented in the first part. The chosen approach and data collection techniques were then discussed. Following that, the pilot study, research topics, and ethical considerations were described. The fieldwork procedure was explained in the following section. Finally, the strategy for data analysis was examined, and prospective research constraints were considered.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC SETTING OF SLUM COMMUNITY

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines how and when the international migration process was introduced to the slum residents of Pokhara Metropolitan City while also identifying their social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Two basic goals for the debate exist in this chapter. The initial goal is to draw attention to the social and cultural context of the slum neighborhood to track the characteristics of the research respondents. Emphasis is placed on depicting all aspects of the slum community that migrated families abandoned. The second goal is to assess the reason why women migrate rather than male members.

#### 4.2 The Slum Community of Pokhara

Many people from rural areas are migrating to urban areas in search of better job opportunities, education for their children, and health and social services. The process of urbanization and modernization does not only affect city dwellers but also affects the lives of rural people, as more people are migrating in search of better opportunities. Pokhara City has become one of the fastest-growing regions, and the roads toward becoming a modern society with an urban lifestyle have been an emerging element of the Nepalese economy for the past two decades (World Bank, 2007). The country's main issue has been dealing with the competitive features of its urban economy, which pull rural residents to urban centers. Rapid urbanization patterns have been linked to new dynamics in Nepal's economic development. The World Bank described Nepal's urbanization process as being at a "critical juncture" in its history, and the rapid urban economic expansion is not only evident in the

country's major cities like Pokhara but also has a significant impact on rural areas' demographic, social, and cultural trends.

In order to migrate the growing slum people to suitable places in city area with basic human rights facilities, the government and the people living in these cities are facing tremendous problems due to growing urbanization and a modern lifestyle. The problem is not limited to Nepal; there are already one billion slum residents worldwide, and UN-HABITAT (2013) projects that figure will increase to two billion by 2030. Residential areas known as "informal settlements" are those where: 1) residents lack security over their land tenure; 2) they lack formal basic services and city infrastructure, such as clean drinking water supply, health facilities, a lack of electricity, etc.; 3) they are situated in environmentally and geographically high-risk areas; and 4) their housing may not meet building codes (UN-HABITAT, 2015).

Slum, squatter, and sukumbasi settlements often describe the informal and unstructured urban communities lacking fundamental human rights amenities. Due to their unique culture and manner of life, the people are perpetually socially isolated. Due to the government's lack of a strategy to manage the neighborhood and the slum community's growing population, residents face enormous issues in their day-to-day lives. According to the United Nations agency UN-HABITAT, a slum is a run-down part of a city that is distinguished by poor housing, poverty, and a lack of tenure security. The percentage of urban residents living in slums declined from 47 percent to 37 percent in developing countries between 1990 and 2005, according to the UN.

As most people migrate for better opportunities, the growth of slum communities is closely related to rural-to-urban migration. Additionally, many who have been uprooted due to wars and other conflicts in their community travel to cities for better places to live. According to Paudyal and McDougall (2010), who traced the

history of slums in Nepal, slums have existed in the country's major cities for twenty to thirty years. While the Nepalese government has made various attempts to safeguard government land against invasion by the public, these efforts have been unsuccessful (Brooks, 2016), and no long-term solutions have been found. The Nepali government makes very few attempts to regularize slum communities.

Sukumbasi Samashya Samadhan Aayog (SA), a new high-level political committee, was established in 1995 to fight for landless people and informal settlements in Nepal following the restoration of democracy in 1990. Later, this commission received 263,738 requests for land ownership and property rights certificates. SSSA examined the applications and determined that 54,170 families were legitimate informal encampments (Sukumbasi). The commission had given 1278 people land ownership certificates to formalize these settlements, while 10278 families obtained provisional property entitlement papers (Adhikari, 2008). The Nepali government has been working at the policy level to legalize, migrate, regularize, and upgrade informal settlements to address their associated difficulties (Paudyal and McDougall, 2010).

This study, carried out in Pokhara Metropolitan City, is based on the daily experiences of migrant families living in slum areas. There are 33 wards in the Pokhara Metropolitan City, spreading to over 464 square kilometers in Nepal's Gandaki Province's Kaski District. According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) (2021), Pokhara Metropolitan City had a total population of 457,792. Its population is among the five highest among metropolitan cities, according to the 2020 census. Due to prospective work prospects for impoverished people from the surrounding hill districts, migration to Pokhara has recently increased. In addition, the desire for better economic prospects and the attractiveness of educational and medical facilities is a major pull factor for lifetime urban migration.

On the other hand, the Maoist movement drove people from rural areas to look for safe havens. As a result, the city attracted these new lifelong migrants, which influenced urban evolution. According to the 2018 Economic Census, Pokhara Metropolitan City has 30,745 establishments engaged in various economic activities. 111,818 individuals work in those establishments as employees or independent contractors, including the unofficial and unregistered sector. 61,872 men and 42,597 women are employed. In Pokhara, there are a lot of street kids, intravenous drug users, female sex workers, industrial workers, porters, garage workers, hotel and restaurant employees, and hotel and restaurant workers. The city's slum communities are ungoverned, overcrowded, and vulnerable to disease outbreaks because of their poor location. These groups are shut out of political, social, and economic spheres of existence. Squatter dwellers work in the informal sector and receive insufficient wages for their subsistence because they lack education, skills, empowerment, good health, and a suitable standard of living. In general, they are denied access to fundamental human needs like security, self-identity, health, and education and face a long-term cycle of poverty.

### **4.3 Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

The socio-demographic characteristics of migrants are presented in this section. Following a basic overview of the Pokhara slum population, the next section will concentrate on education, caste or ethnicity, religion, marital status, year of migration, destination, household structures, and the decision-making ability of the family left behind. Using primary data from the household survey, the inner-slum social structure reveals instructive characteristics for a neighborhood in which objective socio-economic factors were discovered to differ significantly from one household to another. According to descriptive statistics at the population level in Pokhara (based

on a polled sample), the rate of women migrating for work is rising. This is because women are more likely to migrate abroad for employment than men, who are more likely to stay home and work. However, the field data reveals that one of the factors causing women to migrate is their divorce, and for unmarried migrants, maternal parents are the main motivators. The practice of young love marriages and having a drunken spouse drive them abroad due to lower costs and simpler visa requirements highlights the transient nature of slum women's migration.

#### **4.3.1 The Household**

Reproduction on a biological and social level, socialization, and gaining essential decision-making authority are crucial household functions. Nevertheless, a family's power resides within its members. Though my study site is in a metropolitan city, the family system in slum regions is still conducted in the customary and normative manner in which family processes unfold, which is the generally preferred pattern of family practices and household dynamics. The study area's residential arrangements demonstrate that several family units share a single home, making up one household. The maternal parents have supplied one room in the same house for a few married, divorced, or separated immigrant families, and these families see themselves as independent entities. Because of the high cost of living in the city, migrant wives and their kids—who are typically separated—end up living with the migrant's maternal parents. It is interesting to note that children from divorced and separated couples often reside with the migrants' maternal parents. In these situations, the parents almost necessarily had a love marriage, and if the child is young, remittances are paid directly to the migrants' parents. The in-law family and their children share a home but have separate kitchens.

The research area has also harmed the migrants of the daughter-in-law, law, who live with their son and grandchildren and share everything. They see themselves as essential components of one another, making up a household. It's noteworthy that the mother or father still has the final say despite this. Nevertheless, these families speak with migrants before making any decisions. For this study, a household is defined as a collection of possibly related family units that live on the same property and utilize the same kitchen. The study selected 198 homes from Pokhara Metropolitan City's various wards.

Households are socially and historically produced groupings that are always changing, not natural or primordial beings (Mishra, 2017). This theory is supported by the fact that Nepalese households have changed over the past few decades due to various variables, including migration, shifting production methods, a high enrolment in professional professions rather than reliance on parental property, and many other factors. In the interim, it was thought that households had served as gathering places for resources. Due to their inheritance, the head of the household still occupies the position of honor, power, and authority in the domestic hierarchy (Mishra, 2007). Mishra argues that socioeconomic groups with few fixed assets, such as landless people and Dalits, may encourage early age mobility, separation, and the formation of new households. Similarly, the landed household may inhibit mobility and early formation even in severe family strife. Even though the extended family system is built on male-headed units that are mostly related through patrilineal kinship in most of Nepal, this structure has been strictly upheld throughout history. Extended family arrangements predominate because they are compatible with the labor requirements of agricultural production. Although some families have their own homes, most share the same compound and a kitchen. Today, some nuclear families live in homes that

the head of the household built; other extended families live in homes that they either inherited or purchased. The fundamental source of economic, emotional, and social security ultimately comes from the family, including nuclear and extended family members.

The head of the family, who can be either a man or a woman, and the secondary members of the group, who could be the head's father, mother, adult siblings, adult children, and spouse, make up most households. The practice of inheritance, whereby homes and other things are inherited by right, primarily by the eldest son, contributes to male-headed households. The idea that the traditional home structure is still an important aspect of the social structure of the research region is supported by the fact that children and relatives other than the immediate family make up a sizeable portion of the household. Similarly, some of Nepal's upper Himalayan regions have also used female household practices. Aside from this, the migration of their spouses made most women the heads of their families, and female migration made them powerful due to their increased income. As a result, the growing numbers of migrants—both male and female—have significantly contributed to changing the traditional roles and responsibilities of family members.

#### **4.3.2 Research Participants/Respondents**

The majority of study participants were either household heads or their spouses. Immigrant siblings and children also lived with them. All of the participants came from various wards in Pokhara. The age breakdown by sex of the respondents who participated in the study is shown in the table below.

**Table 4.1**

Age and sex of the respondents

	Sex of respondent		Total	
	Male	Female		
20 to 30	2	9	11	
30 to 40	22	24	46	
Age of respondents	40 to 50	5	18	23
	60 to 70	16	29	45
	70 above	28	45	73
Total	73	125	198	

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 4.1 displays the age and gender of the respondents who participated in the study. There are forty five women and twenty eight men over the age of seventy. Eleven respondents between twenty and thirty were chosen, with two men and nine women. Most of the respondents in these age groups were the offspring of migrants. Respondents between the thirty and forty age groups interviewed were migrants' siblings and their spouses. According to the respondents' ages, women migrants are typically in unmarried, single, divorced, or separated groups. The age-sex pattern may also indicate that more women survive longer than men, especially as they get older.

The proportion of males and females within each age bracket is presented under the respondents' gender. To find out the reasons for women's migration and motives for their labor migration, the two variables, age, and type of marriage, are defined to establish whether there is a relationship between them.

**Table 4. 2**

Marital status and age of migrants

		Migrants age				Total
		25 to 35	35 to 45	45 to 55	above 55	
Marital Status 2	Single	2	11	3	0	16
	Arrange Marriage	5	15	17	6	43
	Separated	5	5	4	2	16
	Widowed	0	0	0	7	7
	Unmarried	20	21	1	2	44
	Divorce	3	5	1	0	9
	Love marriage	6	35	18	4	63
Total		41	92	44	21	198

Source: Field Survey 2022

Table 4. 2 illustrates a large section of the active women age group who had chosen the option of migration for their livelihood sources and to solve their economic situation, as one of the major causes of women migration in Nepal is poor economic conditions. Likewise, forty four of the migrants—who ranged in age from twenty five to forty five, and two were older than fifty five—were single after having a cross-tabulation of two variables, including age and marital status. Similar to this, sixty three of all migrants had love marriages, and the majority of them were between the ages of thirty five and forty five. Forty-three married women, mostly between 45 and 55, migrated to survive. It is extremely noteworthy to note that the reasons for women's migration to this age group include their self-decision and their husbands' ill health.

As most of their kids enroll in private boarding schools, one of the main reasons for women's migration is to provide better for their children's. Seven immigrant widows who are over fifty-five make for an especially interesting scenario. While two of them were returnee migrants living with their boys in a house built by her remittances, and one of them returned four years after suffering from HIV, three of them even missed their husband's funeral because their employer forbade them from returning to Nepal.

### **4.3.3 Religion and Ethnicity Composition**

Families in Nepal place a high value on religion, which plays a significant role in their daily lives. The study's results demonstrate how religious those who live in slum areas are. The most prevalent religion in the research area is Hinduism. Brahmin, Chhetri, and Newar make up the main ethnic groups, which are Brahmin, Chhetri, and Newar, which constitute the three main ethnic groups: Brahmin Dalit, Gurung, and Magar in the research area. Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian religions are represented in the population. Hinduism is the primary religion practiced by the study's respondents, primarily from the Dalit ethnic group. Most Dalit groups consist of Biswokarma, Pariyar, Sunwar, and Nepali. The respondents and migrants have a diverse population of religion, race, and caste, with 73.9% being Hindus, 11.1% being Christians, 9.5% being Buddhists, and the remaining 5% being largely Bon. The majority of the population considers Hinduism to be their main religion. Caste and ethnic groupings exhibit patterns of heterogeneity, with a significant proportion of Dalits (58.5%), Gurungs (20.6%), and Brahmins (4%), respectively. With 16.6% of the total population, Chhetri is the largest caste or ethnic group in Nepal, followed by Brahmin (12.2% of the total population), although in the study region, Dalits are more common. The fact that the Dalit population has been neglected by the state and high-caste individuals accounts for the over representation of Dalit responses.

Overall, the migration figures at the individual level support the household data in demonstrating that, proportionately, Dalits and Gurung tend to travel overseas more than other groups. After a thorough conversation, the respondents agreed that it is simple and less expensive to obtain a visa and work abroad, especially for women from their community. A study carried out by Adhikari and Gellener (2019) claims that the Dalit group makes sense to companies worldwide because their caste is practically meaningless, even among their Nepalese peers. They made the allegation that Nepalese people, regardless of caste, are indifferent to caste differences when they are cooperating overseas.

Improvements in economic conditions for all groups affected, including Dalits, have been brought about by changes in occupational and skill patterns, which are partially linked to international labor migration. As a result, the movement of Dalits has been on the rise. The following table 3 shows the migrants' ethnicity and religion:

**Table 4.3**

Religion and ethnicity

		Ethnicity						Total
		Brahmin	Chhetri	Newar	Gurung	Magar	Dalit	
Religion	Hindu	8	13	4	34	12	76	147
	Buddhist	0	0	0	7	0	12	19
	Christian	0	0	2	0	0	20	22
	Other	0	0	0	0	1	9	10
Total		8	13	6	41	13	117	198

Source: Field survey 2022

Table 4.3 reveals that one hundred seventeen respondents, mostly from Dalit communities, identified Hinduism and Christianity as their two main religions. Similarly, just eight respondents were from the Brahmin community, and Hinduism was their primary faith. It is quite astounding to learn that forty one respondents were from Gurung communities and that the two main religions practiced by this group were Buddhism and Hinduism. Six respondents from the Newar group identified as practicing either Hinduism or Christianity as their primary religion. According to the findings, one hundred seventeen Dalit communities are constantly looking for sustainable sources of income, and transnational spaces have been shown to uphold their fundamental human rights and reduce the caste discrimination that was common in traditional Nepalese societies. The money they make in foreign countries improves their standard of living and changes their mindset, attitudes, and behaviors.

#### **4.3.4 Education Level of the Respondents and Migrants**

Access to education is essential because it affects people's prospects in life, their role in the economy and community, and even how much integration they achieve — in the case of migrants — by assisting in eradicating various forms of prejudice and stereotyping. Individuals can increase their knowledge, skills, and competencies through migration and education, which will help promote social and economic development. Education is crucial for progressive development since it enables people to choose their lifestyle with knowledge. The research area's household heads had a fairly low education level, as shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4**

The education level of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Illiterate	16	8.0	8.1	8.1
Formal	20	10.1	10.1	18.2
Primary level	44	22.1	22.2	40.4
Secondary	23	11.6	11.6	52.0
Higher Secondary	29	14.6	14.6	66.7
Others (Bachelor, Master)	66	33.2	33.3	100.0
Total	198	100.0		

Source: Field survey 2022

These respondents were children and siblings of migrants. The findings show that 33.2% do not attend school, 22.2% have completed primary school, 14.6% have completed higher secondary level, 11.6% have completed secondary school, 10.1% have had formal education, and 8% are illiterate. The information gathered about respondents' educational status was further divided by gender. The findings indicate that 21 men and 45 women were among the uneducated. Female respondents stated that they were not educated due to early marriage, a lack of funds, and the fact that their parents did not value girls' education and sent their brothers to school instead. The interview respondents showed that their parents wanted them to become experts at home chores and socialize this way. In the same line, Table 4.5 indicates the migrants' educational attainment, as seen in Table below:

**Table 4.5**

Education of the migrants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Illiterate	33	16.6	16.8	16.8
	Formal	17	8.5	8.6	25.4
	Primary level	44	22.1	22.3	47.7
Valid	Secondary	36	18.1	18.3	66.0
	HS	31	15.6	15.7	81.7
	Other	36	18.1	18.3	100.0
	Total	197	99.0	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.5		
Total		198	100.0		

Source: Field survey 2022

Table 4. 5 shows that 18.1% of migrants in the study area completed secondary education, while 22.1% completed primary education. 16.6% of women are illiterate and have no college degree; 15.6 attend higher education; and 8.5% attend formal school. Although none of the migrants pursued higher education, a select few have taken twelve classes. However, one was reluctant to discuss their education level.

#### **4.3.5 Marital Status**

Table 4.6 provides insight into the marital status of migrant women in the study area. This will help explain the reasons for migration trends among married and unmarried groups.

**Table 4.6**

Marital status of the migrants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Single	16	8.0	8.1	8.1
Arrange marriage	43	21.6	21.8	29.9
Separated	16	8.0	8.1	38.1
Widowed	7	3.5	3.6	41.6
Unmarried	44	22.1	22.3	64.0
Divorce	9	4.5	4.6	68.5
Love marriage	62	31.2	31.5	100.0
Total	197	99.0	100.0	
Missing				
System	1	1		
Total	198	100.0		

Source: Field survey 2022

To determine the causes of migration, the marital status of migrants was studied. It was discovered that 31.2% of the women had love marriages, while 4.5% were divorced. Similarly, a significant percentage of single women—22.1%—went through the immigration process. Therefore, it is clear that the majorities of migrant women are single, separated, widowed, unmarried, divorced, or part of a love marriage couple.

#### **4.3.6 Respondent's Relationship to Migrants and Decision for Foreign Migration**

The majority of the information was submitted by the migrant's mothers and other family members, including their sisters, brothers, and other relatives. The

decision for women to migrate overseas is greatly influenced by the spouse in a marital relationship. In the process of the interview, the couple disclosed that their wife migrated instead of their husband for the following reasons: the husband's poor health, the wife's low charges for visa processing, and the influence of relatives living abroad. Similar to Table 4.7, unmarried migrants face pressure from their maternal parents to stay longer, which forces them to leave. The majorities of these migrants are living with their maternal parents and are single, widowed, or separated.

**Table 4.7**

Decision-making process in the migration process

		Decision maker for foreign labor migration				Total
		Self	Husband	Family members	Other	
Relationship to migrant	Spouse	7	13	5	0	25
	Mother	33	5	14	3	55
	Father	9	2	2	6	19
	Brother	4	1	4	0	9
	Mother in law	6	1	9	0	16
	Father-in-law	4	1	1	0	6
	Other	24	5	13	0	42
	Returnee	16	0	4	0	20
	Children	4	0	2	0	6
Total		107	28	54	9	198

Sources: Field survey 2022

Most migrants (107) decided to migrate to another nation to provide for their families through employment. Additionally, family members—especially mothers—play a big role in migrants' migration. Twenty-eight migrants traveled with their husbands' consent. A few spouses were physically unable to migrate for foreign labor migration. They failed the medical examination during the visa application process. Others could not support their families because they were unemployed or alcohol drinkers. Most migrants were unmarried, single, or divorced and migrated in consultation with their mothers.

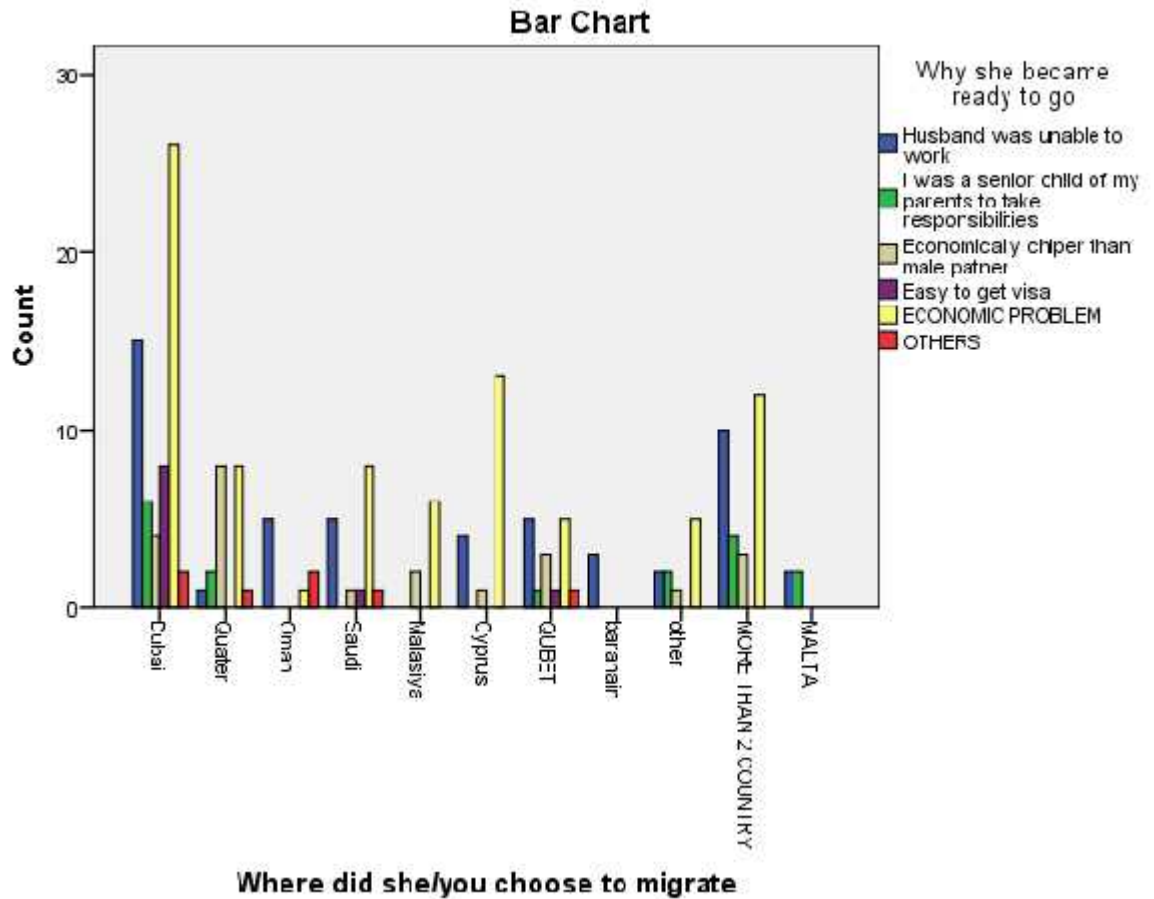
#### **4.3.7 Destination of Migrants and the Reasons**

The most popular destination for migration is Dubai, and most migrants' families inform us that their husbands' insufficient incomes and the economic difficulties of their families are the main driving forces behind their migration. In a conversation with the maternal parents of divorced migrants, they claimed that their son-in-law is inebriated and spends the majority of their time working as laborers on construction sites. Similarly, another well-known location for women to go to is Qatar. Twenty-nine migrants traveled to more than two different countries and lived there for more than 15 years.

The in-depth interview and case study analysis asserted the facts that it can be less expensive for women migration comparison to male mobility. So, a men prefer to send their wife for oversee labor migration.

### Bar Chart 4.1

Place for migration and reasons for migration



The bar chart above displays migrant women's reasons and preferred locations. Most migrant women chose Dubai as their destination, and their economic condition was the primary motivator for their travel. Respondents reported that Dubai's pay were greater than those in other countries and that working there was safer for women. Additionally, women have less visa restrictions than males. Dubai was their preferred destination to meet their basic requirements and enable them to provide good education to the children. Because they are the family's elders, the migrants must carry out all other tasks.

#### **4.3.8 Types of Family and House Ownership**

The type of family and who owns property are important considerations for establishing the relationship between overseas labor migration and the gender nexus, as this study was conducted in an area with low incomes. Without a particular property ownership registration, the majority of these households cannot lawfully possess land. It was observed that 118 of them reside as nuclear families in their own homes, whereas 80 live in joint families. It is noteworthy that after getting married, just three migrants continue to reside with their parents. Most of the respondents migrated to Pokhara City from another district prior to a decade. Just 43.7% of respondents said they had some land in other part of Pokhara, but they had moved to their parents' house many years ago. However, 54.3% of the respondents state they do not own any land and are consequently living here.

#### **4.4 Mode of Communication**

Every aspect of migration is impacted by technology, notably the digital communication provided by mobile phones, such as Facebook Messenger, Imo, and Viber. It offers a way for migrants to stay in touch with their host nations and stay informed about events elsewhere. Additionally, keeping in touch with family strengthens their bonds with one another and helps them handle all of their financial affairs. When asked how they connect with migrants, the majority (168) of them used social media, notably Imo and Messenger. Only 20 of them used phones since they did not have access to the internet and had a limited number of phones. It is important to note that a woman who had studied Grade 10 but was unable to complete her SLC since her parents had passed away. So, she migrated to Saudi Arabia before 22 years ago. While there, she wrote a letter to her brother in Nepal and sent it via the post

office. When asked how often they communicated with migrants, 107 reported that had daily contact, while 70 reported weekly contact with the migrants. When asked if there were any communication issues, 140 responded that there were none because they had at least made one call or sent a message to the migrants. However, 47 reported having trouble communicating because of overload of work and time differences in Nepal. About 4.5% preferred not to talk about it because the migrants only speak to their husbands and children. Table 4. 8 displays the various forms of communication and the frequency with which migrants use:

**Table 4.8**

Means and frequency of communication

		How often does she communicate at home?				Total
		Daily	Weekly	One month	Other	
Communication mode	Social Media	104	54	9	3	170
	Phone	4	16	4	2	26
	Other	2	0	0	0	2
	Total	110	70	13	5	198

Sources: Field survey 2022

The communication methods and frequency migrants used to contact their families are shown in Table 4.8. 170 respondents, or the majority, regularly contact migrants via various social networks, primarily WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Viber. Similarly, 26 respondents said they call migrants on their mobile phones because they do not know how to use a conventional mobile phone. The findings showed that due to the workload and busy schedules of migrants, 110 respondents and migrants

communicate daily, while 70 respondents and migrants communicate weekly. Due to the time difference, only 13 respondents claimed to converse monthly with the migrants.

#### **4.5 Remittances and their Various Aspects**

Most migrants, 149 out of 198, earn between Rs. 30, 000 and Rs. 60, 000 monthly. Interestingly, 91 percent of migrants send money to their maternal parents, while only four percent send money to their husbands' families. In addition, 34 migrants sent money to their spouses. There are fewer cases, i.e., only four people earn Rs. 90,000 monthly. On the other side, there are only five cases where people have sent remittances directly to their bank accounts.

Most migrants, i.e., 86, send money monthly to their families, and only one said they ask to send money when required. The family belongs to the migrants' cousin, who is herself handicapped and gets assistance from organizations. Similarly, 163 discovered that it is critical to consult migrants before using money because it is migrants' earnings, and they should have full authority to decide where to send and where not to send it. Notably, 131 of the respondent's expenses were remitted mostly from their daily expenditures. During the difficulties of sending the money, these families easily borrowed money from their neighborhood and relatives. After receiving the money, they pay it back to them. Similarly, the remittances are also spent on the schooling of their children. When asked if they had any loans, 68.8% of respondents said they did not, while 23.1% said they had indebtedness due to the migration process because they had to pay a manpower company for visa applications and all other expenses. When asked about the reasons for their debt, 28.1% said they needed money for visa processing and 4.5% for medical treatment. Most of them did

not take any loans and had to pay somewhere. So, the remittances sent by migrants are mostly spent on household expenditures. Interestingly, most migrants do not have any bank accounts in Nepal and send remittances to their families. In contrast, only 13.1% have bank accounts but still do not send money directly to their accounts. While 6.5% of the respondents did not have any idea about migrants' bank accounts,

#### **4.6 Households' Responsibilities and Decision-making Process**

The primary daily activities of homes and other forms of activity, such as doing business or working, have been identified as significant indicators that demonstrate the correlation between gender transition and migration. Since a female household worker is absent, their male spouse has assumed the traditional replacement role. During an interview with respondents, 24 spouses were doing all the household work, such as cooking, washing, cleaning, taking care of children, and outside work, in the absence of their wives. Most respondents, 134, were employed in various types of household work, and their jobs had changed due to the migration process. In contrast, 72 respondents found no changes in their roles and responsibilities due to the migration process. In the absence of migrants, the respondents are mostly supported by other family members, such as their children, siblings, husbands, and cousins. When asked what aspects of migration had changed their lives, approximately 145 respondents stated that their lifestyle had changed after the migration process. In contrast, 34 stated they had changed their child's schooling system. Overall, migration has brought about changes in the way people tackle problems and deal with people. As the respondents said, they take suggestions from migrants before dealing with something. Most respondents, i.e., 172, had deciphered that migration has increased their everyday activities. They had to manage all household activities and all their predetermined activities. During interviews and informal conversations with

respondents, they deciphered that migration has increased their decision-making power. The ability to handle remittances and their applications forces the family left behind to decide what to do. It is interesting to note that, in divorced and separated families, the children of migrants are taking classes and helping their relatives with their tasks.

#### **4.7 Motives for Women's Migration**

The search for an explanation of migration is a recurring theme in migration studies. Individual or household attributes that increase or decrease the propensity to migrate. The study explored the determinants and motivations of slum women's migration from Pokhara to different countries. Exploring the subjects of power relations and decision-making within the spousal relationship, respondents were questioned about the motives of women migrating instead of male members and whether or not they were part of this decision. The motivation for women's migration is mainly due to socio-economic factors in the context of Nepal.

The causes of migration are usually explained by using two broad categories, namely, push and pull factors. For example, people from slum areas may be pushed out of their original birthplace by poverty and migrate to Pokhara city in search of employment and to solve the hands-to-mouth problem. All of the respondents in the study area expressed the same sentiment: they had migrated from villages due to a lack of jobs, extreme poverty, no prospects, and the possibility of better job opportunities in cities. There is no authorized data to show the total number of households living in slums in Pokhara Metropolitan City.

However, the Social Development Sector of the Metropolitan Office has received reports that about 20,000 households in Kaski district are living in slums.

Nevertheless, there are no official records about the socio-economic demographic profile of the community. Though settled in the city, they do not have work due to a lack of skills and education, and they cannot fulfill their basic needs. Due to improper settlement in the city area, they faced many problems. Perceived income disparities thus play a significant role in international migration from the slum community, with the Gulf countries being a popular destination due to easy visa access. However, it is interesting to note that the increasing trend of women's migration from the community is the ultimate source of income generation for the families left behind. There are various reasons behind the motives for women's migration, but the field site has different experiences.

Since, the data showed that most of the women were married by themselves and had made their decision for migration by themselves. Similarly, unmarried, separated, single, and divorced women made consultation with maternal parents and granted permission for the migration. The family's financial and economic struggles were the primary causes for migration. Twenty-five spouses explained why their spouses had migrated. There were six situations that stood out: two of the men decided to send their wives to Qatar after their visas were denied because they had Hepatitis B and a failed health check.

One of the husbands decided to send his wife to Malta 14 years ago, and she is still there. At the time, he had multiple surgeries for appendicitis and ulcers, which prevented him from working. Through my conversations with migrant spouses, I learned that the economic downturn and ill health were the only reasons their women were sent abroad. Family obligations force 55% of migrants to migrate. 23 of the 55 cases involve unmarried migrants who are alone and fully responsible for taking care

of the family as their parents are old. Maya's case is a unique and fascinating one. She spent almost 18 years in a different country and came for her holiday. She was well aware that, due to her father's half-body paralysis, she was responsible for running the seven members of her family, beginning at the age of 13, when she worked as a laborer in Pokhara. Due to her low income, her relatives persuaded her to visit Saudi Arabia for the first time. Nobody in the family has ever asked her to leave her job and come to Nepal since that time. Maya's entire life history is fascinating in that the motivations for her first-time labor migration become causes for multiple migration as she is responsible for her three younger siblings' education, health, and even marriage. It is very interesting to note that, in cases of love marriage, the wives have migrated. After several visits with such cases of respondents, the reasons for their migration are due to their husband's behavior, as most of their husbands are alcohol drinkers and do not work. Eight women decided to migrate with their husbands and leave their children with their maternal grandparents. The male respondents who had lived with their spouse before migration were involved in her decision to migrate. Many respondents advocated that the logic for women's migration was all due to poor economic conditions and that no other sources could solve the hand-to-mouth problem. So, the migrants used their transnational network to choose their destination country. During an interview, the respondents mentioned that the social network made their chances of visa processing easy and less costly.

During field research, I discovered that a common reason for women's migration was to improve their financial situation. Additionally, married women want to provide better education to their children and improve their daily lifestyle, so one of the major reasons behind migration is schooling. However, it was very interesting to note that the maternal parents are fully dependent on the remittances of their

unmarried daughter, even to cover their daily expenditures. The hope of acquiring economic capital for saving and future security in their home country also inspired them to migrate. A 52-year-old single returnee migrant who spent almost 22 years of her life in different countries opened a small grocery and also invested around 7 to 8 lakh using her remittance, showing how migrants want to be back in their home country. In some cases, respondents wanted migrants to return home. However, they did not because of the fascinating lifestyles in foreign countries and hearing that other women from the community had also gone on migration.

**Table 4.9**

Migrants marital status and decision makers for migration

		Who makes decisions to go abroad for migration?				Total
		Self	Husband	Family members	Other	
Migrant Marital status	Single	8	0	5	2	15
	Arrange marriage	20	9	14	0	43
	Separated	15	0	1	0	16
	Widowed	4	0	3	0	7
	Unmarried	25	0	18	1	44
	Divorce	9	4	0	0	13
	Love marriage	34	12	14	0	60
Total		115	25	55	3	198

Sources: Field survey 2022

Table 4.9 displays both the marital status of migrants and the key players in their migration process. The majority of respondents, as shown in the table, were

either single, divorced, separated, widowed, or single people who made their own decisions about moving abroad to work. Forty-four were single, 13 were divorced, and 15 were unmarried. Unmarried migrants choose to travel independently, but their families also play a significant part in this decision. In the event of a marriage, i.e., in the case of a love marriage, the migrants themselves, as is also observed in the case of an arranged marriage, make the bulk of the decision for foreign migration. This shows that women migrate to work abroad on their own initiative and because they are sincere and willing to care for their families. In a thorough interview, migrant mothers made it clear that their sons are too young to take on adult obligations, while their spouses are negligent, and that their daughter is very serious and mature enough to carry the family's financial load.

#### **4.8 Conclusion**

This chapter provided information on the existing social and cultural contexts of the slum community of Pokhara. The discussion has shown that the community was created about 25 to 30 years ago when people from different districts came searching for employment opportunities and basic life facilities. However, their daily problems were not solved due to insufficient skills and education. The people select alternative options for international migration to meet their daily life expenditures and earn sufficient money. Nevertheless, the field site has experienced an increasing trend of female labor migration due to multiple factors. The inadequate education and lack of skills enable the women to work for low wages to fulfill the needs of their families, so in Nepal and elsewhere, migration has become a magical tool to earn more money with the same skills and education in different parts of the world. The chapter has also provided insight into the gendered differentials in men's and women's experiences about education, destination countries to migrate to, choices of marriage, and the roles

and responsibilities of women and men. The chapter mentioned the motives and inspirations for women's migration rather than men's in slum communities and how women help improve the economic conditions of families left behind. The increase of economic capital with the social and cultural capital gained by the family showed an increase in the accessibility of women's decision-making power in households, which was not possible before the migration.

## CHAPTER V

### HOUSEHOLDS FORMATION AND GENDER PRACTICES

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines household formation in women's migrant families and the changing gender practices in the study area. The aim is to distill the major features of household relationships common among immigrant families. It discusses gender formation in traditional Nepalese societies as reflected in existing patterns of practices in social relationships and the available resources for distribution, management, and control. The assumption is that power dynamics are resource-dependent (Sen, 1991), but power does not play a dominant role in shaping the situation as multiple factors are responsible. As in traditional society, the household's ownership and control, or lack thereof, is not required to determine the household's power relations. The changing nature of household formation in transnational space has created a new theoretical approach to the traditional gender approach in Nepalese society. This has been substantiated by using survey data obtained from the study area. This chapter discusses the complex and contextually specific ways gender power organizes household relations. The capacity of an individual to face a situation in existing circumstances has been determined by a larger social and cultural process that has affected his or her socially ascribed position and brought new social roles and responsibilities.

The chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section examines the general situation of gender relations and the status of women in Nepalese society. It is intended to serve as a wider context for analyzing gender relations in the migrant family. The second section discusses the gendered nature of the resource based on

households as an organization, highlighting the ownership of resources and the decision-making power over those resources. The third section focuses on family networks and connectivity. It examines how the migrant family is supported by the other family members in the migrant's absence and the role of migrants in making household decisions and managing the household. This illustrates how social and cultural capital has been transformed with the help of economic capital and, in doing so, how women have become the family's breadwinners.

## **5.2 The Status of Women in Nepal**

Nepal is one of the countries with the highest degree of gender inequality, where women work three to four more hours a day than men but earn less money, have less access to education, own marginal amounts of land, and perform the majority of unpaid domestic and agricultural labor (World Economic Forum Nepal, 2013). It is expected of women to handle all household chores; even if they work outside the home, their decision-making capacity is not much influential and granted. According to Acharya and Bennett (1983), women often encounter barriers in their participation in social and commercial activities, and their influence over family decisions is comparatively lower than that of male family members. The majority of workers in Nepal are women, both inside and outside the home. They do, however, have low social and economic standing in their families and society, and their right to privacy is also restricted. The diversity of Nepal means that this scenario is not representative of the nation. This situation does not represent Nepal because of its diversity. In comparison to women of lower status and education, girls and women with higher caste, rank, and educational attainment typically enjoy greater freedom of choice.

Additionally, numerous academics have emphasized the significant contrasts between Tibetan and Burman women, who enjoy greater freedom, and Indo-Aryan women, who are confined to the domestic area (ibid.). Historical and structural factors have influenced women's lives differently than those of men. For instance, high-caste and Madhesi women from the Tarai were confined to their private lives and did not appear in the public realm; yet, Thakali women, known for their commercial savvy and skills, are akin to Limbu women, who are free to divorce and remarry as widows (Tamang, 2009, p. 65). Nepal has historically been dominated by men. The caste structure and Hindu culture have promoted the growth of this culture over many years. One of the main reasons why women in society experience unfairness and discrimination is the firmly ingrained caste culture. The prevalence of prejudice against women and the demand for a male child in Nepalese society are largely due to social conventions about marriage. The patrilocal marriage system, which mandates that a woman moves to her husband's home after being married, boosts parents' preference for a son because girls would not be around to care for them in old age or carry on the family lineage. A female child may be less desired by parents if the dowry system, which forces the bride's parents to make significant payments to the groom's family, is still in place (Majupuria, 1989). Discrimination against girls starts even before they are born, since Nepal's medical professionals and administrators who provide abortion services have noted that the practice of female feticide, while against the law, is becoming a problem (Lamichhane et. al., 2011). A girl has comparatively fewer advantages than her male counterpart when she is born. Only a few girls get the opportunity to attend school; others spend more time caring for family and managing households, and they have uneven access to food and other resources. After she marries, her role further declines because she must begin at the bottom of the

household hierarchy and shoulder an unjust amount of household duties (Adhikari et. al., 1994). As a result of their religious convictions and the social system in which they live, Nepalese women experience a variety of forms of discrimination. These severely limit women's freedom to decide what to do and how to express their ideas. In the long run, girls who experience unequal access to school and healthcare are at a disadvantage compared to their male counterparts when it comes to developing the skills necessary to engage in social and economic activities.

Because of this, women are compelled to work at home and in subsistence agriculture or take on low-paying jobs in the marketplace, leaving them financially dependent on their husbands (Manjupuria, 1989). Women still lag behind men in terms of achievements due to the various forms of prejudice they encounter. On the other hand, the men are the main providers for the family because they are more qualified than the women and have received more education and skill-based training. A glance at Nepal's gender-disaggregated socio-economic statistics reveals that women fall short of men in terms of educational attainment, economic success, asset ownership, and political participation. Nepal has been improving steadily over the past few decades in terms of enhancing the educational level of its citizens. Although there is a significant difference between men's and women's educational accomplishments, adult literacy rates and the percentage of the population attending school have increased between 1995–1996 and 2010–2011. Certain social, geographic, and economic groupings exhibit even greater gender inequality. For instance, just 58 percent of 6- to 10-year-olds in the Tarai middle caste group are female, which suggests that they trail behind men in terms of educational attainment, economic success, asset ownership, and political engagement. Nepal has been improving steadily over the past few decades regarding the population's overall

educational level. Although there is a significant difference between men's and women's educational accomplishments, adult literacy rates and the percentage of the population attending school have increased between 1995–1996 and 2010–2011. Certain social, geographic, and economic groupings exhibit even greater gender inequality.

For instance, compared to 94 percent of males in the Tarai middle caste group, just 58 percent of 6- to 10-year-old girls attend school. Additionally, school enrolment is lower for children from lower-income families; of the 36% of 6–10-year-olds who are not in school, 2/3 are girls (Mathema, 2007). In Nepal, the literacy rates for men and women still differ significantly; just 78.59% of men and 59.72% of women are educated (UNESCO, 2018). Traditional societal norms not only obstruct the advancement of gender equality but also restrict women from participating in every area of a state-led program due to their low standing in the family and society.

Similar disparities exist between men and women in Nepal regarding political participation and decision-making. Even though women make up slightly more than half of the population and actively participated in the civil war from 1996 to 2006, the mass movement of 1990, and the political movement of 1951, they have not been given equal rights or political representation (Pokharel, 2014). Women secured an unprecedented number of seats in the parliament after the Maoists won the 2008 elections for the Constituent Assembly, boosting hopes for improved representation of women's interests. Though high-caste, elite men still dominate political parties, women are marginalized by being given positions with less decision-making power (Tamang, 2009). Only 29.5% of the seats in the national parliament and 13.6% of the 62 ministry positions were held by women in 2015. The newly adopted constitution from 2015 includes measures for real gender equality, such as equal property rights

and the abolition of violence against women. However, it also includes discriminatory language, such as unequal citizenship rights. For instance, children of a Nepali married to a foreign woman automatically acquire citizenship; whereas children of a woman married to a foreign man can only obtain citizenship through naturalization (naturalized citizens are not eligible for higher positions in administration or security). Other factors that are frequently used to show the position of women are regional or national changes in the age of marriage, women's asset ownership, credit availability, and the frequency of gender-based violence. The percentage of women married before age 15 has decreased from 24% for those between 45 and 49 years old to 5% for those between 15 and 19 years old in Nepal as the country's median age for marriage has increased. Contrarily, the median marriage age for women aged 25 to 49 is four years lower than for men (NDHS, 2011). Men and women also acquire parental property in different ways.

In the past, unmarried women could only inherit land from their parents, which led to inequality because a son could easily inherit it from his parents. Most Nepalese depend on agriculture as their main source of income, and they must constantly rely on their male counterparts, which cause economic uncertainty for women. Women own land in only 19.7% of cases. Only 5% of Nepal's entire land area is represented by this. Landlords make up just 11% of these women, 11% of these women, 11% of these women, and 11% of these people. Due to a 2015 legal reform, there is a 25–50% registration fee reduction when the land is registered in a woman's name. Daughters now have the right to retain part of their parents' assets following marriage under the 2018 revisions to civil law. Sons and daughters now have the same rights. If the divorce was the husband's fault, women are also entitled to their part of the marital assets after the divorce. This results in a favorable

transformation. In a patriarchal nation like Nepal, women's emancipation depends critically on their ability to acquire land. Security, independence, and confidence that come with land rights allow women to participate in all spheres of society and politics. Men are more likely to consider women as equals when women own land, which has been demonstrated to offer women more control over household decisions and reduce domestic violence. Despite having legal access to banks, women have limited access to institutional finance due to low literacy (Acharya et. al., 2010).

According to a 2011 report from the Department for International Development, about 75% of women in Nepal had suffered some type of abuse throughout their lifetimes. Women are expected to be more submissive, less demanding, and content, with less access to resources than their brothers because they are daughters. Security, independence, and confidence that come with land rights allow women to participate in all spheres of society and politics. Men are more likely to consider women as equals when women own land, which has been demonstrated to offer women more control over household decisions and reduce domestic violence. Despite having legal access to banks, women have limited access to institutional finance due to low literacy. When resources are limited, a daughter's education, nutrition, and healthcare are frequently given up so that her sons can receive better education and healthcare. A woman is expected to continue obeying her husband and in-laws after marriage. She has to assume responsibility for most of the household's childcare and labor, starting from the bottom of the hierarchy (Bennett, 1983). In addition, women experience substantial restrictions on their freedom and movement throughout their lives. They are underrepresented in practically all public spheres, including the civil service, local government, politics, and business. Women also have less access to resources than men (Mishra, 2014). What can be concluded is that the

forces of capitalist development, institutional restructuring, legislative reforms, and male-dominated political dynamics conspired to create the current gender relations, including the male-dominated social structure. However, the inferior position of women in Nepalese society must be analyzed in light of the social and cultural setting, as well as the structural and historical duties and obligations given to men and women.

### **5.3 Household Formation and Migration**

The configuration of households compromises all the familial relationships and activities performed by household members' position and status in the family, including the ownership of resources and their management. Generally, the operation of households is maintained by their kinship ties and social and cultural practices and ideologies. The owner of resources and breadwinner makes all the decisions and assigns them according to age, sex, education, and capacity for earning money. The traditional gender assumption is that men are the key decision-makers because of their breadwinner ability, and women are economic dependents because men own the household. Women have less access to and control over household resources and less power in household decision-making, even in their activities (Acharya et. al., 2010).

One of the main features of migrant women's households is their limited access to resources. This is one of the primary reasons why feminist writing is so important in interpreting and explaining women's capacity and ability to perform both inside and outside the home. International migration has become a major tool for enhancing and empowering women through strategies for gender-specific traditional roles assigned to them for a long time in the name of cultural preservation. Transnational space does not economically empower migrant women, but at the same time, they become breadwinners for the families they left behind. Generally, these

women play a vital role in the decision-making process at home. Thus, migration has changed household affairs; for example, it has caused a separation between wife and husband and a vacuum in household functions. Similarly, the unmarried daughter plays the role of breadwinner to take on the family's responsibilities. In contrast, divorced women become independent and take on all the responsibilities of their children and parents, and so many changes can be noticed during the migration period. So, in the following section, various aspects of household components are explained, which assist in the transformation of traditional household organization in Nepalese families.

### **5.3.1 Ownership and Decision-Making Process**

Individuals gain independence and decision-making power when they own any asset. Individuals' access to land and housing reduces their chances of poverty, vulnerability to natural disasters, and economic crisis as their social status and power rise (IMO, 2016), whereas having skills and knowledge allows them to make independent decisions. Therefore, ownership over any asset plays a dominant role in determining the position of an individual both inside and outside the house. One of the main features of women's migration is whether it enhances their decision-making power in household activities. It, therefore, requires planning and implementing context-specific strategies that draw on and use resources and skills possessed by family members left behind, especially the household head. Thus, in the following section, I examine whether a relationship exists between ownership over resources such as individual skills, education, networking, capacity, and land and the households' ownership and decision-making processes due to migration. To establish the relationship among the variables, I used the Chi-Square test and cross-tabulation results to show whether women's migration has affected the decision-making process.

I identified factors such as education, skills, social capital, and the ability to handle situations that influence decision-making and establish relationships. I stated the null and alternative hypotheses to show whether there is a relationship between age, education, marital status, land ownership, family type, and the decision-making process of migrants affected by the migration process. The following assumptions were made, and chi-square values for various variables were calculated using SPSS.

Household ownership and decision-making are independent of women's migration, i.e., there is no relationship between them.

Household ownership and decision-making processes are not independent of women's migration processes, i.e., there is a relationship between them.

**Table 5.1**

Education and Decision-making for migration

	Who decides to go abroad for migration?				Total
	Self	husband	Family members	Other	
Illiterate	9	6	1	0	16
Formal	7	2	13	0	22
Primary level	22	5	13	2	42
Education Secondary	19	1	3	0	23
Higher	17	4	8	0	29
Secondary					
Others	40	8	17	1	66
Total	114	26	55	3	198

Source: Field survey 2022

**Table 5.2**

## Chi-square Test for Education and Decision-making

	Value	Df.	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	36.224 <sup>a</sup>	15	.002
Likelihood Ratio	36.374	15	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.889	1	.169
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 11 cells (45.8%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .25. Df. is degree of freedom

Educational skills, capacity, and knowledge are essential for making the right decision at the right time, which is also associated with societal power. In my analysis, I used the chi-square test to find out whether there is a relationship between education and the decision-making of migrants, the results showed there is a relationship between these two variables. Since .002 is less than .05, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, meaning there is a relation between education and decision-making for migration. This means there is a statistically significant relationship between education and decision-making. This means the education of migrants plays a dominant role in making decisions for their families, which they left behind. The changing mode of the patriarchal structure of society with the intervention of female education not only empowers women in decision-making for their career enhancement but also allows them to play the role of breadwinner.

**Table 5.3**

Migrants' Marital status and decision making for migration

		Who decides to go abroad for migration?				Total
		Self	husband	Family members	Other	
Marital status 2	Single	8	0	5	2	15
	Married	20	9	14	0	43
	Separated	15	0	1	0	16
	Widowed	6	0	3	0	9
	Unmarried	25	0	18	1	44
	Divorce	7	4	0	0	11
	Love marriage	34	12	14	0	60
Total		115	25	55	3	198

Similarly, when we use the chi-square test to find out whether there is a relationship between marital status and the decision-making process of migrants, the computed value of the chi-square is 20.029, which is shown in table 5.4. The level of significance is .171, which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, so I accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis. This shows there is a statistically significant relationship between marital status and decision-making. This means the marital status of migrants does not play a dominant role in making decisions about travel abroad. Though the proportion of married migrants is higher than that of unmarried migrants, the self-decision-making capacity of women plays a vital role in their movement. Nevertheless, informal talks with migrants' husbands indicate that they are still liable for the migrant's movement due to their poor economic and health conditions.

**Table 5.4**

Chi-Square Tests for marital status and migration

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.029 <sup>a</sup>	15	.171
Likelihood Ratio	25.202	15	.047
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.145	1	.076
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 16 cells (66.7%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .02.

**Table 5.5**

Relationship to migrant and decision-making process

	Decision maker for the migration process				Total
	Self	Husband	Family members	Other	
Spouse	12	12	5	0	29
Mother	33	5	14	2	54
Father	9	2	2	1	14
Brother	4	1	4	0	9
Mother in law	6	1	9	0	16
father in law	4	1	1	0	6
other					
Other	26	3	13	0	42
Returnee	16	0	6	0	22
Children	4	0	2	0	6
Total	114	25	56	3	198

Source: Field survey 2022

The chi-square test results in Table 5.7 show the relationship between respondents and the decision-making of migrants. The computed value of the chi-square is 50.012, and the level of significance p-values is 001. Since 000 is less than the alpha value of 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means a statistically significant relationship exists between the respondents' relationship with migrants and their decision-making. This means the migrants' relationship with respondents plays a dominant role in their everyday life performance. Because most respondents are migrant mothers and spouses, during an in-depth interview with the husband, they agreed that they do not always consult with migrants on everyday decisions and make those decisions independently. In some cases, such as divorce and separated migrants, the maternal parents may make decisions according to the wishes of migrants as the respondents are fully responsible for the migrants' children. The decision regarding the use of remittances was at least once discussed with migrants, but it does not matter if it is implemented or not. This could be because most respondents rely on the remittances sent by migrants as a major source of household expenses.

**Table 5.6**

Chi-square Test for Migrants and Decision Making

	Value	Df.	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	50.012 <sup>a</sup>	24	.001
As for the likelihood Ratio	44.039	24	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.320	1	.251
decision-making	198		

a. 23 cells (63.9%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .09.

The following table 5.8 and 5.9 shows relationship between migrant decisions making power and the uses of saving. The chi-square test yields a computed value of chi-square of 1.307 and a level of significance p-value of .727. The alternative hypothesis was rejected and accepts the null hypothesis because 0.727 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This means there is a statistically insignificant relationship between whether the migrants are more powerful and hold higher positions in the decision-making over the uses of savings made by them. This means saving does not play a dominant role in making decisions in their family, which they left behind. Since most remittances are used for daily expenses and children's schooling, the family does not have a culture of saving. During the field observation, it was clear that the respondents' high standard of living and lack of a saving culture caused them to rely on remittances and thus have to consult with migrants for the proper use of remittances.

**Table 5.7**

Saving and decision-making

		Decision maker for expenditure				Total
		Self	husband	Family members	Other	
Uses saving	Yes	42	14	25	0	81
	No	64	21	30	2	117
Total		106	35	55	2	198

Sources: Field Survey 2022

**Table 5.8**

Chi-square test for saving and decision making

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.307 <sup>a</sup>	3	.727
Likelihood Ratio	2.006	3	.571
Linear-by-Linear Association	.153	1	.696
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .78.

When we use the chi-square test to determine whether there is a relationship between family type and migrants' decision-making, the computed chi-square value is 3.349, and the level of significance p-values is .341. I reject the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis because .341 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This means there is no statistically significant relationship between the type of family and the decision-making. This means the migrant's family type does not play a dominant role in making any important decisions in their families. This showed that women's decision-making power within the house seemed to depend on the household structure and women's position within the household hierarchy.

**Table 5.9**

Types of family and decision-making process

		Decision-making process				Total
		Self	husband	Family members	Other	
Types of family	Nuclear	65	14	26	2	107
	Joint	50	13	28	0	91
Total		115	27	54	2	198

Source: Field survey 2022

**Table 5.10**

Chi-square test for decision-making process and types of family

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	3.349 <sup>a</sup>	3	.341
Likelihood Ratio	4.088	3	.252
Linear-by-Linear Association	.881	1	.348
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 2 cells (25.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .88.

The following Table 5.9 and Table 5.10 show the relationship between house ownership and migrant decision-making. The computed value of the chi-square is 5.697, and the level of significance p-values is .458. Alternative hypothesis was rejected and accept the null hypothesis because 458 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This means there is a statistically insignificant relationship between house ownership and decision-making. This means the land does not play a dominant role in

making decisions in their family; they left it behind. Interestingly, during the field observation, women owned more household properties than men, but these women still did not play a dominant role in the decision-making. However, the chances of decision-making increased in the case of migrants' families as they sent remittances to the family.

**Table 5.11**

House ownership and decision-making process

		Decision-making process				Total
		Self	Husband	Family members	Other	
House ownership	Own house	100	22	52	2	176
	Rented house	15	3	1	0	19
	Parents house	3	0	0	0	3
Total		118	25	53	2	198

Source: Field survey 2022

**Table 5.12**

Chi-square test for house ownership and decision making

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.697 <sup>a</sup>	6	.458
Likelihood Ratio	7.008	6	.320
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.992	1	.084
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 8 cells (66.7%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

During the fieldwork, I discovered that women in nuclear families who had taken on the role of breadwinner participated in decision-making with their husbands because they maintained regular contact with their spouses. The husbands mentioned that they consult their wives before spending the remittances. Nevertheless, the migrants living with their in-laws do not possess the same role as those living in a nuclear family, as the family only lets migrants know about different issues but makes decisions themselves. Mostly, the in-laws and spouses made the decisions. One of the respondent living with his parents, sibling and daughter shared his experiences as follows:

A 37-year-old migrant's spouse living with his parents, a sibling, and his daughter shared his experiences how his mother manage the household activities and take of his child:

My mother used to manage all the household chores and buy all the necessary stuff for the house. My wife sends remittances to me as well as to her maternal parents. We did not object to her sending money to her mother, and we never inquired about how we invested the remittances at home because my mother handled everything. She knows all the financial matters at home and tells me that I do not have to worry about her and just take care of our daughter Mahi (6 years old). I do my outside work and do not worry because my mother takes care of everything (D. Upreti, personal communication, May 5, 2022).

The cases of unmarried and single migrants living with their parents have a typical story. The migrants send remittances regularly to their mothers and siblings for their daily expenditures, as most fathers in these families have passed away and some are not working. Their mother required her migrant daughter to consult before using the remittances she sent, but saving for the migrants' future use was not possible due to the money being spent on current survival. Some male respondents felt they had accomplished more because their daughter went for foreign migration, and they could solve their hand-to-mouth problem in the city. One of the migrant spouses living with his in-laws and his two sons mentioned that it was very difficult to live in the city if his in-laws did not support his wife's decision to migrate.

I came to Pokhara fifteen years ago and had nowhere to live. However, I found work in a construction company and met my wife, Anju, who was only 14 years old. We decided to marry, and we did, but I had no proper place to live, so her parents provided a room in their house, and we lived here from that time on. When I decided to migrate to Qatar, I was turned down due to my poor health, so Anju decided to migrate to Bahrain with the help of her

cousin's sister. She sends money to her mother, and my mother-in-law gives me whenever necessary, as she manages everything. I do not have any objections because I do not have any proper work and have to depend on remittances sent by my wife (S. Biswokarma, personal communication, May 5, 2022).

For married women, on the other hand, significant decisions are made by their husbands. A man living with his two sons sent his wife Mina for foreign migration before 12 years ago. He was unable to work because of his serious health problems and backbone troubles, which resulted in a persistent economic difficulty. Mina went to Malaysia for the first time and then migrated to Qatar. He shared his experiences as:

My wife has passed eight classes, and she is very rational in managing all the household chores and completely taking care of my health when I was on bed rest for eight months. I found myself very blessed to have such a caring and loving wife. She decided to move for foreign labor migration due to our economic condition, and I had no option to say no other than yes, as we did not have any option of earning a wage for our survival. Without her, I cannot manage the money, care for two children, or run the house. She sent remittances regularly, and we made joint decisions about our child's education, my health treatment, our approach to household chores, and my participation in community activities in which we invested money ( T. Biswokarma, personal communication, May 10, 2022).

As a result, women's ownership of certain assets does not always imply that they have complete control over these assets. Though women become the family's

breadwinners by sending remittances, they do not make most of the decisions independently; the involvement of a spouse or other family members was seen. This could be due to our society's patriarchal nature, in which men continue to play a significant role in decision-making in certain areas and women do not have a special status within the family.

### **5.3.2 Roles and Responsibilities in Household Domains**

A movement of women members from households, especially wives, creates a long-term vacuum in everyday household activities and a lack of proper nurturing for children. Women's movement does not cause problems for their male counterparts, but in the case of unmarried and single families, loyalty to them has been jeopardized due to their long-term absence from the house and society. Thus, many things happen inside households in the absence of migrants, and these should be handled in the right place for the proper functioning of the family as an institution. Despite the changing roles and responsibilities, the restructuring of gender relationships should be granted, given the traditional patriarchal nature of society. The changing roles of the husband, who is taking on household chores and their own business, not only result in a shift in accepted gender images but also lower the male's social position (Lan, 2003).

Nonetheless, the shifting roles of household members have assisted migrants in acquiring economic resources that could be used for household purposes by the family left behind. The complete process of changing gender roles and their substitution in positions has been tested using SPSS through a chi-square test to show whether there is a relationship between everyday activities and migration. To determine whether the relationship exists, the following hypotheses have been developed:

Ho: Respondents' relationship to migrants is independent of their changing roles in household affairs, i.e., there is no relationship between them.

Ha: Respondents' relationship to migrants is dependent on their changing roles in household affairs, i.e., there is a relationship between them.

In the given Table 5.14, the results of the chi-square test are shown. The computed value of the chi-square while using the chi-square test to find out the relationship between daily activities carried out by the family and role changes due to migration is 16.465 and the level of significance p-values are .011. Alternative hypothesis was rejected and the null hypothesis was accepted because .011 is greater than the alpha value 0.05. This means a statistically insignificant relationship exists between the respondent's relationships and changes in their roles due to women's migration.

**Table 5. 13**

Relationship to migrants and changing roles in Households

	Value	D.f	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	16.465 <sup>a</sup>	6	.011
Likelihood Ratio	19.004	6	.004
Linear-by-Linear Association	.608	1	.435
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 4 cells (33.3%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.69.

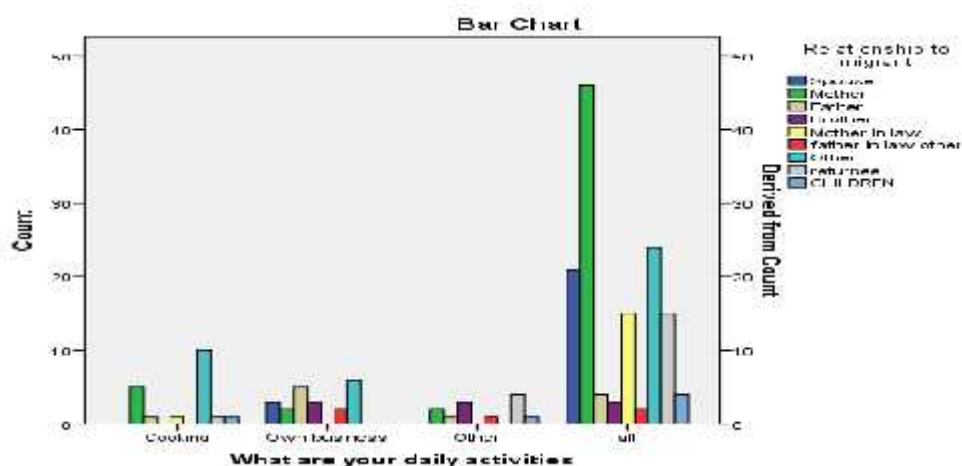
Sources: Field Survey 2022

Role substitutions in migrants' households may be done by the family inside the households or their associated kinship network. The absence of a daughter does not result in significant changes in family roles. In such cases, a female member,

either the migrants' mother or a sister, takes over the duties of the migrants' women. However, in married cases of migrants' families, the mother-in-law, a sister-in-law, or a grown female child takes over the domestic roles; if the families were nuclear, the burden of responsibility falls on the heads of the migrants' husbands. In the field sites, most of the migrants' work was performed by their mothers, as 22.3% of the migrants were unmarried, so their absence did not change the mothers' role performance. About 24% of the migrants were single, divorced, or separated; they were living with their maternal parents and taking care of their children. So, mothers become important figures in carrying out the roles of migrants in their absence. These roles are not new to Mothers, as they were already engaged in doing household chores. The following Bar Chart 5.1 shows that most of the migrants' role replacement was done by their mothers, who were followed by their spouses. Migrants' spouses were more responsible for taking over all the roles of migrants along with their businesses.

**Bar Chart: 5.1**

Daily Activities Performer and relationship to migrants



Sources: Field Survey 2022

In the study area, substituting a person for the domestic chores of the migrant woman, the mother of the migrants, was the preferred choice as most of the migrants were unmarried, single, divorced, or separated. These mothers have domestic work experience and can be trusted to take on the child's responsibilities and remittances. The following examples demonstrate how choosing the mother as the focal person in carrying out the activities. A men living in a joint family with his two children, clearly explains his role substitution by his mother to bear all his responsibilities:

While living with my parents and two children, I do not have time to do housework because I work in an ayurvedic medicine pharmacy. My mother took care of all my responsibilities, including those of my child, besides all the house members. She looked after my children and did cooking, washing, and everything. I was not worried as my mother was there to care for the children and send them to school. My wife sent money to me regularly, and I gave it to my mother for household expenses; she dutifully played the mother role by caring for me, my children, and other family members. My wife is also happy that I and my children are eating on time and have a routine under the supervision of our mother (B. Upreti, personal communication, May 12, 2022).

If a migrant's spouse is living with his parents and if the spouse is unable to take up the role of his wife due to his own business or is unwilling for some reason, the mother-in-law of migrants becomes the best choice for carrying out household duties in joint or extended families. In the nuclear households of the study communities, the husband generally bears all the household responsibilities when a husband depends on remittances and generally when he is unemployed. After a

mother and mother-in-law, the migrant's spouse is more responsible for taking on the roles of the migrants. One case of respondent is very interesting to note because, due to his severe health condition, he is not able to engage in wage-earning work.

My wife, Nikita, and I decided on her foreign labor migration before 14 years ago. After I got into a road accident, I faced severe health problems and had to go for multiple surgeries, becoming unable to work. We began to live hand to mouth because no one in the family was willing to take on my responsibilities. After that, I never became the breadwinner for the family or took on the responsibility of raising our children. It is all thanks to Nikita, who faithfully assumes the role of a husband and sends monthly remittances for household expenses, my treatment, and my children's education. Nonetheless, I must care for these three children: the young girl was only two years old when her mother abandoned her. I have to prepare meals for them, wash their clothes, clean the house, and everything else. All the children are in school, so I have to manage everything on time (R. Pariyar, personal communication, May 14, 2022).

Some of the husbands take care of household work and children. These tasks do not put them under stress, so they consider them regular activities. Most of the spouses in the field site heavily depended on their wives' earnings, so they had to take over the roles of migrants. However, other groups of husbands relied on other family members to help them organize household chores and care for children. The spouses' reliance on wives' remittances benefits and disadvantages them. The field site observation and in-depth interviews with most husbands clarified that they did not get good wages in the local labor market and stopped working after their wives' migration. They take

care of household affairs and children, as they do not have any financial burden.

Wives send money regularly for the household's expenses and children's schooling.

Throughout my field visits and observations, I found these men were always gathered in a public place and idling with friends by playing cards and taking alcohol. These men have no plans or expectations for the future, but they hope their wives will continue hiring foreign labor until their children are old enough to take over their responsibilities.

### **5.3.3 Substitution of Migrants in Transnational Space**

Gender practices and performing different tasks than in the past not only change the status and position of role bearers for both migrants and their families, but it also modifies traditional gender roles and expectations. The changing gender roles of men, such as from breadwinner to housemaker, not only limit their roles in household affairs but also lower their position in the family and society. Nevertheless, on the other hand, migration empowers women due to their breadwinner role in the family and the heavy financial dependence of the family on the remittances they send. Even though both men and women dutifully play their changing gender roles without any grumbling. The role substitution of migrants in the family either benefits or disadvantages the role bearer, whereas migrants taking on the role of breadwinner instead of a male member may gain a high position in the family. The male member, especially the spouse of migrants, might have a lower position in the family due to his changing traditional role, i.e., from breadwinner to housewife. On the other hand, female members, especially migrants' mothers, found themselves more authoritative due to their control over remittances earned by their daughters. Gamburd (2002) noted that the person bearing the responsibilities may not abide by the agreed arrangement or may have problems with family members if he or she is from outside the family.

The following cases of respondents describe how his wife's migration affected his lifestyle and bring changes:

Fourteen years ago, my spouse migrated to Saudi Arabia; she then moved in Kuwait and currently lives in Qatar. Since I was unable to apply for foreign immigration because of my terrible health, my wife and I discussed her migration. Our sons were too little when their mother moved. Our sons, the older of who is seven years old and the younger of five, were too little when their mother moved. I raised them as if I were a mother from that point on, cooking for them, cleaning the houses, doing their laundry, and taking care of all the domestic duties in addition to my own business. I'd taken up my wife's role and taken care of our two kids fourteen years ago. However, my wife started sending me remittances two or three years ago because she thought I was spending too much money on useless extras. She used to send money to my account on a monthly basis, but I never saved, and my wife was annoyed with my behaviors, which put our future security at risk, so she stopped giving me money. My neighbor takes it seriously when I take out a loan with a child. I'm bored; whenever I asked my wife for money, she only said that I would spend it on frivolous stuff so, she stopped sending me money instead of it, she always send money to our sons (S. Pariyar, personal communication, May 22, 2022).

The role played by the husband in the absence of their wives not only overburdens the household's affairs but also takes the children's responsibilities on top of their work. However, this does not always result in positive changes in gender aspects, and men are also subjected to psychological pressure as a result of their patriarchal role in society. The social position of husbands is partially affected by

their wives' migration as these men have to substitute the domestic role of women and manage their own lives. The following case illustrates how men become more careful and active during migration:

I worked in a cooperative from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., so managing all the inside and outside activities was very hard after my wife's migration. Anita moved to Dubai five years ago, leaving behind a three-year-old daughter. I woke up early this morning, prepared breakfast for Shibu's school and meals for us, washed the clothes, dropped Shibu off at school, and then got myself ready to work. It has been difficult for me because nobody is there to help me.

Nevertheless, I did not bother; instead, I dutifully played my roles as mother and father while caring for my daughter. Anita is also happy with me and said I am fully responsible now. This is why Anita trusts me and sends money to my account regularly, which I deposit for savings as we plan to build a cement house with a rooftop (R. Pariyar, personal communication, May 25, 2022).

There cannot always be balance and harmony in the conjugal relationship, as some migrant spouses claim that their wives' migration causes them problems. These men have to do household chores and child care; however, this work does not satisfy them mentally, and they are always under pressure to keep working inside and outside the house. This can lead to conflict in their marital relationship. According to the case of the 37-year-old returnee immigrant, her husband divorced her due to their long separation of twelve years and she expresses as:

I moved to Saudi Arabia for the first time after consulting with my husband, who permitted me to do so. It was extremely difficult for us to meet our basic needs then, and he had no permanent job, making it difficult to send our children to a good school. So, I spent five years of my life in Saudi Arabia,

leaving my children with their father. However, when I returned home on vacation, I discovered he had extramarital affairs and was spending all of his money on his extramarital affairs. Then I give him a divorce and bring my two children with me. As I have no savings and no work in Nepal, I again plan for foreign labor migration and leave my children with my parents this time. I moved to Oman and stayed there for seven years, but due to my health problems, I just returned a few months ago. I have made some savings and am planning to start a small business. Let us see what happened... (S. Biswokarma, personal communication, May 27, 2022).

The above three cases emphasize three different aspects of migration. First, the case emphasizes that, though the husband becomes the focal person for receiving the remittances in the early stages of migration, migrants send their earnings to children later. Though husbands take on all of the roles and responsibilities of wives admirably, trust in their marital relationship has weakened, as evidenced by the proxy of receiving remittances, i.e., from the husband to the children. The second case explains that wives do not choose another proxy for their role replacement and fully trust their husbands to substitute their roles. The level of trust does not weaken due to their physical separation. The men in these situations are seen as too busy securing their future by having bank deposits, faithfully doing household affairs, and caring for children. The third case concerns the adverse impacts of transnational women's migration on their marital relationships. There is conflict and divorce between the partners due to their long separation. The rejection of the husband usually comes from the wife's side as she gains economic independence and makes her own decisions. Though the proxy plays the role of migrants, the level of trust and belief in relationships over a long period does not tie up their conjugal relations, which leads to

separation and divorce. The field data shows that a total of 8% of migrants were separated, and 4.5% were divorced. Most of them get divorced and separated after the migration process. The confrontation between the husband and wife is usually due to their long physical separation, suspicion over their marital relationship, the use of remittances, and the alcoholic husband. Though their conjugal relationship was good and harmonious before the wives' migration, their relationship had ups and downs after the wives' migration.

Among the women migrants in the study area, most of them are single (8%), separated (9%), widowed (3.5%), unmarried (22.1%), or divorced (4.5%). Thus, these migrants either live with their maternal parents or near to their house. The migrants bring their children, families, and households together in a networking relationship so that the child left behind will have proper care in their absence. The other important aspect is that most of the household's responsibilities were carried by the migrant's mother, and these mothers did not find any changes in roles due to the migration process except for child care. The household's tasks, such as preparing food, washing clothes and utensils, cleaning the home, and so on, were their prime daily activities. The mother found nothing bothersome about carrying out these activities. During an interview, the migrants' mother expressed as:

Laxmi, my daughter, got married at the age of 19 on her own. She made the decision to immigrate to Saudi Arabia for foreign labor migration after three years of marriage because her husband's income was insufficient to support them. My son-in-law was unreliable, slothful, and addicted to booze, so she decided to oversee migrating. And now her daughter, who is one year old, is living with me. I have to cook food; clean the houses, wash clothes, and send the granddaughter to school. No one assists me because my spouse works

early in the morning for his little business and must leave early for work (R. Sunwar, personal communication, May 28, 2022).

The case study presented above is not unique to one family; nearly all families of migrants, whether single, divorced, single parents, or widows, have comparable narratives. As a proxy manager, the mother manages the migrant's work from home by taking care of all domestic chores. A major factor in the movement of laborers abroad is a 43-year-old divorced mother who was solely responsible for providing for and raising her three children. For the benefit of her children's quality of life, a wife living with her three children, had to leave her husband's because his alcohol nature and terrible habits. Her 17-year-old daughter decoded it as follows:

My father always comes home after a night of drinking and rambling around the village, and he spends his life idling with friends. My mother constantly works in other people's homes but does not earn enough to feed all of us. So, she left my father, and we came to live with our grandparents. My mother moved to Malaysia about six years ago, and I have managed all household affairs and cared for my younger brother and sister. I am prepared for college, and I prepare them to go to school, prepare their tiffin, wash their clothes, clean the house, and participate in all activities. I matured at an early age, so my mother sent remittances to me directly, and after consulting with her, I used them (R. Pariyar, personal communication, June 2, 2022).

Having a negligent and uncaring husband was very common in the study area. The reasons could be a low literacy rate in the slums and inappropriate male behavior. As women migrants assist in the family's economic activities, the family left behind bears all the responsibilities taken on by women in their absence. Due to the social roles attached to gender practices in Nepalese traditional societies, mostly female members take on the management roles of women migrants.

### 5.3.4 Trust and Obligation over the Relationship

Gender practices and performing different tasks than in the past not only change the status and position of role bearers for both migrants and their families, but they also modify traditional gender roles and expectations. The changing gender roles of men, such as from breadwinner to housemaker, not only limit their roles in household affairs but also lower their position in the family and society. Nevertheless, on the other hand, migration empowers women due to their breadwinner role in the family and the heavy financial dependence of the family on the remittances they send. Even though both men and women dutifully play their changing gender roles without any grumbling, The role substitution of migrants in the family either benefits or disadvantages the role bearer, whereas migrants taking on the role of breadwinner instead of a male member may gain a high position in the family. The male member, especially the spouse of migrants, might have a lower position in the family due to his changing traditional role, i.e., from breadwinner to housewife. On the other hand, female members, especially migrant mothers, found themselves more powerful due to their control over remittances earned by their daughters. Gamburd (2002) noted that the person bearing the responsibilities may not abide by the agreed arrangement or may have problems with family members if he or she is from outside the family. A wife's migration affected the lifestyle of whole families as her husband said like this:

My wife moved to Saudi Arabia 14 years ago, then to Kuwait, and now to Qatar. I and my wife consulted with each other about her migration, as I was unable to apply for foreign immigration due to my poor health condition. When their mother moved, our sons, the elder seven and the younger five, were too young. Since then, I have played the mother's role and brought them up; I prepared food for them, washed their clothes, cleaned the houses, and

managed all the household chores and my business. It had been fourteen years since I assumed my wife's role and cared for our two children. About 2/3 years ago, my wife sent remittances to me directly, but as my youngest son gained citizenship, she sent remittances to him. When she sends money directly to me, I unnecessarily spend. She then sends money to my son's account, and whenever I needed it, I asked him. My neighbor does not take this easy and criticizes my habits, as people believe that my wife was not loyal to me I feel humiliated in front of my sons and other people. (B. Thakuri, personal communication, June 5, 2022).

In a nuclear family, the role substitution of the wife by her husband is completed cautiously because these men can take on domestic responsibilities and care for children. However, faith in the marital relationship was observed among both men and women on the field sites. During an in-depth interview with a 43-year-old returnee woman immigrant who has been mentally ill for a long time, she describes how her husband divorced her by taking all of her remittances:

I had a love marriage at 17 with a man from Dhading who lived in a rented room in Pokhara. He was not earning enough, and sometimes we faced a hand-to-mouth problem. Later, I began working at a construction site but was not paid well, so after consulting with my husband, I decided to apply for foreign immigration to Saudi Arabia, where my aunt was working. I left my husband and three children in Nepal and lived in Saudi Arabia for five years after she arranged all the official documents and gave me some money for visa processing. I regularly sent money to my husband's account for all the expenses and my child's schooling, and I found him very honest and kind. When I went on vacation to Nepal, I was astounded to learn about my

husband's extramarital affairs. He did not tell me anything during our phone conversation. When I ask him about his affairs, he manipulates things and raises questions about my character, as I was in Saudi Arabia for five years alone. My bad luck was that I frequently sent whatever I earned to him without saving. I had to face lots of problems. He left me to marry his girlfriend. After some months, I also got into a second marriage, as my parents insisted. However, unfortunately, this man has a second marriage; nonetheless, I found him kind and sweet. After one year of marriage, we decided to migrate to Qatar. We worked for the same company for four years. However, my health deteriorates as a result of the heavy workload, and I return to Nepal. I bought a house with money earned there. My husband calls me and occasionally sends money for household expenses as he has to look after his first wife and children. I do not have any problem with this, thinking that all men are the same (R. Pariyar, personal communication, June 10, 2022).

Due to long-term physical separation, the Rima case sparked a series of debates about faith in marital relationships. Even though these men take on the responsibilities of children left behind, their long separation from their wives leads to extramarital relationships and the misuse of remittances. Additionally, marriage as an institution built on faith relationships has always been problematic due to women's migration. However, the question is, what about men migrating and women left behind with children? Is it going to cause family discord or infidelity? First, the physical distance between men and women may sow seeds of distrust, making both men and women more likely to seek a new partner. Second, women's financial vulnerability increases with male outmigration (Elson, 1992). Due to the tradition attached to breadwinner roles for men and women as housewives in Nepal, the

women left behind rely heavily on their spouses' earnings. Thus, women's economic dependence on men and the socio-cultural traditions associated with women do not sow seeds of distrust in their husbands. These women were always busy with household affairs and taking care of children, including their outside activities under the supervision of other family members. The overburden of work does not enable them to think outside the family, and thus, they are always tied up in familial relationships, although her husband is far away. The very foundation of Nepalese families lies in the women's commitment to the marital relationship and their trust in the husband; nevertheless, it does not matter how devoted her husband is to their relationship.

### **5.3.5 Involvement of Migrants in Household Activities**

Women who migrate for foreign labor are not simply cut off from their families and societies; they continue to play an influential role in household and family life through various modes of communication. The migrants regularly send remittances back to the family, and at the same time, they provide instructions about using remittances. These migrants' women not only instruct the family members about using remittances but, in some cases, control the management of household affairs. At the same time, because of their economic dependence and the belief that migrants have a stock of outside knowledge, the family left behind maintains constant contact with the migrants and seeks advice in emergencies. The family left behind economically depends on the migrants; they follow all the instructions on using funds unless there is already agreement about how to spend the money. Migrants' priority was to provide their children with quality education and basic health care. Additionally, migrants exchange their knowledge, ideas, and values gained in the international sphere with their families through social media platforms, such as IMO,

Vibor, and Facebook Messenger. Migrants typically stay in touch with their families, sharing conversations about family matters and informing them of the significant events ongoing in their lives.

Thus, the socio-cultural and economic capital women gain in transnational spaces gives them economic independence, confidence, and greater freedom and enables them to take a special position in the decision-making of household affairs. Thus, the type of remittances gained in transnational space transforms transnational networks (Bailey, 2010). On the other hand, remittances raise the social position of migrants both inside and outside the family and facilitate women's control over the resources in their home country. A 16-year-old migrant's daughter share more interestingly about her mother instruction to manage all the households tasks:

My father abandoned us when I was nine years old, and my mother took over all of my and my two sisters' responsibilities from then on. My mother worked, but her earnings were insufficient to feed all four of us, so she decided to travel abroad. She left us with our grandmother; we were very small. She moved to Kuwait six years ago due to economic pressures and a desire to provide a quality education. Nevertheless, after three years of mother migration, my elder sister ran away with a community boy and got married. I relayed this message to my mother, who became frustrated and told me she didn't want to work anymore, suspecting that my sister and I would do the same as my older sister. I promised her I would never make such a ridiculous decision and would carefully look after and socialize with her younger sister. After that, I always informed her of everything that happened here with us, and she instructed me on what to do or not do. She will guide me on what

sectors the remittances will be spent in, and I will act accordingly ( S. Pariyar, personal communication, June 11, 2022).

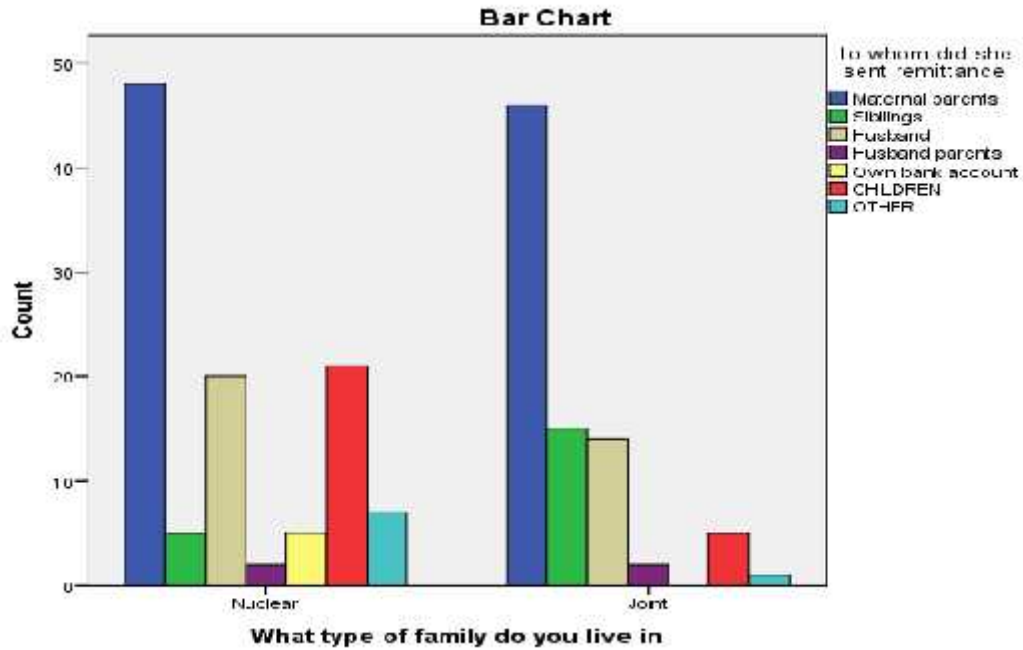
Though the migrants live miles away from their families, they frequently contact family members and feel their presence in household affairs. Additionally, migrants want to ensure the proper use of the remittances and guide the socialization process of their children through various means of communication. Thus, the migrants are not only the breadwinners of the household's affairs but also transfer social, cultural, and economic capital to the family back home in a transnational space. In return, these migrants only need the emotional support and care of the non-migrants for the smooth running of their lives.

During the field survey, while asking about respondents' opinions (whether they consult with migrants in spending the remittances), about 89.3% of the respondents answered that they consult with migrants before using the remittances for different purposes. The respondents accord a special position to migrants in the household's affairs due to their economic dependence on migrants. Most migrants make important decisions regarding child education and insist their children attend private schools. 14% of remittances were used for schooling after a large portion of remittance expenses (73.1%) were utilized in the household's expenditure. The girls living with her brother shared the difficulties they faced after his father and mother got divorced. After the divorce, her mother went to Qatar without supportive hands to fulfill their basic needs. She was only twelve years old at the time of her mother's migration, and her brother was only nine years; she managed all the household activities and went to school with her brother. They attend a private school close to their home. Her mother is a very strict person who follows up with the principal of the

school to make sure the children are showing up to class on time. Their mother provided money on a monthly basis, so they didn't have to worry about school expenses.

Talking about the choices of remittance receivers depends on the types of families in which migrants live. The following Bar Graph 5.2. Depicts the first choice of recipients of remittances. Whether they live in a nuclear or joint family, maternal parents are the first choice for sending remittances. This is because about half of the migrants are unmarried (22.3%), single (8%), separated (9%), or divorced (4.5%) and live with their maternal parents, and the migrants who send remittances are their mothers. However, in married cases, migrants preferred to send remittances to their husbands and children. Most migrant women, i.e., 59.3%, used bank drafts to send money home, and the noteworthy thing is that most migrants do not have their own accounts, so they send money to their mothers. IME is the second choice (34.7%) for the migrants to send money. Economic support is always accompanied by instructions on using funds unless there is agreement about how to spend the money, such as household expenditures, health, schooling, buying land, constructing houses, etc.

**Bar Chart 5.2:** Types of family and remittances receiver



Sources: Field survey 2022

### 5.3.6 Conjugal Relationships in Transnational Space

Though migration is primarily motivated by economic pressures to support the family, it can also be motivated by a desire to escape stressful situations and make the migrant's life easier. Nonetheless, in the case of married women, physical inability to work and husbands' bad behavior drive women to migrate. The overall concern for migrants is maintaining harmony and stability in their familial relationships.

According to Shah's (1998) research, the absence of women in the family led to misbehavior by the husband and children due to the lack of proper supervision by the mother. Research shows a strong link between divorce or separation and female foreign migration (Eelans, 1995). Typically, the husband leaves behind money squandered on another woman, excessive alcohol consumption, and gambling. The marital status of migrants shows that there were 15 single, 60 were in a love marriage, 43 were in an arranged marriage, 16 were separated, seven were widowed, nine were

divorced, and 44 were unmarried. Due to the experiences of migrants, the conjugal relationships of married, divorced, and separated migrants were very noteworthy.

A 46-year-old migrant's mother stated that her daughter migrated to escape the psychological torture and reduce the economic burden she faced as she divorced her husband. She experienced much stress from the divorce, lived with the consequent social stigma of a divorcee, and also had to feed and educate her child.

My daughter had to go abroad because her situation was very bad during the time of the divorce. The economic hardship of that time and the frustration created by the divorce forced her to migrate. Her husband left her and started living with another woman. Then she came to live with us and her daughter. My granddaughter was about three years old. She needed money to raise her and provide a good education. She then moved to Kuwait with the help of a manpower agency six years ago and sent money to my account regularly. After paying household expenses and school fees, I deposit the remaining funds in the bank (P. Thakuri, personal communication, June 16, 2022).

After divorce and separation from spouse, migrant's women became the primary breadwinner for the family. Only 15.6% of the migrants went for higher secondary education, so they cannot get good opportunities and can earn barely enough for their everyday consumption and their children's education. In the passage below, migrant's sister explains that how divorced and separation causes her sister for foreign migration:

My sister did not have a good relationship with her husband, and people go away when their hearts are broken. Her husband would not care for her; he did not value her. Then, after consultation with our parents, we thought that

instead of staying here, she should earn a living. Why would anyone have to go abroad if they had a caring husband? I believe that only women who have unsupported husbands, are alcoholics, or have extramarital affairs travel abroad. They had to earn for the family, as did my sister, as our brother-in-law divorced her and left her alone. She migrated to Qatar six years ago and regularly sent money to her mother (A. Pariyar, personal communication, June 23, 2022).

Women sought foreign labor migration after divorce to secure a better future for their children and the survival of their families. The dilemma of whether to stay home and care for children or go abroad to solve a family's economic problems is always triggered to choose migration because migrants earn high wages in foreign lands. These women give much priority to the children's future and want to provide education and care in their absence through the use of proxies. Therefore, they want to maintain regular contact with their home proxy manager to reassure themselves that their children are being looked after. Migrant's mother has noted the following expressions during her communication with daughter on IMO:

Since my granddaughter was six years old, when my daughter has been migrating to Bahrain, leaving her two children with me? Her husband was not sincere about taking over the household's responsibilities, so she migrated. She sends remittances to me regularly for household expenses and to pay the school fees. She was always exhausted from her work but didn't take a break. She provides me with guidance and is concerned about our lives. This is all due to her earnings. (S. Thapa, personal communication, June 26, 2022).

These women are physically absent but are always concerned about their families. Women feel mentally free from their family's pressure when their husbands

are honest and faithful in their relationship. Some husbands are duty-bound, and children do well despite the mother or wife being away. The following case of migrant's husband stated that how they are coping the changing role in absence of his wife:

My wife and I migrated to Kuwait for the first time before 14 years ago; at the time, our sons were only 4 and 7 years old. She stayed there for eight years, came back, and again went back to Oman within six years. She migrated for foreign labor migration since that time. I did everything, even cooking and washing, which I had never done before. I did not mind doing housework because I realized it was my part of life, and I had a duty to look after my children. The children are closer to me and are now going to college. My wife sends money directly to me for the household's expenses and the children's schooling. She has no anxiety about us, as I have also made some savings for our future. (R. Thakuri, personal communication, July 5, 2022).

When a mother acts as an attentive and loving proxy manager, migrants can focus on their work without worrying about their children and their family back. To maintain their family, migrant workers should, however, manage their remittances carefully in order to save money for the future.

### **5.3.8 The Communication Process in the Household's Management**

Through various communication mediums such as letters, phone calls, video chat, voice calls, mail, and various social media, migrants are socially linked to household affairs back in the nation. In recent years, communication technology has made it easier and cheaper to establish super-fast connections. The easiest and cheapest way of connecting enables both migrants and non-migrants to follow the

ongoing activities happening around them. The family at home, particularly husbands, discovered social media to be a means of nourishing their marital relationship by keeping both of them updated on every activity carried out by them easily and inexpensively. Discussions with migrants revealed that social media is the favorite communication medium, and in my opinion, Facebook Messenger has become a more common and regular means of communication. The migrants are mostly connected to their families via social media (85.4%), and they frequently use IMO international video calls and chats with them. The advancement in communication has, therefore, further strengthened the transnational relationships and overall management of the household by the migrants. Only 1% of them write letters to their family due to the unavailability of a phone system in their home. Nevertheless, replacing letters by telephone systems has made their relationship fluid. 10.6% of them use telephone calls to communicate with their family. The following table shows the different means of communication used by the respondents to communicate with migrants:

**Table 5.14**

Means of communication used by Migrants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Social Media	170	85.4	88.1	88.1
	Phone	21	10.6	10.9	99.0
	Other	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	193	97.0	100.0	
Missing	System	5	3.0		
Total		198	100.0		

Sources: Field survey 2022

The regular and frequent communication between migrants and non-migrants not only strengthens their familial relationship but also assists in the coordination of household affairs in the home country, as well as in consultation over any emerging problem that has been solved through their virtual communication. This is demonstrated by the following respondent's statement:

My daughter sent money to me for all the household expenses and her father's treatment. She knows that her father needs to visit the hospital twice a month for his regular checkup. I know how hard my daughter has worked to earn money so we don't overspend. My daughter always inquires about household affairs and her sister's studies; the household honestly answers all of them because it is all on her earnings that we depend on (B. Pariyar, personal communication, July 5, 2022).

The above account, however, doesn't reflect the general problem faced by the migrants' families. However, it sheds light on the means and ways of communication that keep the familial relationship nourished and trustworthy with each other. Every instruction passed from the transnational space strengthened their emotional feelings and tied up the family as an institution through the households' coordination as migrants regularly keep in touch with their families. During an in-depth interview with a 48- or 49-year-old migrant spouse living with his two children, decipher like this:

Due to my poor health, my wife chose foreign migration 16 years ago to sustain our five family members. She sends me money and instructs me on money management via IMO. She placed a higher priority on paying the school and tuition fees and bringing the required household supplies and other

requirements because she detested wasting money on useless things. During our conversation, she requested that I visit her mother because no one cared for her, and I used to give her money. I also ask her to look after her health, eat on time, and not be concerned about us. She always seems stressed out about the children, as she said, "I do not become a good mother." What will they think of me now that I have abandoned my small child? I am unlucky that I did not enjoy their childhood, did not play with them, or even prepare the food they liked, so please do not compromise their needs. I will send more money if they demand anything more. "Her overall concern is to look after the children in a well-managed manner and to take over the household affairs in a good manner, and you know I consider myself fortunate to have such a loving and caring wife who is playing my role (D. Sunwar, personal communication, July, 14, 2022).

The above case shows that both migrants and non-migrants make their presence felt in each other's lives through their instructive communication, creating the situation of a closely-knit transnational family. Both instruct and guide each other's activities in a dignified way so they do not feel any burden or pressure over their changing roles and responsibilities. During communication, the expectations toward each other are clear, and generally, they follow them to nourish their relationship in a transnational space. Another case of a 19-year-old girl living with her sister and maternal parents clearly stated how all of the family members followed the instructions of her mother:

When my mother called, I told her everything in the house and our academic progress. During the conversation, she always instructs and questions—to do

this and not do that, and so many other things. Because my grandparents are elderly and cannot remember anything, I had to care for them and my younger sister, so my mother always asked me to mature and take on all responsibilities in her absence. I realized once that I had matured at a young age and could do anything (R. Malla, personal communication, July 17, 2022).

The preceding example demonstrates how mothers can assist their children in becoming independent by providing enabling conditions for their progress, with the mother always present. Regular communication with appropriate guidance and instruction enables the children to become responsible. The field survey data shows that 16% of the migrants were divorced, separated, or widowed, and their children are living with their maternal parents, so they have to take care of themselves. Some older children help with household chores under the supervision of their mothers, while younger children are cared for by siblings or grandparents. Similarly, 52.8% of migrants are married (31.2% through love marriage and 21.6% through arranged marriage), and all of these migrants have left their children with their husbands and grandparents. Communication through different means shows that the migrants play an instructor's role in dealing with household affairs and guiding the children's activities. The family left behind, especially the husband and children, felt the presence of a caretaker, even though the migrants were not physically there. This was partly because the instructions came over social media in real time.

### **5.3.9 Mother as a First Choice: Alternative Manager in Household Affairs**

The mother is a focal person who functions as the migrant's alternative manager, and she is also a trustworthy to whom migrants send remittances and share their feelings about living in a transnational space. Mothers play a dominant role in

performing all the household chores and taking over the children's responsibilities. As a proxy manager, the mother facilitates the transnational household process by working as a mediator to ensure that all instructions are followed and by attending to matters that would require the physical presence of the migrant on her behalf. The involvement of the migrants through an alternative role performer is a common feature in the transnational families in the study area and is closely linked to gender and kinship. The following Table 5.15 shows the migrants' first choice for whom they trust and find responsible for sending their lifelong earnings:

**Table 5.15**

## Marital status and Remittance

	To whom did she send the remittance								Total
	Maternal	Siblings	Husband	Husband	Own	Child	Other		
	parents		parents	parents	bank			account	
Single	9	3	0	0	0	0	1	13	
Married	16	4	15	1	0	5	2	43	
Separated	8	2	0	0	0	5	1	16	
Widowed	6	0	0	0	0	4	0	10	
unmarried	29	8	0	0	3	2	2	44	
Divorce	6	3	0	0	0	3	0	12	
LOVE	22	3	19	3	2	7	4	60	
MARRIAGE									
Total	96	23	34	4	5	26	10	198	

Sources: Field survey 2022

The cross-tabulation between marital status and the proxy operators for receiving the remittances sent by migrants, shows fascinating phenomenon. In cases of marital status among migrants, the husband is not the first and preferred choice of remittance receiver. Normally, the remittances are sent to the mother, which shows that the mother is the trustworthy focal person for receiving the money and performing all the household chores. In most of these cases, the married spouses share a home with the migrants' parents, which is one of the reasons why the mother is chosen as the recipient of remittances. Furthermore, the majority of migrant spouses are alcoholics or gamblers. Returnee women migrants generally share the following description of the situation:

I spent six years of my life in Dubai. I always send money regularly to my husband's account, but he spent it playing cards and drinking alcohol. Even so, he did not pay our child's school fees. I was shocked at his behavior when my mother informed me about this. He does not know the value of money and my labor and sweat in an unknown place. Nevertheless, I always used to tell him what to do with the money. However, he never understood me. Then, I started to send money to my mother and asks to take care of the house as well my children (S. Magar, personal communication, July 27, 2022).

Another returnee woman migrant explained her experiences in the following ways, which summarize the common sentiments of migrant women in not choosing their husband as their priority for remittance receivership:

My husband was working as a labor in a construction company while I was away, and he was not getting paid well. So, after one and a half years of my migration, he quit the job, thinking that whatever he earned in a month, I had earned in a day, so he left the job and lazed around with the surrounding

people. He spends the whole day playing cards and drinking alcohol with friends. He never became a good husband and father, as my children share everything. My elder son is 12, and my daughter was eight when I left for Dubai. I spent almost nine years there but never heard from my husband about returning. My maternal parents live nearby, so they took over the child's responsibilities and all other management in the house. I sometimes wonder what would happen to my children if my mother was absent. (P. Biswokarma, personal communication, August 1, 2022).

The preceding two instances explain why they did not select their husbands as the remittance receiver. Unlike mothers, these men are not used to being at home and caring for children's responsibilities. The social and cultural obligations associated with gender make men irresponsible towards their families in Nepalese traditional society, as evidenced by the field site. The remittances they receive from their wives not only allow them to be the primary entertainers among friends' circles, but their friends also pressure them to engage in such activities for their benefit. The result was a neglected family, wasted earnings, and a husband addicted to alcohol. Such activities make migrant women think twice before sending remittances to their husbands. Nonetheless, few spouses take on all household responsibilities and carefully care for children. One respondent living with his two sons and one daughter, shares his experiences as follows:

My wife moved to Qatar seven years ago, and I was responsible for all household activities and the care of all the children because there was no one to help me. After finishing all the household activities and sending the children to school, I am ready to work in the cooperative organization from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. I did not bother my wife with anything because I knew we were

both doing well for our family. The children are also very smart; they always come around the 10th position in their class. She sends remittances to my bank account regularly, and after paying household expenses and school fees, I used to save the remainder for our future. Still, my wife would like to stay for another five years so that we can build a house and send our children to college (C. Thapa, personal communication, August 3, 2022).

One of the most important aspects of sending remittances to the husband is his honesty and dependability regarding family responsibilities. If the husband is unreliable, migrants search for next-generation proxy operators to perform all the household's activities. Migrants' mothers serve as proxy operators to handle all the activities along with taking care of children. The familial conjugal relationship between husband and migrant wife is linked to their children's love in transnational space. During field trips and informal conversations with migrants' spouses, they maintained that it is all their children for whom they are changing roles or performing double duty of work both inside and outside the household.

Additionally, in the case of unmarried, single, divorced, and separated migrants, the mother is the proxy operator for doing the migrants' work and receiving the remittance. Mother is the more dependable and trustworthy person for migrants to send remittances and share their feelings and experiences in a foreign land. This is all about how women's migration empowers not only the migrants but also their mothers in handling money and being in charge of all household responsibilities. Mothers, siblings, and children are more dependable sources of funds for migrants when sending remittances. They always communicate and consult with migrants before deciding anything in the house. It has been noted that no other person outside the household is responsible for receiving money. The following case illustrates how a

sibling becomes a focal person in the absence of migrants, taking on all the responsibilities of the migrants' children and her spouse:

My sister moved to Malta three years ago, leaving her two-year-old daughter with her husband. She lives nearby, about a 5-minute drive from my house. Except for me, my two brothers and one sister are abroad. My Vinaju (brother-in-law) works at a hotel in Lakeside, so he does not have time to look after his daughter and do household chores. As I was free, I prepared food, washed clothes, cleaned the house, and sent the baby to school. I have no problem doing this work. My sister sent remittances to me because Vinaju (brother-in-law) did not have time to collect money from IME, so I brought the money and gave it to Vinaju. Nevertheless, my sister instructed me what to do with money and for what purposes, and I followed her instructions and saved some money in her bank account without notifying Vinaju (R. Shrestha, personal communication, August 5, 2022).

The proxy has many obligations, ranging from running the family to taking full responsibility migrants children. In every situation, the migrant's proxy usually means a self-assured, reliable individual who handles their responsibilities and has receive remittance. Because the person is only doing what the migrants' instructions instruct properly, they have a special position inside the home due to economic resources gained in the form of economic capital. Also, the person is more likely to attend to family affairs, basically substituting for the role of a migrant. In general, mothers are the focal point for migrants, carrying out all their replacement activities and shouldering responsibilities. Sometimes, a husband creates problems. It is not uncommon for the men to resist this arrangement as it increases the hold of the migrants on the households (Gamburd, 2002). This situation put migrants and non-

migrants into conflict in their conjugal relationships as migrants transferred their autonomy to another proxy rather than a male member of the house. The following statement, deciphered by the migrants' mother, is pitiful and resulted from the migrants choosing their mother to receive remittance rather than a father:

Due to our family's poor financial situation, my older daughter traveled abroad before she was 11. Nobody took on all the household responsibilities and cared for my younger children, who were just six and nine years old. My husband did not work; he got drunk and gambled the whole day. I worked in different houses and earned some money to sustain our family, but that was not enough. So, my daughter decided to pursue foreign migration in Malaysia. For a few months, she sent money to her father, but he spent it on alcohol and gambling. He gave us only a small amount of money, which was insufficient. Then I told my daughter, and she started sending money to me, but my husband started to quarrel by making unnecessary arguments. I only pray to God; there should not be misuse of money that is mixed with the blood and sweat of my daughter. (D. Pariyar, personal communication, July 7, 2022).

To verify the qualitative data, further quantitative testing has been done to show whether there is a relationship between the marital status of migrants and the proxy operators receiving the remittance. I stated the null and alternative hypotheses as follows: whether there is a relationship between married, unmarried, single, separated, or divorced migrants and the person to whom they send remittances. The following assumptions were made, and chi-square values for various variables were calculated using SPSS.

Ho: The marital status of the person receiving remittances is independent of the women's migration process, i.e., there is no relationship between them.

Ha: Marital status and the person receiving remittances depend on the women's migration process, i.e., there is a relationship between them.

**Table 5.16**

Marital Status and Remittances

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	76.843 <sup>a</sup>	36	.000
Likelihood Ratio	90.409	36	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.049	1	.306
N of Valid Cases	198		

Sources: Field survey

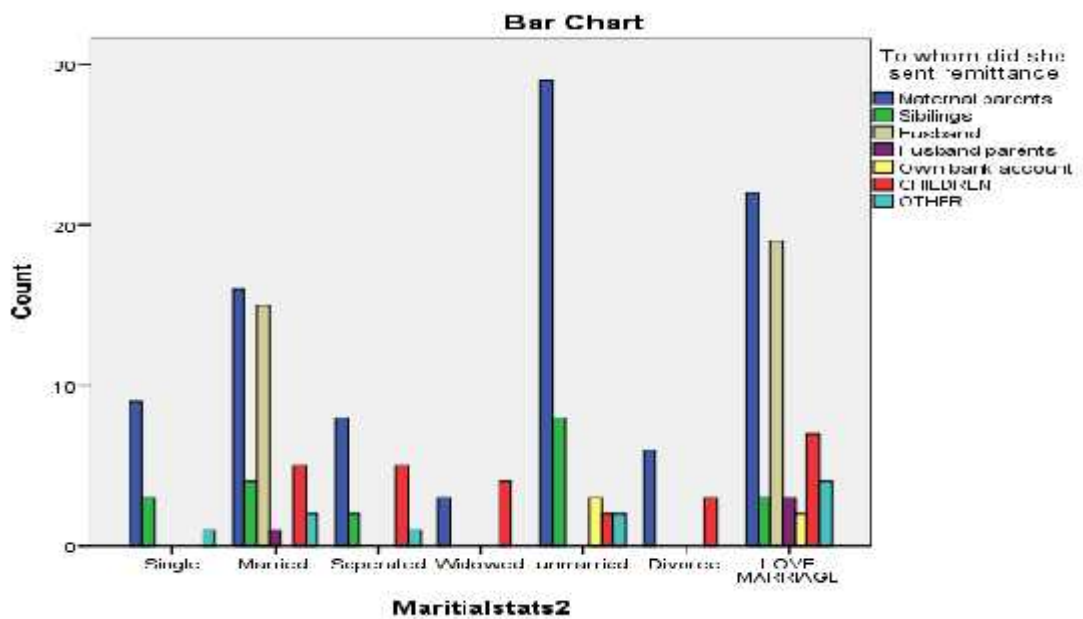
a. 37 cells (75.5%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .15.

The computed value of the chi-square test for determining the relationship between marital status and the relationship of persons receiving remittances with migrants is 76.843, and the level of significance p-values are .000. Since .000 is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, I reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means there is a statistically significant relationship between the marital status of migrants and the recipients of their remittances. For example, married migrants may prefer to send money to their husbands first, then to others. Similarly, unmarried and single migrants prefer to send their earnings to their mother, who then sends them to their siblings. During the field observation and survey questionnaire, most of the migrants' first choices of proxy operators were their mother and husband, while other relatives came next. The interesting thing to note is that migrants rarely send their remittances outside of their close relationships. The

following bar chart shows the marital status of migrants and their preferred choice for sending remittances. Remittance is one of the dominant factors in choosing the proxy management team to look after the household's affairs, along with childcare responsibilities.

**Bar Chart 5.3**

Marital status of migrants



Sources: Field survey 2022

Furthermore, having a substitute role replace in the household links the migrant and the household more efficiently and effectively, which benefits migrant women. In the case of married migrants, the person is more responsible for receiving remittances, performing household tasks, and caring for children. The migrants instruct the proxy manager through social media platforms to properly use remittances and all other ongoing activities. Thus, the first and preferred choice of migrants is their mother, followed by their husband, to send money and build trust that these people will be the best choice for their role substitution.

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

The chapter provides nuance information about how women's labor migration creates a wide range of opportunities that enable women's participation in the capitalist market, where women play a key role as breadwinners and contribute to household domains. Migrants' women not only contribute economically but are also ready to continue their breadwinner role for more and more years. The nature of role transformation of women from home-maker to breadwinner vibrates the role of families left behind, particularly the husbands as he bears the responsibilities of home and children along with outside work in the absence of spouse. The results also suggested that, women left behind in households, especially the mother's act as proxy managers to maintain the household's chores and take care of children. This demonstrates how, in global contexts, conventional gender norms take on new meaning and how role substitution occurs in the creation of the household in order to preserve the family institution.

**CHAPTER VI**  
**POWER STRUCTURES AND IDEOLOGIES IN POST-MIGRATION**  
**HOUSEHOLDS**

**6.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the returnee women's power negotiations in their households and society to show that the changes they brought to household formation during migration are still the same or different after their return. For three reasons, the investigation is critical for understanding the effects of gendered power structures and ideologies on household formation. First, post-migration households shake up the family's domestic power dynamics. Secondly, the changes in the power relations among households are due to economic factors and trust relations between spouses after the wife returns. Thirdly, unlike during the migration, the ideas associated with breadwinner power and decision-making do not give women the same admiration in post-migration households. Therefore, the explanation needs to be found elsewhere, namely in ideological and context-specific processes.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section examines the reintegration process of the returned migrants both inside and outside the household sphere. In a patriarchal society, how do non-migrants perceive and interact with returnee women migrants, and how are images and identities defined? More specifically, the section will focus on how returnee migrants adopted strategies to be incorporated into society and households. While these migrants help improve household economic status, they also lose dignity. The second section examines the main features of the domestic rules and their gender implications in post-migration households. The third section examines how a new trend in household formation

emerged where migrants were searching for a special plan to sustain the rest of life in their home country.

## **6.2 Challenges and Opportunities for Reintegration in Post-Migration**

Women's migration primarily aims to alleviate family hunger and improve household economic status. However, it does not consider the level of suffering endured by women in transnational spaces, or their struggle for easy reintegration into the household domain once they return.

The primary driver of women's migration may be men's incapacity to support their families and to play the role of breadwinner. However, there are also secondary desires that arise, including a desire to build a home, obtain health insurance, provide better education for their kids, and so forth. For the returnee migrants, their reintegration into conjugal relationships and community activities may not be easy, as the women need more time to assimilate with other people. The provider role during migration may transfer to the homemaker, who depends on others for decision-making. Nevertheless, all returnees do not always depend on others and may continue the breadwinner role by engaging in different income generation programs. Even though those women continue to fulfill the role of providers, they still have to perform all the household chores and care for children.

In addition to the importance of the above-mentioned scenarios in understanding the power position of returnee women migrants in households, the other aspects of women's integration into social life should be equally emphasized. Additionally, households and migrants became self-sufficient due to remittances, which solved their economic insecurity. Thus, migration leads both the family and the migrants to raise their social position by solving everyday problems.

### **6.2.1 Opportunities Acquired by Returned Workers**

The traditional values attached to the gender role of women as housewives changed during the immigration process with the formation of a new identity. Women become economically independent and serve as breadwinners for the entire family. As a result, it has had broader implications for her status in the households and communities where her new position is visible, elevating their status level. The housemaid's housemaker role is transferred to the breadwinner, shaping two distinct identities and positions of women in a transnational space. The power structure associated with the dualistic role should be analyzed and explained to understand gender relations. The images and identities are subsequently created based on the different roles assigned to women in different contexts.

The migration of women provides an opportunity for the whole family to overcome their existing circumstances; on the other hand, the social position of women raises issues both in the family and community. The behavioral and attitudinal changes shaped during migration make these women different from non-migrant women. Furthermore, highly modern material consumption makes the arrangements of the returned households easier. Also, these returnees open their businesses instead of loafing with friends to sustain their livelihood.

A 41-year-old unmarried returnee migrant, who spent almost 24 years of her life in three different countries, i.e., three years in Saudi Arabia for the first time and seven years in Kuwait. Then 14 years in Oman with a Muslim family, she deciphered her journey like this:

My parents have four children: three daughters and one son. I was only twelve when my father became paralyzed, and there was no one to help us. I began

working for a construction company and earned Rs. 200 per day, which was insufficient to support the family and pay for my father's treatment. My aunt was in Saudi Arabia, so I consulted with my mother about foreign labor migration. Initially, she did not permit me, but later on, she was convinced. I was only 17 when I crossed the border into Saudi Arabia from India. Then, my journey to a foreign country begins. I transitioned from daughter to son by being the breadwinner, educating two sisters and my brother, and assisting one sister in getting married. My brother works in the Nepal Army, and my little sister is a nurse. It was all due to my hard work in a foreign nation. Both my father and mother are sick, so they need regular health checkups. Much money was needed for their treatment, and I made it possible. We found ourselves lucky to have our elderly parents with us. Before I went to work in foreign migration, we lived in rented houses. I bought a small plot of land in a slum community and built a small house after earning money in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. However, when I migrated to Oman, my first target was to build a cement house, and the dream came true; now we have a big house. Our house is bigger in our community; everyone calls it Sita's House. I was pleased when someone recognized it as mine. When I was abroad, I regularly sent remittances to my mother's account, and she managed everything, including my siblings' studies and my father's treatment. I never get involved in anything and only want them to be happy. I have not done any savings; whatever I earned, I used to send it all in. I returned home for vacation three months ago, and my owner in Oman calls me every day. My mother does not want me to leave again, and I have no idea what to do. I am confused. Everyone at home is settled; my brother has a family, and my sisters got married. Now I have

nothing to do but look after my parents. I plan to open a small grocery store so that I will easily spend time without anxiety. In our Nepalese culture, different people have different perceptions about women's migration, and so far, I am still single, so people gaze at me differently. My mother was concerned about me, so she regularly consults about my marriage. However, at this age, getting a good partner with a likable character is impossible, so I rejected her option and convinced her by sharing my problem (S. Pariyar, personal communication, August 8, 2022).

Another returnee female migrant who is sitting in a small grocery store with a tailor. She spent nearly 21 years in a foreign country, where she worked hard and cared for all her family members. She shared her experience like this:

My father died when I was 12 years old, and then my mother took care of us (one brother and two sisters). I was in class 10 when my mother died, and I had to discontinue my studies and look after my brother and sister, as I am the elder child. After consultation with my siblings, I decided to migrate to Kuwait and work for five years. I was there when our king died; my boss informed me. Working in a freezing temperature and eating frozen foods, I suffered from back problems and tonsillitis, so I returned to Nepal. After spending five years in Kuwait, I migrated to Oman for four years, then again to Kuwait for five years, and lived in Qatar for about 7.5 years. I used to send remittances to my brother for household expenses, but he misused them. Later on, I sent money to my sister's account, which she deposited into my account. I bought a small plot of land in Birauta but later sold it; I paid Rs 17 lakh for this house. I spent two years in Nepal before deciding not to return because I was getting too old to work hard. If I do not do anything now in Nepal, how

will I be able to plan my future when I am 51? So, open this small grocery and tailor shop. I know how to sew clothes so that I will open this tailor shop.

Now, I am also responsible for looking after my brother's children and his wife as he has run away from the family; we do not know where he has gone. Due to family and work pressure, I never got time to think about my marriage, and when my mother was alive, she also did not ask for it. You know I am a simple, straightforward girl who has never had a boyfriend. I think it is good for me that I am not married, as most men are not good with their wives (M. Biswokarma, personal communication, August 8, 2022).

The preceding two cases spark debates about the opportunities that returnee migrants seize during and after their migration. The remittances earned have been used for different purposes, such as improving the quality of life of family members back home and making migrants capable of working after they return. In the following section, I will discuss some social indicators that trace the level of opportunities gained through migration.

### **6.2.2 Access to Education**

The remittances migrants send are mostly invested in children's education, regardless of gender, to secure their future. Most of the respondents deciphered that they enroll the boys and girls in private schools without any discrimination between the sexes as the migrants regularly send money for their education. The impact of migration, i.e., all the social, cultural, and economic capital remitted by migrants that is invested in education, often to improve education for girls, results in the transformation of patriarchal power structures and is often viewed as inter-generational (Phizacklea, 1998).

According to one returnee migrant woman who returned from Qatar nine months ago:

I left my seven-year-old son and three-year-old daughter with their father and grandparents as I migrated to Qatar. When I returned after four years, I found that the children were not doing well in school. Suddenly, I realized they did not get proper guidance and care after I left them. I decided not to go again; whatever I earned, if a child does not have proper education and care, then what can I do with money? Now that I have changed their school, I guide their studies at home in my free time. I had finished 11<sup>th</sup> grade in public school, but after my father died, I got married and had to end my studies. I know the value of education. If my children complete their higher education, they will get good jobs here and not need to go abroad (S. Shrestha, personal communication, August 18, 2022).

### **6.2.3 Freedom of Mobility**

Traditional norms and values associated with women's mobility still exist in Nepal, manifested by padlocked women in households with less freedom to move outside the home. Nevertheless, the scenario has changed since foreign labor migration began. A returnee migrant shared her experiences of eleven years in foreign labor migration the following ways:

Before migration, I would wait for somebody to go to official work and pay the school fees for my children. I could not even think of traveling alone from Pokhara to Oman. I did not have the confidence to go anywhere on my own. It never struck me that women think like me and have limitations on their mobility outside the house. I was so shy and hesitated to talk with strangers. However, when my sister in Oman asked me to come there, I became happy

and applied for a visa. I envision a world outside of the home where there are no barriers to women's mobility. After moving, I noticed a significant change in how I spoke and behaved in large groups and even with strangers (L. Thapa, personal communication, June 5, 2022).

Though the woman belongs to a highly developed city, she still lacks the courage and confidence to move freely and alone. Most returnees shared the feeling that, before migration, they hesitated to talk to strangers and speak in mass. However, migration causes many changes among them. A returnee from Dubai explains something like this:

Even as a student, I always assisted others in the community. When I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, I became a class monitor. From the time I learned so many things, I became independent and managed things in their proper place. Everyone in the community trusts me because my father died when I was in class nine. My family (mother, three small brothers, and one sister) has suffered intense economic problems. I decided to migrate to Dubai, and because we did not have enough money to cover my visa costs, everyone in the community chipped in to help me. I sent remittances regularly to my mother's account; she managed all household matters. My brothers and sister went to school. Due to a health problem, I returned last year after spending almost nine years in a foreign land. So, after returning from migration, I had to pay back all the money to community members who had helped me. Now I have opened this small grocery store and am selling items at a reasonable price compared to other stores, thinking it might be one way to help our people. Everyone trusts me (P. Gurung, personal communication, June 8, 2022).

#### 6.2.4 Decision-Making Power

Ideals and norms attached to subservient daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, and daughters-in-law are always at the top of society's rules. These women are expected to work in favor of the patriarchal nature of society. However, the degree of freedom to follow customary practice is determined by the type of label applied to women's relationships. If a woman is a daughter or sister, she has less restriction over social practices, whereas a daughter-in-law has to obey all the rules and regulations made by the family. Migration acts as a catalyst in breaking down the social barriers that limit women's mobility and ways of doing things. Following migration, these women become breadwinners, sustaining their families' expenditure. Additionally, the women become capable of making independent decisions about their way of life, and to some extent, they interfere in family affairs. The family back home also felt compelled to follow the migrant's decision due to their economic dependency. The feeling of being powerless and annihilated, and the high dependence on the male of the family, has changed due to women's wage-earning capacity, which makes women more confident and increases their bargaining power without confrontation. During an in-depth interview, the husband of a migrant who arrived in Oman less than four years ago stated:

When my wife, Purnima, moved to Oman, she became more intellectual and braver in her interactions with others and making decisions about our household affairs and children's education. She regularly sends money to our joint account. She always makes a phone call about the use of remittances, and we discuss the use. She asked me to give her mother some money too so I could do that. She knows everything; she has seen more of the world than I

have and knows how to deal with people, so I always prioritize her decision.

(R. Malla, personal communication, May 8, 2022).

A migrants who have returned, explains how the community and family encourages them to be involved in the ongoing decision-making process as:

I returned from a foreign labor migration from Saudi Arabia and Qatar, after spending thirteen years of life. Now I became a member of a local community organization. I make bold decisions in disputes involving the community and mitigate conflict between people. Everyone likes me due to my behavior and faithfulness and the people believe that I will never make a bad decision. I found myself both proud and worthless while having this status. My family also consults me regarding any household management activities, and my opinions are taken into due account. I feel that I am still playing a dominant role after my return. My migration experience has helped me gain respect from my family and people in the community. Because there was no one to help me during my stay in a foreign land. While I was in foreign labor migration, I learned problem-solving techniques, and now I know how to deal with every situation strategically. After living for 13 years in a foreign land, it has become a natural reflex for me to think strategically. During my stay in Qatar, I learned that everybody should be equally weighed without any discrimination because my owner always called me by name, and I felt like I worked in a homely environment. This is the biggest thing I learned from my migration experience. (R. Chhetri, personal communication, July 8, 2022).

### 6.2.5 Financial Independence

Siegmann and Thieme (2010) noted that, migration enabled women to achieve financial independence, which leads to the traditional role transformation from homemaker to breadwinner. Before migration, these women were engaged in household chores and child care. However, once they moved for foreign migration, there was a shift in the role from homemaker to breadwinner, including increased social and cultural capital. During the field visits, most of the returnees' migrants were seen engaging in some income-generating activities. Before migration, these women were doing household work and taking care of children, and some of them were doing daily wage work in construction sites at low salaries. These women gained economic independence and, became providers for the family. Migration and remittances were their way of breaking what they perceived as a state of subservience. After spending nearly 21 years of her life in three countries, a returnee has opened a grocery and tailor shop in her community.

One of the respondents who return back to home before one and half years ago. She has spent almost twenty two years of her life in different countries; Kuwait, Oman, and Qatar, shared her experiences like this:

After returning, I was in a dilemma as to what to do. The experiences I gained while working in a different country inspired me to do some independent business rather than work for others. So, I opened this grocery and tailor shop with an investment of Rs. 6 lakh. Because I am unmarried, I am not under any obligation to care for a family but instead focus on my retirement, for which I save monthly in a cooperative. (B. M. Biswokarma, personal communication, July 22, 2022).

Sita Nepali, 47, returned to Oman three months ago after spending nearly 24 years of her life in Kuwait for seven years, Saudi Arabia for three years, and Oman for fourteen years, and she is still economically insecure. After building a good rapport with several visits to her location, the story of Sita was very touching, as I had already noted in the above paragraph. Though she spent almost 24 years in a foreign land, she still has no bank account or savings. Whatever she earned in 24 years, she sent all to her mother for household expenditures, to provide education to her siblings, and for her father's treatments. Now, she does not owe anything except her mother's love, as her siblings got married and settled with their families, but Sita is still unmarried. She was in a dilemma about what to do now—whether to go again for foreign labor migration or do something in Nepal. Nevertheless, her mother insists she stays and opens a small business in her old age.

Women still feel insecure in their lives after working for several years by selling their blood and soul in a foreign land. The problem is not only economical, but doing long physical work weakens their body and minds. Thus, the women feel fragile about carrying heavy loads back to the country and searching for simple time-passing work. Most returnees have opened small grocery stores in their communities, while others have been working in households and caring for children. However, the interesting thing is that the unmarried and single women over 40 were doing grocery shopping while the rest of the married women were busy with household chores.

#### **6.2.6 Living Standards and Uses of Assets**

One of the proper uses of migrant remittances is seen in constructing houses and providing good education to children. Nonetheless, the misuse of remittances was observed to waste money in high daily consumption, with a significant amount of money wasted on alcohol consumption. More importantly, migrants want to send their

children and siblings to private schools rather than public schools and to live in better housing than non-migrant families. Having a furnished house improves the standard of living, and building a better house is a status symbol that elevates the household's social position. During a field visit, when I entered the house of some migrants, the household items they owned shocked me because their social setting was not so tidy and hygienic, but inside the house, no one could guess these people lived in a slum community. Items such as LCD T.V.s, refrigerators, gas cookers, iPhones, microwaves, big sofas, and motorbikes indicate a high living standard. The improved use of material goods by returnee migrants and their families represents high living standards. Additionally, these migrants' families consume better clothing and food than others. Furthermore, the migrants' new way of dealing with others is evident in their behavior and attitudes, as politeness is evident during field visits. When I visit the homes of a few returnee respondents, their hospitality is different from that of the other respondents, namely the migrant families. They demonstrated the cultural capital they learned in a foreign land by offering cold drinks and requesting a seat inside their home. These migrants have worked as housemaids in the same house for over ten years, where they acquired training to behave with guests. Thus, during the migration process, migrants did not acquire economic capital. However, the social and cultural capital they gained is always manifested in their way of behaving with people, and thus, they want their family members to follow their path.

### **6.3 Challenges for Reintegration in Post-migration Households**

Due to their long-term physical absence from their families and communities, migrant women faced social stigma when they returned home. These women were always viewed with suspicion at the community and family levels. In this situation, the family should play a significant role in reintegration into the community and

within the family. A total of twenty returnee women migrants were selected for an in-depth interview, and all of these women had faced at least a few months of duration for their reintegration; nevertheless, six of them got divorced and separated after migration. In their absence, most of the spouses likely engaged in extramarital affairs, which created doubt over the character of their wives. This is one of the prominent reasons for their separation. Six of the migrants had bitter experiences after they returned. These women were returned to their homes after being infected with chronic diseases, but their acceptance by family was difficult. Two women suffered from HIV infection, and one of them died last year. The community members do not easily trust the returnee women, as they perceive that women going abroad are not good and might lose their character. During a key informant interview with the community chairperson, he clearly stated that the women who migrated either did not want to return home or, after their return, just went to another country. He deciphered like this:

I wonder why and for what reasons all women are migrating to work. Why do they not have a job in our nation? Why don't the family's male members stop moving abroad? Countless stories about women being abused abroad and migrating are brought to our attention every day. Why should relatives allow them to leave? This is something to think about. Unless they are facing great poverty and must find a way to survive on the hands of their hands, women are not prepared for migrating abroad; these women should, however, return after a few years. However, the migrant women could not return home due to the allure of foreign life and a desire to escape their household responsibilities. I also went to Dubai for a foreign labor migration for five years but returned after earning money. I am now running my own business; I am happy with everything. However, I am astounded that many of our sisters from our community have spent more than ten years of their lives in foreign lands, leaving their

small children behind, and have refused to return. I was surprised that their family did not ask them about their return. My sister has been abroad for the last 14 years, leaving her two sons with their father; she has no plans for her return. I always asked my brother-in-law to convince her to return home, but he said it was okay if she wanted to be there. I understand why he says he completely relies on my sister's income because he does nothing. You may recall that one returnee woman died in our community last year as a result of HIV AIDS. Then, how can one believe that the women who have migrated for labor will return in good health and with the same dignity? (Community Chairperson)

As a result, community members, as well as family members to some extent, were less likely to support the women's migration; however, some families desired that their daughter, sister, or wife return to foreign migration due to the country's economic reliance on migrants. These categories of people only need money regularly. One of the respondents who spent nearly five years in Kuwait and returned home less than five months ago, had the following unpleasant experiences:

My parents never wanted me to go for foreign labor migration, but I was motivated by my colleagues who were already in Kuwait. I consulted my parents, but they rejected my offers for foreign migration, so I consulted with my aunt, who has also had experience with foreign work. She helped me get a visa for Saudi Arabia. It is my bad luck; the work I was sent differed from what I applied for. I wanted to return home, but my passport was with my owner, and they did not let me go. I suffered a lot. Every time my owner gives me mental torture, and I also become physically weak, they always scold me. My visa expired after five years, and I returned home hoping everyone would love and care for me more than before, but I never felt that way. I always send

remittances regularly to my father, but he never asks about my reasons for returning. It was a panic moment for me. My mother brought two men for marriage, but both were heavily inebriated, and one of them had an ex-wife and one child; I turned down both offers. You know I can sustain myself rather than look for another useless person. I learned so many things in my short life. I have promised myself that I will never go again when I return home. However, now I feel I should again try for better company and good work. Let us see what happens. (A. Thapa, personal communication, July 5, 2022).

Bishnu Maya B.K. is another returnee female migrant. She spent nearly twenty two years of her life in various countries before returning home about one and half years ago. She now owned her own company, a small grocery store with a tailoring machine. When her parents died, she chose foreign migration to look after her siblings and run the household. She was still unmarried when I asked her why she had not married yet, and she then clearly said, "Why marry at this age?" "Every man was a drunkard and gambler; I should not rely on any men and cannot take over their responsibilities." I have seen many other couples quarrel every time. "I think I will be safer and freer than when I live with the company." She clearly stated that she wants to live the rest of her life independently rather than taking on other responsibilities. She stated that the men in her community are bad and addicted to alcohol and gambling. At the same time, she was clear that she would not find any proper men for marriage at this age.

When I met the respondent named Binita B.K., who had returned after spending eleven years in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and suffered mentally and physically due to physical assault in a foreign land as well as from her husband. Until

she was in foreign countries and sending remittances regularly, nobody in the family objected to her character. Once she returned home after two years, her family negatively viewed her. After several battles with her husband and mother-in-law, her husband married another woman at the request of her in-laws, so she lived with her two children alone. After developing a close relationship with me, she was eager to tell me her story.

My husband had no work, and sustaining our families was hard. After our consultation, my husband moved to Malaysia. However, within a year, he returned to Nepal he did not get a proper salaried job, as told earlier by the manpower agent. After his return, our daily life becomes more suffocated, and we have a hands-to-mouth problem. My children were dying and did not go to school. Nobody was there to help us, so I decided to do foreign migration and move to Saudi Arabia with a manpower agent for five years, then to Kuwait for almost six years before returning due to severe physical torture from my owner. During my 11-year stay in a foreign country, I sent money to my husband regularly and never interfered with any decision regarding the use of remittances. I was so acquitted and forthright that I never saved money with me; nevertheless, I occasionally sent some money to my maternal parents. My in-laws and husband's behavior after my return was not so good. They stressed me out and argued with me. What others say depends on how your family treats you and whether your community thinks you are good. Later on, my husband left me and married another woman, leaving two children with me. Now, I know that there is nothing more important than money. When I went for overseas work no one blamed my character as I regularly send money back to home. But when I came back to home everybody gaze at me doubtfully,

now, I became a question mark. "Now I am struggling here to feed my children and myself, as well as to overcome my anxiety." (B. Biswokarma, personal communication, August 7, 2022).

The case of Binita reveals the harsher reality of female labor migration and its consequences for both movers and non-movers. The level of suffering and trauma faced by migrants does not have any measurable indicators, so they cannot get relief even if they earn lots of money. The trust and loyalty in the marital relationship declined during the long separation of the spouses. Foreign women's labor migration is a much more complex social phenomenon than men's migration because of the housewife's absence from household activities and other unseen events faced by women in foreign lands. The spouses were affected by the dominant discourse that devalued and disparaged the existing socio-cultural practices in society. After women's migration, families that had "love marriages" were more likely to separate or divorce than spouses who had arranged marriages. After certain periods of foreign labor migration, women were seen to lose their power and authority in household domains and had to live their general lives as in the past. The female outmigration endangered the "prestige" and "pride" of the family left behind due to their long-term absence from the family.

#### **6.4 Migrants' Association in the Post-Migration Period**

Migration has not only brought economic changes but also socio-cultural capital gained in a foreign land by migrants, which is manifested in the behavior and attitudes of both returning migrants and non-migrants. During migration, migrants successfully construct their lives across borders, i.e., in their home and host countries, as they return economic and social capital to their home country (Markley, 2011). Migrants are incorporated into the institutions and patterns of the daily life of the

country in which they reside. On the other side, they maintain connections, build institutions, conduct transactions, and influence local and national events in the countries from which they migrated (Glick-Schiller et al., 1995). During the field study, it was noted that migrants maintain political, economic, and emotional ties with their homeland while abroad. A case of returnee migrants very impressively shared her experiences as:

She spent almost 22 years in a foreign country, earning lots of money and looking after all the family members by sending money regularly back to the family. During a telephone conversation with family members, she also instructs the field to use or save money. She mentioned that the ultimate goal of such instructions is to improve the quality of life for her family by making some savings. Her brother and sisters have been engaged in their businesses with the help of remittances sent by Bishnu and have become independent. During our conversation, she mentioned that her true dream has been fulfilled as all her family members have settled down. She shared her ideas gained in foreign lands about investment and insisted that her brother open a restaurant with the money she sent. She found that her brother had earned a lot of money from the shop, and when she came back to Nepal, she opened a small grocery and stitching shop in her home (S. Chhetri, personal communication, June 28, 2022).

The above case study exemplifies how the ideas, practices, and resources gained in foreign lands not only enhance the economic capability of migrants and their families but also enrich their social, cultural, and educational capital when they return to the host countries. Furthermore, as the economy improves, migrant households' lifestyles and ways of doing things change. Nevertheless, the absence of

women in the form of daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers has resulted in role shifts and altered traditional family arrangements. In the process, the family and households as institutions become contentious sites with conflicting interests among their members and the persistence of rigid gender boundaries (Parrenas, 2001). The complex social and ideological gender roles and responsibilities place returnee women migrants' identities in danger from two different aspects. First, questions about renegotiating women's roles in their families and communities arise due to their prolonged absence from family and society; second, this challenges societal taboos, the stigma and mystification that accompany women's mobility and independence. The returnee woman migrant not only vibrates in the social organization of the household's formation but also assists the whole family's members with sustainable economic opportunities. These returnees were either accepted by the family or struggled to regain their previous position and respect within the family due to their long-term absence. During the in-depth interview, most married returnee migrants said that they had to struggle with their husbands to prove their loyal character and build trustworthy relationships among them. Nonetheless, the husbands' extramarital relationships with other women forced them to think the same way about their wives, and the men did not regard these women as loyal or pure due to patriarchal behavior toward gender nature. A female returnee migrant, exemplifies the preceding statement:

I recently returned from Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, where I had spent nearly 11 years. I have left my daughter and son with their father; my husband is disabled, so he is unable to sustain our family. My husband never raised the issue of my staying in a foreign country, and the only reason was that I sent him money regularly, but when I returned home for the first time, I noticed his

different behavior. However, he does not make arguments with me, but he also does not freely behave with me as before I left. I do not know why. It is all due to our physical absence from home for a long time, and everybody surrounding us might convey bad things about women in foreign lands, i.e., about women's engagement in sexual work. I felt like I had abandoned my marital relationships at times, but we will see what happens in the future (F.Pariyar, personal communication, July 8, 2022).

The negative social perception of the women's physical absence from their family and community does not only raise a question about their purity and dignity; it also puts their future lives in danger as everyone stares at them with suspicious eyes. The process of reintegration into everyday normal life is very challenging for women due to stereotyped characteristics attached to women's mobility outside the house. Nevertheless, the role of the family and community plays a significant role in the process of reintegrating women back into their everyday life interactions and overcoming the stigma of being a "migrant woman." Despite living in their home country, married women migrants, unmarried and single returnee women migrants are always looking for another migration option. The family members also supported these returnee women for further migration. Six single women had migrated to different countries several times and had spent more than 15 years in foreign countries. During an in-depth interview, when asked about the reasons for their marriage, they stated that they spoiled their working years with beautiful personalities from abroad to support their parents, and now they cannot find good men to spend the rest of their lives with. A respondent shared her experiences about migration and the way it affects her family in following ways:

I went to Kuwait for the first time when I was 17 years old, with the assistance of my sister. I was unmarried and very innocent; my parents did not let me go for foreign labor migration, but our economic problems in the house did not force them to stop. I spent nearly 20 years in three different countries. After the death of my father, I want to come back home, but the responsibilities of my mother and three siblings force me to stay. My mother proposed marriage to me, but I declined because most of these men were unattractive and heavily alcoholic. A few years ago, my mother also passed, and I did not find any reason to stay in a foreign land, so I had to return home about fifteen months ago. My brother and sisters have their families and are busy with their lifestyles. They invite me to live with them, but I do not feel comfortable doing so; however, I occasionally pay them visits. I realize the need for a family, but marrying and starting a family at this age is impossible. My overall intuition is to run this small business and pursue my personal happiness (S. Biswokarma, personal communication, August 7, 2022)

The process of re-adjusting into the family and community for unmarried and single returnee women migrants is not more difficult than for married migrants, but the emotion and sentiment of the family decrease due to their own families and busy lives. On the other hand, the relatives expressed embarrassment and a sense of "guilt" in front of others about sending their girls for foreign employment. Nevertheless, the returnee does not care much about how society perceives the female migrants. The unmarried, single, and separated women were also less likely to be concerned about their re-adjustment into the family, as these women were always searching for the next migration option.

During an interview with another returnee woman who is about 47 years old, she said that her relatives and neighbors always reprimanded her for her foreign migration. However, she was compelled to move due to the alcoholic and unsupportive behavior of her husband and in-laws. She left her three children and moved to Saudi Arabia for the first time, stayed for seven years, and returned home to find no changes in the family other than her children receiving a good education thanks to the money she sent. So, she decided to go back to Kuwait and return home after six years. Moreover, her husband married another woman this time and lived in the house built with her remittances. In addition, her two daughters married, and her son moved to Malaysia, leaving her feeling lonely and anxious about the rest of her life. She does not feel comfortable living in the same house as her husband, but at the same time, she has no other option.

The long time away from the family doesn't only create physical distance from them; they also don't get moral and emotional support after their return. Until the family receives regular remittances from migrants, they have no objections or problems with their physical separation; however, once they return, faithfulness and trustworthiness create a boundary between their long-term relationships, as was observed in the returnee migrant's family. Concerns about the long-term separation of women from family and community endanger not only the prestige and pride of immediate family members and relatives but also put returnee women's lives in jeopardy and reduce their dignity and pride as breadwinner members of the family during migration. These women often had to deal with the discourse in their everyday interactions, whether in family or community. These women had to prove their good character. Parbati, a 48-year-old woman who lives with her husband and two children, returned from Saudi Arabia last year after working there for eight years and had a

traumatic experience. Although her husband was very supportive, other family members and community members were watching her character. Women were more likely to hear about other people's perceptions of women's migration because they had to bear the burden of the household's responsibilities and care for outside activities. Even the men were more critical of the female migrant workers. She explains as follows:

Not only women but also our community's chairperson told me, "The women who went for foreign migration had to sacrifice many things. "These women had not only abandoned their families but had also become involved in illegal activities. "The women had lost their self-esteem after returning to the community and family. "After hearing such a ridiculous argument from a gentleman, I was shocked to consider how other people perceive women migrants in rural areas, even though I live in the city. Women do not want to leave their children and family behind, but no other option is available to sustain the family. This happened to me when my husband applied for a Malaysian visa and was rejected due to his poor health condition. We do not have any other option to sustain seven family members, and I migrated to Saudi Arabia. Now that I have returned home, I would like to start a small business with the help of my family (P. Thakuri, personal communication, July 24, 2022).

The social perception and attitude toward returnee women affect their daily lives and force them to reflect on the stressful time they spent abroad, which they wish to forget. The women returnees had to attempt to persuade people that they were different from the other women they might have heard about. During this view, the gender rules attached to men's and women's roles

and responsibilities forced women to trap themselves in their traditional gender norms. These women bear household and family responsibilities and develop and enhance their capacity, skills, and knowledge to financially support their families. These women can invest their savings in some business or engage in some other work. Additionally, the older returnee migrants help to look after their grandchildren and conduct household activities as their daughters-in-law are working ladies. The returnee respondent who spent her long time in foreign land expressed her feeling in the following ways:

I spent almost 21 years in different foreign countries (Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait). I married a man whose profession is driving; nevertheless, he does not support my three children and me. I had to face economic problems all the time. I decided on foreign labor migration with the help of an agent from our community, and I was just 23 years old at that time. I left my children with my maternal parents and moved to Saudi Arabia for the first time. I did not think to tell my husband because he never takes on our responsibilities. After working in a foreign country for more than 20 years, I developed several health issues and was mentally disturbed, so I decided to return home as my two sons and one daughter married and settled. When I returned home, my two sons had also moved to Dubai, and I was responsible for his children and wife. So, my whole task is to stay at home and manage all the household's activities as both daughters-in-law are working. (S. Nepali, personal communication, July 9, 2022).

The preceding explains the returnee's lifestyle in their home countries and reveals a hidden story of pain and stress that migrants experience in a foreign country. Overall, the logic behind women's migration lies in the economic problems of their

families and the unsupportive behavior of their husbands, which does not sustain their families. However, once the women returned to their home country, they had to re-adjust and re-integrate into their daily interactions with family and community members. In doing so, these women faced many problems, i.e., proving their good character to sustain the rest of life depending upon somebody else. Female returnees carve out the rest of their lives in their home countries according to their will and feelings, as they lose their breadwinner power and become physically and mentally fragile as a result of the long hours they work in a foreign country.

### **6.5 Gendered Relations and Household Organization**

The returnee women migrants challenge the norms and values attached to gender relations in society and the household's domain. The women returning as migrants have brought lots of changes to the family. For starters with their return, the women lose their breadwinner power in the family, while the family also loses its regularly earned income. Secondly, these women either remain as providers to the family by engaging in some income-generating activities or return to their traditional tasks and activities performed before the migration. For example, a wife returning home may engage in household and outside income-generating activities. Women who are single, unmarried, separated, or divorced may look for another way to support their families and themselves. Third, the person filling in for the migrants in their absence becomes inactive. Therefore, the household's structure tries to support its traditional household structure. Nevertheless, these structures do not return to their originality, and this should be understood when carving the new gendered ideology and power structure in a household's formation.

The rights, responsibilities, and needs of a particular individual in the household should be socially and historically defined to re-conceive the bargaining model of

households (Moore, 1994). Economic relations must be clearly defined and contextualized to comprehend the domestic power structure. Individual interests, rights, obligations, and resources should be historically defined regarding their economic access. For instance, the traditional norms and values attached to women's roles and responsibilities should be well defined in carving out the household domain in different periods and contexts. Individuals' behavioral and attitudinal changes should be explained regarding their assigned roles. Women's migration has not only changed the breadwinner power of men but also made women more capable with skill-based knowledge to become independent.

#### **6.5.1 Alternation in Post-migration Households' Domains**

The division of labor among the family has always been based on gender, whereby some types of work have been defined as men's work and others as women's work (Jackson and Pearson, 1998). To understand the gender roles within a migrant's family, the study analyzed the division of labor before and after women's migration. The research shows that the relationships within the household are based on gender, with a traditional pattern of a clear division of labor between men and women. Both male and female respondents repeated that the breadwinner role is generally maintained by the male family member. In contrast, the female has to engage in household activities and care for the children. The main role of women is seen as being to complement and support their families. The relatively rigid traditional division of labor remains the same in most households, except in the women migrants' households. With time and in different contexts, the traditional role has been modified, changing the household's formation. The allocation of different tasks to men and women during women's migration has not only altered gender roles but also increased women's prestige due to their income-earning capacity.

Though the first obligation of women is to look after the household's chores and take care of children, migration assists them in becoming the breadwinners of the family, whereas the family left behind, especially the men, carried out women's responsibilities. For husbands and other family members in the household, the provision of women's labor assists in running the family smoothly and easily. However, due to their long-term physical absence, it vibrates the everyday life activities of the family left behind as they have to replace the role of women migrants. These people are expected to perform all the daily household activities and take care of children, including their personal tasks. Nevertheless, in pre-migration households, the woman or wife was expected to carry out household activities such as cooking, washing, cleaning, and caring for the children. The male is not worried about the ongoing activities inside the house but deals with outside work. Nonetheless, women's migration has caused significant changes in non-migrants' lives. The following statement by a husband filling in for his wife exemplifies how he dealt with the double burden of workload in her absence:

When my wife was abroad, I used to get up early in the morning and carry out all the household activities, such as preparing food and meals for the children, washing the clothes, cleaning the house, and getting the children ready for school. I had never done this before my wife's migration. I felt god had given me so many hands to do so many things simultaneously. However, now that she has returned home after six years in Bahrain, I feel like a free bird. I do not have to worry about anything at home because she handles everything and looks after me. I no longer worry or stress about my children's education, food, health, or other issues. (C. Thakuri, personal communication, August 9, 2022).

At the same time, the returnee woman has different experiences:

I expected to see the same things I had seen before my migration when I returned from Bahrain. However, I now feel more at ease than before the migration because I have noticed behavioral changes in my husbands. Though he is not doing household tasks, he cares about me and our children, which he had never done. (S. Thakuri, personal communication, July 3, 2022).

The above two examples of a husband and wife demonstrate that the roles played before, during, and after immigration by both migrants and non-migrants serve the same purpose: to keep household activities running smoothly and to care for their children. Nonetheless, the situation does not remain constant. In a few cases of migrant families, the husband was passive and careless about household tasks and child care, which were handled by the migrant's maternal parents, so after their return, these maternal parents played an important role. The returnee women give an especially high position to their maternal parents, as these women still play the role of family breadwinners. The case of twin sisters named Ganga and Jamuna who are living with their parents opens a new discourse in the household's formation for the returnee family:

I went to Bahrain six years ago, leaving my two children and husband in my parents' house. My husband lived comfortably and calmly as his parents was in Sindhuli. He does not have to take care of household responsibilities or care for children. So, when I sent him remittances, he gave half of the money to my parents. I returned six months ago, and we still live with my parents. I do not have to worry about what my children and household are doing. I work in a restaurant and do not have enough time to look after everything. (G. Biswokarma, personal communication, June 6, 2022).

Therefore, some important changes are developing in the post-migration household' formation. The returned migrant women become more free and independent after migration due to the enhanced skills, capacity, and knowledge gained while playing the role of breadwinner in a foreign country. Their soul and behavior manifest in their everyday interactions, processes, and ways of doing things. The patriarchal nature of Nepalese society separates women from their parents and binds them to their husbands' parents, forcing them to live in their husbands' houses. These women should be more loyal and responsible to their husbands' parents than their own. This is all due to the economic power or breadwinner power gained by male members of society. In this situation, women's migration plays a catalytic role in transforming the nature and pattern of society as these women succeed in becoming the family's breadwinners and gaining high status and position in the family and society. As a result, unlike in traditional society, the compulsion to live with husband and wife parents does not remain static. The provider and breadwinner role makes women more independent, so the role of the proxy manager is to care for the children and look after maternal parents in their household. These maternal parents felt secure and comfortable enough to shoulder the migrant children's and their household's responsibilities. In all these processes, the husband's role was to assist and cooperate with his wife's decisions and actions. Migration as a process replaces traditional roles and responsibilities of actors and aids in forming new households. To some extent, the shadow of migration can be seen in the post-migration period, where women still exercise their decision-making power and have a special position in the family. The new experiences, skills, knowledge, and language enable these women to gain self-confidence and self-esteem that promote their new opportunities but also assist them in finding sustainable income generation programs in their home country.

### 6.5.2 Returnees' Role in the Decision-Making Process

The growing role of women in household decision-making is responsible for determining women's bargaining power (Maharjan et. al., 2012). The cumulative decision-making authority not only enhances their ability to think and increases their problem-solving capacity but also influences their capacity to allocate resources and improve the quality of life among family members. The role of the breadwinner during the migration process makes women more responsible for taking part in the decision-making process of the household's formation. Nevertheless, the supremacy of women's power depends on the context and issues in the family. Regardless of this, migrant women are responsible for decisions such as the schooling of the children, getting health facilities, buying stuff for the house, and their physical mobility. During the post-migration period, the roles of provider and caretaker enhance their capacity to make decisions about the household's activities. Nevertheless, such a decision was made through collaboration and implicit understanding between family members. Women gained economic power due to migration, allowing them to participate in household decision-making. However, how they enjoy their power is determined by the type of family they live in. For instance, married women might take more advice from their husbands than unmarried ones. Unmarried, separated, divorced, and single women enjoy their freedom and participate in all family decision-making processes. The migrants living with senior members may prioritize senior people when making decisions. Nevertheless, the situation is somewhat different for women living with in-laws, as most decisions are made by their in-laws.

A 36-year-old returnee woman from Bahrain living with in-laws realized that even though she earned money, she could not maintain the superior position in the family because her husband's parents and she had to take care of her parents-in-law in

their old age. She does not want to negotiate the decision-making power and position in the family, as she knows she will get all the property after her in-laws' deaths. The case illustrates that the post-migration decision-making power of returnee women has been influenced by the quantity of property upheld by non-migrants in the family, as she gives priority to them. This might be due to her losing breadwinner power or her fear of social criticism. So, the decision-making power of returnee women may also be constrained by social norms about their behavior. Notions of being good wives, good mothers, and good daughters-in-law may influence women's behavior and decisions (Yabiku et. al., 2010). For example, the post-migration period may not give them the same level of freedom as during migration. Returnee women should also obey their traditional practices and follow all the rules and regulations attached to them.

Among the twenty returnee women migrants, six have started their small businesses and generated self-employment opportunities. These women are single, divorced, and separated, mostly above 45 years old and living in their maternal home. In a search for sustainable income-generation activities, these women were found to be more serious about the rest of life. A single returnee migrant has bitter life experiences:

She spent almost 22 years in a foreign country, earning lots of money and looking after all the family members by sending remittances. She has saved a very small amount of money for herself. Nevertheless, her family asks her to marry. However, by the time she realizes she needs some company to get through the rest of her life, it is too late due to her age and many other factors. She stated unequivocally that she is constantly busy helping her parents and siblings but never thinks about herself. So, when she returned from Dubai, she

decided not to pursue foreign labor migration again and instead opened a small grocery store. Finally, she opened a shop to make money, utilize time, and ensure a stable future in her hometown. She made her life decisions, and no one stood in her way. This is entirely due to her earning capacity (S. Nepali, personal communication, June 7, 2022).

During an in-depth interview, a respondent who sent his wife to Dubai six years ago, shared his experiences as follows:

In my family, my wife and I do not consider one superior or inferior to the other... She chose to migrate to Dubai, knowing my health did not support my move there. Because of this, she knows more about managing all the family's activities and making decisions about household activities and children's education. She is the one who does all the shopping and deals with other people. She knows everything and how to interact with strangers better than I do. I should ask for money now and then, but I accept it as normal because she fills my role as breadwinner...I do not say she has more power than me because she earns and performs all the activities, but she is everything to my three children. (R. Neupane, personal communication, July 6, 2022).

The above cases elucidate that returnee women migrants still play a breadwinner role for their families and bear full responsibility for taking care of inside and outside activities. As these returnee women have started their small businesses and some work, their family consults with them before making final decisions. Increased involvement in a household's decision-making process and children's education is all due to the breadwinner power they gained through migration. It is about developing trusting relationships between migrants and non-migrants rather than asserting authority and economic dominance. Nevertheless, the decision-making

role of returnee women depends on their marital status. In the case of single, divorced, and widowed women, decision-making is more egalitarian and self-independent. These women exercise greater power than other members of the family. On the other hand, unmarried and married migrants have some limitations and barriers in the decision-making process. These women have also played a role in the decision-making process, but they have only become a part of it rather than dominating it. Decisions on financial matters, in particular, are made by male members, with migrants becoming only a part of the decision-making, even though these women are breadwinners for the family. Even so, the male retained power in household decisions and outside activities. So, the exercise of power over the decision-making is still guided and controlled by male members in the case of married and unmarried returnee women migrants.

## **6.6 Conclusion**

This chapter concluded that women's power negotiations depend upon the type of households in which they lived. Though women spend her entire productive life in foreign land but still she didn't become role model of the family and have fully participated in decision making power. The life after post-migration period for women is very challenging and faced many struggle in dealing the various problems. After women returns back to home, her previous roles and responsibilities in households works was reassumed but the noteworthy things is that she can easily play a role of breadwinner to the family by engaging in some alternative income generation activities. Nonetheless, the migrant's women are facing weak conjugal relationship in their marital life as the cases of divorce and separation are increasing in women migrants houses. So unlike during the migration or before the migration period, the ideas associated with breadwinner power and decision-making do not give women the

same admiration in post-migration households. The gender norms and values attached to the women and men are still prevalent and can be easily manifested through the people's behavior. Thus, the power in post-migration household is determined by traditional values and practices in the society and not by resources as the women also become breadwinner of the family but occupy the same place as that of men in the house. Though, the women own resources and have encountered the social and cultural capital in global world but still the patriarchal norms and values dominate the women's position and decision making power in the households.

## CHAPTER VII

### ROLE OF REMITTANCES IN RECONFIGURING GENDER PRACTICES

#### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the remittance types migrants sent back home, highlighting that migrants acquire different forms of capital beyond just economic resources. These forms of capital significantly influence education, health, awareness, social dynamics, and gender roles back in their home countries. This examination is relevant to understanding the impacts of migration on gender transformation about economic empowerment for two reasons. The first is the change in breadwinner power in a household's structure. Secondly, migrants tend to keep close contact with their families; thus, ideas and culture flow across borders through different means of communication. The ideas and culture that spread across the country and then back home help reduce gender discrimination. Therefore, an explanation needs to be explored of the causal relations among the various forms of capital transferred by the migrants to their families.

The chapter is divided into three different sections. The first section examines the economic remittances sent by migrants through different means of communication. These migrants send most of their income back home to manage the household and other activities. The improvement in living standards and increased consumption behavior show a lack of culture to save remittances in the study area. The second section examines how economic and socio-cultural capital helps to improve family welfare and the family's health, education, and way of life. Thus, the remittances help to improve the family's well-being and assist members in grasping different opportunities, such as getting skills and training and acquiring knowledge.

The third section investigates how various forms of capital reduce gender tradition in household formation. We can discover changes in household formation by focusing on the various roles played by the family in the absence of female migrants. Here, I borrow my idea from the work of Peggy Levitt (1998) that social and cultural capital helps women to empower as well as it also assists in the construction of a new form of a household's structure.

### **7.1 Proxy Manager in Remittance Management**

This study examined average family economic status and the control over the resources by the families members. To estimate the average remittances sent by migrants to the family, I asked respondents about the frequency of remittances sent by migrants to their homes. Respondents found it difficult to answer questions about their remittances received, so I simply inquired about the person in the family who receives remittances and the frequency with which they do so. Therefore, I asked the respondents about the bank account type and members receiving money. The following Bar chart shows the cross-tabulation results for the monthly income of migrants and their ownership of the money by asking whether the migrants have bank accounts in Nepal.

## Bar Chart 7.1

### Ownership of Migrants Over Remittances

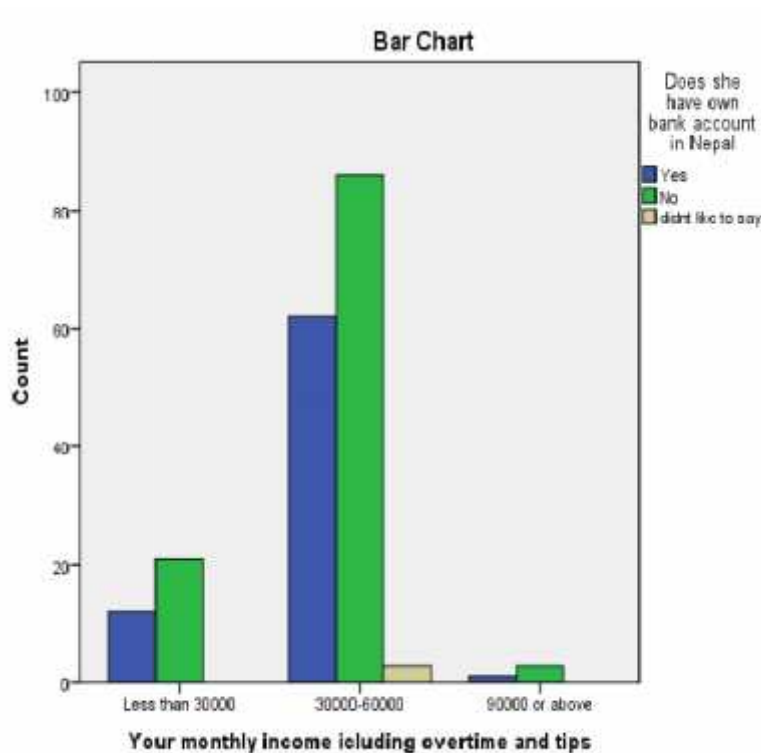


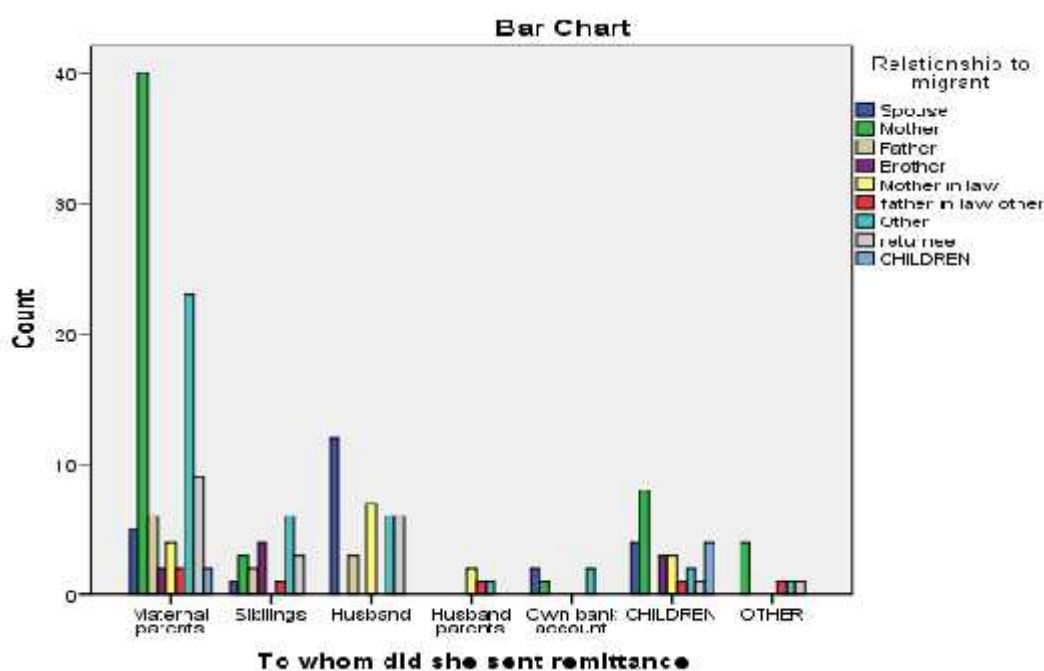
Fig. showing monthly income and ownership of migrants

From the above bar chart, it is clear that most migrants earn an average of Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 60,000 monthly and do not have bank accounts in Nepal. Whereas only a few of them earn above Rs. 90,000 and these women do not have bank accounts. The various literatures shows that even women become breadwinners for their families, they do not achieve independence because they have no control over their earnings. The report published by World Banks Empowering Women shows that once women get access to a bank account, their natural tendencies to save is channeled into a productive financial discipline that earns them interest and gives them financial security. They get the decision-making power over that money, which increases the possibility that it is used for productive purposes. Nonetheless, the data from the field

do not show women's empowerment because the majority of them do not have their personal bank accounts. Most of them prefer their maternal parents, especially the mothers to receive remittances back home. The following Bar Chart 7.2 shows the recipient and the relationship to migrants to whom remittances are sent:

### Bar Chart 7.2

Remittance Receiver and Relationship to Migrants



The above bar chart shows that the first choice of persons receiving remittances in the family goes to maternal parents, and this is all because most of the migrants are unmarried, single, separated, or divorced and are living with their maternal parents. The migrants' mothers become proxy managers for receiving and investing the remittances in different household activities and educating the children. The remittance is received by the spouses of migrants, even though the majority of migrants have bank accounts of their own. A further chi-square test has been done to

show whether there is a relationship between the remittance receiver and their relationship to migrants:

**Table 7.1**

Chi-Square Tests for migrants' relationship to remittance receivers

	Value	Df.	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	115.921 <sup>a</sup>	48	.000
Likelihood Ratio	114.824	48	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	.010	1	.922
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 52 cells (82.5%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .13.

The computed value of the chi-square while using the chi-square test to find out the relationship between the remittance receiver and the relationship of persons with migrants is 115.921, and the level of significance p-values are .000. Since .000 is smaller than the alpha value of 0.05, I reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This means there is a statistically significant relationship between the migrant's relationships with the remittance receiver. Married migrants, for example, may prefer to send money first to their husbands and then to another person. Similarly, the unmarried, divorced, separated, and single migrants prefer their maternal parents to receive the money. During the field observation and survey questionnaire, most of the migrants' first choices of proxy operators were their mother and husband, while other relatives came next. Interestingly, migrants rarely send remittances outside of their close relationships.

The preferences of migrants for receiving remittances from a specific family are shaped, at least in part; by the gendered norms of household provisioning that prevail in a particular society, as well as the role that these norms play in shaping migrants' preferences for how remittances are used. The remittances are used to raise children, spend on their education, health, food, and family care, and purchase their clothing. So, the women migrants mostly prefer to send remittances to responsible members of the family who do not misuse the money. Also, the ability of women migrants to confirm that their remittances are used as envisioned depends on several factors: the timing of their visits to the home, the proximity of role substitution, and the migrants' self-decision. Unmarried and divorced female migrants, for example, are more likely to send remittances to their mothers, knowing that their mother is the second most responsible person in the family. The mother, as the proxy manager in the family, has more influence over the allocation of remittances. Migrants realize that their ability to influence how their remittances are used is only fulfilled through their proxy manager, i.e., those subject to similar norms and whose decisions over the use of remittances are most likely to align with their preferences.

Female migrants want to ensure that their preferences for sending remittances to their mothers or other women are respected, as they carry all gender-based roles and responsibilities and properly care for their children. On the other hand, these females want to ensure that the money they send is used properly. The literature on intra-household expenditure patterns suggests that the distribution of resources depends on the bargaining power of individual household members (Haddad et. al., 1997). In particular, this literature has shown that household expenditure on children's education, health, and nutrition increases with the extent of resources controlled by women (Quisumbing&Maluccio, 2000). Additionally, the remittances women receive

are mostly used to run the household and provide education for the children. During an in-depth interview, a man whose wife was migrated to Bahrain before seven years stated that:

My wife sends money to her mother as I and my children live in my in-laws' house. My wife moved to Bahrain six years ago, leaving our two children with me. After she moved, I came here because I did not know how to care for children and because of my work. My wife frequently sends money to my mother-in-law, and I do not have any objections as she is doing all the work I have to do. My mother-in-law also has to carry all the housekeeping expenses, including the children's schooling and health. I am lucky as she is more responsible than me in looking after my two children and serving food on time before leaving for work and school (R. Thapa, personal communication, August 8, 2022).

Many of the respondents are mothers of female migrants, and they reported that their daughter sends them money through IME for household expenses, health services, and educating the children. Most migrants are unmarried, single, divorced, or separated and live with their parents. Sending remittances to the mother is safe with the proper use of money because she will not unnecessarily expenses it and will save for the migrant's future once they return. The remittance behavior of female migrants is shaped at least in part by the gender ideologies and gendered norms of household provisioning that assign primary responsibility for household provisioning and child care to women. Women, as proxy managers, not only take care of household responsibilities but also take care of children and save money for future security. These gendered norms of household provisioning shape the differences in the

preferences of male and female migrants over how their remittances are used and influence the migrants' decisions over whom to send their remittances.

## 7.2 Remittances, Household Expenditure and Coping Strategies

Literature show that the flow of remittances sent by women migrants is mostly used in productive areas. This literature has consistently shown that the control of resources by women results in greater spending on children's education, health, and nutrition relative to the control of resources by men (Quisumbing&McClafferty, 2006). Inferring from these findings, I would argue that the remittances sent by female migrants are mostly used for household expenditures and children's schooling. So, to find the relationship between the most prominent sectors of remittance expenses and the migrant's decisions, I used the chi-square test.

**Table 7.2**

Chi-Square Tests for prominent sectors of remittance expenses

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.905 <sup>a</sup>	3	.116
Likelihood Ratio	4.990	3	.172
Linear-by-Linear Association	3.521	1	.061
N of Valid Cases	198		

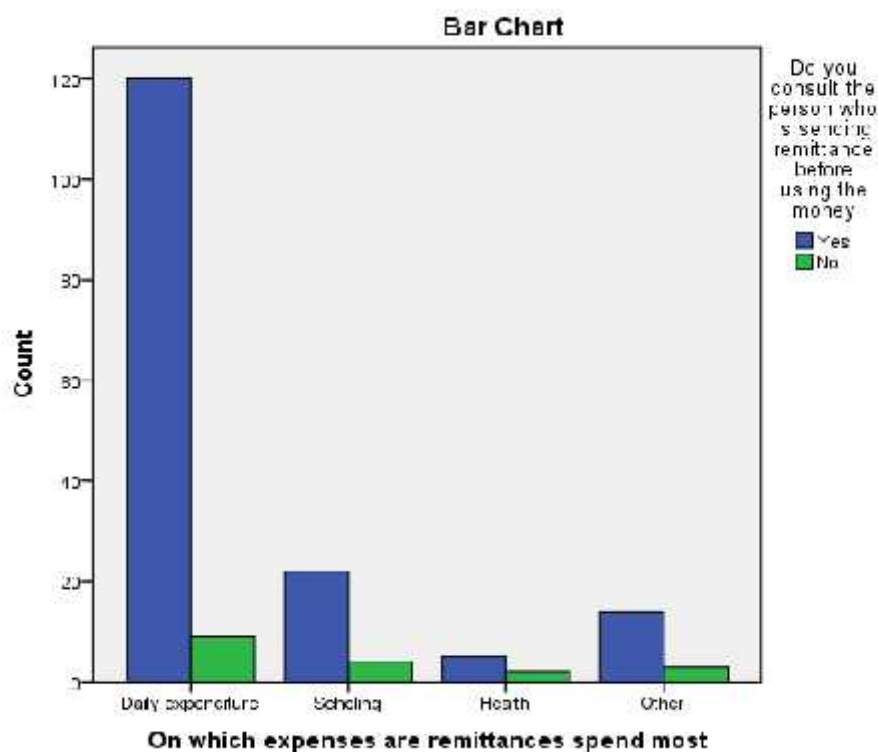
a. 3 cells (37.5%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .70.

The computed value of chi-square tests to determine the relationship between expenditure and migration decision is 5.905, at level of significance p-values .116. I rejected the alternative hypothesis and accept the null hypothesis

because .116 is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. This means there is no statistically significant relationship between household expenditure and the decision to migrate. The proxy manager, especially the mother, plays a dominant role in deciding the uses of remittances in different sectors, and these people consult with migrants while spending remittances in different sectors. It is interesting to note the various sectors in which remittances are mostly spent, and the receiver consults with migrants while they spend the money. The Bar Chart 7.3 below depicts the various sectors where remittances are mostly spent.

### Bar Chart 7.3

Consultation and Remittances Expenses



From the above bar chart, one can assume that most remittances are spent on household expenses such as food, clothes, electricity, and water bills. Following this,

the second priority includes the children's schooling, mainly in private boarding schools.

Additionally, remittances are spent on other sectors, such as festival celebrations, travel expenses, gambling, and alcohol purchases, rather than on family members' health care. While asking questions about how they cope with the existing situation in the absence of remittance flow, about 55.8% of the respondents argued that they borrowed from their relatives and neighbors to run their households' expenditures; nevertheless, they should also pay interest if they borrowed for the long term. Similarly, only 22.6% of the respondents have an income, and these people mainly work in small businesses and hotels. Table 7.3 depicts various coping strategies for migrant families dealing with everyday problems.

**Table 7.3**

Strategy mechanism for handling everyday problems

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Borrow	111	55.8	59.0	59.0
Valid	Own earning	45	22.6	23.9	83.0
	Other sources	32	16.1	17.0	100.0
	Total	188	94.5	100.0	
Missing	System	10	5.5		
Total		198	100.0		

Sources: Field survey 2022

Majority of the respondents stated that, its hard for them when migrant's unable to send money on time as there was no alternative sources to manage the

households activities and pay the school fee on time. The only benefit of living in slum areas is not having to pay house rent, but due to a lack of employment opportunities, they do not easily solve their hand-to-mouth problem. One of the strategies employed by the respondents to solve this problem was to borrow money from their relatives and neighbors. This is the easiest and simplest method to solve their problems, and thus, they return their debt once the migrants send the remittances. One hundred and eleven respondents in the field borrowed money from neighbors to solve everyday problems. The above table shows the different coping mechanisms adopted by respondents. A migrant's mother shared her experiences as follows:

My daughter has migrated to Saudi Arabia before six years ago and left her two daughters with me. I am living alone because my son lives with his own family, so all the responsibilities of two children are with me. Sima, my daughter, sends money on every three months for household expenses. Nonetheless, sometimes makes it difficult to manage the things on time such as paying school fee and to purchase copy paper and pencils for the children. So, I usually borrow from my friends, and she even did not show interest. Moreover, whenever Sima sends me money, I return it. (R. Biswokarma, personal communication, July 3, 2022).

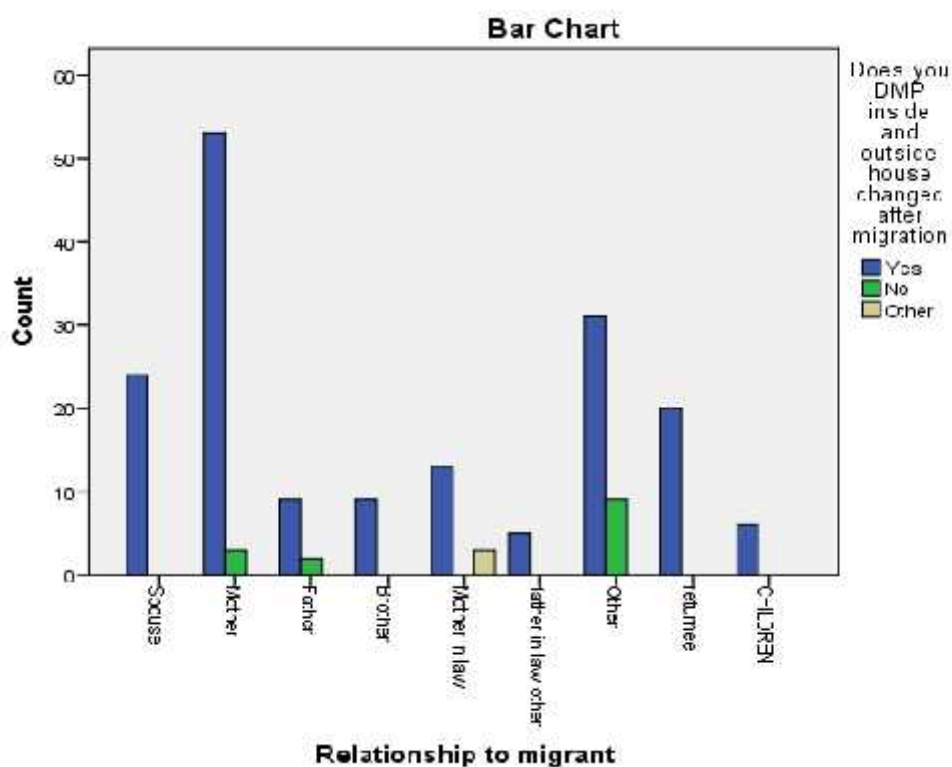
The preceding example is only one part of a larger picture in which the migrant's family left behind struggles with day-to-day problems in the absence of household expenditure. During an in-depth interview with the parents of unmarried and divorced migrants, they stated that it was their economic problem that motives their daughter for foreign labor migration. Nonetheless, they didn't want to send their daughter to overseas work but their poor economic condition and no one is behind them to look after compelled women to proceed for the migration.

## 7.4 Remittances and Decision-making Power

During fieldwork, I asked respondents whether their participation in household decision-making had changed due to the flow of remittances. Because of the patriarchal nature of society, even when women become breadwinners for their families, socio-cultural circumstances scrutinize their behavior. So, these women become pillars of the household's domains but still remain inferior to men. The finding reveals that most of the respondents are mother (56) and spouse (24) of migrants. So, most of the respondents' answers were positive when asking whether their decision-making power inside and outside the house changed after migration. The following Bar Chart 7.4 clearly illustrates it.

### Bar Chart 7.4

Decision-making process and relationship to migrants



Based on the bar chart elucidation about the decision-making power made by respondents and their relationship to migrants, a chi-square test has been done to show whether there is a relationship between them in Table 7.4. The following table shows the chi-square results of decision-making power and its relationship to migrants.

**Table 7.4**

Chi-Square Tests: Decision maker's relationship to migrants

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	53.838 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	37.854	16	.002
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.051	1	.152
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 19 cells (70.4%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .08.

The computed chi-square test to find out the relationship between the respondents' and their decision-making power is 53.838, and the level of significance p-values are .000. Since .000 is less than the alpha value of 0.05, I reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. This indicates a statistically significant relationship between respondents and their decision-making power in both the inside and outside domains of the household. Most of the respondents are mothers, who act as proxy managers to conduct household's activities and take care of children. Since, most of the migrants are unmarried, divorced, single, and separated and are living with their maternal parents. Hence, the mother acts as dominant role player in the families. After asking the reasons behind their empowerment, the alcohol and

gambling nature of migrants husbands enable migrants to migrate. In contrast, some of them lost their husbands and, due to the economic condition of the house, forced their daughters to migrate for foreign labor. Nevertheless, in the case of married migrant's families, their husbands play a dominant role in the decision-making both inside and outside households activities. Migrants send remittances directly to their accounts, and they perform all the household responsibilities. Similarly, other family members' such as sons and daughters in the families has also bear responsible to look after the households activities along with their own studies. Nonetheless, the decisions in the families were taken only after the consultation with migrants. This could be because these people are still immature in handling economic responsibilities and want continuous consultation with seniors in their every action.

#### **7.4 Socio-cultural Influences on Gender Roles**

The connections between migrants and their families left behind are so strong in transnational space because migrants send economic capital and a dual exchange of social-cultural and symbolic capital through various modes of communication. When migrants are engaged in transferring money or goods, they provide instruction with the ideas and knowledge they have accumulated towards the overall management of households. Levitt (1998) asserts that migrants are transferring not only economic but also social remittances. She defines "social remittance" as the diffusion of social norms, practices, and social capital toward and from migrants' sending countries. These kinds of remittance processes occur when migrants visit or live in their hometowns and through other means of communication such as letters, videos, cassettes, emails, blog posts, and telephone calls, or when non-migrants visit those in receiving countries (Levitt, 2001). Not only are migrants instructs their families left

behind, but at the same time, migrants' habits have also strongly influenced their way of living in the new diaspora.

During the interviews, the women were asked if their gender behavior had changed in transnational space. In most of the interviews, the interviewees admitted that they had seen intense and different changes in the role-taking behavior of males and females, as female labor migration empowers women as breadwinner members of the entire family, regardless of how much they earn. During an interview with migrant spouse whose wife had migrated to Kuwait before the seven years ago shared his experiences as follows:

My wife had migrated to Kuwait when I got into a road accident and was unable to take care of the family's responsibilities. She plays the role of father to my children and husband to me. She frequently sent remittances to my account. During phone conversations, I always ask her to take food on time and care for herself in an unknown place. The children are also happy after having a visual conversation with their mother, as she always instructs them to have up-to-date knowledge and learn skill-based work to make it easier for them to migrate to a better country. (S. Chhetri, personal communication, August 5, 2022).

The above case study shows that economic remittances do not remain in a single form; they transform into a symbolic form of capital, and migrants spend money to educate their children and family members. Thus, migration plays a dominant role in children's schooling, as the money sent by migrants is used for educational purposes. Additionally, migrant children have better clothes, fancier book bags, and a whole set of school supplies than their friends. During an informal

conversation with a grade seven student at a recognized boarding school, she stated that she considers herself fortunate to have her mother, who always asks for everything she needs for school and also provides money for tiffin, which most of her classmates do not. These female migrants maintain constant contact with their families, with whom they discuss ongoing household activities and the activities of their children. To establish the relationship between the frequency of communication and the changes it brings to life, I went for a chi-square test, and the following results were found:

**Table 7.5**

Chi-Square Tests for uses of communication in everyday life

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	26.600 <sup>a</sup>	9	.002
Likelihood Ratio	13.982	9	.123
Linear-by-Linear Association	.793	1	.373
N of Valid Cases	198		

a. 12 cells (75.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

To establish the relationship between communication and its impacts on the lives of families left behind, the computed value of the chi-square test is 26.6000, and the level of significance p-values are .002. I rejected the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis because .002 is less than the alpha value of 0.05. This means a statistically significant relationship exists between migrants' communication with their families and its impacts on their everyday lifestyles. During the fieldwork, most

respondents stated that using different types of social media lessens the distance between migrants and them. Migrants share their everyday activities and the new ideas and knowledge they gain with their families. The cheaper means of communication make it easier for them to share every activity affecting their behavior, attitudes, and values across the transnational space.

An interviewee with a 36-year-old migrant sister who lives with her parents and brother describes how her youngest sister moved to Malta three years ago and is now waiting for visas. She stated that:

Three years ago, my sister went to Malta and worked as a housekeeper in a hotel. She said that the work is good and easy for her, so if I wanted to come there, I would apply for a visa. Firstly, my mother did not agree with my migration, but my sister convinced her about our security and good health in Malta during our conversation. We see my sister's room and workplace through Facebook Messenger, and she assures us about everything in her new place. She was so elegant, and she proposed to my mother that if I should migrate there, we both would earn more and buy land in Pokhara. And you know I applied for visas and now waiting for my flights over Malta (D. Sherpa, personal communication, July 2, 2022).

The case does not just highlight interpersonal behavior; it also explains the changing norms and values attached to gender roles during the migration process, where families easily accept the role of breadwinners played by women. Thus, the women migration doesn't limit to this but it also inspires other women in families for their labor migration. In doing so, both migrants and non-migrants share their roles to run the families and maintain stability and cohesion within them.

When asked about the types of communication systems they used during the conversation, most of them—about 85.4% of the respondents—responded that they were using different types of social media such as Viber, Facebook Messenger, E-mail, and Whats App. While only 10.6% used phone calls, only one returnee female migrant, used postal mail to communicate with her parents. The following table 7.6 shows different types of means of communication used by respondents for communication:

**Table 7.6**

Means of communication

Communication means	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Social Media	170	85.4	88.1	88.1
Phone	21	10.6	10.9	99.0
Other	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	193	97.0	100.0	
Musings System	5	3.0		
Total	198	100.0		

Women migrants doesn't only play a crucial role as breadwinner but also keep an eye on ongoing activities back to home through different means of communication so, as to perform the things on right track. During the conversation, these migrants learned about long-term actions carried out by family members in their absence, and they offered suggestions and feedback to improve them. The study carried out by Ramirez et al. (2005) stated that the contribution of women migrants to social remittance transfers can be particularly significant, partly due to their dominant role in

the care and maintenance of family ties. Additionally, the returnee women migrants carried new values, norms, beliefs, experiences, and attitudes they used while opening a new business, as most returnees are engaged in their businesses and making money. During an in-depth interview with a returnee who spent almost 22 years of her life in three countries and has opened a grocery store and a tailor shop in her community, she shared her experience like this:

After returning, I was in a dilemma about what to do with the rest of my life as my parents have already died, and I was still single. There was no reason to stay, but my age limits do not allow for foreign migration. Then, I decided to do something productive. The experiences I acquired working in different countries inspired me to do some independent business rather than work for others. I opened this grocery and tailor with an investment of Rs. 6 lakh. Now, I am earning money, a sustainability I never achieved during my migration phase. Every month, I save some money and deposit it in community-owned cooperatives (B. M. Biswokarma, personal communication, August 2, 2022).

A case of Sita Nepali women in her forties returned three months ago from Oman, and spent nearly 24 years of her life in various countries, is still in economic insecurity. The good rapport with Sita opened a series of discussions about the impacts of migration on women migrants' lives. She spent her life earning for her sibling's education, and they have now become nurses and soldiers in government jobs. This is one of the benefits of her remittance earnings, but it also causes her to question whether she should return to her home country or stay with her parents. She knew she could independently open a small hotel using the skills and knowledge she had gained in a foreign nation. However, insecurity in Nepal's economy and the lower profit margins did not let her do so.

The impacts of social remittances along with economic capital do not only transform the gender roles of women from housekeeping to breadwinners of the family, but at the same time, the proxy manager in the home country utilizes the economic capital to transform into socio-cultural and symbolic capital with proper consultation of migrants through the different uses of communication. Social remittances may cause social change in the lives of migrants and non-migrants in terms of gender transformation. However, the current study found that women are benefited in terms of their economic independent and participating in decision making process at the households and community level.

### **7.5 Conclusion**

The gender relations of the migrant's households have changed due to remittances transfer by the migrants in two ways. First, there is significant change in the way the families have learned to adopt coping strategies to manage the families despite lack of money. This is all in hope that the migrants are in foreign country and will send money whenever they ask for it. This type of dependency over women has both benefits and loss to household's formation. On one hand, women are becoming empowered by taking the role of breadwinner whereas on other hands, the family left behind especially, the idle husband do not work and roam around whereas the children can also be on wrong track. Secondly, the power resides in monetary form enables us to view gender as only traditional practices rather than changing one as women left behind are more responsible to take care of households activities and children. Though one woman in the family act as breadwinner of the family due to economic problems but still majority of them are doing their traditional gender practices. Nonetheless, the socio-cultural capital gained in transnational space helps to improve family welfare and the family's health, education, and way of life.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### 8.1 Introduction

This dissertation explored the experiences of Nepalese families left behind during women's labor migration and analyzed how these changes have affected gender transformation in traditional Nepalese societies. This research is based on gender empowerment, where access to resources, agency, and achievements are specified as the three main dimensions of gender transformation in transnational labor migration (Kabeer, 1999). Particular attention is given to the transformation of gender roles and responsibilities through the intervention of remittances, which later on helps change households' power relations. Though this study focuses on gender relations in households, they cannot be understood in isolation or within the boundaries of households since households are sub-systems of larger social institutions.

Social institutions such as: marriage, family, kinship, religion should be understood in relation to households. The nature of a household can be formed and transformed through understanding all the facets of social institutions that are related to it. For the purpose of constructing gender roles and duties, every component of social institutions and structures should be studied, and which is briefly illustrated in the form of migration, remittance and gender relationships in this research study. In this research, the concepts gender transformations are understood in relation to the household's formation before, during and after the intervention of migration process. The nature of households before, during, and after migration. Using this framework, I look into how gender transformed due to the intervention of remittances and the migration process, whether migrants play a dominant role in the decision-making, and how the post-migration period assists in the sustainable economic empowerment of

women. A mixed-methods approach, including qualitative and quantitative analysis based on fieldwork, was used for the data collection and analysis. Thus, the findings and conclusions on household formations and traditional gender role transformation in Nepalese societies are presented in this chapter.

## **8.2 The Role of Actors in Household Formation**

Migrants and non-migrants play a dominant role in restructuring the household's formation. They can be seen as sections of a bigger livelihood plan for the maintenance and continuation of the family due to the affluence of living brought on by globalization. People's lives are altered by migration, while remittances support the national economy to which they are sent. Copartners left behind are forced to take on more family responsibilities, make more decisions, deal with financial issues, and care for children. While the migration of women requires men to take on the role of househusband, the migration of men increases the duties imposed on women and empowers and increases their capacity for decision-making. Women must deal with the shifting socioeconomic realities brought on by the shortage of men and navigate gender relations to survive in a culture that has historically suppressed women's freedom and restricted them to domestic spheres. However, to maintain social equality, men must perform all household tasks left unattended by women and assume both gender roles.

This study investigates the consequences of global migration on women's and men's lives by exploring the changes in their employment duties, role in home decision-making, and participation in social activities. A woman's challenges while her husband is abroad directly influence her capacity to provide for her family and the health of her children and other household members. Similar to this, men's experiences during their wives' absence have taught them to be responsible at home

and support the dismantling of patriarchal norms and ideals regarding gender roles and responsibilities. Therefore, it is essential to understand the consequences on both men and women and provide them with the resources necessary to deal with these challenges since the migration rate of men and women is rising. For example, by acquiring skill-based training and increasing their involvement in market activity, women may be able to become more financially independent and have more negotiation leverage. Because they play insider positions in the family, men are compelled to reassess their conventional duties as providers.

In Nepal's traditional society, where gender disparity in the distribution of labor is still apparent even at a young age, men's and women's migration has supported gender dialogue. Their increased mobility boosts remittances at the national level and within the family. However, it also lessens work division between the sexes. The companion of the migrant who was left behind must concurrently play both roles, which is only one side of the story.

### **8.3 The Role of Capital in Gender Transformation**

Policies that aim to reduce the gendered division of labor, give men and women equal income, improve women's access to resources, and respect men for their cultural duties while allowing women to take care of the house may be beneficial. Nevertheless, theoretical realm of advocacy doesn't meet the everyday life world's phenomenon. This study addresses the gap left out by the earlier studies since it sheds light on how roles and duties change in the postmodern era, which holds that nothing is static and that migration changed everything. A sociological approach should be used to explore and explain the historical roles and duties assigned to men and women. The problem blocking changes in these roles should be investigated by identifying the root causes. When diverse types of capital are transferred from the host

nation to the home nation using economic, social, and cultural capital, people can experience changes in their normal interaction processes, according to the literature on migration and remittances studies (Bourdieu, 1986). Not only have migrants' lives changed drastically, but so have the lives of their families who remained behind, especially for the partners who had to participate in indoor and outdoor activities.

Gender is a universal, ongoing socio-cultural process that can be changed about the economic, social, symbolic, and cultural capital that migrants gain in the context of global exchange. The social norms and practices attached to the patriarchal mode of production have been modified with capital accumulation. Thus, migration affects gender roles, from emancipation to the strengthening of women in terms of their empowerment both in social and economic aspects over the decision-making process.

This study differs from comparable studies, focusing on separated spouse and their gendered roles after relocation. It may be claimed that studies considering the gender roles played by men and women in the post-migration period are rarely conducted in the Nepalese setting. This statement has been substantiated by information from the slum community of Pokhara Metropolitan City, which developed nearly 25 to 30 years ago. The community people have moved from different parts of Nepal, exploring better economic and social opportunities. Due to a lack of education and skills, people's daily problems are not resolved in the rapidly urbanizing city, and they are forced to migrate to earn. Female labor migration in the field site has increased due to several factors. Women in Nepal and other countries have turned to migration as a magical tool to earn more money with the same talents and education in different areas of the world due to the inadequate education and lack of abilities that allow them to work for low rates to support their families.

International women labor migration has lessened the gendered differences gap between men's and women's experiences regarding their educational opportunities, immigration destinations, marital preferences, and roles and duties. The growing rate of women migration from slum communities not only enhances the economic opportunities for their families but also progresses the national GDP. Additionally, the family's increased social and cultural capital with its increase in economic capital demonstrated that women's access to decision-making power in households has increased since the migration, which was not conceivable before.

#### **8.4 The Organization of Pre and Post Households Gender Relationship**

This study looked into household formations and changing patterns of gender in transnational space, gender power structures and ideologies in post-migration household formation, and the role of remittances in reconfiguring gender practices due to foreign labor migration of women. A central finding is that foreign women's labor migration creates a wide range of opportunities that enable women's participation in the capitalist market, where women play a key role as breadwinners and contribute to household domains. This will further increase women's position and decision-making power at the family level, and women will become more empowered due to the skills and knowledge gained in transnational spaces. On the other hand, the family left behind assumes roles and responsibilities and serves as a proxy manager for all migrant roles in their absence. On examining the changes and patterns of household formation in Chapter 5, I found that migration has enabled families to relieve themselves of the burden of income generation as women regularly send money to the family back home, leading to a decrease in family members' participation in wage employment or self-employment. The causes of this are all due to increasing habits of remittance consumption. These migrant women contribute

economically and are also ready to continue their breadwinner role for more and more years. This has resulted in members left behind being financially dependent on women. Though women perform vital economic and social functions to run household activities, their ability to contribute to the family's economic security makes them more empowered and self-dependent than ever before. This nature of women's gender role transformation from household makers to breadwinners also changes the roles and responsibilities of families left behind, particularly the husbands who play the role of housekeepers in the absence of their wives, engaged in taking care of children's responsibilities, and perform household chores in addition to their regular businesses. Similarly, women left behind in households, particularly mothers, act as proxy managers to replace migrants in the household sphere and care for migrants' children in their absence. Thus, the role substitution of migrants helps examine the traditional role of gender transformation in transnational space due to the breadwinner role played by women.

This research has intensely focused on a woman's position in the post-migration period inside and outside the boundaries of her house. Following their return, these returnee women look for long-term economic opportunities and dignified lives. Generally, the returnee women spend almost fifteen to twenty years of their lives in a foreign land, deteriorating their physical and mental health by accentuating their life goals of accumulating capital for their families' sustainability. My findings suggest that most unmarried, single, divorced, and separated women have spent more than ten years abroad, and once they return, they are always looking for a durable life that meets their everyday life activities. A single, unmarried migrant woman is responsible for caring for family members because most of her family's male members are not able to perform the role of breadwinners. These women have gained

a special position in family decision-making, primarily increasing their household bargaining power. The results suggest that returnee women always searched for better livelihood practices and sustainable economic opportunities. The results also suggest that women's participation in the social sphere of life increases in their returnee lives. These women want to re-create their shadowed identities in communities that have lost them due to their long-term physical absence. In doing this, the women were always searching for better options to adjust to the existing norms and values attached to the community's members.

The different types of remittances—economic, socio-cultural, and symbolic capital—gained in foreign lands help transform gender roles and responsibilities. My results suggest that economic remittances gained in a foreign land not only meet the basic needs of families and increase their accessibility to markets but also assist in transforming economic capital into different forms of capital. The role of the proxy manager, especially for the mother and husband, was crucial to maintaining the household's activities and taking care of the children in the migrants' absence. The findings suggest that not only do women work as breadwinners in foreign countries but also that the women left behind, particularly mothers, play a dominant role in managing remittances and participating in decision-making because migrants send remittances directly to these people. The impact of women's labor migration on gender transformation is thus ambiguous and highly dependent on the characteristics of migrants' families and people who act as proxies in their absence. In general, the women who play the role of proxy manager have greater decision-making power and a higher level of social participation in the community's activities than other family members. Thus, the women left behind could create their new identities in front of others, as they receive remittances frequently and hold a special position in the

decision-making process of the household's formation. Thus, the women in foreign countries and the women left behind help transform traditional gender roles, and these women have created special public images in front of others due to their changing roles and responsibilities. Thus, the overall finding of the chapter suggests the role of capital in gender transformation, where a proxy manager in the families plays a key dominant role in managing the inside and outside activities in the migrants' absence.

### **8.5 Restructuring the New Order in Households**

The nature of household formation due to the intervention of remittances is a unit for analysis of gender transformation in transnational space. The three types of households, i.e., pre-migration, during migration, and post-migration households, show the nature of household formation and the new gender roles that have emerged due to remittances. The changes in gender power relations in different types of households can be viewed as a social transformation of gender roles where women play a key role as providers but have constraints in the decision-making. In such a condition, the male members of the family still occupy a dominant role in the decision-making, but in consultation with the migrants only. So, the interference of migrants is crucial in making decisions.

Pre-migration households were characterized by a patriarchal mode of production, in which men's roles and responsibilities were to provide for and carry out activities outside their homes. Furthermore, because of the inherited mode of resources and land from their forefathers, these men wielded more power in decision-making. Also, men can easily access the labor market to earn money and learn knowledge and skills. Women, on the other hand, have traditionally been restricted to household duties and child care. They do not possess any of her parents' ascribed resources or property. Nevertheless, they became capable and empowered when they

got opportunities outside their house. Women's labor migration as a process demonstrates that the traditional patriarchal mode of society in which women are always dependent on men for their survival is changing.

Women's labor migration in transnational spaces opens opportunities for migrants and the families left behind. The participation of women in the labor market makes them the family's breadwinners. It also empowers them with the skills and knowledge necessary to play a key role in decision-making. Not only the migrants but also the women left behind—especially the proxy managers in households—have become independent and play a crucial role in decision-making. Both migrants and non-migrants were always connected through various means of communication to run the overall households and outside activities, as non-migrants wanted to consult migrants in every decision-making process. That increases the role of migrants in a household's sphere of life and increases their control over the household's resources. Thus, it can be seen that migration has altered the traditional nature of household structures, with women becoming the primary providers and men, particularly husbands left behind, taking on the role of their wives. Despite the existing social circumstances and constraints imposed by traditions, values, and beliefs, women become key figures in the household due to their new breadwinner role in the family. Thus, migration provides supportive power to women for empowerment, which manifests in their involvement in decision-making.

The post-migration period after the women's returns is challenging for their readjustment to their families and communities. After spending their productive ages in foreign lands and returning with fragile minds and bodies, these women look for sustainable sources of livelihood in their home countries, and they still want to play the role of breadwinners. Because they do not want to lose their role as providers,

most returnee migrants at the field site have started their small businesses and are making money. Though they have responsibilities to care for their household chores and children, these women do not wish to revert to their pre-migration lives where they lack decision-making roles in the family. These new attitudes, behaviors, and practices acquired in transnational space inspired these women to uproot their pre-migration life circumstances and adopt a new life in which she is more powerful and sturdier in making decisions.

Thus, the new power and attitudes gained through the migration process are major dimension of gender transformation in Nepalese societies. The underlying household structure has been modified, with women becoming the breadwinner and other family members, especially the men, becoming supportive hands. In addition, the social organization of a household's relationships, tasks, and responsibilities has been changed by a new one, where women and girls who have undergone the migration process prove themselves as providers. This marks a watershed moment in the gender transformation, manifested through gender roles in various spaces. As breadwinners of the family, women have replaced traditional patriarchal norms and values, and thus, women have become a central pillar of development due to their breadwinner capacity. Thus, this study has focused more on changing patriarchal gender roles and responsibilities in transnational space due to the intervention of various forms of capital formation.

## **8.6 Theoretical Implication**

In the patriarchal society, the nature and patterns of household conduction are traditionally associated with male-dominated behavioral practices that focus on overall decision-making power. In this regard, changes in society should be considered in the context of the articulation with significant processes such as the

growth of the capitalist market and its effects on everyday life. In the patriarchal society, where the sexual division of labor between men and women should be submissive to men because God creates differences between them. The reproductive responsibilities deny women to take part in the wage market, and women become inferior. Thus, women are lower and more submissive due to their biological makeup and maternal function that hinder them from engaging in public life. As Marx argued, resources are seen as the foundation of decision-making, and that, in turn, is taken as an indicator of power. In this traditional patriarchal mode of society, the shifting nature of gender roles in transnational society—which is itself a result of the global capitalist market—not only gives women greater economic power but also increases their control over decisions. This study showed that we need to see power as having multiple dimensions to understand the dynamics of power interactions in migrant households.

When power is only thought of in one dimension, as control, we cannot understand the subtleties and variances in power shifts brought on by migration. Pre-migration women are not helpless; they lack control, which is the only way to express power. We have seen that they must manipulate. Because of this, what happens during the migration period is not a simple transition from being weak to being strong, but rather a change like power, from manipulation to control. Since they are no longer the primary or only provider, migrants who return home and lose their jobs do not lose power; rather their power shifts from control to aggressive power. Therefore, the power shift brought about by migration cannot be viewed as being just quantitative, as the social and cultural capital acquired by migrants in transnational space is an integral part of their daily behavioral existence.

The research established additional flaws in the conventional explanation of power relations based on a monolithic conception of power. Furthermore, it shows that the connections between authority, resource access, and decision-making are not as simple as the preceding thesis suggests. Women actively participated in managing the home budget in pre-migration families in the research region. Because it involves decision-making, this involvement is seen as a sign of authority in the family power relations as they stand today. However, in the study area's households, having a say in financial matters does not necessarily mean that women have any dominating influence. Delegation of that responsibility led to the decision-making, which was solely a manipulation tool. Furthermore, the assumption about ownership and access regarding power does not hold in pre-migration families when power is treated broadly, i.e., latent and manifest sources. The wife's decision-making role in managing the budget did not arise from the women's access to them. Either the husband willingly assigned the wife that duty, or she assumed it by default.

This complex relationship was found in post-migration and during-migration households. The migrant had access to resources and was, therefore, the provider in the households during and after migration, where controlling power, decision-making, and resources are more immediately and intimately intertwined. Although they effectively granted her control, she was still exerting full control due to other ideological and cultural issues. However, the circumstances of women in post-migration households are more crucial. She once more assumes the role of housewife in most houses, which restricts her access to resources. However, she retains some of the power she enjoyed as a migrant and provider in the migration households and remains empowered. Despite having limited or no access to resources, she retains her self-confident personality and challenging behavior. Additionally, she now has

network-based power to support her newly enhanced position due to her move. Resource ownership or structural interactions cannot fully explain the elements of power.

The study revealed that individuals not only obtain power but actively exercise it, and they accomplish this by using contextually particular strategies, such as proxy-based household management in migrant homes. Therefore, it is important to consider how much power one has earned, how much power is used, and how it is exercised. Therefore, changes in power must be explained not just in terms of quantitative changes but also as changes in operational elements, i.e., the exercise of power in specific situations through tactical operations, as is done by the wife in homes during migration. As a result, the topic of power shifts, or empowerment, becomes one of how much and how.

The major theoretical implication of this study lies in the importance of personality and behavioral characteristics in the power structure of migrant households. This provides more evidence that migration-led changes are not entirely explained by a structuralist theory focusing on resource ownership and access, but the significance of how power is exerted is another aspect that explains migration-led changes. Position within a resource system is not a measure of one's power. Such characteristics as assertiveness and personality and behavioral aspects, and how different techniques are implemented to suit the setting, can only be explained in terms of a human agency aspect. The system approach used in this study to describe power dynamics in the home highlights the significance of these dimensions of power. Combining actions and structure allows us to avoid the structural bias of some explanations and the flaws that result from treating the two as independent variables.

According to the researcher, this enables us to see all the various sources of power as equally contributing to power relations rather than as independent variables.

Those who study migration and transnational linkages focus mainly on household organizations such as the national level (Esman, 1986) or the community (Vertovec, 2002). Though studies of the family bargaining process have occasionally examined the participation of additional household players (Agrawal, 1997), their main focus is not on the transnational ties unique to migrant workers and how they intersect with the household bargaining process. This study looks at the importance of transnational actors and spatial relationships regarding two scenarios for household bargaining. The first is when a woman is migrating and has to take on the job of breadwinner and holds decision-making power because she is now responsible for caring for her family. The second is the post-migration phase, at which time the migrants have the option of establishing transnational connections.

**APPENDIX-I**  
**CASE STUDIES**

**Case Study 1: Bishnu Maya B.K., a 51 years old returnee migrant:**

Bishnu Maya B.K. is a returnee female migrant. She spent nearly 21 years of her life in three different foreign countries, where she had to work hard and care for all of her family members. Her father died when she was 12 years old, and then her mother took care of her children (one brother and two sisters). She was reading in class 10 when her mother died and had to discontinue her studies and look after her brother and sister, as she was an elder child. After consultation with her siblings, she decided to migrate to Kuwait and work there for 5 years. She was there when our king Birendra Shah died; she came through her owner as she listened on television. Working in a cold environment and eating frozen foods, she always suffered from back problems and tonsillitis, so she returned to Nepal. After spending five years in Kuwait, she again migrated to Oman for four years, then again to Kuwait for five years, and lived in Qatar for about 7.5 years.

She used to send remittances to my brother for household expenses regularly, but he misappropriated them. Later on, she sends money to her sister's account, which she deposits in Bishnu's account. She bought a small plot of land in Birauta but later sold it; for which she paid Rs 17 lakh for this house. She spent two years in Nepal before deciding not to return because she was getting too old to work hard. Now, she has opened a small grocery and tailor shop. She knows how to sew clothes, so open a tailor shop. Still, she has responsibilities to look after her brother's children and his wife as he has run away from the family and nobody knows where he has gone.

She has saved a very small amount of money for herself. Nevertheless, her family asks her to organize a marriage. But by the time she realizes she needs some company to get through the rest of her life, it's too late due to her age and so many other factors. She stated unequivocally that she is constantly busy helping her parents and siblings but never thinks about herself. So, when she returned from Dubai, she decided not to pursue foreign labor migration again and instead opened a small grocery store. Finally, she opened a shop to make money, pass the time, and ensure a stable future in her hometown. She made her own life decisions, and there was no one to stand in her way. This is entirely due to her earning capacity.

Due to familial pressure and work pressure, she never got time to think about my marriage, and when her mother was alive, she also didn't ask for it. Her outer gaze is very simple, and straightforward as she says that she has never had a boyfriend in her life. When I asked her why she hadn't married yet, she then clearly said, "Why marry at this age?" "Every man was a drunkard and gambler; I shouldn't rely on any men and can't take over their responsibilities." I have seen many other couples quarrel every time. "I think I will be more safe and free instead of living with the company." She clearly stated that she wants to live the rest of her life independently rather than taking on other responsibilities. She stated that the men in her community are bad and addicted to alcohol and playing cards all the time. At the same time, she was clear that she would not find any proper men at this age for marriage. Now, she is clear and good about not having any boyfriend and living an unmarried life as she found the lifestyle of married women is also not so good and has to suffer from social and economic problems.

**Case 2: Sita Nepali, a 41-year-old returnee migrant**

A 41-year-old unmarried returnee migrant, Sita Nepali, spent almost 24 years of her life in three different countries, i.e., 3 years in Saudi Arabia for the first time, 7 years in Kuwait, and then 14 years in Oman with the same Muslim family, deciphered her journey like this:

“My parents have four children: three daughters and one son. I was only twelve when my father became paralyzed, and there was no one to help us. I began working for a construction company and earned Rs. 200 per day, which was insufficient to support the family and pay for my father's treatment. My aunt was in Saudi Arabia, so I consulted with my mother about foreign labor migration. Initially, she didn't permit me, but later on, she convinced me. I was only 17 years old when I crossed the border into Saudi Arabia from India. Then, my journey to a foreign country begins. I transition from daughter to son by being the breadwinner and educating two sisters and my brother, as well as assisting one sister in getting married. Now my brother is doing a job in the Nepal Army, and my little sister is a nurse. You know it's all due to my hard work in a foreign nation. Both my father and mother are sick, so they need regular health checkups. Lots of money was needed for their treatment, and I made it possible. We found ourselves lucky to have our elderly parents with us.

Before I went to work in foreign migration, we lived in rented houses. I bought a small plot of land in a slum community and built a small house after earning money in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. But when I migrated to Oman, my first target was to build a cement house, and the dream became true; we have this big house. You know our house is bigger in our community; everyone calls it Sita House. I was pleased when someone recognized it as mine. When I was abroad, I regularly sent

remittances to my mother's account, and she managed everything, including my siblings' studies and my father's treatment. I never get involved in anything and only want them to be happy. I have not done any kind of saving; whatever I earned, I used to send it all in. Now, I returned home for vacation three months ago, but my owner in Oman calls me every day, my mother does not want me to leave again, but I have no idea what to do here. Still, I am confused. Everyone at home is settled; my brother has his own family, and my sisters got married. Now I have nothing to do but look after my parents.

If possible, I am planning to open a small grocery store so time will be easily spent without any anxiety. You know, in our Nepalese culture, different people have different perceptions about women's migration, and so far I am still single, so people gaze at me differently. My mother was concerned about my rest after their deaths and came to consult about my marriage, but at this age, it's not possible to get a good partner with a likable character, so I rejected her option and convinced her by sharing my problem.”

**Case 3: Binita B.K. 47-year-old returnee migrant**

Binita B.K. had returned after spending eleven years in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia and is currently suffering from mental and physical fragility due to physical assault in a foreign land as well as from her husband. Until she was in foreign countries and sending remittances regularly, nobody in the family had objections towards her character, but once she returned home after two years, her family had a negative view of her. After several battles with her husband and mother-in-law, her husband married another woman at the request of her in-laws, so she lived with her two children alone. Binita was eager to tell me her story after developing a close relationships with me.

Her husband doesn't have any work, and it's hard to sustain their three children and parents. After a series of consultations with families and relatives, her husband moved to Malaysia, but within a year, he came back to the country as he didn't get a proper salaried job, as told earlier by the manpower agent. After his return, their daily lives become more suffocated, and they have a hands-to-mouth problem. Their children were suffering from a hands-to-mouth problem and also didn't go to school. Nobody was there to help them, so she decided to go for foreign migration and move to Saudi Arabia with a manpower agent for five years, then to Kuwait for almost six years before returning due to severe physical torture from the owner. During her 11-year stay in a foreign country, she regularly sent money to her husband and never interfered with any decision regarding the use of remittances. She was so acquitted and forthright that she never saved money with her; nevertheless, she occasionally sent some money to her maternal parents. Her in-laws and husband's behavior after her return was not so good, and every time they stressed her out, it created a condition of argument. Later on, her husband left her and married another

woman, leaving two children with her. Now, she knows that there is nothing more important than money because when she was earning it, no one blamed her, and her every activity was pure and normal, but after her return, she became a question mark. "Now she has been passing through a bundle of trouble, including mental problems and physical infirmity.

#### **Case 4: Praveen Thakuri 46-year-old migrants husband**

Praveen Thakuri is living with his mother and two sons. His wife first moved to Saudi Arabia 14 years ago, then to Kuwait, and now to Qatar. He and his wife consult with each other about her migration, as his poor health condition doesn't allow him to apply for foreign immigration. When his wife moved, their two sons were too young, the elder being 7 and the younger being 5. From that time, he played the role of mother and brought them up; he prepared food for them, washed their clothes, cleaned the houses, and managed all the household chores along with his own business. His mother is very about 60 years old and is not able to do all the activities easily, so he has to manage himself. He doesn't have an objection to taking care of his children and performing household activities; the only problem is that his younger children are suffering from poor health.

It had been fourteen years since she assumed his wife's role and cared for the two children. Before, about 2/3 years ago, his wife sent remittances to him directly, but as his youngest son gained citizenship, his wife sent remittances to his son. As he clearly stated, he misused the money many times and got into problems. He uses remittances for business, but unfortunately, the whole thing has gone to waste. Instead of getting a profit, he had lots of debt, which was paid by his wife, so his wife was very strict about the way expenses were handled by Praveen. Nevertheless, when he

needed it, he simply asked his son to give it to him. Nevertheless, his neighbor does not take this easy, as he has to depend on his wife's money. In the last two years, he has instantly told his wife to return home as his children have grown up, but she has always blamed his decision. She always says that there is no job security in the country and no option for doing any business in Nepal. Once their two children migrate to some better country and happily settle there, she will come back and take care of all the household responsibilities.

**Case study 5: Damodar B.K. 46 years old migrants husband:**

His wife, Nikita, decided about foreign labor migration for his wife, and when he got into a road accident. He was doing his own small business at that time, one day while crossing the highway road he had an accident had multiple fractures, and had to go for multiple surgeries. He had to go for 1.5 years for bed rest, at that time his family had to suffer from a hands-to-mouth problem as no one in the family was willing to take on his breadwinner responsibilities. After that, he never became the breadwinner for the family or took on the responsibility of his wife and the children. Then his wife consulted with him about foreign labor migration as few women from the community went for this and sent good remittances back to the home. Then Nikita went for migration for the first time went to Saudi for five years and is now in Dubai for the last 7 years.

He found himself lucky to have a wife like Nikita, who faithfully assumed the role of a husband and sent monthly remittances for household expenses, his treatment, and his children's education. She regularly and honestly sends money to him and never interferes in his decision-making about household activities and children's education. Damodar has also done lots of work in the absence of his wife. He has to

take care of his three children. The young girl was only two years old when her mother abandoned her; however, now his daughter supports him in cooking the food and cleaning the utensils on her school holiday. He prepares meals for his children, washes their clothes, cleans the house, and does everything else. All the children went to school on time, so he had to manage everything the right way. “He is very sincere towards his responsibilities” One of his neighbors interfered in our conversation and said this and clearly stated that Nikita has found a good, caring, and honest husband to perform all her household's responsibilities in her absence, and Damodar is also lucky to have Nikita as a wife”

**Case study 6: Shovita B.K. 37 years old returnee migrant “**

Shovita got married at the age of 19 by her own choice, despite her parent’s objections to her decision. After three years of their marriage, her husband migrated to Malaysia, but he had an accident in his company, so he returned after nine months. So, it's very hard for them to survive in Pokhara. Shovita started to work on the construction site but didn’t earn enough to feed her three children, along with two of themselves. She consults with her husband for foreign labor migration; instantly, her husband rejects her offer by remembering his day in foreign, but later on, due to option less and helpless conditions, he gives her permission.

She moved to Saudi Arabia for the first time, where she spent five years, leaving her three children with their father. She regularly sent remittances to her husband for their children's education and to buy things for the house. When she returned home, she found everything going well, as her husband was caring for all the children and doing all household chores, but at the same time, she found that he had some extramarital affairs. But when she talks about this, he denies it and makes her

convince Shovita. After living for 1.5 years in Nepal, she again decided on foreign migration as she found that unless she earned it, her children wouldn't get an education, and everything would be confusing. So, for the second time, she went to Dubai, where she spent almost eight years and now comes for vacation at home. While she was abroad, her husband was pretending to be good and take care of two children, as one of her sons got married while she was in Dubai and is now living separately. Shovita was surprised when her husband brought another woman to her home and started living with her.

She didn't do anything and also her children did not have any objections as they found that most of the time their father was living with other women. The house in which they were living was in Shovita's name, so, to some extent, she found herself strong, and instead of living a stressful life, she decided to divorce her husband. Now, they are separated, and Shovita is living with her son, as her daughter also got married. She has decided to open a small grocery store in her house, but due to insufficient money, she cannot do it. One of the community members has promised to help her for loan from the cooperative, and after getting the loan, she will open a grocery store to entertain herself in her life stress-free.

**APPENDIX II**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HHS SURVEY**

Women Labor Migration, Remittances, and Gender Nexus

S.N

1. Respondents Demographic Information:

1.1 Respondents Name:

1.2 Address, of the respondents:

1.3 Age:

1.4 Sex:      1. Male                      2. Female                      3. Other .....

1.5 Religion:   1. Hindu      2. Buddhist      3.Christian   4.Islam      5. Others

.....

1.6 Ethnicity:   1. Brahmin   2. Chhetri      3.Newar   4.Gurung 5.Magar

6.Others...

1.7Education:   1. Informal   2.Formal   3.Primary level   4.Secondary

5. HS   6.Others

1.8 Marital status:   1. Single      2. Married      3.Separated      4.Widowed      5. Other

If married:   What type of marriage practice did you apply?

1. Love marriage   2. Arrange marriage   3. Elope   4. Court   5. Others.....

2. Migrant Demographic Information (not need to fill up if respondent self is migrant)

2.1 Respondents Name:

2.1 Address of the respondents:

2.3 Age:

2.4. Sex: 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other .....

2.5. Religion: 1. Hindu 2. Buddhist 3.Christian 4.Islam

5. Others .....

2.6. Ethnicity: 1. Brahmin 2. Chhetri 3.Newar 4.Gurung 5.Magar

6. Others.....

2.7 Education: 1. Informal 2.Formal 3. Primary level 4. Secondary 5.HS

6.Others

2.8 Marital status: 1. Single 2. Married 3.Separated 4.Widowed

5. Other

3. Information regarding migration

3.1 Relationship to migrant

1. Spouse 2. Mother 3.Father 4. Brother

5. Mother-in-law 6. Father-in-law others 7. Others.....

3.2 Who decides to go abroad for migrants?

1. Self    2. Husband    3. Family members    5. Others.....

3.3 Where did you /she choose to migrate?

1. Dubai    2. Qatar    3. Oman    4. Saudi    5. Malaysia

6. Other .....

3.4 How did you /she get information regarding these places and job opportunities?

1. Radio    2. Television    3. Newspaper    4. Relatives    5. Manpower

3.5 From whom are you/she motivated to go abroad on a working visa?

1. Family    2. Relatives    3. Manpower agent    4. Other .....

3.6 Why did you/she become ready to go abroad instead of a male member?

1. Husband was unable to work

2. I was a senior child of my parents to take responsibilities

3. Economically chipper than other    4. Easy to get visa    5. Other .....

3.7 Which airport did you/she use to go to abroad for the first time?

1. Nepal    2. India    3. Other

## 4. General Information: Households

name	Name	Sex	Age	Relationship to respondents	Education	Occupation	Income	Marital status

## 5. Your monthly income including overtime and tips also

1. Less than 30000                      2. 30000 to 60000      3. 60000 to 90000      4.  
90000 or above

## 6. Does you/she have a bank account in Nepal?

1. Yes                      2. No

## 7. To whom did you/she send remittance?

1. Maternal Parents    2. Siblings    3. Husband    4. Husband's parents    5. Own  
bank account

6. Other.....

8 . What types of transfer agents do you use for sending remittances?

1. Bank
2. Money transfer agent (Hundi)
- 3.IME or such
4. Other.....

9. How often do you /she send remittances to your family?

1. Monthly
2. Every three months
3. Every six month
4. Above six month

10. Do you/she have your savings?

- a. 1. Yes
2. No

b. if yes, current saving.....RS.

11. Information regarding household

11.1. What type of family do you live in?

1. Nuclear
2. Joint
3. Extended
4. Others

11.2 type of ownership the house you live in is you're:

1. own house
2. Rented house
3. Family house
4. Parent house
5. Others

11.3 How long have you lived here?

1. Less than a year
2. 1 to 5 years
3. 5 to 10 years
4. Above 10 year

12. Do you have your land somewhere?

1. Yes      2. No

13. from where your parents migrated to these places?

1. Same local governmental area      2. From same district      3. From other district  
4. Other

14. Remittances:

14.1. How often did migrants send money to you?

1. Every hour or 2. Regularly but not monthly      3. Occasionally      4. When required  
5. Others

14.2 To whom did she send money?

1. Husband      2. Children      3. Father-in-law      4. Mother-in-law      5. Others

14.3 Do you owe the money?

1. Yes      2. No

14.4 If yes to whom the amount is to be paid id?

1. Bank      2. Merchant      3. Friends      4. Money lender      5. Others

14.5 Why did you borrow the money?

1. To go abroad      2. Sickness      3. Family events      4. House construction      5. Economic activity  
6. others

14.6 Do you consult the person who is sending remittances before using the money?

1. Yes 2. No

14.7 Do you think the opinion of [migrant] about the spending of remittances is important?

1. Yes 2. No 3.

14.8 Do you and [migrant] share (all) your bank account(s)?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Others

14.9 How do you or your family cope when remittances are not forthcoming/irregular?

1. Borrow 2. Own earning. 3. Other source

14.10 On which expenses are remittances spent most?

1. Daily expenditure 2. Schooling 3. Health 4. Travel 5. Others.....

15. Communication:

15.1 How did migrants communicate with home?

1. Social media 2. Phone 4. Letter 5. Others.....

15.2 How often did migrants communicate with home?

1. Daily. 2. Weekly 3. Once a month 4. Other.....

14.3 Is it difficult to keep in contact with her?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Rarely 4. Other.....

## 15. Responsibilities:

15.1 What are your daily activities?

1. Cooking
2. Washing
3. Cleaning
4. Child schooling
5. Own business

6. Other

15.2 Are these activities different since [migrant] migrated?

1. Yes
2. Partially
3. No (Skip 15.4)

15.3 If yes, then what types of activities do you engage in mostly?

1. Job
2. Own business
3. Chatting/Roaming with friends
4. Care of child

5. Other

15.4 Do you get assistance/support in household activities from family members?

1. Mother
2. Father
3. Sisters
4. Brothers
5. Family members
6. Others

## 16. Changes:

16.1 Do you think migration brings changes in your and your family's life?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Other.....

16.2 If yes, then what types of changes do you notice?

1. life style
2. Child schooling
3. Way of celebrating events
4. Friend circle

5. Others

16.3 Do you think migrants influence you to make those changes?

1. Yes
2. No

16.4 Does your decision-making power (DMP) inside and outside the house change after migration?

1. Yes    2. No    3. Other

16.5 Why does migration affect DMP?

1. Because of my income sources    2. Increasing my level of understanding

3. Other. ....

**APPENDIX III**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE TO RETURNEE**

1. Which nation did you visit in search of employment abroad?
2. How did you do? Would you mind outlining the immigration procedure?
3. Describe the role that the family has played in this process.
4. How long were you employed?
5. Describe a normal workday for you. Give us as many specifics as you can.
6. Do you recall any special instances from your time spent abroad? They were what? Can you give more details?
7. How much did you make? Did you get paid in full?
8. When did you get back? What brought you back, and why? Describe your return.
9. What were your feelings like when you got to Nepal?
10. Can you describe the day you met up with your family? How were you feeling? How did you act?
11. How did your family react when they learned that you had returned?
12. Did your family's opinion of you change at all following your return?  
What aspects of your life and family have changed?
13. What will you do next?
14. Did you encounter any problems or issues when readjusting in your family and neighborhood? Describe them.
15. How would you characterize your experience moving?
16. What is your plan?

**APPENDIX IV****CHECKLIST FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. What are the major reasons for women's migration in your community?
2. What is the reason behind the extended stay in foreign countries?
3. In your opinion, did family members easily permit women's migration?
4. What challenges or problems do women migrants face during the migration process? While working abroad? While returning?
5. What kinds of changes do you find in the household composition in the absence of women?
6. Do the returnee migrants easily adjust to their families and communities?

## REFERENCES

- Acharya, C.P. & Leon-Gonzalez, R. (2012). The Impact of Remittance on Poverty and Inequality: A Micro-Simulation Study for Nepal. *National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies*, Discussion Paper: 11-26. Retrieved from GRIPS website: <http://www.grips.ac.jp/r-center/wp-content/uploads/11-26.pdf>.
- Acharya, D.R., Bell, J.S., & Simkhada, P. (2010). Women's Autonomy in Household Decision-making: A Demographic Study in Nepal. *Reproductive Health*. 7 (15). <https://doi.org/10.1186/1742-4755-7-15>.
- Ackers, L. (1998). *Shifting Spaces. Women, Citizenship, and Migration within the European Union*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Acosta, P. (2006). Labor Supply, School Attendance, and Remittances from International Migration: The Case of El Salvador. In *World Bank policy research working paper*. <https://doi.org/10.1596/1813-9450-3903>.
- Adhikari, J. & Gurung, G. (2009). *Migration, Security and Livelihoods: A Case of Migration between Nepal and India*. Kathmandu: Nepal Institute of Development Studies.
- Adams, W. (1969). *The Brain Drain*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Adhikari, J. (2008). *Land Reform in Nepal: Problems and Prospects*. Kathmandu: Action Aid-Nepal.
- Adhikari, K. & Gellener, D. (2019). Introduction: Nepal's Dalits in Transition. *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*. 46( 2). Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies. 141 - 153.
- Adhikari, J. & Hobley, M. (2015). Everyone is Leaving. Who Will Sow Our Fields?" The Livelihood Effects on Women of Male Migration from Khotang and

- Udaypur Districts, Nepal, to the Gulf Countries and Malaysia. *Himalaya, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies*.35 (1).
- Agrawal, B. (1990). *Structures of Patriarchy: The State, Community and the Household*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books.
- Agrawal, B. (1997). Bargaining and Gender Relations: Within and Beyond the Households. *Feminist Economics*.5 (1).1-51.
- Agrawal, N., Liu, H., Murthy, S., Sen, A. & Wang X. (2009). *A Social Identity Approach to Identify Familiar Strangers in a Social Network*.The Third International ICWSM Conference.
- Agarwal, S. (1997), Bearing the Weight: The Kayayoo, Ghana's Working Girlchild. *Journal of International Social Work*.40(3).245–263.
- Agesa, J. & Agesa, R. (1999). Gender Differences in the Incidence of Rural to Urban Migration: Evidence from Kenya. *The Journal of Development Studies*.35 (6).36-58.
- Ahmed, A. (2012). Networks among Retired British Women in the Costa Blanca: Insiders, Outsiders, ‘Club Capital’ and ‘Limited Liability’. [Electronic version].*Urbanities*.2(2).95-112.
- Alumkal, A.W. (1999). Preserving Patriarchy: Assimilation, Gender Norms, and Second Generation Korean American Evangelicals.*Qual. Sociol.* (22). 127-40.
- Amuendo-Dorantes, C. & Pozo, S. (2006). Migration, Remittances, and Male and Female Employment Patterns.*The American Economic Review*, 96 (2), 222.
- Arango, J. (2000). Explaining Migration: A Critical View.*International Social Science Journal*.52(165).283–296. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2451.00259>

- Asis, M. & Piper, N. (2008). Researching International Labor Migration in Asia. *The Sociological Quarterly*. (49). 423-444.
- Babbie, E. (2004). *The Practice of Social Research*. USA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Bailey L. (2007). Feminist Critiques of Educational Research and Practice. In Bank B. J. (Ed.), *Gender and Education: An Encyclopedia* (107–116). Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Bakewell, O. (2010). Some Reflections on Structure and Agency in Migration Theory. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 36(10). 1689-1708. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2010.489382.
- Beechy, V. (1979). On Patriarchy. *Feminist Review*. (3). 66-82.
- Bellman, E. (2015). Nepal's Earthquake may Trigger a New Wave of Migrant Workers. *The Wall Street Journal*, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-IRTB-29262>.
- Benach, J., Muntaner, C., Delclos, C., Menéndez, M., & Ronquillo, C. (2011) Migration and "Low-Skilled" Workers in Destination Countries. *PLoS Med*. 8(6): e1001043. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1001043>.
- Bennett, L. (1983). *Dangerous Wives and Sacred Sisters: Social and Symbolic Roles of High-Caste Women in Nepal*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Bever, S. W. (2002). A Socioeconomic Profile of Yucatec Maya Families in Migrating and Non-migrating Households *Research in Economic Anthropology*. (21). 187:128.
- Bhadra, C. (2007). *International Labor Migration of Nepalese Women: The Impact of Their Remittances on Poverty Reduction*. Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade Working Paper Series.

- Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to Social Enquiry*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bohara, M. P. & Massey, D. S. (2011). Individual Decisions to Migrate During Civil Conflict. *Demography*. 48. 401 – 424.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The Forms of Capital*. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by J. G. Richardson. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Boyd, M. & Greico, E. (2003). *Women and Migration: Incorporating Gender into International Migration Theory*. Retrieved from Migration Policy Institute: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/women-and-migrationincorporating-gender-international-migration-theory>.
- Bradley, H. (2013). *What's in a Name? Meanings and Usages of Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Brooks, R. (2016). *Relocation, Resistance and Resilience: Squatter Community Responses to Government Intervention for Urban Development in Kthmandu*. Independent Study Project (ISP) Collection. [https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp\\_collection/2505](https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/2505).
- Brown, B. (1983). The Impact of Male Labor Migration on Women in Botswana. *African Affairs*. 82(38).367-388.
- Caglar, A. (2013). Locating Migrant Hometown ties in Time and Space. Locality as a Blind Spot of Migration Scholarship. *Historische Anthropologie*. 21 (1). 26-42, DOI:10.7788/ ha.2013.21.1.26.
- Carling, J. (2005). *Migrant Remittances and Development Cooperation*. PRIO Report 1/2005, Oslo.

- Carr, L. T. (1994). The Strengths and Weaknesses of Quantitative and Qualitative Research: What Method for Nursing? *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. (20). 716 – 721.
- Cassarino, J. (2004). Theorising Return Migration: The Conceptual Approach to Return Migrants Revisited. *International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS)*.6 (2).253 -279.
- Castaneda, E. (2013). Living in Limbo: Transnational Households, Remittances and Development.*International Migration*. (51). 13 – 35.
- Castles, S. & Miller, M. J. (2003).*The Age of Migration.International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Center.
- CBS (2012).*Nepal Population and Housing Census 2011*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- CBS.(2022). *Preliminary Report of National Population Census 2021*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- Chant, S. (1991). Gender, Migration and Urban Development in Costa Rica: the Case of Guanacaste. *Geo Forum*. 22(3).237-253.
- Chant, S. (1992). *Gender and Migration in Developing Countries*. London: Belhaven Press.
- Chant, S. (1997). *Women-Headed Households: Diversity and Dynamics in the Developing World*. London: Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Chaudhary, A. (2015). Impacts of Transnational Labor Migration on Learning Process: A Case Study of Nepalese Children and Women Staying Behind. [\*Open Journal of Social Sciences\*](#). 4(11).81-96.
- Chant, S. &Craske, N. (2003). *Gender in Latin America*.Latin American Bureau. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1hhfrqg>.Accessed 19 Feb. 2023.

- Chant, C., & Radcliffe, S.A. (1992). *Migration and Development: The Importance of Gender*. London: Gender and Migration in Developing Countries.
- Choy, L. T. (2014). The Strengths and Weaknesses of Research Methodology: Comparison and Complimentary between Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 19 (4).e-ISSN: 2279-0837. www.iosrjournals.org.
- Clewett, P. (2015). *Redefining Nepal: Internal Migration in a Post-Conflict, Post-Disaster Society*. Retrieved from Migration Policy Institute: <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/redefining-nepal-internalmigration-post-conflict-post-disaster-society>.
- Cochran, W. G. (1963). *Sampling Techniques*. (2<sup>nd</sup>ed). New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc.
- Cohen H. J. (2011). *Migration, Remittances and Household Strategies*. Columbus: Ohio State University.
- Cohen, J. & Rodriguez, L. & Fox, M. (2008). Gender and Migration in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca. *International Migration*. (46). 79 - 101. 10.1111/j.1468-2435.2008.00437.x.
- Connell, R.W. (2002). *The Question of Gender*. In R.W. Connell, Gender. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. California: Sage, publications.
- Creswell, J.W., & Creswell, J.D. (2018). *Research Design*. (5<sup>th</sup>ed.). London: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (2005). Interpretivism: for and against Culture. In M. Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research*, (pp. 66-86). London: SAGE publications.

- Dahal, M. P. (2019). *AaupacharikMadhyambaataBipreshanBhitryauneraUtpaadhanmulakKshetramaaUpayogGarneGarauneSambandhiAdhyayanPratibedan (A Study Report on Bringing Remittance through Formal Channels and Utilising it in Productive Sector)*. Kathmandu: MoLESS.
- De Haas, H. (2005). International Migration, Remittances and Development: Myths and Facts. *Third World Quarterly*.26(8), 1269–1284.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4017714>.
- Debnath, P. & Selim, N. (2009). *Gender Roles and Support Networks of Spouses of Migrant Workers in Gender and Labor Migration in Asia*. International Organization for Migration.
- De Haas, H. & Van Rooij, A. (2010). Migration as Emancipation? The Impact of Internal and International Migration on the Position of Women Left Behind in Rural Morocco. *Oxford Development Studies*.38(1).43-62.
- Denscombe, M. (2010). *The Good Research Guide for Small Scale Social Research Projects* (4th ed.), (pp. 172-195). Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage publications.
- Desai, S. & Banerji, M. (2008). Negotiated Identities: Male Migration and Left-Behind Wives in India. *J Popul Res (Canberra)*.25(3): 337–355.  
doi: [10.1007/BF03033894](https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03033894).
- Deshingkar, P. & Grimm, S. (2005). *Internal Migration and Development: A Global Perspective*. 10.18356/00e90d72-en.
- Devine, F. (2002). Qualitative Methods. In Marsh, D. & Stoker, G. (eds.). *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- DoFE (2014). *Labor Migration for Employment: A Status Report for Nepal: 2013/14*. Retrieved from the Asia Foundation website: <https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/MigrationReportbyGovernmentofNepal.pdf>.
- DoFE (2015). *Annual Report 2015*. Retrieved from the Department of Foreign Employment website: <http://www.dofe.gov.np/new/uploads/article/year2070-71.pdf>.
- DoFE.(n.d.). *Notice for Renewal of Foreign Employment Related Institutions for Fiscal Year 2078/79*. Accessed August 10, 2022. <https://dofe.gov.np/Modules/News/Document/OriginalDocument/jpg2pdf-compressed.pdf>.
- Donato, K.M., Gabaccia, D., Holdaway, J., Manalansan, M. &Pessar, P.R. (2006). A Glass Half Full? Gender in Migration Studies. *International Migration Review*, 40(1), 3-26. doi: 10.1111/j.1747-7379.2006.00001.
- Drinkwater, M. &Rusinow, T. (1999). *Care's Livelihoods Approach Natural Resources Advisers' Conference (NRAC)*. Sparsholt, UK: Department for International Development (DFID) Rural Livelihoods Department.
- Durand, J. & Massey, D.S. (Eds.). (2004). *Crossing the Border: Research from the Mexican Migration Project*. Russell: Sage Foundation.
- Eelens, F. (1995). *Migration of Sri Lankan Women to Western Asia*. In *International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants*. Proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting on International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants, San Miniato, Italy, 28-31 March 1991.
- Eisentein, Z. (1999). Constructing a Theory of Capitalist Patriarchy and Socialist Feminism. *Critical Sociology*.25. 196-217.

- Elbadawy, A. & Roushdy, R. (2010). *Impact on International Migration on Women's Status: the Case of Egypt*. Paper presented at International Conference on Women and Youth in Arab Development, Cairo, Egypt.
- Elias, N. (1994). *The Civilizing Process*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Eliza, M. (2011). *Social Remittances and Social Capital: Values and Practice of Transnational Social Space*. Kennesaw State University.
- El-Sakka, M.I. (1997). *Migration Remittances: Policy Options for Host and Origin Countries*. (Project No. CC023, Final Report). Kuwait University.
- Elson, D. (1992). Male Bias in Structural Adjustment. In *Palgrave Macmillan UK eBooks* (pp. 46–68). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-11961-5\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-11961-5_3).
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic field notes (2nd Edition)*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Engels, F. (1884). *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*. Marx/Engels Selected Works, 3.
- Esterberg, K. (2002). *Qualitative Methods in Social Research*. Boston: McGraw Hill
- Fernandez-Kelly, M. (1981). The Sexual Division of Labor, Development, and Women's Status. *Current Anthropology*, 22 (4):414-419.
- Findley, S. E., & L. Williams (1990). *Women Who Go and Women Who Stay: Reflections of Family Migration Processes in a Changing World, Population and Labor Policies Program*, Working Paper No. 176. Geneva: ILO.
- Galvan, T. (2015). *Women Who Stay Behind: Pedagogies of Survival in Rural Transmigrant Mexico*. The University of Arizona Press.
- Gamburd, M. R. (2002). *The Kitchen Spoon's Handle: Transnationalism and Sri Lanka's Migrant Housemaids*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Gartaula, H. N. (2009). *International Migration and Local Development in Nepal*. Kathmandu: CNAS/TU.
- Gawlewicz, A. (2016). Language and Translation Strategies in Researching Migrant Experience of Difference from the Position of Migrant Researcher. *Qualitative Research*.16. 27–42. 10.1177/1468794114557992.
- George, S. (2000). *'Dirty Nurses and Men Who Play: Gender and Class in Transnational Migration; in M. Bur way Global Ethnography: forces, Connections and Imaginations in a Postmodern world*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gibbs, G.R. (2002). *Qualitative Data Analysis: Explorations with Nvivo*. Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The Constitution of Society*. Cambridge: Polity
- Glick-Schiller, N., Basch, L. & Blanc-Szanton, C. (1995). From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration. *Anthropological Quarterly*.68 (1). 48-63, DOI:10.2307/3317464.
- Glover, D. & Kaplan, C. (2009). *Introduction: Gendered Histories, Gendered Contexts*. In D. Glover & C. Kaplan, *Genders*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Golring, L. (2003). Gender, Status and the State in Transnational Space: The Gendering of Political Participation and Mexican Hometown Associations in P. HondagneuSotelo (ed.) *Gender and US immigration*. Berkeley: University of California Press. <https://doi.org/10.1525/california/9780520225619.003.0016>.
- Goss, J. & Lindquist, B. (1995). Conceptualizing International Labor Migration: A Structuration Perspective. *The International migration review*. 29. 317-51. 10.2307/2546784.

- Government of Nepal (2014). *Labor migration for Employment: A Status Report for Nepal: 2013/2014*. Government of Nepal. Kathmandu, Nepal: Ministry of Labor and Employment, Department of Foreign Employment.
- Government of Nepal (2017). *Foreign Employment (Third Amendment) Rules*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- Gulati, L. (1986). The Impact on the Family of Male Migration to the Middle East: Some Evidence from Kerala, India in F. Arnold and N. M. Shah (Eds.). *Asian Labor Migration: Pipeline to the Middle East*. Westview Press: Boulder and London.
- Gupta, S., Arjun, K. & Fraser, S. (2022). 'Migration and COVID-19 in Context: Labor Migration and the Agriculture Sector in Nepal.' Agrumig Policy Brief Series, No. 5.
- Gurung, Y.B. (2012). Migration from Rural Nepal: A Social Exclusion Framework. *Himalaya, the Journal of Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies*. 31 (1). 12.
- Hadi, A. (2001). International Migration and the Change of Women's Position among the Left-Behind in Rural Bangladesh. *International Journal of Population Geography*. 7. 53-61.
- Hammersley, M. (1995). *Theory and Evidence in Qualitative Research*. Quality & Quantity. 29. 10.1007/BF01107983.
- Haas, H.D. & Rooij, V. A. (2010). Migration as Emancipation? The Impact of Internal and International Migration on the Position of Women Left Behind in Rural Morocco. *Oxford Development Studies*. 38 (1). March 2010.

- Hesse-Biber, S. (2014). A Re-invitation to Feminist Research. In S.N. Hesse- Biber (ed.). *Feminist Research Practice*. London: Sage publications.
- Ho, C. (2006). Migration as Feminisation? Chinese Women's Experiences of Work and Family in Australia. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(3). 497-514. doi: 10.1080/13691830600555053.
- Hochschild, A. R., & Machung, A. (1989). *The Second Shift*. New York, NY: Avon.
- Hoang, L.A. (2011). Gender Identity and Agency in Migration Decision-Making: Evidence from Vietnam. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 37(9). 1441-1457. doi: 10.1080/1369183X.2011.623618.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. & Avila, E. (1997). 'I'm here but I'm there': The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood. *Gender & Society*. 11(5). 548-571. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124397011005003>.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo P. (2001). *Doméstica: Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*. Berkeley: Univ. Calif. Press.
- ILO (2015). *ILO Global Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology*. Retrieved from ILO website: <http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public>.
- Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka. (2013). *Migration Profile: Sri Lanka*. Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- International Labor Organization (ILO) (2010). *Labor and Social Trends in Nepal 2010*, ILO Country Office for Nepal and National Planning Commission. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2019). *IOM Reintegration Handbook*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

- International Organization for Migration (IOM).(2020). *Migration and Development*. Kathmandu: IOM.
- Jackson, C. & Pearson, R. (1998).*Feminist Visions of Development.Gender, Analysis and Policy*.Routledge.
- Jolly, S., & Reeves, H. (2005). *Gender and Migration: Overview Report*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- Joshi, R. P. (2017). *The Impacts of Foreign Labor Migration of Men on Women's Empowerment in Nepal.Doctoral Dissertations*. 882.  
<https://doi.org/10.7275/9281528.0>.
- Kabeer, N. (1994). *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*. London: Verso.
- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, Agency, and Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment. *Development and Change*.30. 435-464.
- Kanaiaupuni, S. (2000).Reframing the Migration Question: An Analysis of Men, Women and Gender in Mexico.*Social Force*.78 (4).1311-1348.
- Kansakar, V.B.S. (2001). *Nepal-India Open Border: Prospects, Problems and Challenges*. Nepal Democracy: Gateway to Nepali Politics and Civil Society web site. Retrieved April 13, 2015 from [www.fes.de/aktuell/focus\\_interkulturelles/focus\\_1/documents/19.pdf](http://www.fes.de/aktuell/focus_interkulturelles/focus_1/documents/19.pdf).
- Kaspar, H. (2005). *I am the Household Head Now: Gender Aspects of Out-migration for Labor in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Nepal Institute of Development Studies (NIDS).
- Khalaf, M. (2009).Male Migration and the Lebanese Family.*Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*. 5. 102-119. 10.2979/MEW.2009.5.3.102.

- Khanduri, C.B. (1997). *The Gorkhas of the Indian Army: An Enduring Relationship*. In Nepal in Transition, edited by M. D. Dharamdasani. Varanasi: Rajdhanipublicationss. 1997b. A Re-Discovered History of Gorkhas. Delhi: GyanSagar.
- Kharel, P. (2011). *Remittance as Development Resource: The Experience of Nepal*. In Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on 'Implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action', ESCAP, Bangkok.
- Kindelberger, J. H. (1967). *Europe's Postwar Growth: the Role of Labor Supply*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Kindler, M. & Napiera a, J. (2010). Wst p. In M. Kindler & J. Napiera a (eds.) *Migracjekobiet: PrzypadekPolski (7-36)*. Warszawa: WydawnictwoNaukowe Scholar.
- Kofman, E. (2004). Gendered Global Migrations. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. 6 (4), 642-664. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461674042000283408>.
- Kosack, G. (1976). Migrant Women: The Move to Western Europe – A Step Towards Emancipation? *Race Class*, 17, 369-379. doi: 10.1177/030639687601700402.
- Lamichhane, P., Harken, T., Puri, M. (2011). Sex-Selective Abortion in Nepal: A Qualitative Study of Health Workers' Perspectives. *Women's Health Issues*, 21 (35), 537 – 541.
- Lan, P. (2006). *Global Cinderellas: Migrant Domestic workers and newly rich employers in Taiwan*, London: Duke University Press.
- Lerner, G. (1986). "Origin", *The Creation of Patriarchy, chapter 1*. Oxford: Oup Levitt.
- Levitt, P. (1998). *Social Remittances: Migration-Driven Local-Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion*.

- Levitt, P. (2001). *The Transnational Villages*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Levitt, P. (2004). Transnational Migrants: When “Home” Means More Than One Country. *The Online Journal of the Migration Policy Institute.migrationpolicy.org* (<https://www.migrationpolicy.org>).
- Levitt P. (2007). *God Needs No Passport: How migrants are Changing the American Religious Landscape*. New York: New Press
- Levitt, P. & Glick Schiller, N. (2004). Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society. *International Migration Review*. 38 (3). 1002-1039, DOI:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2004.tb00227.
- Levitt, P. & Lamba, N. D. (2010). Social Remittances Revisited. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 37. 1-22.
- Levitt, P. & Lamba, N. D. (2011). Social Remittances Revisited. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. 37. 1-22. 10.1080/1369183X.2011.521361.
- Levitt, P. & Ninna, G. S. (2004). Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society. *The International Migration Review*. 38 (3). 1002-1039.
- Lim, L.L. & Oishi, N. (1996). International labor migration of Asian women: Distinctive Characteristics and Policy Concerns. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*. 5(1). 85–116.
- Lipton, M. (1980). Migration from the Rural Areas of Poor Countries: The Impact on Rural Productivity and Income Distribution. *World Development*. 8(1). 1-24.
- Lister, R. (2003). *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*. (2nd ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Liz, S. & Sue, W. (1993). *Breaking Out Breaking Out Again Feminist Ontology and Epistemology*. Routledge. ISBN 9780415072700.
- Lokshin, M. & Glinskaya, E. (2008). *The Effect of Male Migration for Work on Employment Patterns for Females in Nepal*. (Policy Research Working Paper 4757). The World Bank, Development Research Group, Poverty Team.
- Lorber, J. (1998) *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics*. LA, California: Roxbury Press.
- Maharjan, A., Bauer, S., & Knerr, B. (2012). International Migration, Remittances and Subsistence Farming: Evidence from Nepal. *International Migration*, 51(1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2012.00767.x>
- Maharjan, A., Bauer, S. & Knerr, B. (2013). *Migration for Labor and its Impact on Farm Production in Nepal*. (Working Paper IV Centre for the Study of Labor and Mobility) Social Science Baha, Kathmandu Nepal.
- Mahler, S. J. & Pessar, R. P. (2006). Gender Matters: Ethnographers Bring Gender from the Periphery toward the Core of Migration Studies. *International Migration Review* 40(1).27-63.
- Maimbo, S.M. & Ratha, D. (2005). *Remittances: Development Impact and Future Prospects*. World Bank: Washington, DC.
- Majumuria, I. (1989). *Nepalese Women: A Vivid Account of the Status and Role of Nepalese Women in the Total Spectrum of Life, Religious, Social, Economic, Political, and Legal : Focus on Equality, Development, and Peace*. The University of California.
- Marshment, M. (1997). The Picture is Political: Representation of Women in Contemporary Popular Culture. In: Robinson, V., Richardson, D. (eds)

- Introducing Women's Studies*. Palgrave, London. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-25726-3\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-25726-3_6).
- Markley, E. (2011). Social Remittances and Social Capital: Values and Practices of Transnational Social Space. *Quality of Life*.22. 365-378.
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. (2nd ed.). Sage publications, London.
- Mathema, K. B. (2007). Crisis Education and Future Challenges for Nepal. *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research*. 31. 46-66.
- McCarthy, M. (2021). *A Comprehensive Analysis of Policies and Frameworks Governing Foreign Employment for Nepali Women Migrant Workers and Migrant Domestic Workers*. Kathmandu: International Labor Organization.
- Mcevoy, J., Peggy, P., Claudia, R. & Birgit, S. (2012). Gendered Mobility and Morality in a South-Eastern Mexican Community: Impacts of Male Labor Migration on the Women Left Behind. *Migration*.7 (3).369-388.
- McKenzie, S. &Menjivar, C. (2011). The Meanings of Migration, Remittances and Gifts: Views of Honduran Women who Stay. *Global Networks* 11 (1).63-81.
- Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MOLESS). (2020). *Labor Migration for Employment: A status Report for Nepal*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- Ministry of Labor and Employment (2014).*Labor Migration for Employment, A Status Report for Nepal: 2013/2014*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal, Department of Foreign Employment.
- Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS). (2018). *Foreign Employment Related Demand Letter Enquiry Directive*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.

- Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) (2020). *Nepal Labor Migration Report 2020*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Security (MoLESS) (2022). *Nepal Labor Migration Report*. Kathmandu: Government of Nepal.
- Mishra, C. (2007). *Households, Prosperity, and Poverty*. Center Department of Sociology, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur Kathmandu.
- Mishra, M. (2014). Changing Status of Nepali Women: An Overview. *Hamro Sansar – A Journal of Women's Studies*. 8. 59 – 61.
- Mitchell, J. (1974). *Psychoanalysis and Feminism: Freud, Reich, Laing and Women*. London: Vintage Books.
- Money, J. (1994). The Concept of Gender Identity Disorder in Childhood and Adolescence after 39 years. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*. 20(3). 163-177. doi: 0.1080/00926239408403428.
- Moore, HL. (1994). *Passion for Differences*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Morawska, E. (2001). Structuring Migration: The Case of Polish Income-seeking Travelers to the West. [Electronic version]. *Theory and Society*, 30(1), pp. 47-80.
- Morgan, S. P. & Niraula, B. B. (1996). Marriage Formation, Post-Marital Contact with Natal Kin and Autonomy of Women: Evidence from two Nepali Settings. *Population Studies*. 50 (1). 35 – 50.
- Morokvasic, M. (1983). Women in Migration: Beyond the Reductionist Outlook. In A. Phizacklea (Ed.), *One Way Ticket: Migration and Female Labor*. (13-32). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul plc.
- Myrdal, G. (1957). *Rich Lands and Poor*. New York: Harper and Row.

- Nath, L. (2006). Migration, Insecurity and Identity: The Nepali Dairymen in India's Northeast. *Asian Ethnicity*.7(2). 129 – 148.
- Nepal Migration Yearbook (2010). *NIDS and South Asia Regional Coordination Office Swiss-National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South*. Kathmandu: NCCR.
- Neuman, L.W. (2006). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- New Era (1981). *Study in Inter-Regional Migration in Nepal*. Kathmandu: National Planning Commission.
- NIDS.(2011). *Nepal Institute of Development Studies*.Kathmandu: NIDS
- NRB.(2020). *Nepal Ma BipreshanAprabaahaSthiti (The Situation of Remittance Flow in Nepal)*. Kathmandu: Nepal Rastra Bank.
- NRB.(n.d.).*Remittance Companies*, Accessed June 8, 2022.  
<https://www.nrb.org.np/departments/fxm/#licensed>.
- Oakley, A. (1972). *Sex, Gender & Society*. London: Maurice Temple Smith. Reprinted with new Introduction. London: Gower Publishing Company Limited, 1985.
- Oakley, A. (1981). Interviewing Women: A Contradiction in Terms.In H. Roberts (ed.), *Doing Feminist Research* (30-62). London: Routledge&Kegan Paul Ltd..
- Olsen, W. (2012).*Data Collection: Key Debates and Methods in Social Research*. Sage publicationsss Ltd.
- Oppong, C. (1983). *Female and Male In West Africa*. London: Allen &Urwin.
- O'reilly, K. (2012). Practice Theory: A Framework for International Migration Research. In K. O'Reilly, *International Migration and Social Theory* (13-38). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Palmer, I. (1985). *The Impact of Male Outmigration on Women in Farming*. West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Pant, B. (2008). *Mobilizing Remittances for Productive Use: A Policy-oriented Approach*. Nepal Rastra Bank Working Paper. Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Parrenas, R. S. (2001). Mothering from a Distance: Emotions, Gender, and Intergenerational Relations in Filipino Transnational Families. *Feminist Studies*. 27 (2).361-390.
- Paudyal, D.R. & McDougall, K. (2010). *Spatial Data Infrastructure for Pro-poor Land Management*. In Proceedings of the 24th International Federation of Surveyors International Congress (FIG 2010).(1-14). International Federation of Surveyors (FIG).
- Pedraza, S. (1991). Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender. *Annual review of Sociology*.17. 303-325.
- Peggy, L. (2001). *The Transnational Villagers*. California Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Peggy, L. & Nadya, J. (2007). [Transnational Migration Studies: Past Developments and Future Trends](#). In. *International Migration Review*.37 (3).812-846.
- Pessar, P. R., & Mahler, S. J. (2003). Transnational Migration: Bringing Gender In. *International Migration Review*. 37(3). 812-846. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7379.2003.tb00159.x>.
- Phizacklea, A. (1998). Migration and Globalization: a Feminist Perspective on K. Koser and H. Lutz. (eds)., pp.21-23. *The new migration in Europe social constructions and social realities*, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan.

- Pickbourn, L. J. (2011). *Migration, Remittances and Intra-Household Allocation in Northern Ghana: Does Gender Matter?* (Doctoral Dissertation) University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- Piper, N. (2005). Gender and Migration. *Policy Analysis and Research Programme of the Global Commission on International Migration*. Asia Research Institute. National University of Singapore. 1-54.
- Piper, N. (2009). *Gender and Labor Migration in Asia*. Report on Gender and Labor Migration in Asia, IOM.
- Płomie , A. (2009). Welfare State, Gender and Reconciliation of Work and Family in Poland: Policy Developments and Practice in a New EU Member. *Social Policy & Administration*.48(2). 136-151. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9515.2009.00652.x.
- Pokharel, B. (2014). Gender and Politics: Nepalese Women in Politics. *HamroSansar – A Journal of Women’s Studies*. 8. 11 – 15.
- Posel, D. (2001). How do Households Work? Migration, the Household and Remittance Behavior in South Africa. *Social Dynamics*.27 (1).165-189.
- Quisumbing, A. &Maluccio, J. (2000). *Intra-household Allocation and Gender Relations: New Empirical Evidence from Four Developing Countries*. FCND, Discussion Paper 8 Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Quisumbing, A. &McClafferty, B. (2006). *Using Gender Research in Development*, Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Quisumbing, A. (2003). *Household Decisions, Gender, and Development: A Synthesis of Recent Research*. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.

- Ramazanoglu, C. (1992). On Feminist Methodology: Male Reason Versus Female Empowerment. *Sociology*.26 (2).207-212.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038592026002003>
- Ratha, D. (2007). *Leveraging Remittances for Development*. Paper presented at the Second Plenary meeting of the Leading Group on Solidarity Levies to Fund Development, Oslo. Retrieved from the World Bank website: [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Leveraging Remittances For Development.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/Leveraging%20Remittances%20For%20Development.pdf).
- Ratha, D. (2023). [\*Workers Remittances: An Important and Stable Source of External Development Finance\*](#). Global Development Finance. Washington DC: World Bank.
- Ratha, D., Eung, J. K., Sonia, P., Elliott, J. R. & Vandana, C. (2022). *Migration and Development Brief 36: A War in a Pandemic: Implications of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the COVID-19 crisis on Global Governance of Migration and Remittance Flows*. Washington, D.C.: Knomad-World Bank.
- Reeves, H. & Baden, S. (2000) *Gender and development: Concepts and definitions*. Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex.
- Ritchie, J., Lewis, J. & Elam, G. (2003). Designing and Selecting Samples. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (eds.), *Qualitative Research Practice* (77-137). London: Sage publications Ltd.
- Salih, R. (2013). *Gender in Transnationalism*.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203383148>.
- Sakka, D, Dikaiou, M., & Kiosseoglou, G. (1999). Return Migration: Changing Roles of Men and Women. *International migration*, 34 (4): 741-764.

- Salazar, N.B. (2011). The Power of Imagination in Transnational migration. *Identities. Global Studies in Culture and power*. 18(6).576-598.
- Sapkota, C. (2013). Remittances in Nepal: Boon or Bane? *The Journal of Development Studies*.49 (10).1316-1331.
- Schiller, N. G., Basch, L., & Blanc, C. S. (1995). From Immigrant to transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration. *Anthropological Quarterly*.68(1). 48. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3317464>
- Schiller, N. G.(2023) From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration. *Anthropological Quarterly*.68(1). 1995, 48–63. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3317464>. Accessed 19 Feb. 2023.
- Seddon, D., Adhikari J. & Gurung, G. (2002). Foreign Labor Migration and the Remittance Economy of Nepal. *Critical Asian Studies*.34 (1).019-040.
- Sen, A. (1991). Gender and Cooperative Conflicts, in I. Thinker. *Persistent Inequalities Women and World development*.123-149. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shan, Y. (2021). Philosophical Foundations of Mixed Methods Research. *Philosophy Compass*.17(1). <https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12804>
- Sharma, S., Shibani, P., Dinesh, P. & Bimbika, S. B. (2014). *State of Migration in Nepal*. Kathmandu: Centre for the Study of Labor and Mobility.
- Sijapati, B. (2015). *Women's Labor Migration from Asia and the Pacific: Opportunities and Challenges*. Migration Policy Institute. Retrieved from IOM website: [http://publicationsss.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mp\\_i\\_issue12.pdf](http://publicationsss.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mp_i_issue12.pdf)
- Sijapati, B. & Limbu, A. (2012). *Governing Labor Migration in Nepal: An Analysis of Existing Policies and Institutional Mechanisms*. Kathmandu: Centre for the Study of Labor and Migration, Social Science Baha, Himal Books.

- Silverman, D. (2011). *Interpreting Qualitative Data* (4<sup>th</sup>ed.). London: Sage publications Ltd.
- Smith, J. & Immanuel, W. (1992). *Creating and Transforming Households: The Constraints of the World Economy*. New York and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l Homme.
- Song, Y. (1998). *"New" Seed in "Old" China: Impact or CIMMYT Collaborative Programme on Maize Breeding in South-Western China*. Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Wageningen Agricultural University. Wageningen.
- Sorensen, N. (2004). The Development Dimension of Migrant Remittances.
- Stahl, C.W. (1999). *International Labor Migration in East Asia and Policy Issues*. Paper presented at the APRMN symposium: New trends in Asia Pacific Migration and Consequences for Japan, Waseda University, Japan.
- Stark, O. & Lucas, R.E.B. (1988). Migration, Remittances, and the Family. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. 3 (3). 465 – 481.
- Sunam, R.K. & McCarthy, J.F. (2016). Reconsidering the Links Between Poverty, International Labor Migration, and Agrarian Change: Critical Insights from Nepal. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*. 43 (1). 39-63.
- Tamang, S. (2009). The Politics of Conflict and Difference or the Difference of Conflict in Politics: The Women's Movement in Nepal. *Feminist Review*. 91. 61 – 80.
- Tashakkori, A. & Creswell, J.W. (2007). The New Era of Mixed Methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*. 1 (1). 3-7.
- Taylor, J. E. (1999). The New Economics of Labor Migration and the Role of Remittances in the Migration Process. *International Migration*. 37 (1). 63 – 88.

- Teddle, C. & Tashakkori, A. (2010). *Overview of Contemporary Issues in Mixed Methods Research*. Sage Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research (2<sup>nd</sup>.ed.). 1-42. Sage publications.
- Thagunna, K. S. & Acharya, S. (2013). Empirical Analysis of Remittance Inflow: The Case of Nepal. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*. 3(2). 337 – 344.
- Thieme, S. & Wyss, S. (2005). Migration Patterns and Remittance Transfer in Nepal: A Case Study of Sainik Basti in Western Nepal. *International Migration*. 43(5): 59-98.
- Thimothy, R. & Sasikumar, S. K. (2012). *Migration of Women Workers from South Asia to the Gulf*. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. V. V. Giri National Labor Institute. 1-124.
- Titkow, A., Duch-Krzyszczak, D. & Budrowska, B. (2004). *Nieodpłatna praca kobiet. Mity, Realia, Perspektywy*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Filozofii i Sociologii PAN.
- Tyner, J. A. (2000). Global Cities and Circuits of Global Labor: The Case of Manila, Philippines. *The Professional Geographer*. 52(1). 61–74.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/0033-0124.00205>.
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). *International Migration 2019: Highlights (ST/ESA/SER.A/439)*.
- UN Habitat (2015). *Habitat III Issue Papers, 22–Informal Settlements*. In United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Vol. 2015).
- UN-Habitat (2007). *Policy Makers Guide to Women's Land, Property and Housing Rights Across the World*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.

- UN-Habitat (2013). *Global Report on Human Settlements, 2007*. Nairobi: UN-Habitat.
- Upreti, B.C. (2002). *The Marginal Migrants: A Study of Nepali Emigrants in India*. Delhi: Kalinga Publ.
- Wambui, J. (2013). *An Introduction to Feminist Research*. University of Nairobi. <http://hdl.handle.net/11295/84523>.
- West, C. & Zimmerman, D.H. (1987). Doing Gender. *Gender and Society*. 1(2). 125-151. doi: 10.1177/0891243287001002002.
- Wong, Y. J. (2006). Strength-Centered Therapy: A Social Constructionist, Virtues based Psychotherapy. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*. 43(2).133–146. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-3204.43.2.133>
- World Bank (2007). *Remittances, Working Paper 4, 2007*, <http://www.uninstraw.org/en/publicationss/working-papers/working-paper-4-remittances/download.html>.
- World Bank (2016). *Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*. Washington DC: Global Economic Prospect.
- World Economic Forum (2015). *The Global Gender Gap Report 2015*. Geneva: World Economic Forum.
- Yabiku, S.T., Agadjanian, V. & Sevoyan, A. (2010). 'Husbands' Labor Migration and Wives' Autonomy Mozambique 2000-2006. *Population Studies: A Journal of Demography*. 64 (3).293-306.
- Yin, R. K. (1994). *Case Study Research, Design, and Methods*, 3rd ed. Newbury Park: Sage publications.
- Yuval-Davis, N. (1997). *Gender & Nation*. London: Sage publications Ltd.

- Zhao, Y. (2003). *Rural-Urban Migration in China—What Do We Know and What Do We Need to Know?* China Center for Economic Research, Peking University.
- Zimmerman, D.H. & West, C. (1987). Doing Gender. *Gender and Society*.1(2). 125-151. doi: 10.1177/0891243287001002002.
- Zimmerman, D.H. (1992). They Were All Doing Gender, but They Weren't All Passing: Comment on Rogers. [Electronic version]. *Gender and Society*, 6(2).
- Zlotnik, H. (2003). *The Global Dimensions of Female Migration in Data In-sight: Migration InformationSource*, <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/>.May 23, 2008.
- Zontini, E. (2004). Immigrant Women in Barcelona: Coping with the Consequences of Transnational Lives. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*.30(6).1113–1144. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183042000286278>