

# NEPALESE YOUTH MIGRATION FOR ABROAD STUDIES



**A Thesis**

**Submitted to APF Command and Staff College  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Tribhuvan University  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for Master's Degree in  
Security, Development and Peace Studies**

**Submitted by**

**SHYAM RAWAT**

**Eighth Batch (2079-2081)**

**Roll No: 28MSDPS40066**

**TU Registration No: 24038-95**

**APF Command and Staff College  
Sanogaucharan, Kathmandu, Nepal**

**May, 2024**

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## DECLARATION

I, **SHYAM RAWAT**, declare that this thesis entitled “**NEPALESE YOUTH MIGRATION FOR ABROAD STUDIES**” submitted to APF Command and Staff College, is my own original work unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged in the thesis. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted or submitted for any other degree at the University or other institution. All sources of information have been specifically acknowledged by reference to the author or institution(s).

.....

Shyam Rawat

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(24 May, 2024)

## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

This Thesis entitled “**NEPALESE YOUTH MIGRATION FOR ABROAD STUDIES**” has been prepared by **SHYAM RAWAT** under my supervision. I hereby recommend it in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master’s Degree in Security, Development and Peace Studies, Tribhuvan University. I, hereby recommend this thesis for the final evaluation and approval.

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Prof. Dr. Ramesh Raj Kunwar

Thesis Supervisor

Date: 24 May, 2024



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**LETTER OF APPROVAL**

This thesis entitled “**NEPALESE YOUTH MIGRATION FOR ABROAD STUDIES**” submitted by **SHYAM RAWAT** to APF Command and Staff College, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University in partial fulfillment of Master Degree in Security, Development and Peace Studies has been approved by the undersigned members of the Evaluation Committee.

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## ABSTRACT

Nepal is facing massive out-migration of students for abroad studies. According to the No Objection Certificate (NOC) branch of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 110,217 students took NOC in 2023; during the last five years, 404,139 students went abroad for studies. About 50% of the enrolled number of students dropout till the last semester of the academic session in Bachelor and Master level colleges in main cities. Nepal is potential to long lasting impacts of brain drain though economy temporarily compensated by remittances. The purpose of this paper is to identify the causes of migration from the standpoint of push-pull factors, to explain the perception of youths and parents/guardians and to analyze outcomes and impacts instigated by out-migration in the human security of Nepal. This study has employed explanatory sequential mixed-methods approach. For quantitative data, 110 respondents have participated in closed-ended questionnaires. Especially, potential, migrating youths were selected using convenience sampling method. For qualitative data, 17 of the respondents were selected using judgmental sampling method from the list of 110 participants. Open-ended questions and interviews were employed to further understand the out-migrating phenomena of Nepalese youths. 11 respondents including (five guardians, three consultants, and three KIIs were approached and interviewed for in-depth understanding and interpretation of the migration to fulfill the requirement of the study. Two case studies have been used to better explanation. The analysis of the data has drawn mixed methods integrative findings. Quotes, codes and themes have been embedded to explain the phenomena. Qualitative data have been triangulated by quantitative data in the study.

The issues that this study discussed as causes of migration are push-pull factors such as the lack of quality education and subsequent job opportunities in Nepal. Likewise, obsolete curriculum, insecure future, irresponsible and unaccountable administrative system, aspirations and capability of students were observed as determinants. Youth migration was found economically motivated; earning and studying together was perceived as an investment. The exodus of talent and innovative youths was interpreted a signal of brain drain, an appalling impact. This study has been expected to be useful for understanding the youth migration for abroad studies and will help policy makers to formulate plans in addressing the appalling issues of out-migration of students (S. Rawat, personal communication, May, 2024).

*Keywords:* Migration, abroad studies, push-pull factors, brain drain, economy

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

7 <sup>th</sup>	Seventh
8 <sup>th</sup>	Eighth
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APA	American Psychological Association
APF	Armed Police Force
Asst.	Assistant
BGC	Brain Gain Centre
DIG	Deputy Inspector General
Dr.	Doctor
DS	Directing Staff
DSP	Deputy Superintendent of Police
ECAN	Educational Consultancy Association of Nepal
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IOM	International Office of Migration
KII	Key Informant Interview
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
NELM	New Economics of Labor Migration

No.	Number
NOC	No Objection Certificate
NSO	National Statistics Office
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
Prof.	Professor
Reg.	Registration
Rs.	Rupees
SP	Superintendent of Police
Sq.	Square
TU	Tribhuvan University
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar
UNESCO	Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

‘Migration’ in general term is the movement of people from one place to another. In other words, migration is the movement of people across a specified boundary for the purpose of establishing a new or semi-permanent residence. The United Nations Multilingual Demographic Dictionary (United Nations, 1970) defines ‘Migration’ as a form of geographical mobility or spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another. It generally involves a change in residence from the place of origin to place of destination or place of arrival. Such migration is called permanent migration and is distinguished from other forms of movement which do not involve a permanent change of residence.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines ‘migration’ as the movement of a person or people from one country, locality, place of residence, etc., to settle in another. As per the International Organization for Migration (IOM), ‘migration’ is the movement of a person or group of persons, whether between or within a country between two places in its territory. The Federal Office for Migration and Refugees states that migration occurs when a person changes the location of their usual place of residence. Migration worldwide is increasing; the number of new permanent-type immigrants in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), reached an all-time high of 6.1 million in 2022. This is about 26% more than in 2021 and 14% more than in 2019.

Nepal, known as the roof of the world, is a landlocked country situated in South Asia. It is nestled between China to the north and India to the south, east, and west. The country with the population 2,91,64,578, according to National Census 2078 (Collegenp, 2023), occupies 147,516 sq. km of land and lies between coordinates approximately 28°N and 84°E (Nepal Tourism Board [NTB], 2024). Nepal is renowned for its breathtaking landscapes, including the majestic Himalayas and Mount Everest, the highest peak in the world. The country holds great religious significance for both Hindus and Buddhists, with ancient temples, monasteries, and pilgrimage sites scattered throughout the land. Full of natural resource, Nepal is still unexplored land. Economically, it is a developing/emerging lower-middle income economy.

Nepal's economy relies heavily on agriculture (24.1% in fiscal year 2022/23), tourism (6.7% in 2022/23) of the nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP- 57 billion USD in 2023), and remittances (about 25% of the GDP in 2023 ) from its large diaspora Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2023; Kafle, 2023; S. Shrestha, 2023; Pandey, 2023)]. However, the country faces various challenges, including poverty, political instability, and natural disasters. National Statistics Office (NSO) of Nepal published that more than 20% of the country's over 29 million population live below the poverty line (EFE, 2024). Amid these socio-economic phenomena, the current trend of Nepali students' migration for abroad studies is also alarming.

The data of No Objection Certificate (NOC) Section of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology shows that 404,139 have left Nepal for abroad studies in the last five years. By Fagun 2080/81 (February 2024), 51,631 students have left. The number in the previous fiscal year 079/80 was 110,217; in 078/79 was 117,000; in 077/78 was 27,900; 076/77 was 34,096 and in 075/76 was 63000 (About Nepal, 2024; Ghimire, 2024). It shows the increasing trend of migrant students from Nepal. Nepal, with this out-migration, is prone to impending brain drain and potential to undergo long lasting socio-economic deterioration.

Country-to-country migrants often have different motivations. In all different types of migrations, people move in the hope that they will be able to do something better than the current situation. Push and pull factors determine the migration. As per the data published by Department of Immigration of Nepal, more than 1.6 million (16,03,838) Nepalis traveled abroad in 2023 for employment, tourism, study and other purposes (Xinhua, 2024). A large part is covered by student migration. Over 108,542 students left Nepal in the last fiscal year-2023 to study abroad (Onlinekhabar, 2023).

Nepalese student started to migrate for abroad studies especially after the advent of British in India. Migration process in Nepal is found mainly to have started in 19<sup>th</sup> century during the British rule in India (Edusanjal, 2022). Before that Nepalese travelled towards north up to Lhasa especially for trade and towards south for work. As far as student migration is concerned, very few went to Banaras for neighboring towns for education. During Rana regime, few Ranas went to England for study. In 1910, Rana Prime Minister Jang Bahadur had sent his sons and nephews to the United Kingdom (UK) for education. In 1959, Eight Nepali youths as per Edusanjal (2022) were sent to Japan to learn technical courses. They were officially sent for study.

Human beings migrate for better opportunities. Migration is always rationalized by lack of suitable opportunities in one's own country (Patnaik, 1997; Brooks & Waters, 2011, pp.84-85, as cited in Acharya, 2012, p. 2). According to Saravia and Miranda (2004, as cited in Acharya, 2012), opportunity is the driving force of migration (p. 2). The globalization effect in Nepali society is extensively seen in the field of migration. Out of several factors, the quest for better opportunities is explicitly narrated when talking about abroad migration. Students have soaring dreams to make something better with exposure in developed countries.

Migration is worldwide phenomena. More than 280 million people, roughly one out of every thirty people on earth, currently live in a country in which they were not born (World101, 2023). With more people than ever on the move, it's important to understand what drives migration because it's increasingly likely that people encounter or become migrants in their lifetime. The majority of migrants, however, are pulled to countries that offer better economic prospects for themselves or their families. Nghia (2019) found that students' immigration intentions depended on their personal attachment to the home country and (perceived) adaptability to the host country. It's quite common that a mix of push and pull factors affects a person's decision to migrate. People move for a lot of reasons, which are often called push and pull factors.

Migration, as per Johnson et al. (1981, as cited in Acharya, 2012) is a very complex phenomenon (p. 218). He found that apart from a set of social, economic, political, and environmental factors, migration of population in any region is determined largely by the perception and behavior of individuals concerned. Cohen (1996, as cited in Acharya, 2012) attempted to construct a theory of migration but was constrained by the considerable variety of migrations which had to be considered professional and unskilled, compelled, and voluntary, settler and temporary, internal, and international, and finally, illegal and legal. In the context of Nepal, although attempts have been made, from time to time, to integrate migration into economic and social theory, spatial analysis and behavioral theory, no theory of migration is comprehensive enough to in defining specific characteristics of Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies.

While migration has traditionally been conceptualized as an individual undertaking as part of a search for a better life in fact it is, and has always been, a predominantly collective enterprise that result from social, economic, and political change (de Haas, Castles, & Miller, 2020). Under conditions of contemporary globalization, it is also becoming highly

politicized, with the significant social, economic, and political change that it spurs producing significant impacts in both host and origin countries. Globalization has also exposed Nepal to world community, it is one aspect of the search for a more comprehensive understanding of the causes of migration (the factors that drive and motivate the decision to migrate) and is highly significant. Yet many other aspects of migration are to be defined and explored.

As far as Nepali youth migration for abroad studies is concerned, students are quite far eager to go for abroad studies. Several underlying factors are driving this migration. Colbran (2023) found that demand for universities in Nepal far outstrips supply. Nepal did not open its first university until 1986. Currently, there are twelve universities in Nepal, many of these are small and in poor condition. They lack the capacity to serve the number of students demanding higher education. 21.6% of the number of students of total tertiary enrolment study abroad (Colbran (2023)). It is 10 times more than the ratio for China (2.2%) and 15 times more than the ratio for India (1.4%). So, the study of this appalling migrating trend is significant to understand the problem and address it. Otherwise, Nepal may face huge brain drain consequences.

Ravenstein (1885, as cited by Lee, 1975) made the macro analysis of migration. He said that migration is often a collective action, arising out of social, economic, and political change and affecting entire communities and societies in both origin and destination areas. Moreover, the experience of migration and of living in another country often leads to modification of original plans, so that migrants' intentions at the time of departure are poor predictors of actual behavior. It indicated the personal or individual factors of migration. Youth migration in Nepal in the name of study is a subject to study in all levels.

Most of the studies conducted in the Nepalese migration are about labor migration. Faist (2000) explicated that, of all types of migration, student migration is the most sensitive one. Letting students migrate is letting the prosperous and innovative future of Nepal go out of country. Insightful study on the causes of youth migration and its impacts to the developing country Nepal is essential. This study has explored such insightful spheres of youth migration. It contributes to understanding the educational system-shortcomings and youth-mentality towards the country. Most importantly, it is useful and must study paper for policy makers who determine and direct educational cum other national mainstream polices. Making widespread reforms and generating opportunities and hopes in Nepal, youth migration can be managed.

## 1.2 Significance of the study

The main reason behind selecting this topic is the appalling outflow of energetic youths. My interest grew in the topic after knowing that more than 108,542 students left Nepal for abroad study in 2023 ( Onlinekhabar, 2023; S. Ghimire, 2024; B. Ghimire, 2024) and other data pertaining to outflow of students. It is not just a migration of population but outflow of future of Nepal, a brain-drain and most active and innovative human resource of the country. Despite being an integral part of national plan, unfortunately, migration to foreign countries for higher education has got almost no attention at policy level in Nepal. This study has covered the responses from stakeholders and concerned ones to bring out realistic results. It has raised awareness on Nepali student migration which is a serious issue of human security of Nepal.

Migration has become a global phenomenon, so many factors drive migration around the world. Massey (1998, as cited in Acharya, 2012) viewed this field as intrinsically multi-disciplinary with contributions stemming from economics, demography, human geography, law, sociology, political science, and anthropology. In Nepalese society as well, migration to foreign countries for higher education has become a common phenomenon. In general, student migration is to surpass the present condition. Nevertheless, there can be many other reasons. This study has explored and unraveled the mentality of students and their parents understanding the factors instigating abroad studies.

So, my selection of this new area in order to explore the causes of student migration and impacts posed on socio-economy of the nation have been precisely and subtly depicted. I chose the mixed methods study thinking that it will better address the migrating issues when I integrate both quantitative and qualitative approaches to draw out the results. Patton, 1990 (as cited in Ramse, 1993, p. 94) noted that “qualitative data can put flesh on the bones of quantitative results, bringing the results of life through in-depth case elaboration”. Mixing up both the data in this study is expected to provide stronger understanding of the research problem or questions and overcome the limitations of each as well.

Information and findings of this research are expected to be useful to policy makers, researchers, planners, students, educational consultancies, and other concerned organizations for the formulation of policies and for further research in this area. Finally, this study is expected to pave the way for further study on migration for educational purposes.

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

The number of Nepalese students going abroad for studies is increasing. The data of NOC Section of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology shows that 404,139 took NOCs for abroad studies in the last five years. By Fagun 2080/81 (February 2024), 51,631 students have left. The number in the previous fiscal year 079/80 was 110,217; in 078/79 was 117,000; in 077/78 was 27,900; 076/77 was 34,096 and in 075/76 was 63000. It shows the increasing trend of student migration. Despite the increment of allocation of annual budget in boosting up education by the government of Nepal, number of students leaving Nepal is increasing every year.

The foreign currency is also going out of Nepal. Nepali students spent Rs 67 billion on their foreign studies in one year (2023) (B. Ghimire, 2024). The trend continues. In the first five months of the current fiscal year as many as 45,000 students have acquired permits to study abroad. Teenagers, after completing plus two or A level want to leave Nepal as soon as possible. A paradigm shift in higher study is underway as a growing number of students are now opting to pursue their undergraduate or even higher secondary education in foreign universities.

This study intends to find the driving forces behind this excessive migration of Nepalese youths for abroad studies. Very few migrants return to Nepal after completing the study. With this migration, the talent of the country is drained out, the outflow of foreign currency is weakening the economy of this developing country. It has posed great negative impacts in the socio-economic phenomena of Nepal. The paper has tried to identify the causes of migration and its short- and long-term consequences in Nepal.

### **1.4 Research questions**

The study has been focused to answer the following research questions:

- 1.4.1** What are the causes (push-pull factors) of youth migration for abroad studies?
- 1.4.2** How do Nepalese youths and guardians perceive the out-migration of Nepalese youths for abroad studies?
- 1.4.3** What outcomes and impacts do the Nepalese youth migration instigate in Nepal?

## **1.5 Objectives of the study**

Having realized the extensive student migration and its potential impacts in Nepal, the study, based on the research questions has set the objectives as follows:

- 1.5.1** To identify causes of Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies from the standpoint of push-pull factors.
- 1.5.2** To explore and explain and the perception of Nepalese youths and guardians on the out-migration of Nepalese youths for abroad studies.
- 1.5.3** To analyze outcomes and impacts instigated by Nepalese youth migration for abroad in Nepal.

## **1.6 Limitation of the study**

The study is able to cover only a small portion of the population whereas the number of student migrants each year is above one lakh. Chances of being left of many voices are high. Aspirations and circumstances of abroad studies also vary with dynamic time and periods. So, this paper has presented the current scenario of student migration of Nepal. Nature and perception of individual, experiences and stories of migrants differ from one another. This paper is just a piece-meal of extensive migration phenomena.

Making survey of 110 respondents is symbolic representation. The survey is made only in Kathmandu valley; colleges of provincial locations are missed in the collection of data though the study has included the student from all provinces. Field study of the very provincial colleges could give more precise picture of youth migration. As Lee (1965) has expounded, migration is selective and rational. Personal factors influence the decision to make migration. Halo effect in expressing the opinions by respondents dwells there however the researcher has tried best to minimize the amount. Many factors may prevail in migration drive/decision in the context of Nepalese youth migration as well; it is continuous process. Thus, the room for further exploration and analysis is always there.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This paper has been conducted observing the unexplored aspects of Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies. A long history of human migration is found around the world. Nepal has also own migration history and process. This study has highlighted some of the key literature on human migration in general, and student migration, higher education, in particular. Prominent migration theories and their relevancies have been reviewed in this section.

According to Punch (2014), a literature review is a comprehensive examination and synthesis of existing research and scholarly literature on a specific topic. It involves systematically analyzing, evaluating, and summarizing relevant studies to gain a deeper understanding of the current state of knowledge in a particular field or subject area. Similarly, Cooper (2010, as cited in Creswell & Creswell, 2018) stated that previous scholarly works serve to integrate the literature, organize it into a series of related topics (often from general topics to narrower ones), and summarize the literature by pointing out the central issues (p. 67). Student migration literature that is globally read and linked to the migration process has been assessed in the study.

The reviews of literature have been presented as introduced by Creswell and Creswell (2018) in “five components: (a) an introduction, (b) Topic 1 (about the independent variable), (c) Topic 2 (about the dependent variable), (d) Topic 3, (studies that address both the independent and dependent variables), and (e) a summary” (p. 86). Topics have been arranged as described by Locke et al., (2010) in several stages for reviewing the literature to develop the concepts that provide a rationale for the study. Subtopics have been developed for each major concept.

#### **2.1 Migration and its theories**

Different theories have been propounded on migration trends and phenomena. The first attempt to spell out the ‘laws of migration’ was made by E.G. Ravenstein as early as in 1885. He described the migration process within nine laws (Ravenstein, 1885, as cited by Lee, 1965). Lee revised the nine laws and proposed seven laws of migration (Lee, 1965). They found that migration was always selective and rational in micro cum macro level.

In the 1940s, Stouffer's migration model was introduced. It suggested that the number of migrants from an origin to a destination is directly proportional to the number of opportunities at that destination, and inversely proportional to the number of intervening opportunities between the origin and the destination (Stouffer, 1940, as cited in Velde, 2005, p. 846). This model was modified later on too. In Stouffer's model the measure of 'disadvantages or 'push' factors in the place of origin is defined as the total out-migrants.

The idea that migration by earlier scholars was used as the concept of 'chain migration' (Kenny 1962; Price 1963, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020). The term chain migration has been replaced with the term 'network migration' in recent research literature. In the context of Nepal, previous migrants are facilitating to the new ones.

Another theory of migration is the Gravity Model. Based on Newton's law of gravitation, this model goes one step further and states that the volume of migration between any two interacting centers is the function of not only distance between them but also their population size. Tinbergen (1962, as cited in Velde, 2005) first used the gravity model to explain international trade patterns. Woods (1979, as cited in Velde, 2005) described a clear and persistent inverse relationship between the two that has been established in several studies (p.183). The model was initially proposed by the exponents of social physics in the nineteenth century and was later revived in the middle of the twentieth century (Johnston et al 1981, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020, p. 141). The model has been criticized for being too simple to account for a complex phenomenon like migration.

Zelinsky (1971) offered a more comprehensive explanation of why development initially tends to increase emigration as migration transition theories. These theories saw migration as an intrinsic part of broader processes of development and social transformation that is associated with processes of modernization and industrialization. Transition theories conceptualized how migration patterns tend to change over the course of development process. These processes cannot be pre-defined or determined. They evolve and get shaped with the flow of development. These processes affect migratory and non-migratory mobility. It establishes a notion that development and migration relation is complex and fundamentally non-linear.

In 1965, Everett S. Lee proposed another comprehensive theory of migration. Lee (1965) introduced formulations with factors which led to spatial mobility of population in any area.

He discussed four factors associated with the place of origin, associated with the place of destination, intervening obstacles, and personal factors. Lee (1965, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020) found that each place possesses a set of positive and negative factors (p.191). While positive factors are the circumstances that act to hold people within it, or attract people from other areas, negative factors tend to repel them. After outlining the factors at origin and destination, and the intervening obstacles and personal factors, Lee moved on to formulate a set of hypotheses concerning the volume of migration, streams and counter-streams, and the characteristics of migrants.

Migration is determined by other factors in the family. The New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM) emerged during 1990s. The economist Stark (1978; 1991, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020) argued that, in the context of migration in and from the developing world, migration decisions are often not made by isolated individuals, but usually by families or households. NELM stresses that income maximization does not alone influence migration decision-making. It is risk-sharing behavior of families or households. A type of family pressure exists there.

The Atlantic slave trade diminished sharply after 1820, which gave rise to self-bound contract labor migration from Europe and Asia to plantations. Overcrowding, open agricultural frontiers, and rising industrial centers attracted voluntary migrants. Moreover, migration was significantly made easier by improved transportation techniques. In American history, as per Lemann (1991), the great migration, a long-term movement of African Americans from the South to the urban North, transformed Chicago and other northern cities between 1916 and 1970.

Migration is made in micro and macro structural factors. warfare, colonialism, conquest, occupation, military service and labor recruitment, as well as shared culture, language and geographical proximity, often play a crucial role in the initiation of migration processes (Massey et al. 1998; Skeldon 1997, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020, p. 65).

Dependency in world system flourished with migration trends. Precursors of the globalization theories that emerged in the 1990s were dependency and world systems theories. Globalization was defined as 'the widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life' (Held et al. 1999: 2, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020). With globalization, a rapid increase in cross-border exchanges of all

sorts, ranging from finance and trade to media products and ideas were experienced with widespread migration.

The economist and philosopher Amartya Sen defined human capability as the ability of human beings to lead lives they have reason to value, and to enhance the substantive choices (or 'freedoms') they have (Sen, 1999, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020, p. 62). A richer understanding of human mobility aligning with the thought of Amartya Sen has been expressed by de Haas et al. (2020, p. 62). de Haas stated that this perspective showed that human mobility enhances people's capabilities and wellbeing for (1) instrumental (means to an end) and (2) intrinsic (directly wellbeing enhancing) reasons. The instrumental dimension suggests that people migrate to access better opportunities. The intrinsic dimension is the well-being derived from the awareness of having the freedom to explore new horizons.

When the pace of migration accelerated since the 18th century (including the involuntary slave trade), it increased further in the 19th century. Manning (2005) distinguished three major types of migration: labor migration, refugee migrations, and urbanization. Urbanization attracted people; millions of agricultural workers left the countryside to move to the cities. That phenomenon was first seen in Britain in the late 18th century and spread around the world and continues to this day in many areas. Manning found that industrialization with an increasingly global economy globalizing the labor market encouraged migration. According to estimates from the UN 2015 report, in 2013, India and Mexico had the highest numbers of native-born persons living in a foreign country, while Tokelau and San Marino had the lowest.

(de Haas et al. (2020) found migration a collective action, arising out of social, economic, and political change and affecting entire communities and societies in both origin and destination areas (p.42). Migrants face new environment and struggle to adjust there. The experience of migration and of living in another country often leads to modification of original plans, so that migrants' intentions at the time of departure are poor predictors of actual behaviors. de Haas et al. discussed various theories of migration to clarify the evolving process.

One of the theories, historical-structural theory emphasizes that while economic and political power is unequally distributed, the capitalist economy has the tendency to reinforce these inequalities unless governments intervene through taxing the rich and redistributing resources

to poor people and peripheral regions (de Haas et al., 2020). It assumes that the origin countries provide cheap labor for capital, which primarily serves to keep wages down and boost profits of businesses and economic growth in destination countries. But it deprives origin countries of valuable labor and skills through the brain drain.

Migration network theory explained how migrants created and maintained social ties with other migrants and with family and friends back home, and how this could lead to the emergence of social networks (de Haas et al., 2020; Massey, 2002; Taylor, 1986). Such networks are meso-level social structures that facilitate further migration shaping subsequent migration patterns path-dependent processes with interpersonal relations (Franz, 1939; Lee, 1966; Petersen, 1958, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020, p. 65). The Table given below illustrates some of the principles of migration theories.

**Table 2.1**

*Matrix of migration theories*

Theories/ Models Main	Related Disciplines	Major Contributors	Themes
Gravity Model	Physics Economics	H. C. Carey (1858) Tinbergen (1962) Linneman (1966)	1. Migration flows depend negatively on distance and positively on population 2. Relationship between origin and destination 3. Positive relationship between GDP p/c and education quality 4. Students flow from low to high income economies 5. Higher tuition fees in host country decrease migration 6. Unemployment in origin leads to positive migration
Human Capital Theory	Economics of Education	Marshall (1930,) Adam Smith (1937) T. Schultz	1. Human capital individuals more geographically mobile 2. Individuals weigh benefits as well as

		(1961) L.A.	costs of migration
		Sjaastad (1962)	3. Education- center of human capital theory
		Gary Becker	
		(1964) Harbison & Myers (1964)	4. Decision to migrate as an investment decision
		Sen (2000)	5. Younger persons receive higher returns
			6. Discusses monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits
			7. Migration decreases with age and individuals with higher education often exhibit a higher migration propensity
Push- Pull model	Economics Sociology	E. G. Ravenstein (1885, 1889)	1. Lee revised Ravenstein's laws of migration (Seven laws)
		Everett S. Lee (1965) Sirowy and Inkeles	2. Push –Pull factors influence migration (origin, destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors)
		(1985) Mei Li & Mark Bray	3. Personal factors influence the decision to migrate
		(2007)	4. Migration is selective and rational individual
			5. Potential migrants compare the expected income at the destination with the expected income at the origin
			6. Largely analogous to neo-classical micro model (Hollifield, 2008, p184, Haas, 2007, p. 9)
			7. Major causes of migration are economic
			8. Migration arises due to dissatisfaction with the present situation

			9. Many research articles based on Lee's theory including student migration (Haas, 2007).
Todarian Model	Economic	Michael P. Todaro (1969) Harris and Todaro (1970)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Purely an economic model (neo-classical approach)</li> <li>2. Compared expected incomes at the destination(city) with sure rural income earned and migrate if former exceeds later</li> <li>3. Income differential main determinant of decision to migrate</li> <li>4. Higher probability of getting a job will induce migration</li> <li>5. Potential migrants weigh up costs, benefits of moving</li> <li>6. Migration is a selective and rational</li> <li>7. Education influences migration</li> <li>8. Higher wages gap between home and destination increases migration</li> <li>9. Takes both demand and supply</li> </ol>
Social Network Theory	Sociology Anthropology (associated with World System Theory, Hollifield 2008, p.184)	Douglas Massey (1987, 1993,1998) Mark S. Granovetter (1973) Tamar Diana Wilson (1994)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Linking sending and receiving societies</li> <li>2. Networks reduce the risk and lower the costs of further migration</li> <li>3. Ties of kinship and friendship in origin and destination</li> <li>4. Early migrants provide potential migrants with information including food, accommodation, job opportunity</li> </ol>

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*Source:* Adapted and modified from Acharya (2012)

Migration links people, families, and communities with another worlds. Defining this tendency, the role of flows of information and new ideas according to Sen (2000), such as on the 'good life' and consumption patterns in shaping migration systems within and across national borders attracts others. Historical-structural theories assume that the primary objective of migration is an outgrowth of poverty, development 'disequilibria' and the resulting of geographical income inequalities.

A migration system, de Haas et al. (2020) defined as a set of places linked by flows and counter-flows of people, goods, services and information, which tend to facilitate further exchange, including migration, between the places. The importance of feedback mechanisms, through which information about the migrants' reception and progress at the destination is transmitted back to the place of origin functions extensively as a pull-factor. Favorable information encourages further migration and leads to situations of almost organized migratory flows.

## **2.2 Theoretical frames of migration**

Theories of student migration are interlinked with migration theories related to socio-economic aspects. There are many theories /models typically related to student migration. They are push-pull model, social network theory, human capital theory, and gravity equation model. Anthias (2008, as cited in Acharya, 2012) linked brain drain. It is important to consider that theoretical frameworks have previously been used to understand student migration. As a dominant factor of migration economy determines population movements in terms of basic push-pull logics. Whereas sociologists have stressed the importance of transnationalism and social networking (Hollifield, 2008, p. 194-195, as cited in Acharya, 2012).

Sjaastad (1962) described different theories of international migration into three main types, as micro, meso, and macro theories which were not mutually exclusive. Macro theories emphasize the structural, objective conditions which act as "push" and "pull" factors for migration (Lee, 1996). In the case of economic migration, push factors typically include economic conditions such as unemployment, low salaries or low per capita income relative to the country of destination. Lee noted that most theorists agree that macro conditions are crucial for explaining forced displacement and also so-called pioneer voluntary migration. These are more intervened by regulation of special mobility through international regimes.

**Table 2.2***Main levels of migration analysis*

MICRO	MESO	MACRO
Individual and his values, desires and expectations	Collectives and social networks	Macro-level opportunity structures
Individual values, and expectations	Social ties	Economics
- Improving and securing survival, wealth, status, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, affiliation and morality	-Strong ties: families and households,  - Weak ties: networks and potential movers, brokers and stayers	-Income and unemployment differentials
	Symbolic ties	Politics
	- Kin, ethnic, national, political, and religious organizations; symbolic communities	-Regulation of spatial mobility through nation-states international regimes; and  -Political repression, ethnic, national and religious conflicts  Cultural Setting  -Dominant norms and discourses  -Demography and ecology population growth;  - Availability of arable land, water

*Source:* Adapted and modified from Faist (2000)

Micro theories focus on the factors influencing individual decisions to migrate, analyzing how potential migrants weigh up the various costs and benefits of migrating (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1970; Borjas, 1980). They thought that costs could include the financial and psychological resources invested in moving and integrating in the country of destination, while benefits could include a higher salary or physical safety. Micro theories draw on rational choices when taking decisions.

Meso theories reject the macro focus on push and pull factors. They locate migration flows within a complex system of linkages between states. Two concepts for meso theories: systems and networks are particularly important (Massey, 1987; Wilsom, 1994). Migration is linked by economic, political and cultural ties as well as migration flows. Networks refer to a set of individual and collective actors (actual and potential migrants, their families, firms, religious or social groups, and so on) and the multiple social and symbolic ties that link them together. These theories focus on the social ties that are forged between origin and destination areas through reciprocal flows of people, information, ideas, money and goods.

This typology of theories provides a useful background for explaining international migration and is a good starting point for constructing a general theory of the causes of migration (Heine, 2002, p. 4). Heine pointed out four different types of causal factors based on the possible different levels of intervention. So, migration is not unilinear.

The migration processes, once started, tend to gain their own momentum over time. According to Massey et al. (1993), meso-level theories underscore how migrants can actively challenge and defy structural constraints such as poverty, social exclusion, oppression and migration restrictions through their individual and collective agency. These define how migrants their identity during the migration process.

Zlotnik (1998) and Kupiszewski (2000b, as cited in Bijak, 2006, p.5) divided theories of migration into four common theories as sociological, economic, geography and unifying. Sociological theories include intervening opportunities as described by Stouffer (1940). The intervening obstacles factors can be both positive, negative and neutral as well in nature. Factors such as tradition, religion, cultures, services, misinformation, political differences, government policies, immediate job opportunity, travel cost, language and many more affect migration phenomena. The common theories explaining migration process are illustrated in the table below.

**Table 2.3***Theoretical framework of migration*

Theories of migration				
Sociological	Economic		Geographical	Unifying
	Macro	Micro	Spatial interactions	
-Intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940)	-Classical (Lewis, 1940)	-Neo-classical (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1970; Borjas, 1980)	-Gravity theory (Stewart, 1941; Zipf, 1946; Isard, 1960; Lowry, 1966)	-Migration systems theory (Kritz et al., 1992)
-Push-pull factors (Lee, 1966)	-Neo-classical (Harris and Todaro, 1970)	-Value-expectancy (DeJong and Fawcett, 1981)		-Multidisciplinary approach plus mobility transition (Massey, 2002)
-Migrant networks (Taylor, 1986)	-Cumulative causation (Massey, 1990)	-New economics of migration (Stark and Bloom, 1984)	-Entropy (Wilson, 1967)	
-Transnational social spaces (Pries, 1999; Faist, 2000)	-Institutional theory (Massey et al., 1993)	-Relative deprivation (Stark and Taylor, 1989), migration without wage differentials (Stark, 2003)	-Catastrophe theory and bifurcations (Wilson, 1981)	
	-World systems theory (Wallerstein, 1974)		-Mobility transition (Zelinsky, 1971)	
	-Keynesian (Hart, 1975)			
	-Dual labor market theory (Piore, 1979)			

*Source:* Adapted from Kupiszewski (2002, as cited in Bijak, 2006, p.5)

The above-mentioned theoretical framework advanced an abstract and formalized set of assumptions to guide the design and conduct of the research. In this framework, a mixed methods core design has been intersected with an established theory. Being mixed methods research, integration of both quantitative and qualitative data using distinct designs have been involved in constructing philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks in the study. Nepalese youth migration is influenced by the concepts and assumptions of the established theories.

### **2.3 Nepalese student migration**

Migration process in Nepal is found mainly to have started in 19<sup>th</sup> century during the British rule in India. Before that Nepalese travelled towards north up to Lhasa especially for trade and towards south for work. As far as student migration is concerned, very few went to Banaras for neighboring towns for education. During the Rana regime, few Ranas went to England for study. In 1910, Rana Prime Minister Jang Bahadur had sent his sons and nephews to the United Kingdom (UK) for education. In 1959, Eight Nepali youths were sent to Japan to learn technical courses (Edusanjal, 2022). They were officially sent for study.

A study conducted by Dr. Jitendra Prasad Upadhyay of the International Journal of Management shows that 65.6% of students desire to go abroad for studies (Upadhyay, 2017). Every middle-class family dream about sending their children to foreign countries for further education. The recent flux of students to the USA is evidence of this fact. Besides, many students go to India, China, Bangladesh, Singapore, Russia, Australia, Canada, Germany, U.K., and many other countries around the globe.

A great number of students from Nepal are migrating for abroad studies each year. Many push-pull factors are behind the result of which the number of students going abroad is on the rise. Students' mobility is not limited to a single country but covers many countries. More than 1.6 million Nepalis traveled abroad in 2023 for employment, tourism, study and other purposes (Xinhua, 2024). Among them over 100,000 are students who left Nepal in the last fiscal year (2023) to study abroad (Onlinekhabar, 2023). According to the NOC (No Objection Certificate) branch of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 110,217 students obtained their no-objection certificate to study abroad.

A general perception among Nepalese students is that Nepal lacks quality education. B. Shrestha, (2023) found that even the top universities in Nepal are sub-par compared to the

universities around the world with the number one university in Nepal Kathmandu University ranked 3957<sup>th</sup> in the world. The courses offered are stagnant and outdated. He found that very few institutions provide practical knowledge. Mostly the knowledge is purely theoretical and focused only on test scores.

As far as Nepali youth migration for abroad studies is concerned, students are quite far happy to go for abroad studies. Several underlying factors are driving this migration. Colbran (2023) found that demand for universities in Nepal far outstrips supply. Nepal did not open its first university until 1986. Currently, there are twelve universities in Nepal, many of these are small and in poor condition. They lack the capacity to offer the service the number of students demanding higher education. 21.6% of the number of students of total tertiary enrolment study abroad. It is 10 times more than the ratio for China (2.2%) and 15 times more than the ratio for India (1.4%).

(B. Shrestha (2023) mentions that the student-to-teacher ratio is also appalling in universities. According to the National Centre for Educational Statistics in the US, the ideal ratio between students and teachers should be 16:1. But Nepalese universities are far behind the standard. Student per teacher ratio of Pokhara University is 371.98:1, Mid-West University is 25.32:1, Far-Western University is 27.85:1, Kathmandu University is 72.84:1, and Tribhuvan University is 44.19:1. This evinces the dire insufficiency of teachers in Nepalese universities.

The number of students enrolled in academic sessions decreases drastically because of the dropouts. It is a common trend in colleges in Nepal. Ghimire (2024) surveyed some colleges around Kathmandu valley and found very high dropout trends. In GP Koirala Memorial College, Chabhil, 600 students were registered in the BBS First year in 2077 BS but only 75 remained in the fourth year in 2080 BS, 300 were enrolled in BA first year in 2077 BS, only 135 remained till the fourth year in 2088 BS, 200 were enrolled in B Ed. First year, only 75 in the fourth year.

Ghimire (2023) found similar situations in Pashupati Campus, Chabhil, out of 700 enrolled in BBA in 2077 BS only 200 reached up to fourth year 2080 BS, out of 300 enrolled in BA in 2077 BS only 100 reached up to fourth year 2080 BS, out of 300 enrolled in BEd. in 2077 BS only 100 remained in the fourth year in 2080 BS. Almost the same conditions he observed in Shankar Dev Campus in Bagbazar and Public Administration Campus in Balkhu. All these

institutions are facing similar problems. The Campus Administration admitted that 50 to 60 per cent students drop out till they reach the final academic year.

The NOC data provided by the Section of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology showed that 404,139 had taken NOCs for abroad studies in the last five years. By Fagun 2080/81 (February 2024), 51,631 students took it. The number in the previous fiscal year 079/80 was 110,217; in 078/79 was 117,000; in 077/78 was 27,900; 076/77 was 34,096 and in 075/76 was 63000. It shows the increasing trend of out-migrating students. Some students take multiple NOCs when applying in different countries at the same time.

Nepali migrant students cover a large portion in the world. A recent study by the online platform study portals revealed that Nepali students make up 14.3% of international students across the world (Kumar, 2023). Lack of employment and meaningful earnings are the primary reasons for the young to leave. Basic items have become unaffordable even in fixed-income households. Other push factors are peer pressure, falling living standards, and a growing hopelessness for a better future because of corruption and political disarray. Losing trust, a connection or a bond, be it in a relationship, in an organizational setting, or in more extensive scenarios, trust in the national system is one of the push-factors.

Kumar (2023) further noted that an increasing number of Nepalese students is found choosing abroad studies. They prefer to work and study in countries primarily in Australia, Japan, Europe, and North America. Some medical students chose China as easy destination during 2010. Li and Sun (2019) found that approximately 40% of all the Nepalese medical students studied overseas in 2015.

There are both pros and cons of Nepalese students going abroad to study. B. Shrestha (2023) observed that some individuals have significantly been able to improve their quality of life with their family. Even from a societal perspective, the remittance they send back is an essential source of income of foreign currency for developing country like Nepal. It is an easy lifeline for Nepal. That remittance has definitely stimulated the economy and increased aggregate demand in the economy. But remittance is not a permanent source of economy. Nepalese youths prefer to migrate in comparison to elder ones. Migration flows are projected to developed economies. Nepalese students' ultimate goal is to be economically strong enough. These youths want to achieve two objectives at the same time: achieving educational degrees and opportunities to work in high income countries.

## 2.4 Student migration in global context

As seen in the literature and viewed by Johnston et al, (1981, as cited in de Haas, 2020), migration is a very complex phenomenon (p. 218). Apart from a set of social, economic, political, and environmental factors, migration of population in any region is determined, to a large extent, by the perception and behavior of individuals concerned. Student migration is also determined by individual choices, aspirations, and capabilities.

Mohanty (1986) studied the aspects of economics of brain migration from less developed countries. She found a very interesting trend. She noticed that students from less developed countries always wished to return to their home country after completion of their studies. But it has altered now. Another trend her study indicated that the students from highly developed countries had a less defensive attitude towards their home country. Mohanty stated that the causes of brain migration could be explained by the micro theory through the push-pull forces.

Bologna University is considered the first university in the world as it was established in 1088 AD (Guruz, 2008). According to Mohanty (1986), in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, majority of students at Bologna University were foreigners come from 55 European countries. Acharya (2012) states that, students, at that time, were free to go anywhere for higher studies. Some of those students settled down abroad where they went for their studies and some returned to their home countries (Mohanty, 1986, pp.9-10). With the age of industrialization, the economic premium of a college degree began to rise significantly in the 1970's. Industries needed human capital. Better sources to fulfill the demand of human resources were migrated people; students were easier, innovative, and energetic.

According to Smith (2006), college student migrants weighed economic and non-economic costs on the demand side. The migration of college students was viewed as the framework of demand for education and subject to supply considerations. Students chose to invest in education because they expected a positive return, and the government also chose to invest in human capital through education. The impact of college student migration was quite positive on society. In Nepal, eight students went to Japan in 1902 for further studies for the first time (Kumar, 2023). Hence, it is seen that student migration from Nepal started from the very beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is not a new phenomenon.

According to Fernando (2023), migration has always been woven into the fabric of human history – from the time the first human ancestor stepped out of Africa in search of new land and life nearly two million years ago. We find the educational migration first beginning around the 4th century B.C. in Athens. Many scholars, under the auspices of Plato, came to study science and philosophy at the academy (Rao, 1979). In the 8th and 9th centuries, the Abbasid Dynasty was the center of the Muslim world located in Bagdad. It attracted brilliant Jewish, Syrian, Persian, and Hindu scholars by offering “generous” stipends to pay their expenses. By the 12th century, thousands were freely migrating across Europe for study at popular locations such as Paris and Bologna (Cardinale, 2000, p. 10).

Other factor of student migration such as economic globalization processes have also influenced foreign education (higher education) as well as migration for human development or to achieve human capabilities. According to Velde (2005, p. 12), migration is one of the three economic features of globalization. The other features are trade in goods and services and private cross-border investment. Students especially from developing countries migrate first appealing for the quality of education but they do not return normally since they find better work environment and higher salary.

Around the world, improved access to education and information, social capital and financial resources typically increase people's aspirations and capabilities to migrate (de Haas, 2014a as cited in de Haas et al., (2020). Development typically expands people's access to material resources, social networks, and knowledge. Nepalese society’s mobility to meet aspirations acquiring the capabilities is rampantly seen either in student migration or labor migration. Student migration is also oriented towards better earnings in developed countries after accomplishing their studies.

## **2.5 Causes of migration**

Students move for a variety of causes (Acharya, 2012). Lee, in 1996, first discussed these push-pull factors as main causes of migration. Many researchers such as Sirowy and Inkles (1985; Cummings, 1984; Lee & Tan, 1984; Agarwal & Winkler, 1985; Niece & Braun (1977; and Chen, 2007, as cited in Acharya, 2012) have applied the push-pull model in student migration. The push-pull and cost benefit analysis are closely associated with neoclassical economics (Castles & Miller, 2003, p.22) whereas networks and transnationalism are

analytical concepts derived primarily from world system theory and most often studied in sociology and anthropology. These causes basically motivate students to migrate.

Students decide to migrate based on cost-benefit calculation. To obtain better education, students invest in the cost of migration. Castles and Miller (2003) also viewed that human capital is the central concept of push-pull model. People decide to invest in migration in the same way as they might invest in education or vocational training because it raises their human capital and brings potential future gains in earnings (Acharya, 2012). Embedded with push-pull factors, many others cause migration. Lee (1966) and Dorigo and Tobler (1983) listed push and pull factors as follows:

**Table 2.4**

*Push and pull factors of migration.*

Push factors	Pull factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough jobs</li> <li>• Few opportunities</li> <li>• Conscription (draft young men into army or militia)</li> <li>• Famine or drought</li> <li>• Political fear of persecution</li> <li>• Poor medical care</li> <li>• Loss of wealth</li> <li>• Natural disasters</li> <li>• Desire for more political or religious freedom</li> <li>• Pollution</li> <li>• Poor housing</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Job opportunities</li> <li>• Better living conditions</li> <li>• The feeling of having more political or religious freedom</li> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Quality education</li> <li>• Better medical care</li> <li>• Attractive climates</li> <li>• Security</li> <li>• Family links</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Good governance/ system</li> <li>• Technological advancement</li> <li>• Media angles</li> <li>• Development</li> </ul>

*Source:* Adapted and modified from (Lee, 1966; Dorigo & Tobler, 1983).

Better earning and social prestige are prominently associated with student migration in Nepalese societies. Tamang and Shrestha (2021) found that even the parents are ready to pay the high tuition fees in international universities as they believe that their children can earn a quality education and later support them financially. Even the upper middle families and children of industrialists send their children for abroad studies. They believe that their children will be competitors and better only after studying in international universities.

Heuer (2004) expounded that most of the students from the developing countries are motivated and excited to pursue both their higher education and the socio-economic developments towards the international University. Nepalese students get the visa easily for the study. Then after they do not return to Nepal in normal situation.

Taylor (1986) found that migrant networks work as pull factors. de Haas (2020) felt the aspirations and capabilities as factors of migration. As Stark and Bloom (1985) described that the new economics of migration were the causes. Massey (2002) gave multidisciplinary approach plus mobility transaction theory to explain the migration causes. Nepalese students are also influenced by these factors more or less.

## **2.6 Impacts of migration**

The impacts of student migration are long lasting for the developing country like Nepal. Studies of Harrell et al. (2017) showed that intrinsic and extrinsic factors which students believe motivated them to study abroad. Each student has at least one goal they strived towards during their study abroad. Their expectations for abroad experiences are extremely varied and influenced by outcomes of their imagined trip. The short-term effect and its impacts on their life continue in the future. This research highlights important themes for future analysis of the impacts of studying abroad.

The Age of Migration, a book by Hein de Haas, Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller discussed and updated global coverage of migration trends, debates and policies. Repo-Saeed (2022) expounded the importance of observing the trends in migration in a historical continuum and demonstrated that the destinations of migration have changed significantly over the centuries. At present time, the development aid to poorer states has potentially increased emigration rather than reducing it. As emigration requires financial means, opportunities to travel and access to information that one gets when he enters developed worlds. de Haas et al. (2020)

signified that when a sufficient level of living standards is achieved in the society, emigration starts to diminish (pp. 58–59).

Colbran (2023) found that of the 95,268 outbound students from Nepal studying abroad in 2022, 40,752 (42.77%) students studied in Australia, 18,436 (19.35%) students studied in Japan, 13,574 (14.24%) in India and 12,660 (13.28%) in the USA. Cyprus, Korea, Germany and the United Kingdom (UK) are also popular destinations for Nepalese students (Colbran (2023)). Nepal is the third-largest sender of students to Australia and Japan in recent years. Not only the human resources but also the currency is Nepal loosing because of this out migration. Nepali students spent Rs 67 billion on their foreign studies in one year in 2023 (B. Ghimire, 2024). This is a huge amount of money for a developing country like Nepal.

International universities for Nepalese students are like dreamlands. In addition to the quality education, students prepare themselves for the workplace at an international level. Nepal's youth unemployment rate is high, sitting around 19%, with an estimated 400,000 young people entering the labor force each year (Colbran, 2023). The right to work while studying is a critical factor for Nepalese students. They do so in order to manage their finances. Post-study work visa options are also likely to be a key influence for Nepalese students when deciding where to study abroad. As a result, Nepal lacks innovative and energetic youth work force.

In Nepal, migration has solved the acute unemployment problem to a great extent. This movement Kumar (2023) thinks is helping keep Nepal's economy afloat. Remittances contributed significantly to lowering Nepal's poverty rate to below 17%, but over the long-term the cost of losing such a large proportion of the working age population is incalculable. Some 65% of Nepal's total population is in the 15-64 age group, and Nepal is losing this demographic advantage. The country has only one-and-a-half decades left to take advantage of an active youth workforce. Even after study, skilled manpower either shift to other countries or stay there in destination countries.

Migration has various impacts in the countries of origin, countries of destination and migrants as well; these impacts are both positive and negative (Internet Geography, 2024). In spite of negative ones, students migrate. Research in migration show that people make better or earn more when they migrate. Fernando (2023) has quoted World Bank Senior Managing Director Axel van Trotsenburg saying that migration can be a powerful force for prosperity and

development when it is managed properly, it provides benefits for all people — in origin and destination societies. So, migration, for the countries like Nepal is one of the sources of earning foreign currency. One-fourth of remittance, in Nepal is acquired by remittance (Kafle, 2023; Pandey, 2023; S. Shrestha, 2023 ).

Lampsal (2024) noticed long-term dire consequences of this migration. It has increased dependency of Nepal on destination countries. Policies for job opportunities within the country, fostering entrepreneurial skills, providing training, and funding, and encouraging youth participation in development and economic activities can be some measures. This study has underscored causes of youth choice to fly away from Nepal and has foregrounded its consequences.

## **2.7 Research gap**

Having reviewed various literature on Nepalese students' migration for several reasons, I came to know that there is something missing in the study of those students' migration for abroad studies. Abroad study sector is to be understood and explored in the new context. Few studies have been made to cover abroad studies but they not sufficient to excavate the burning issues of student migration.

Past studies have overlooked some of the important variables that this study has included and analyzed its effects. Superficial presentation of statistics about student migration are rampant but in-depth analysis remains to be explored. As explained by Creswell & Creswell (2018), “deficiencies in past literature may exist because topics have not been explored with a particular group, sample, or population”; new voices of underrepresented groups, new generations are to be studied, so, this study fulfills the gap of the previous studies.

Rauniyar (2023) bore out that the government of Nepal has been increasing the annual budget since 2069 BS under the ‘Education for All’ program. The program covers basic level (up to grades 8) compulsory and free and secondary level education (Grades 9 to 12) free of cost. Children get textbooks, snacks, and educational materials for free; tuition fees, examination fees are also waived. Despite these facilities, students opt to go abroad for further studies. Rauniyar mentioned expert's saying regarding students' out-migration that it is one of the biggest challenges at present. Grooming a generation is very sensitive; a gap in transforming the legacy can impact overall system. Given the appalling situation, this study intends to dig out a comprehensive analysis of the problem.

I noticed that increasing number of student migrants shows that the real study that project the consequences to the nation are not effectively projected in the previous research. It seems that Nepalese students' outflow to foreign countries remains an under-researched area. My study has explored the motivations and intentions of students who go abroad for higher studies. So, there is a gap in the literature on student mobility in the Nepalese perspectives.

Regarding the methodology for this study, a philosophical underpinning for mixed methods studies, as suggested by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2010) conveys its importance for focusing attention on the research problem in social science research. It uses pluralistic approaches to derive knowledge about the problem integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. It is a blend of both the methods to better address the issues of student migration for abroad studies.

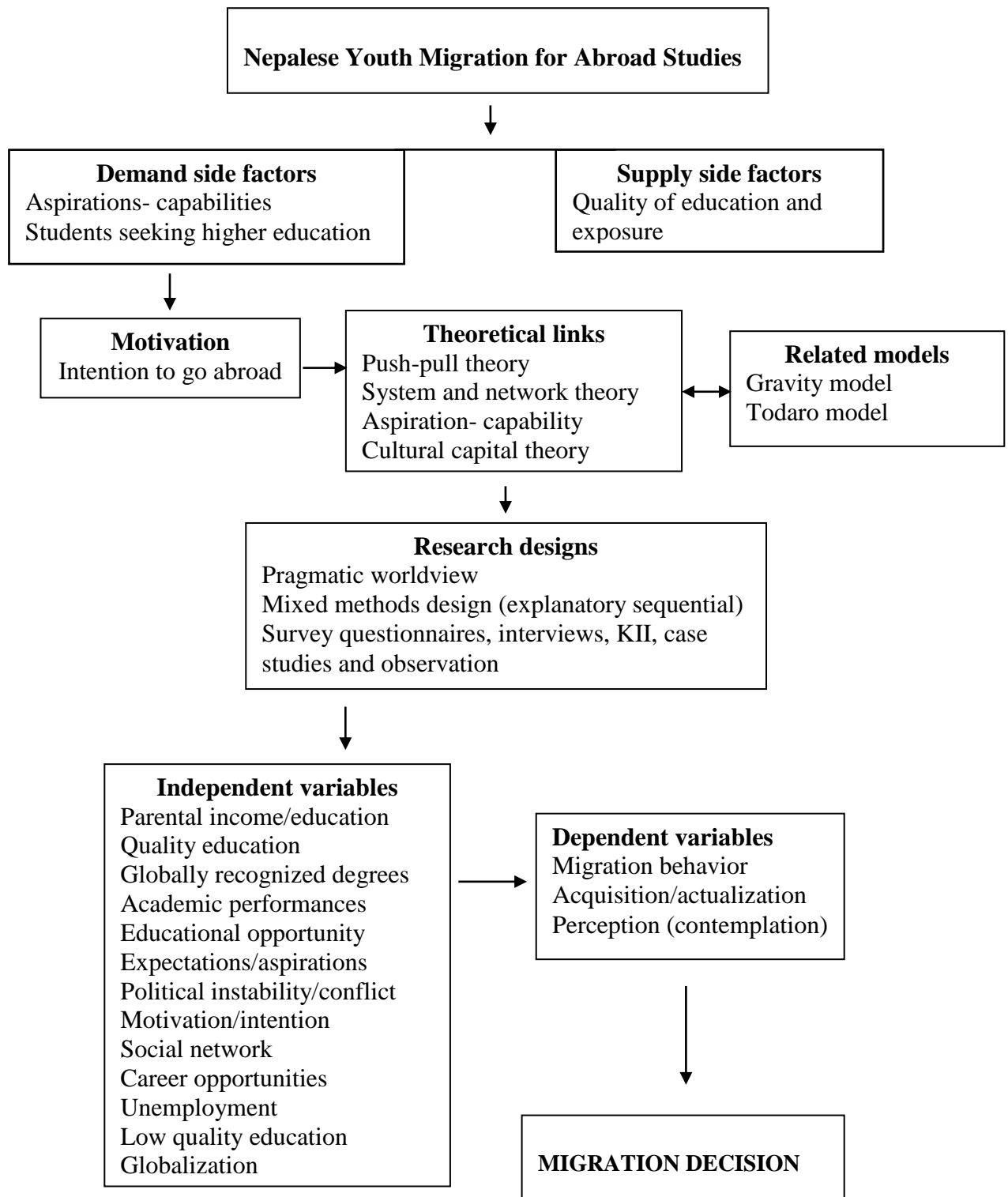
## **2.8 Conceptual framework**

Conceptual framework outlines key concepts (variable relationships and interconnectedness) and explores how they are intertwined with each other. It is a mind map that shows how existing theories relate to the study's elements and expected relationships. It guides the study and helps interpret findings. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), conceptual framework “helps to explain (or predict) phenomena that occur in the world” (p. 95). de Haas et al. (2020) further elaborated the concept adding the idea of theoretical connection specifying how and why the variables and relational statements are interrelated. Nepalese youth migration is also a part of international student migration which is a result of both demand side and supply side factors of education. Having considered this, the conceptual framework as blueprint for the study has been presented with clarity and focus in a systematic approach enhancing in-depth analysis.

Students from developing countries like Nepal prefer to study in developed countries. Nepalese students choose such developed countries where they find quality education they seek and better job opportunities. Rajbhandari (2009, p. 24) viewed that the demand for high-quality higher education can be seen in the large number of students from developing countries who choose to study abroad. Social networks as per Taylor (1986), also play an important role in educational migration. Their family members already migrated in the destination countries facilitate new ones to migrate. In line with this concept, the conceptual framework of this study is created as shown in the figure below:

Figure 2.5

*Conceptual framework*



*Source:* Adapted and modified from (Acharya, 2012, p.184)

The above-mentioned conceptual framework illustrates interconnectedness of variables regarding the student migration. Aspirations and capabilities of students lead for abroad studies (de Haas et al., 2020). They are motivated by pull factors of the countries of destination (Lee, 1965). Regarding the students' decision to migrate, this study has discussed independent, moderating, intervening, and dependent variables. Independent variables are push-pull factors. Moderating variables are distance, transportation, institutional policies and networks abroad. Ultimately migration decision for any purposes is dependent variable.

To cause migration several factors latent and manifest function. In context of Nepal, parental income, mobility costs, motivation, academic performance, aspirations, expectations, migration network, career opportunities, socio economic status, parental occupation and education, faculty, quality of education, and policy as found by Acharya (2012) are independent variables. And dependent variables such as educational migration /student migration/flow of students/cross border higher education/migration decision, emigration, immigration, migrant behavior, movement of students, and number of Nepalese students in institution enrolls are moderated by personal choices.

Social networks in Nepalese context play important roles; the relatives and friends' activities and fascinating narratives attract youths in Nepal for abroad studies. So, Brettell and Hollifield (2008), placed policy, network and social capital on independent variables (p. 20). Individuals weigh benefits as well as costs of migration. In this sense, decision to migrate is like an investment in present scenario of Nepal. Youths expect to receive higher returns by migration. The host countries get highly benefitted as well as they receive cheaper human capital to their economy. Based on push-pull model, social network theory, and cultural capital theory, the conceptual framework above offers the overview of the concept of this study.

Thus, this mixed methods study is an approach that combines or integrates both qualitative and quantitative forms of research. Embodying pragmatic philosophical overview, the study has conceptually scrutinized the migration phenomena. Faist (2000) explicated that, of all types of migration, student migration is the most sensitive one. And McGill (2023) defined migration, as a very complex phenomenon. The conceptual framework in this study has been equipped with quotes, codes and themes aligned in channelizing the discussion and analysis. A precise outline of the study has been set forth encompassing the essential entities to explain the youth migration for abroad studies.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The worldview of this paper is pragmatic. The paper is designed to explain and analyze the problem of student migration. Using eclectic mixed-methods research design, this explanatory sequential mixed methods approach has used both quantitatively research design to understand relationships among variables (push-pull factors) in student migration and qualitative research design to explore the migration in further depth aligning with the views of Creswell and Creswell (2018, p. 163). The research questions have been approached by quantitative data followed by qualitative data.

Employing both primary and secondary data, the researcher has triangulated and justified the entity of the study. Quantitative data have presented the statistical expression of the participants. Qualitative approach in phenomenological research methods with interviews, narratives and two case studies (as anecdotes) have explored the understandings, perceptions and under-pinning experiences of students and guardians in the migration process. Both descriptive and explanatory tools of interpretation have been used. The primary data obtained by open-ended questions, interviews, KIIs, and closed-ended survey questionnaires have helped dig out underlying relations and crosscutting interrelations among variables and impacts of student migration for abroad studies. The secondary data of relevant themes obtained from various literature has strengthened the statement of the study.

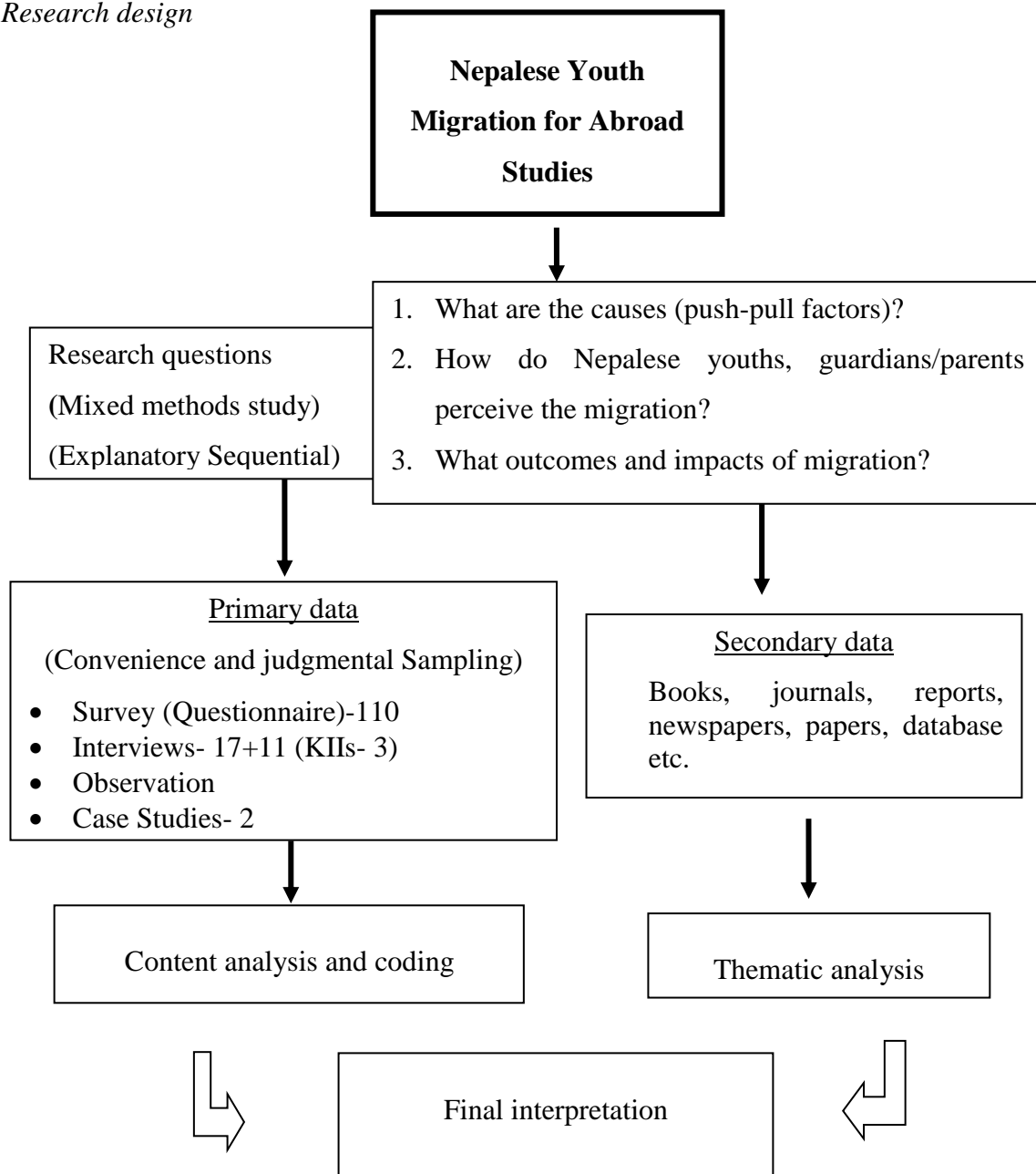
#### **3.1 Research design**

This study is descriptive, explanatory, and analytical. An explanatory mixed methods approach has been applied in this study. Quantitative data were collected using closed-ended questionnaires via survey study. For the subsequent qualitative data open-ended interview were conducted using face-to face and telephone interviews. Both quantitative and qualitative, two forms of data have integrated been using distinct design that according to Creswell and Creswell (2018), “involves philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks; the core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the integration of qualitative and quantitative data yields additional insight beyond the information provided by either the quantitative or qualitative data alone” (p. 41). To better present the realistic migration trend of students for abroad studies and analyze its impacts on socio-economic sectors in Nepal, the

researcher found mixed methods research approach more suitable and effective. For secondary data, relevant literature such as books, journals, papers, articles from databases and various library sources have been used. All these types of collected data have presented an overview of Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies. This research paper has been prepared in American Psychological Association (APA) 7<sup>th</sup> Edition style. The study has been designed as follows:

**Figure 3.1**

*Research design*



*Source:* Depicting the outline of the study. Generated by the researcher (2024)

Figure 3.1 depicts the general outline/plan of this study. Three questions have been framed to address the requirement of the study. Being explanatory sequential mixed methods design, it has embodied both quantitative and qualitative data. Of nonprobability sampling, convenience and judgmental sampling techniques have been used in the study; for questionnaire, convenience and for interview judgmental. Two anecdotal case studies have been used for insightful explanation. KIIs have been consulted for in-depth analysis of the migration phenomena. Coding then content and thematic analysis have been done to explain and interpret.

Of combining quantitative and qualitative inquiry methods, Karmacharya, 1984 (as cited in Ramse, 1993, p. 23) commented, “one gives figure but does not explain the context whereas other describes the context and process but does not provide the figure”. In this sense, complementing one another, the best approach would be one which combines the best aspects of the two.

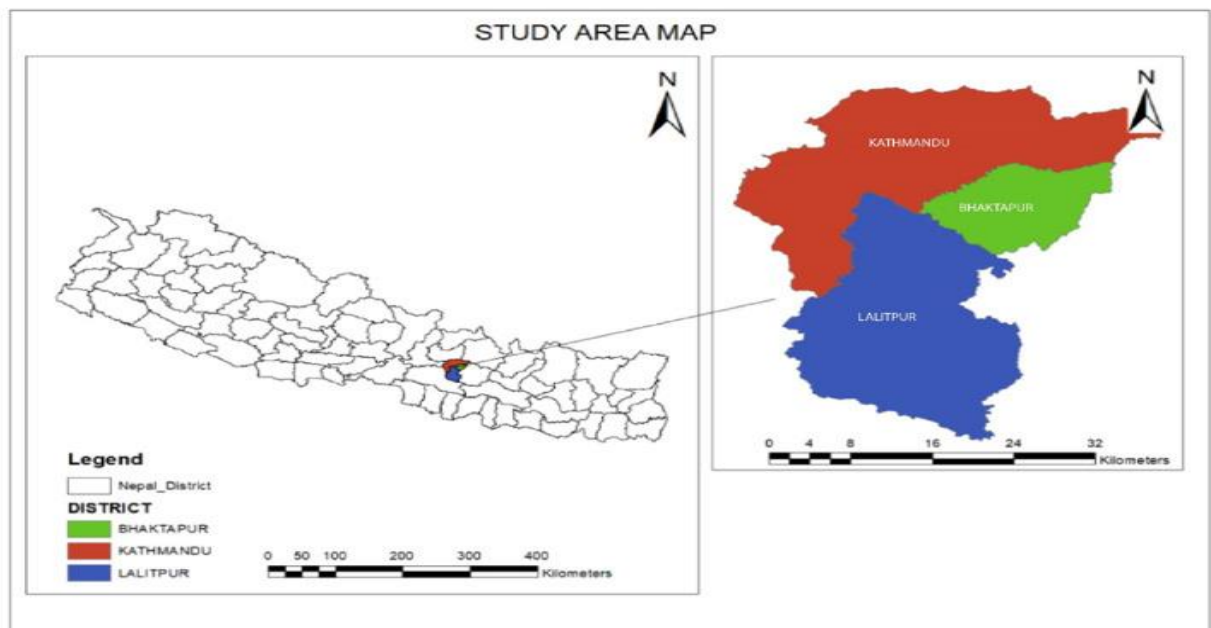
To attain more reliable findings, mixed methods (objectivism and subjectivism) have been included in this study. As per Tashakkori and Teddlie (2009, p.4), mixed methods research has been called the third research paradigm. And it is the third methodological movement further by various individuals writing in the field. Tashakkori and Teddlie state that mixed methods research emerged as an alternative to the dichotomy of qualitative and quantitative tradition during the past 30 years. According to them, mixed methodologists work within pragmatist paradigm and interest in both narrative and numeric data. Thus, this study is framed within pragmatic perspective to include both quantitative and qualitative aspects of migration issues.

### **3.3 Area of study**

The area of this study is Nepal as an origin country in relation to other destination countries of migration. The primary data have been collected only from Kathmandu valley (Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts); the Kathmandu valley, (27°42'14" N, 85°18'31" E), situated at an average elevation of approximately 1400 meters. Theoretical studies of migration observed so far around the world and trends of emigrants, immigrants, and migration process have also been the areas of analysis in the study. Sequentially, the impacts of Nepalese students' migration, its trends and potential impacts have been included, explored, and analyzed in the study.

Figure 3.2

Study area map in Kathmandu valley



Source: Government of Nepal, Ministry of Land Reform and Management, 2024

The figure 3.3 depicts the areas of study. Participants as responders of the study were from different parts of Nepal though the survey was conducted in Kathmandu valley. Some of them had studied in the valley and some had come to Kathmandu to complete the migration documentation. Map showing areas of Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur districts are sites where the researcher made field study.

### **3.4 Nature and sources of data**

Both primary data and secondary data have been used in this mixed methods study. Primary data received from self-administered closed-ended questionnaires, open-ended questions, interviews and Key Informant Interviews (KII) help fulfill quantitative as well as qualitative research requirements. Quantitative data in the statistical form provide the numerical representation of the expression of respondents. Qualitative in-depth interviews with experts, KIIs who are well acquainted with the migration trends and issues of Nepal and the world as well help in deciphering the layers of current student migration. For this purpose, KIIs, interviews and observation have provided information from a wide circle of people such as students, parents professors, community leaders, and professionals.

For quantitative data, I chose students taking or taken NOC mostly and students studying bachelor's degree in both community and private colleges. 110 respondents participated in the survey. I chose some selective students for qualitative data in the list of ten respondents. 171 have used both common techniques telephone interviews and face-to-face interviews. The interviews provided insightful first-hand information to understand and explore student migration.

Secondary data has been obtained from previous literature such as books, journals, articles, research papers mainly from database to support the themes of the study. Academic journals of universities, institutional statistical data of consultancies working in the field of student's abroad studies, college and university annual enroll and drop out data have been used as sources of data.

### **3.5 Techniques and tools of data collection**

Self-administered questionnaires with closed-ended were distributed to 125 students for quantitative data; 110 of them responded. Then I chose 17 students for sequential open-ended questions for qualitative data pertaining to student migration based on the findings of quantitative data. I chose areas of Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur to collect primary data. For further understanding and exploration, in-depth interviews and KIIs have been included. I used convenience and judgmental sampling technique for survey questions, interviews and KIIs. For KIIs have been consulted for further in-depth interpretation of the phenomenon and analysis on relevant field. Two case studies have further explained the themes of the study. Experience and observation of the researcher contributed to the study.

For secondary data collection, different published books, journals, reports, and articles on migration issues and abroad studies have been taken as references. Database has been consulted to find the relevant theories and literature.

### **3.6 Data analysis and findings**

In this mixed methods study, I have collected, analyzed, and integrated both quantitative and qualitative data using diverse mixed methods designs as referred by Creswell & Creswell (2018, p. 112) pertaining to the data analysis in mixed methods study. I applied thematic analysis to interpret the qualitative data collected from primary and secondary sources. To interpret quantitative data, I applied coding (thematic method) to understand the relationship and interconnectedness among variables.

Thus, the views and experiences expressed in the questionnaires and interviews have been documented, codified, and interpreted transcripts to identify significant patterns of migration. The codification of the data has revealed the essence of the migration process. Migration theories observed around the world have been assessed in relation to the context of Nepal. Migration trends of Nepal now and before have been compared and scrutinized. Migration impacts have been analyzed and foregrounded based on data and literature.

The study has projected the potential socio-economic picture of Nepal aftermath of the massive youth migration. Outflow of talents, brain drain has given appalling signals. The inflow of remittance embedded has increased per capita income and GDP of Nepal, but it is not sustainable development in economic sector. As McGill (2023) described migration, as a very complex phenomenon. Nepalese youth migration has also been intrigued with numerous factors. The socio-economic issue has been viewed dominant factor by majority of the respondents. Various migration theories have been scrutinized in the study. Both content and thematic analysis applied to interpret the data have helped understand and explain the migration of Nepalese students for abroad studies. The themes of secondary data have been compared, judged, and verified by primary data. Eventually, the paper has explained the realistic picture of Nepalese student migration for abroad studies.

In findings and discussion section, “law of non-direction” in use of language as referred by McCracken (1988, p. 21, as cited in Creswell & Creswell, p. 179) has been maintained though qualitative tilt in research using words that prevent suggesting a directional orientation.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

The ethical issues when conducting this study have been revered. I have presented this study to the best of my knowledge and belief. Since it is prepared for the partial fulfilment of requirement of 8<sup>th</sup> APF Command and Staff Course, there is no funding of any institution and agencies for any research purpose. All the respondents had been behaved as respected person. Research involves collecting data from people, about people (Punch, 2014). Data collection was made with due permission only after winning the trust of participants. No discrimination of any types such as based on caste, ethnicity, status, regionalism has been made.

The study has protected the confidentiality of the individual participants and institutions. research participants. I developed a complete trust with them; promoted the integrity of research; guarded against misconduct and impropriety that could reflect on organizations or institutions; and coped with new, challenging problems as referred by Israel & Hay (2006, as cited in Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p.144). Ethical issues as personal disclosure, authenticity, and credibility of the study, patents of the literature and compliments have been properly maintained in the study.

Data used in this paper has been analyzed to convey the original opinion of the source. No distortion or modification has been made to the tone of the source. Confidentiality of the respondents has been respected and well maintained when accomplishing the analysis. The views respondents and KIIs have been preserved to deliver the message they intended accordingly. The paper has been oriented to underscore the outflow of migration foregrounding its current and future consequences to Nepal. The paper is not guided to fulfill any interests. This study is purely academic.

Thus, this study has been conducted adopting the general principles of ethics as the primary responsibility respecting the intellectual property rights, rule of consent, confidentiality and privacy. A full-fledged academic justice has been made in the study. Anonymity and pseudonyms have been used to conceal the identity in the qualitative parts. Supervision and guidance when preparing the study have been respectfully acknowledged and credited. Migration process is dynamic so analysis made at the contemporary time period in the study may change with changing time. Different independent variables can appear in the time to come in student migration process of Nepal. This study has followed APA 7<sup>th</sup> edition as research style.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter analyses causes of student migration from perspectives of push-pull and network factors. Based on the defined three research questions, the researcher has collected the data to fulfill the requirements. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect the primary data. 110 respondents participated in survey questionnaire. 17 of them were further selected for in-depth interviews. And 11 different persons (five guardians, three consultants, three KIIs) were approached and interviewed to explore and unravel the problem in depth. The data were collected from three districts of Nepal namely Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. Telephone interviews with some educationists have also been included from outside the Kathmandu valley.

This chapter has been divided into two sub-sections. The first section deals with findings comprised of descriptive statistical analysis related to the first research question: causes of student migration, the perception of students and guardians pertaining to the out migration as the requirement of the second research question and the impacts of student migration as per the third research question. The second section covers the discussion. Primary data collected using both eclectic quantitative methods and qualitative methods have been embedded aligning with the theoretical entity of the study. This study dominantly phenomenological in student migration for abroad studies has been statistically supported by quantitative survey data to present ground reality though narratives constitute major portion of the study.

#### **4.1 Findings**

Several causes of migration as push-pull factors were explored when collecting data. Descriptive data obtained by survey questionnaires help analyze and verify the expression of the respondent during interview. Individual choices in micro level, collective in meso level and in large number macro level, the phenomena of out-migration of students for abroad study is driven by various reasons. Some prominent reasons seen in Nepalese students' migration are presented in the following sections. The analysis of the findings discussing its underlying meanings and implications have been associated in the study. The coding of the statistical representations to explain the causes of migration are interpreted accordingly.

The finding sections is weaved in three different requirements of the study, the causes of migration, perception of migration from the side of students and guardians and finally the impacts of migration in Nepal. The statistical presentation of the first part is linked with the subsequent second and third parts. The views of experts, consultants and KIIs have helped further decipher the complexity of the migration phenomena.

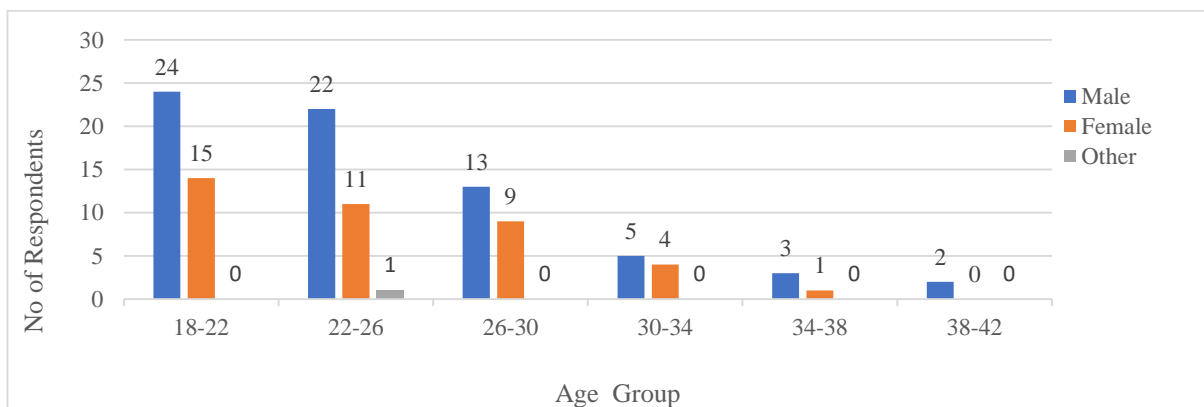
#### 4.1.1 Descriptive statistical presentation

The information gathered through survey questionnaire has been depicted with the help of percentage, pie chart, tables, and frequency. Push-pull factors, social network and personal characteristics of the students' academic ability, demographic, socio-economic status, and their responses on diverse aspects of migration have been analyzed. As Hollifield (2008), has stated, "international migration can be seen as a function of economic forces (demand pull and supply push) and networks" (p.195). The study also has shown that push-pull factors are associated with earning after or with the study in the countries of destination.

##### a) Age and gender of respondents

**Figure 4.1**

*Gender and age of respondents*



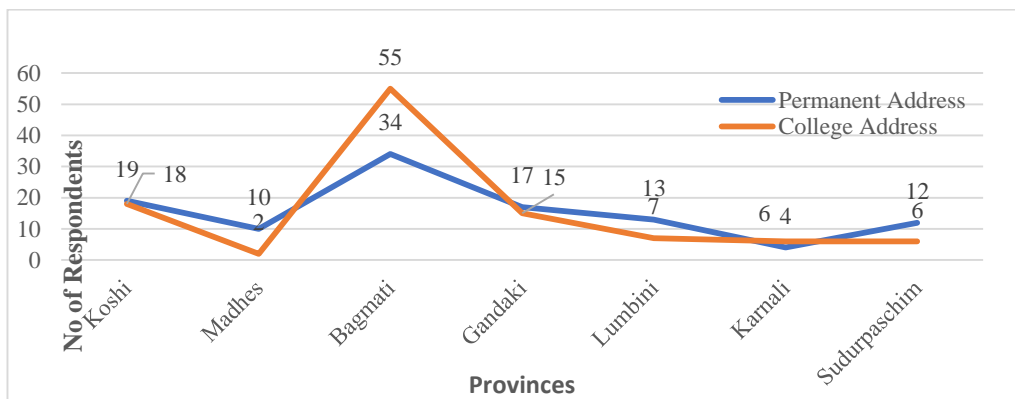
*Source:* Field Study, 2024

Figure 4.1 reveals the Age and Gender of 109 respondents; of the total respondents, 69 were males, 39 females and one other. It shows that males are dominant in number. As the age increases, the number of out-migrating students decreases. The age group (18-22) has the highest number 24 out of 39. Only two are seen in the (38-40) age group.

**b) Permanent address and college address of respondents**

**Figure 4.2**

*Permanent address and college address of respondents*



Source: Field Study, 2024

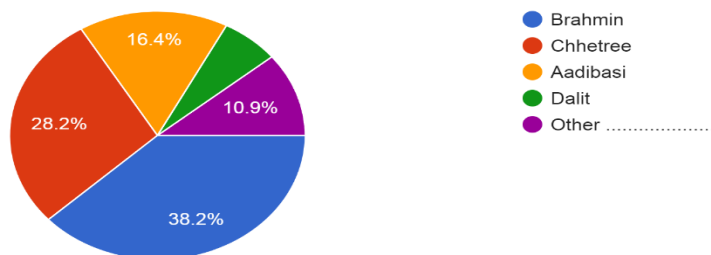
Figure 4.2 depicts the address of the respondents as per province. Series1 shows the home address and Series2 shows the location of the college where students completed their Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL). Out of 110 respondents, the highest number 34 were from Bagmati and the lowest 4 were found from Karnali province.

**c) Caste/ ethnicity of respondents**

**Figure 4.3**

*The caste/ethnicity of the respondents*

3. Caste/ Ethnicity:  
110 responses



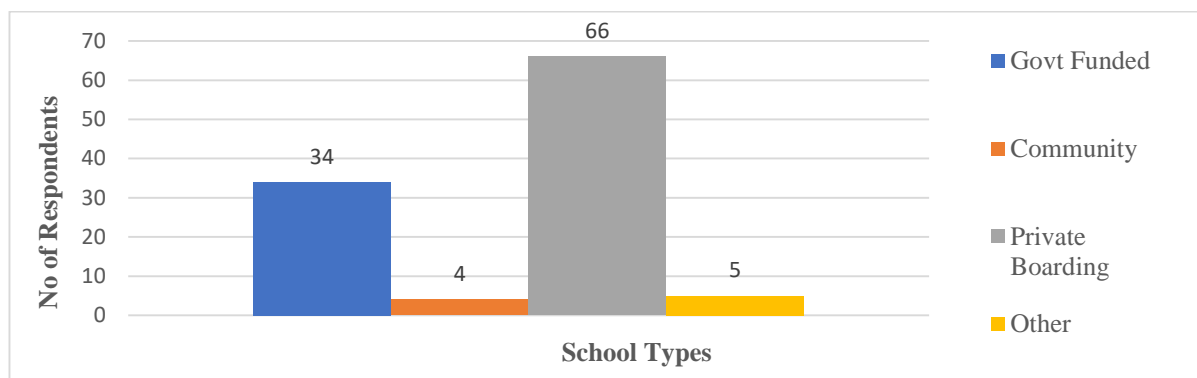
Source: Field Study, 2024

Figure 4.3 shows that Brahmin, with 38.5% have occupied the highest number of migrating students. And Dalits are only 6.4%, seven in number. The socio-economic status of Dalits in Nepal is comparatively weaker than others. This chart also reflects that condition. Chhetrees were in second with 27.5%.

**d) Types of school students studied in**

**Figure 4.4**

*School types where students studied PCL*



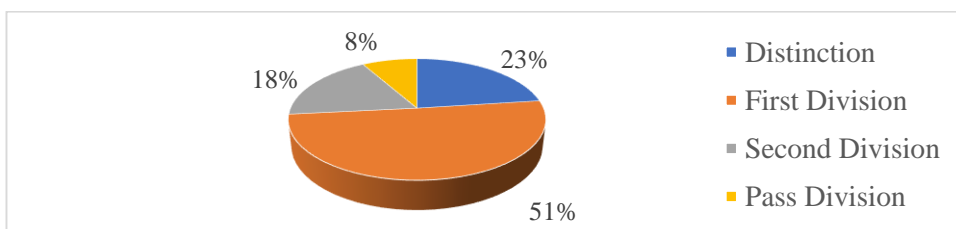
Source: Field Study, 2024

Figure 4.4 shows the type of schools where students studied, survey shows that students graduated from private boarding school are in the highest number, (N 66) 60.6%. Government funded school products are in the second number and community school students are in the least number with (N 4) 3.7 %.

**e) Performance level of students in PCL**

**Figure 4.5**

*Performance level of students in PCL*



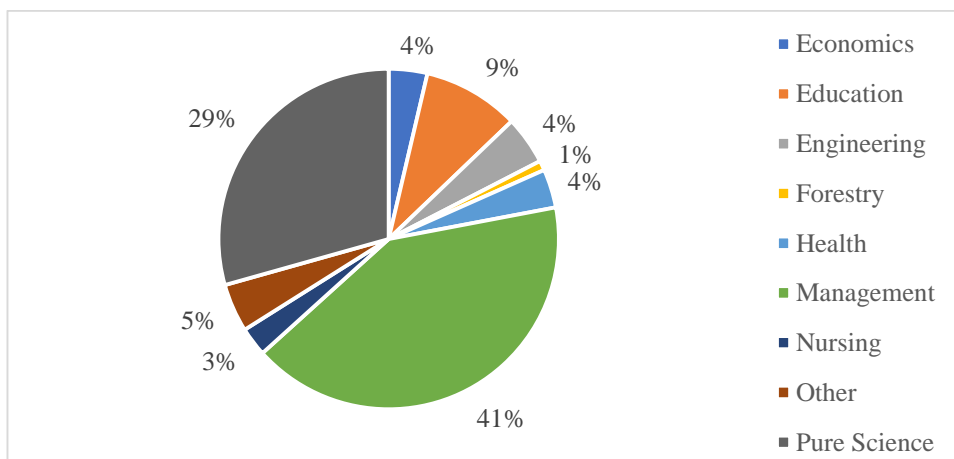
Source: Field Study, 2024

Figure 4.5 shows the performance level in PCL. It was chosen because most students go abroad study after PCL. It was found that 23% of the respondents had obtained distinction, 51% first division, 18% second division and 8% had pass division. Very few students acquire distinction in PCL; 23% of the respondents in survey shows that the propensity of migration of those who acquired distinction is very high. More than 50% (51% in survey) has been covered by those holding first division. It is obvious that better performers preferred abroad studies to studying in Nepal. The exodus of comparatively more competent students results in various sectors of Nepal. Out-migrating of talents means letting space or opportunity to hold major positions in the country to less competent persons. Ultimately it slows down the overall prosperity of developing country like Nepal.

#### f) Areas of studies

**Figure 4.6**

*Area of abroad studies of students*



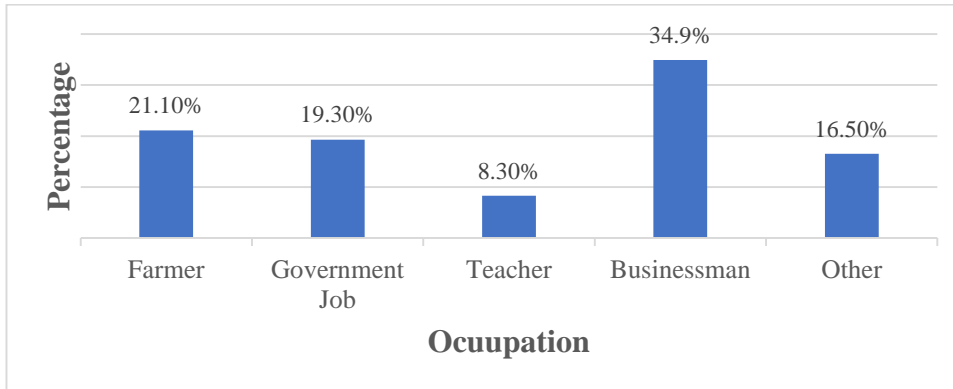
*Source: Field Study, 2024*

Figure 4.6 shows management with 41% is the most favorable area. Pure science is the second choice- 29%. Similarly, education 9%, economics, health and engineering each 4%, nursing 3%, forestry 1% and other 3%. Management is seen as the best choice. Accounting and management in various fields are seen attractive subjects of study. Engineering is in the second choice in the survey data holding 29% of the respondents. The number of migrating youths from business families in the highest number has been found in the survey data; students, highest from management faculty and from business group is significant.

### g) Occupation of guardians

**Figure 4.7**

*Occupation of the guardians of respondents*



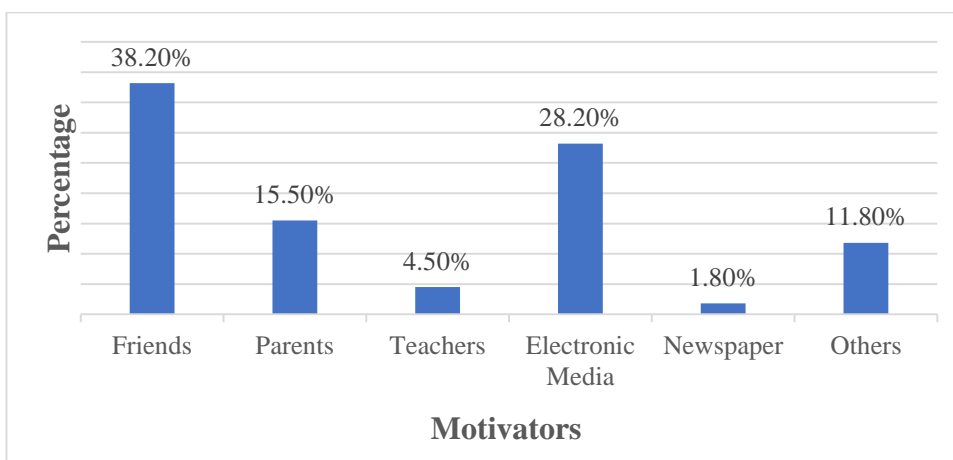
Source: Field Study, 2024

Figure 4.7 exhibits that students of the business family are in higher number 34.9%. It shows the capability of parents. Students from teacher families are in the minimum range 8.3%. Students from business, farmer and government job families are in more numbers. They aspire for more investment for abroad studies.

### h) Knowledges sources of abroad studies

**Figure 4.8**

*Knowledge about abroad Study Program.*



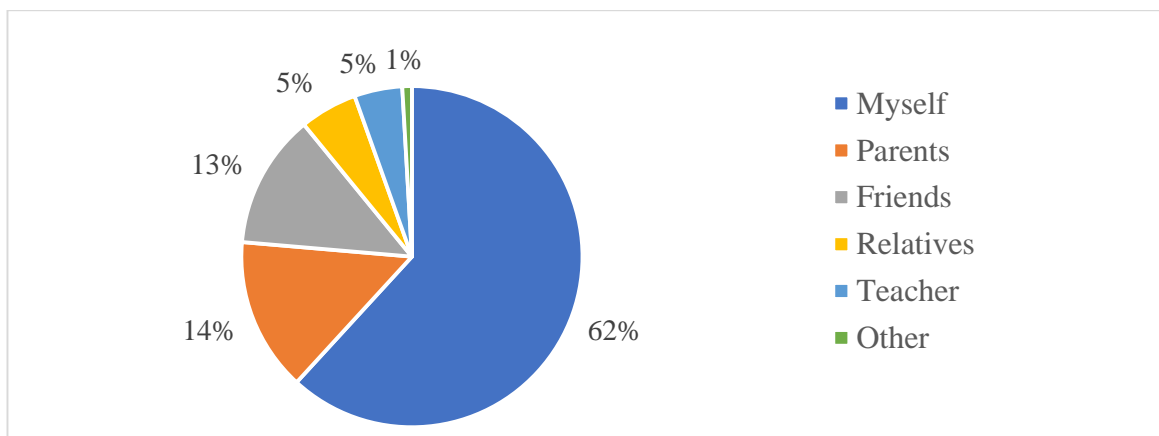
Source: Field Study, 2024

Figure 4.8 manifests the network of abroad study. Students know about the lifestyles of the people in developed countries via different sources. The survey data found that 38.20% of the students were informed by friends; likewise, 28.20% by electronic media, 15.50% by parents. Teachers also have nominal role: 4.5%. Newspapers cover only 1.8%, the least in survey. It explicates that migration trend is more influenced by friend networks and social/electronic media. Taylor (1986) had found that networks encourage migration. Students see the photos posted on social medias; their senior students share fascinating narratives. These help youngsters plan to migrate at any cost. One of the respondents said, “two of my seniors always post photos of their fascinating college and the weekend in beech. It makes me unstable. I just think of flying as soon as possible.” In the contexts of Nepal, the network factor is one of the prominent reasons of migration.

### i) Motivational agents for migration

**Figure 4.9**

*Motivational agents for migration*



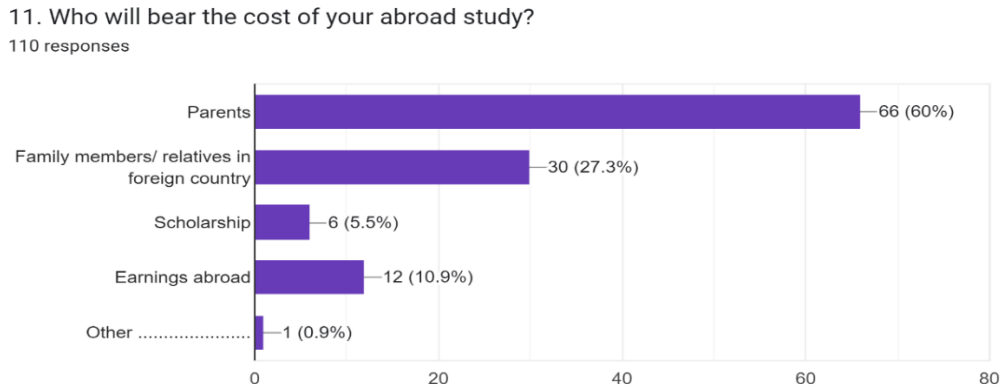
*Source: Field Study, 2024*

The above figure presents the motivating agents for abroad studies. Maximum of the respondents (62%) were found to have been motivated by own selves. Likewise, motivating factors such as family (14%), friends (13%), relatives (5%), teacher (5%) and other (1%), have been found in the survey. The students themselves are choosing migration to a great extent. In micro level, as described by Todaro (1970), individual values and expectations determine the decisions. Behind this decision, personal freedom, social status, stimulation, autonomy, and affiliation are associated.

**j) Bearer of expenses for abroad studies**

**Figure 4.10**

*Bearer of expenses for abroad studies*



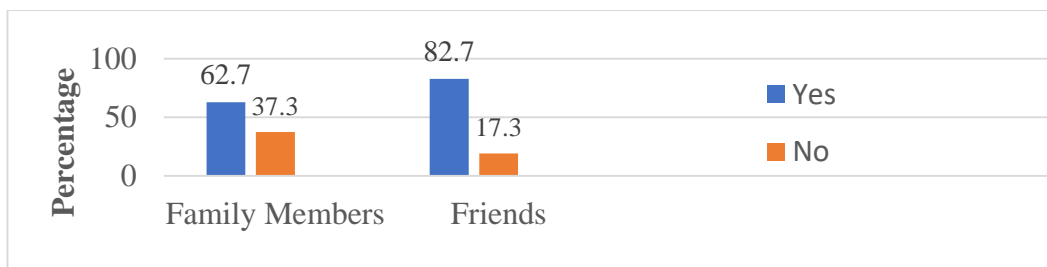
Source: Field Study, 2024

The above figure illustrates the bearer of the expenses of abroad studies. While leaving Nepal, parents (60%) afford the expenditure, then family members or relative abroad (27.3%) is in the second bearer. 5.5% in scholarship and only 10.9 % were found to bear the expenses by earing themselves in the survey. In the consecutive semesters after they get enrolled, most of the respondents said that they would manage the expenses by working certain hours in a week.

**k) Networks abroad**

**Figure 4.11**

*Network of family members and friends abroad*



Source: Field Study, 2024

The above figure shows family members and friends living abroad. 62.7% had family members and 82.7% had friends abroad. This network helps them facilitate the migration.

#### l) Attempts made for abroad studies

**Table 4.1**

*Attempts for abroad studies*

Attempts	Frequency	Percentage
First Time	80/110	72.7
Tried Before	30/110	27.3

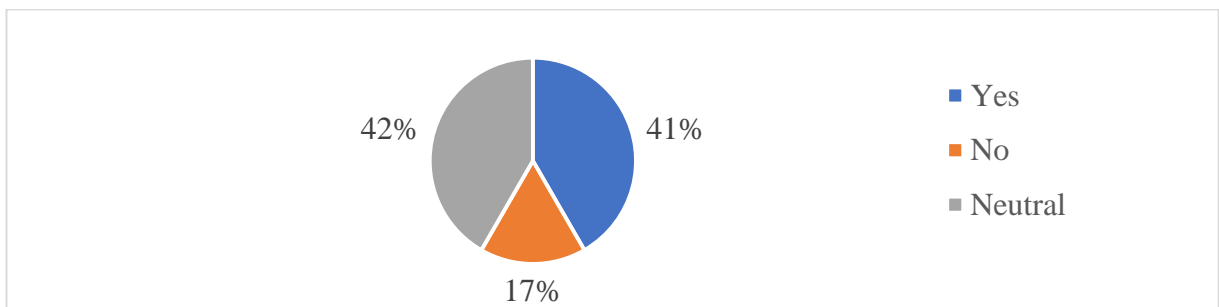
*Source: Field Study, 2024*

Table 4 shows the attempts students made for abroad studies. 72.7% students were found applying for the first time and 27.3% had tried before.

#### m) Parent's encouragement for abroad studies

**Figure 4.12**

*Parent's encouragement for abroad studies*



*Source: Field Study, 2024*

The above figure shows the parent's encouragement for abroad studies. 41% of the parents encouraged for abroad study, 14% were found unhappy with the decisions of their children. Majority of the parents (42%) remained neutral; they did not impose their interests rather they complied with their children. Potential students compare the expected opportunities and income at the destinations with the expected income at the origin. Having seen the socio-economic conditions, parents cannot manipulate the migrating mentality of their children.

**n) Push factors for abroad studies**

**Table 4.2**

*Push factors of student migration*

Push factors	Frequency	Percentage
(a) Lack of quality of education in Nepal	44/110	40
(b) Lack of employment opportunities (earnings) in Nepal	46/110	41
(c) Choice of subjects are not offered in colleges in Nepal	12/110	10.9
(d) Outdated or not reformed Curricula	10/110	9.1
(e) No career prospects in Nepal	11/110	10
(f) Frequent strikes (Hadtals) in campus in Nepal	2/110	1.8
(g) Discrimination against scholarship	1/110	0.9
(h) Discrimination against gender in college/campus	2/110	1.8
(i) Prestige will be enhanced in Nepal if I study abroad	1/110	0.9
(j) Because I have an excellent academic performance (higher marks)	1/110	0.9
(k) Others (mention) .....	4/110	3.6

*Source:* Field Study, 2024

The above table shows the push factors of student migration. Maximum (41%) of the respondents thought that lack of employment (earning) opportunities is the cause of migration. While 40% thought lack of quality education in Nepal, cause of student migration. Other causes are lack of choices of subjects (10.9%), uncertain career (10%), and traditional/outdated curricula. Other causes are very nominal. In Nepal, they have seen the opportunities of earning. They are more worried of what they will do even after they work hard and acquire very good marks. Todarian economic model, Todaro (1969) explains that income differential is the main determinant of decision to migrate; students consider themselves underemployed in Nepal. One of the respondents said that salary of even big job holders has very low. He had seen his seniors earning quite more money than their fellows in Nepal.

**o) Pull factors for abroad studies**

**Table 4.3**

*Pull factors of student migration*

Pull factors	Frequency	Percentage
(a) Quality education in foreign country	58/110	48.2
(b) Employment opportunities and higher earnings abroad	37/110	33.6
(c) Experienced and friendly professors	2/110	1.8
(d) Reputed universities abroad	4/110	3.6
(e) Availability of choice subjects	8/110	7.3
(f) Chances of getting scholarship or subsidized fees	4/110	3.6
(g) Multinational classmates	1/110	0.9
(h) Democratic government and freedom	3/110	2.7
(i) Security and social security measures	5/110	4.5
(j) Developed countries with high per capita income	3/110	2.7
(k) Other (mention).....	8/110	7.3

*Source:* Field Study, 2024

The above table illustrates the pull factors of student migration. Maximum (48.2%) of the respondents viewed that quality education of the foreign countries pulls the students. Employment opportunities and higher earnings abroad (33.6%) is the second pull factor of the student migration. Availability of choice subjects (7.3%), reputed universities abroad (3.6%), and experienced and friendly professors (1.8%) also complement the quality education. 4.7% have chosen security and social security measures. Only 3.6% chose migration hoping that there are chances of getting scholarship or subsidized fees in foreign university. They hope to do so getting quality education.

#### 4.1.2 Perception of the youths

This chapter addresses the perception of students and guardians pertaining to student's out migration for abroad studies. This portion of the study is mainly based on qualitative research verified by the data presented and discussed in the previous research question. The research question two "*How do Nepalese youth and guardians perceive the out-migration of Nepalese youths for abroad studies?*" is covered by this portion. As Yowell, 2002 (as cited in Feuer, 2009) has defined aspirations as an individual's hopes or dreams for the future, while expectations are an individual's understanding of what is most likely to happen in the future. The current trend of student migration is well aligned with dreams in new lands. The analysis in this part is based on the opinions of respondents (guardians whose children are potential migrants and those whose children are already abroad studies) and KIIs expressed during open-ended questions and in-depth interviews. Their views are compared with existing theories of migration. Push-pull factors of migration as mentioned in Table 5 and Table 6 are linked with the analysis.

Potential students who were to take or had taken NOC were approached for interviews and case studies. Nine students studying in Proficiency Certificate Level (PCL), five in Bachelor level, and three in Master level were separately interviewed. All the students of proficiency level wished to study abroad after PCL. Most Bachelor level students expressed their will for abroad study. In comparison to Bachelor level, Master level students wished to look for opportunities first in Nepal.

##### a) **Dissatisfaction with the present situation**

The majority of interviewees expressed that they were motivated to go abroad in order to learn and earn as stated by Acharya (2012). Students were obliged to migrate to study because of push and pull factors. They were lured by better opportunities (pull/positive factors) and felt compelled to leave the country because of push/negative factors. One of the respondents, Krijan, (pseudonym) who had just taken NOC from the office of Sanothimi, Bhaktapur stated that:

*See, I was in queue for three hours just to receive NOC. How frustrating our system is at this age of technology? Whom to blame? Our whole system is inefficient. Forget the job and big salary, to complete the documentation in our bureaucratic system is a great success. There are limited jobs in government, and one needs to go through*

*tough competition. On private sectors, nepotism and favoritism are rampant. And the salary hardly fulfills our basic needs. Then, why not go abroad? My ultimate objective is to earn money and be economically strong (Field Note, March 20, 2024).*

He was preparing to go to Japan for the course of Mechanical Engineering. He did not feel secure in Nepal.

Jyoti and Aayusha (pseudonyms), both planning to study Medical Nursing in Australia, expressed similar views. They preferred Australia because of the job opportunities and high salary after study. They did not want to work in Nepal with low salary and no job guarantee. Nikesh (pseudonym) decided to go to the USA; he expressed, “I preferred American university because of the quality education which is globally recognized degree that Nepalese universities lack.” Being dissatisfied with the present situation, youths are leaving.

Education is politicized in Nepal; it is supposed to be free from politics. Higher education in Nepal is very unstable and unpredictable; strikes (Hartal) and disturbances are normal phenomena. The political parties easily manipulate teenager youths in colleges. Students are used as party activists by political parties. These activities not only ruin the study of students but also their career. Exams are not held on time. Students wait too long for the results. Thus, many Nepalese students opt to study abroad. One of the participants, Anish (pseudonym) stated:

*I do not want to participate in politics, but I was forced to take membership against my will. I was compelled to get involved in party campaigns that I hated. I ruined my study. I could not score so good marks in PCL. I decided to apply to study in USA. Other friends also have applied in different states. I just want to escape from this college politics and study independently, free of politics.*

## **b) The psychological pressure**

Psychological factors and social status are putting pressure on students. Some parents, relatives or neighbors make their children go abroad. In such situations, potential student migration is stimulated by psychological effects (Acharya, 2012). To fulfill the wills of guardians, they struggle a lot. One of the respondents from Biratnagar, studying in Kathmandu shared his views as:

*My father always suggests me to go for abroad study as one of my neighbor's sons has done. At the beginning, though, they invested some money to send him but now he is sending one lakh rupees per month to home. He is studying and earning. My father is selling a portion of land to send me abroad. He thinks that my education abroad would yield returns when I work and study together. I cannot go against the will of my father. He is imposing his will but it sounds a burden for me.*

The above statement evinces psychological effect in society. Parents, despite the limited income sources want to send their youths for abroad studies. This type of psychological effect is rooted in contemporary Nepalese society in case of students' migration.

**c) World of opportunities and adventure**

Unemployment and underemployment are two major problems of youths in Nepal. The main reason for going abroad is lack of employment and opportunities. 33.6 per cent students as shown in Table 4.3 thought employment and underemployment one of the major causes of migration. Most of the participants in interview also viewed lack of employment opportunities as main cause of migration. One of the respondents said, "I have seen many seniors unemployed even after their study. So, I want to migrate to the USA because of lack of earning and career in Nepal". Similar views have been expressed by other three students.

In Nepal, as per the data, industry covers only 13% of the GDP in fiscal year 2023 (Worl). As explained by Gravity theory, Linneman (1966), viewed that unemployment in origin leads to positive migration; Nepal's unemployment is pushing students out of Nepal. The number of educated unemployed is increasing every year since there are very little chances of employment.

In micro level, as described by Todaro (1970), individual values and expectations determine the decisions. Behind this decision, personal freedom, social status, stimulation, autonomy, and affiliation are associated. One of the potential students, aged 19, said,

*I am from the well of family. My parents do not want to send me for abroad study. But I want to go abroad. I want to enjoy my life and have new experiences. This is my personal decision. I want to take risk and explore. I don't want to be confined in Nepal. My parents lived their lives and I will live my own. I will go abroad for both quality education with better opportunities and exposure to new worlds.*

Freedom and autonomy as enjoyed by individual in western world is not found in Nepalese society. Parents monitor and control their children, but new generation does not want to be contained within parents' control. That is why they choose abroad study.

**d) Lack of quality education**

As found in the survey (Table 4.3), 48.2% of the students chose quality education abroad as pulling factors. They thought Nepal's education system more theory-based knowledge that is not suitable at dynamic global context. One of the students said: "Even the private colleges charging high fees cannot provide quality and practical education. They simply follow traditional curricula. In the public schools and colleges, classes are not run regularly." Some private colleges have adopted international courses taking affiliation of the renowned universities. But very few can afford those colleges. These colleges are being used as the ladder for abroad study. Almost 50% dropout is found by the end of the semester in those colleges (Field Survey, 2024). One of the respondents said, I joined this college because it helps get visa for UK, I can easily shift in second or third semester if I want."

The above expression indicates that students use hook or crook to get visa easily and migrate. Thinking of shifting in the subsequent semester means they want to be abroad for study. Quality education for them is possible only in destination countries. Hence, low quality education in Nepal leads to student migration.

**e) Work and study opportunity**

Costs of education in Nepal has risen. The money parents spend for the completion of the course if invested to send the child abroad, it yields as an investment. In this connection, one of the students expressed, "I need 30 lakhs to complete engineering in Nepal. This is only college fees. If I go to Australia, I can earn and learn together. I will repay back the money." This expression shows that students are eager to migrate to study to relieve their parents of educational costs. After they are employed, they are determined to send back the money. With this plan, they easily convince parents.

Going abroad for earning and learning is very common for the Nepalese students. As explained by Sjaastad (1962), education as a Centre of human capital theory and decision to migrate as an investment decision, Nepalese youths are using abroad study an easy way to migrate. They plan to earn for further study One of the potential students said:

*My priority is to gain quality education, that I hope, I can do by abroad study. My parents borrowed money from my relatives whom I will have to pay back. I think if work is not permitted along with study, nobody would go for abroad study. This facility is not available in Nepal. We can never imagine arranging own study expenses work side-by-side in Nepal. Once we go abroad, family does not have to bear any additional expenses of our study.*

Similar views were expressed by other four students. The statement clarifies that Nepalese students are motivated to migrate to foreign countries to work and study together. Managing both the task is definitely challenging. Working will hamper the study; even then youths are yearning for abroad studies. Eventually earning surpasses the study. By hook or crook, they want to earn money. Farrer (2009) termed such types of students as “coin raking” students. He said that study was in front but making money was the real motivation, actual in practice. In Nepal, students have no such options. One of the respondents, KII, explained that sending children for abroad study is a safe investment. They expect that student will earn and learn together. Investment done once will continuously results in profits.

#### **f) Networks abroad**

Social networks facilitate the migration process. Relatives and friends provide shelter, food, information, and college admissions. Seeing the progress of predecessors, new ones are encouraged. One of the respondents stated, “My elder sister went to Australia to study nurse five years ago. She completed master and got a good job. Now she has bought a house. I have no problem in Australia. I just need to go there.” Taylor (1986) and Dutta (2017) explained that the social factors influence migration; cultural richness, better welfare programs, better schools, infrastructure, strong social network presence of friends and relatives who have already moved work as motivational agents for new migrants.

In the survey, it was found that 62.7 % of the respondents had family networks and 82.7 % had friends abroad. These networks have helped them migrate in all respects. They choose the countries where they have strong ties. The social network theory as suggested by Wilson (1967) and Massey (2002) expounded that ties of kinship and friendship in origin and destination encourage and promote migration. Nepalese students have these sorts of ties in many developed countries around the world. Not only these networks encourage but also facilitate. In line to this, a case study is presented below:

## Case study-One

### Family network facilitating abroad study

Tina KC (pseudonym), a young woman from a rural village in Nepal, dreamt of becoming a doctor. University in Kathmandu seemed distant, let alone studying abroad. However, her cousin, Muna (pseudonym), had migrated to Australia for a medical degree several years ago. Muna, through video calls and frequent messages, painted a picture of opportunity and a path to a brighter future.

Muna not only shared stories but also actively helped Tina. Muna provided guidance on entrance exams, connected Tina with scholarship resources, and even offered financial support for initial application fees. With Muna's guidance, assistance and the knowledge Tina felt empowered and successfully navigated the path for abroad study. Her dream, once distant, became a tangible goal. Tina aced her exams and secured a scholarship to study medicine in South Korea.

This case exemplifies network theory in migration. Muna's presence abroad established a social connection, providing Tina with crucial information, emotional support, and practical assistance reducing barriers to international education for Tina.

#### 4.1.3 Perception of guardians

Having seen that parental role is important in abroad studies because of their involvement in the migration process, this section of study explored the insightful feelings and in-depth experiences of guardians. As this research survey found, 60% of the respondents' parents would bear expenses of the study. Motivational role of the parents was found only 14 % in the migration. And 15.5% of the respondents accepted that they were informed about the abroad study by their parents. This way parents are directly or indirectly related with the youth migration. Parents perceive student migration differently. The survey has shown that 41% of parents supported migration, 17% did not like, and 42% were neutral. Their opinions were found divided. Whatever they perceive, they are seen obliged to comply with the decision of their children believing that safety and security for their children are guaranteed in the destination countries.

Parental views have a significant role in this research because of their involvement in the migration process. Aspirations of parents in some cases are reflected into the aspirations of

parents. With the abroad study, parents also get chance to visit foreign lands. The safety and security for their children are more guaranteed in nations of destination in the views of those parents though motivational role of parents in youth's abroad study was found only 14%. This portion of the study is covered by the discussion of the perception of the parents pertaining to abroad studies.

**a) Lack of opportunities**

Lack of employment opportunities in Nepal is the main push factor of abroad study. 41% of the respondent have viewed that they leave Nepal in search of employment opportunities in high income countries. Even if they get employed with hard struggle, the salary is very low. Referring to unemployment, one of the respondents stated, "*Yaha padhera ke garne? kaam paidaina, Kaam paye pani salary thorai chha*" (There is no work after study. Even if work is found, salary is too low). His views were obvious that they generally do not get work in Nepal and salary is very low. He further stated he wished his son to remain in Nepal instead of going to foreign countries, he could not stop him either.

**b) Underemployment**

Underemployment is the state where one gets paid low as compared to the work/contribution. Nepalese society has been materialistic. New generation thinks that only the money can fulfill their wants. Nationalistic feelings and patriotism do not bother them. As viewed by Pandey (2023), our academic institutions removed moral science from school curriculum and there is no more education that teaches patriotism. Its impacts are seen in youth. Parents cannot convince them to stay and struggle in Nepal. One of the respondents said,

*My son was working in a private bank in Nepal. He was laborious so he earned bonus and incentives but it could hardly manage his expenditure. He was not satisfied with his salary. he applied for abroad study in the USA after working for two years. He was selected. He left the job and went there.*

The respondent had gone to attend the graduation ceremony of his son. He thinks that his son will not return to Nepal. These statement shows that underemployment and low salary (under employment) are perceived as push factors of abroad study migration. The socio-economic conditions are driving migration trends. Unemployed in Nepal is a worry for youths. Once they entertain abroad, they cannot indulge in Nepal with low salary.

Socio-economic factors as expounded by Ravenstein (1885; 1889, as cited in de Haas et al., 2020), Lee (1965) and Inkeles & Siroy (1985, as cited in Acharya, 2012), potential students compare the expected opportunities and income at the destinations with the expected income at the origin. One of the respondents shared that her parents did not want her to send her away for abroad studies but did not impose their will on her. Having seen the socio-economic conditions, parents cannot manipulate the migrating mentality of their children.

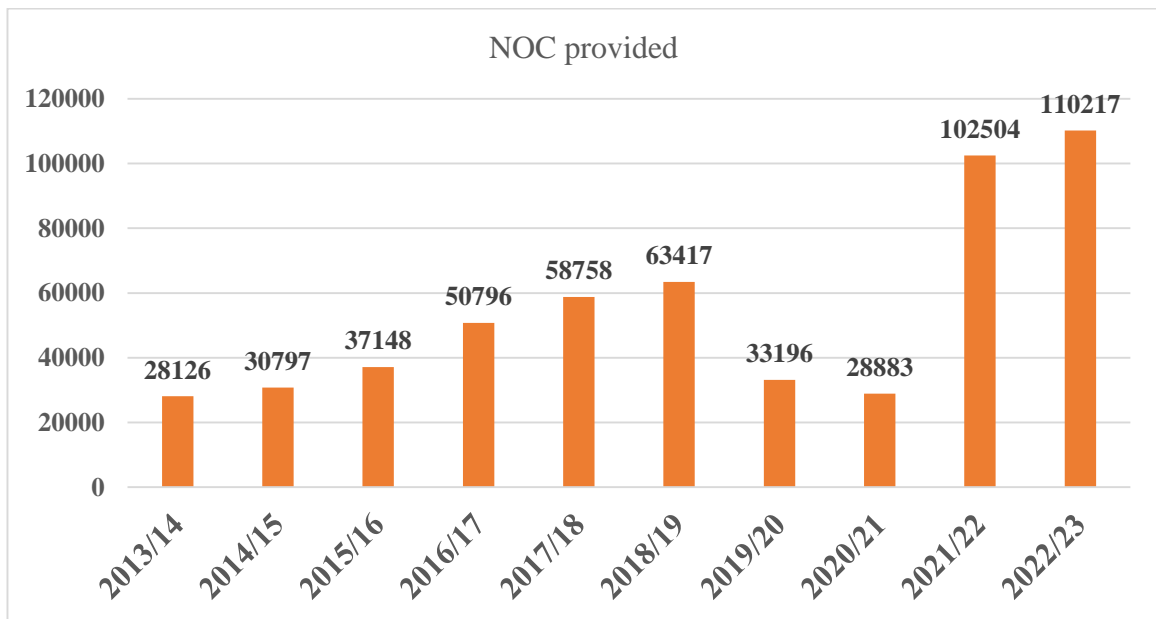
**c) Tendency of going abroad**

Going abroad for study, in Nepalese society has been an issue of prestige. Those who are capable of affording the expenses send their children. Those who have not enough fund borrow from others or sell their assets, generally land, and maintain expenses. The survey data showed that majority of students (34.9%) are from business family, 21.1% from farmer, 19.3% from government job holder family and 8.3% from teacher family. And others were found covering 16.5%. All types of families are involved in migration process. In this connection, one of the respondents viewed:

*The trend of studying abroad has been so assertive that it relates to the prestige of students and family. Even if they may not go, they try to go. A student applies for multiple destinations; wherever s/he gets the permission, s/he flies. If not one, they get another chance. Till they get success, they keep on trying for one or other countries.*

As per aspirations and capabilities of migrants, according to de Haas (2021), the students try time and again to go for abroad studies. One of the respondents, applying for Japan said that it was not sure whether he would get the visa or not, so he had applied for South Korea and France as well. It shows that all aim to fly abroad. The role of parents is not dominant in most cases. They simply comply with their children.

Students follow the path of their peers and believe in them so the fashion of going abroad as Acharya (2012) found is one of the reasons for supporting their friends. They learn about the foreign countries from their friends. An amorphous future in foreign lands evokes students for abroad study. The number of students going for abroad study is increasing every year despite Nepal increases annual education budget. It has been challenging for Nepal to hold students after study. There is not any concrete plan from the government of Nepal. The government has not even maintained the exact official data of out-migrating students. The following figure illustrates the growing number of students for abroad study.

**Figure 4.13***Number of NOCs provided to students*

*Source:* Government of Nepal, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (Kumar, 2023).

The above figure shows the increasing number of students taking NOC. In the interval of ten years, number of students has increased by four times. Many of the students during the interview said that they wanted to migrate for abroad study because their relatives and friends were already there. One among them expressed, “They see friend’s photos posted in social media about the college and holidays infatuates them. They also want to experience that life.” So, seeing one another, students yearn for abroad study.

#### **d) Globalization**

The world community is affected by globalization. Information technology has made easy access to know about the thing one needs. New generation is quite forward to take advantage of all these things. Nepalese youths, especially after 1990s moved abroad in more numbers. It was the impact of globalization. The liberal policy of the government has endowed the individual with personal entitlements to decide for own selves. The facilities and opportunities attract students towards better destinations. The gravity theory (Linneman, 1966) of migration indicated that students flow from low to high income economies. New mindsets cannot be obstructed. In this connection, one of the parents said,

*They live in 21<sup>st</sup> century. We cannot dictate them and confine them in our control, neither can we impose our dreams on them. We can just wish they would do well whatever they do. That is an opportunity for new generation to explore the dreams and do something new as per own will and capability. The whole world is open. We cannot stop them, and we should not.*

The above statement reveals that change in mentality has come regarding globalization. It has provided a new and wider horizon for youths for their progress. Opportunities in new renowned colleges, announcements of scholarships have provided accesses to enter in global arena of knowledge. But for the countries like Nepal, the globalization is posing negative impacts. Youths are leaving, institutions are emptying, domestic production is decreasing. Rather than preparing manpower according to the need of the global market, Nepal is just sending its energetic youth to work out of country. Deciphering this out migration of students, one of the KII said, “talent and will of an individual, at present world should be utilized by state otherwise it will go where it fits.” Thus, globalization effect is precisely seen in Nepal.

**e) Globally accepted degree/quality education**

Though there are some colleges implementing world class curricula in Nepal, this facility is confined in capital city. These colleges have been used as the ladder for migration. Parents’ complaints pertaining to the education system are that their children are not satisfied with the traditional educational systems. The majority of the parents in the interviews raised the issue of quality education. Some colleges claim that they deserve global quality, but their products are not trusted and recognized in international level if they complete their study in Nepal. One of the parents expressed his disappointment as,

*Why can’t Nepalese youths get job in foreign lands after studying in Nepal? Definitely, the foreign systems do not accept Nepal’s educational quality. The global ranking of colleges of Nepal is lower than the third-grade colleges in UK and USA. Why ruin the career of children? If they can study abroad, we need to facilitate them.*

The expression is clear that parents want Nepalese colleges to be compared and recognized tantamount to globally renowned colleges. Nepal should acquire the standard to attract foreign student to study in Nepal. It can be done as world class colleges implement the policy

revising the curriculum to meet the need of the time and choice of students with rigorous and continuous research and evaluation.

**f) Brain-drain**

Brain drain is the exodus of talented, energetic, and skilled human resources. Nepalese youths, especially after plus two or proficiency certificate level leave for better opportunities abroad. Their departure hurts the economy and innovation of Nepal. Regarding this brain drain of youth talents, all parents in interviews were found worried about the future of Nepal. But paradoxically, they saw better future of their children in foreign lands. One of the respondents who's both the children, son and daughter are in Europe said,

*They completed their studies and have started working. They are happy there. We also do not want to call them in Nepal. It is very difficult to get work of their demand in Nepal. Underemployment in Nepal cannot prosper them. Of course, we need them in our old age, but we cannot sacrifice their career as well.*

The above statement reveals parents' consciousness regarding their children's career opportunity. They are very calculative when making decision about their children. In Most cases, collectively all parents are worried about future the country due to brain drain but personally all are happy because their children escaped the insecurity and economic uncertainty of Nepal. As Haris and Todaro (1970) explained that migration is a selective and is influenced by economic and non-economic factors however, influenced more by rational economic consideration, student's outflow for abroad is also very rational not only for students but also for their parents.

Being calculative meticulously, the talents are looking for better opportunities and they are welcomed by the countries of destination. Host countries are fortunate in the sense that they get skilled and energetic human resources. Visa process is prepared in such a way that only the brilliant ones are selected. Origin countries like Nepal prepare the man power. When there is time to reap the crop, youths fly away. It needs to wait for another generation to get such age group man power. This exodus of talents further obstructs the prosperity of Nepal. Migration is not always negative. It can be as set forth by Lawder (2023), a powerful force for prosperity and development; when it is managed properly, it provides benefits for all people in origin and destination societies. In line to this, a case study is presented below:

## Case study: Two

### Exodus of talent student

For Santosh (pseudonym), acing every exam was not only his habit but also a legacy. He was topper in every level of his study. After B.Sc. he dreamt of an academic environment that mirrored his ambition. His sights were set on the scholarship in a renowned US university. Applications were meticulously crafted, transcripts gleamed with top marks, and his thirst for knowledge shone through in his essays. The wait was agonizing, but then came the life-changing email - a full scholarship from a prestigious US university.

Santosh tackled the visa process; he was elated but determined. Demonstrating financial security was a breeze thanks to the scholarship, and his stellar academic record spoke volumes. Interviews were a breeze, his passion for learning evident with every answer. Soon he bid farewell to friends and family. A mix of excitement and nervousness filled him as he boarded the plane to the US. Armed with his scholarship and a world of knowledge waiting to be explored, Santosh embarked on a new chapter, ready to make his mark on the international academic landscape.

Santosh's journey embodies the triumph of academic excellence. His story underscores the transformative power of scholarships, paving the way for talented Nepalese students to pursue their dreams on a global stage. It becomes a beacon of hope, inspiring others to excel and seek opportunities beyond their borders. Applying for scholarships as presented in the above case study or on paid courses, thousands of talent Nepalese students leave Nepal.

#### 4.1.4 Impacts of youth migration for abroad studies

This part covers impacts instigated by students' out migration in Nepal. Perceptions expressed by students and guardians/parents are intertwined in the predictions made by them. Individually, the respondents are happy, satisfied if their children are going or have gone for abroad studies but collectively when talking about the future of Nepal, they are disappointed with this phenomenon. Lived experiences of students, parents, consultants, and educationists as KIIs, culminated in the essence of the experiences of several other individuals, as stated by Moustakas (1994), have been described and analyzed in this section of the study. Strong philosophical underpinnings as suggested by Giorgi (2009) and Moustakas (1994) have been drawn out by conducting interviews. Impacts of student out-migration have been seen in many facets in Nepal. Impacts are both positive and negative. From an individual (micro

level), macro level (family) to state level (macro level), impacts of student's migration are very striking. Various impacts perceived by respondents and the repercussions of migrating trend are discussed in the paper within specific impact spheres.

**a) Brain-drain**

The survey has shown that students acquiring distinction in PCL are 23% and first division are 50% (S. Rawat, Personal Communication, 2024). These could be the future milestones in many aspects of prosperity. Leaving Nepal means leaving Nepal into the hands of those students who are less capable than them literally. Supporting this theme, one of the respondents, an Assistant Professor in a college, said,

*The rate of dropout in colleges is awful. Almost 50% of the students leave the college. About 90% of them leave for abroad study. They are all more capable and more talented students. This trend disappoints us as teachers. After the brilliant ones leave class, the level of completion among students decreases. Eventually, out-migration of talents lags the development of Nepal.*

The above statement explains the brain-drain impacts in colleges. Similar to views expressed, most of the respondents said that when highly skilled and educated young people leave Nepal, it results in a brain drain, meaning that Nepal loses its best and brightest talents. The exodus of talented, energetic, and skilled human resources out of Nepal poses massive negative impacts. This definitely poses negative impacts on Nepal's economy and development because it loses potential leaders and innovators. The government of Nepal has increased the budget in education every year. Even then number of students leaving Nepal for abroad study is increasing.

**b) Lack of competent human resources**

The loss of skilled and educated young people can lead to a shortage of skilled workers in Nepal, as result it decreases the overall production which can affect the growth of production and service sectors. Generally, unemployment is a serious problem in Nepal. Youths leave Nepal because of lack of job. Survey has found highest (41%) of the respondents leave Nepal for the quest of better employment opportunities (Survey, 2024). But sometimes, re-vacancies are announced due to insufficient candidates for the announced posts. When competent youths go abroad less competent ones occupy the major decision-making positions.

**c) Impact of remittance and technology**

In 2023, remittance covered 24% of the GDP of Nepal. Contribution of migrated students is also included in this amount. Not only do migrants send remittance in Nepal but also bring new entrepreneurship and technology with them when they return. It will be possible in Nepal if it prepares a conducive environment to utilize the knowledge students learn in abroad studies. Unfortunately, Nepal is not able to do so now in state level. In micro-level, the economic status of the families whose members are abroad is comparatively well enough. They support the neighbors when need as well. Their families in Nepal are found happy and satisfied. In line of this condition, one of the parents said,

*My younger son went to Switzerland for study. He is making quite a lot of money. We bought the house in Kathmandu where we are living now. He is helping his friends and neighbors. All respect us in the village. Seeing him, many youths in our village are planning to go for abroad studies. We are also going to visit Switzerland.*

The above statement explains the positive impacts posed on the socio-economic status of a family. All migrants have helped their families and friends in one way or other ways. Some of the returnees have started new businesses or entrepreneurships. One of the respondents who returned from Korea after the study and started farming in his in terai said,

*I learned how farming is done in developed countries. I got propensity of farming in Nepal and came back. In the beginning, I underwent loss, but I had confidence that organic farming would be sustainable and profitable. Gradually, I established myself. I have employed over 100 people in my farm.*

These examples are symbolic and nominal in Nepal. Nevertheless, they plant hopes in those who are quite pessimistic. So, migration is not always negative. Lawder (2023) quoted World Bank's Senior Managing Director Axel Van Trotsenburg's saying that "migration can be a powerful force for prosperity and development. When it is managed properly, it provides benefits for all people in origin and destination societies." But returnee youths cannot find such conducive environment in Nepal where they can use their skills. They simply cling to the destination countries. The propensity of staying in Nepal even after they return after completion of their study is rare. They cannot indulge in chaotic situation. Except some nominal cases, Nepal has experienced negative impacts.

#### **d) Drainage of exchange reserve**

According to records at the Nepal Rastra Bank, students sent US\$571 million (NPR75 billion) to different countries to pay their fees in the last 11 months of the fiscal year 2022-23. As much as US\$515 million (NPR68 billion) flowed out of the country in the 2021-22 financial year (Ghimire, 2023; Xinhua, 2024).

The number of students in Nepalese colleges and universities has been decreasing in the latter years. Some colleges are planning to merge and some closing due to lack of students (Personal Communication, 2024). Not only Nepal is losing talents and youths but also a huge amount of money. Every year a huge amount of Nepalese currency is draining out in the name of foreign studies. In line with this statement, one of the KII expressed,

*Mostly, young generations of middle-class families are shifting towards those countries where they study. Some students from business class families return after study to handle their family business. But those working as employees do not return. They prefer to sell the property in Nepal and settle in destination countries. Forget the remittance, it is rather draining Nepalese reserve. This fact is very disappointing.*

The above expression reveals the drain of not only but also capital. Its chain effect appears in other sectors of the national economy. Purchasing power, demand side and aggregate consumer sphere shrinks, as a result, overall prosperity of the country get affected. Gradually, this type of migration weakens Nepal.

#### **e) Loss of cultural identity**

When young people move abroad, they may be exposed to new cultures and way of life that can distance them from their Nepali roots. This can lead to a loss of cultural identity and a weakening of Nepal's social fabric. Migrants are knowingly or unknowingly compelled to adopt the culture of the destination countries. When generation crosses, there remains none to teach them culture. Children of migrants have no interests in their ancestral culture for they are not groomed with it. To assimilate the culture, one must spend the childhood in a particular cultural environment; only then one can adopt and own it.

They feel pressured to assimilate in new cultural environment in distant lands. It creates a feeling of being "in-between" cultures, neither fully Nepali nor fully integrated into the host

society. Regarding the loss of cultural identity among Nepali migrants, one of the key respondents said,

*Children of youths hardly speak or learn Nepali language. They grow in foreign cultures. They cannot experience Nepali culture as a member of the society because they are not groomed in it. Knowing about the culture and internalizing about the culture are two quite different things. Ultimately, offsprings of migrant students will face identity crisis.*

The above statement speaks the voice of many respondents. Identity is one of the inevitable assets of human life. New generation of Nepal abroad will lose their Nepalese cultural norms and social values. This impact in identity will leave them in the middle of the road.

**f) Lack of innovation**

When talented young people leave Nepal, it can result in a lack of innovation and progress in areas like science, technology, and the arts, which can have long-term negative implications for Nepal's development. The survey data of the study shows that of outgoing students, 51% are first division students in PCL and 23% are distinction graded students. Average and low-grade students hardly get eligible score in language tests. Those who acquire good score in English language are potential to explore sources of knowledge mostly texted in English language.

Out-migration of youths stops innovation that as viewed by Kunwar and Ulak (2023) captures multiple reciprocal relationships at different points in the process of knowledge capitalization (p.1). Knowledge production, innovation and entrepreneurship are adversely affected by exodus of laborious, energetic and intuitive youths. It opens the space for low-grade and average products. The government policy for brain gain is limited only in plan documentation; not effective to engage talents within Nepal. Innovation using new generation in present context is going farther amidst increasing out migration.

**g) The psychological cost**

Leaving behind familiar faces and stepping into a new culture can trigger feelings of isolation and loneliness. Language barriers and social cues are definitely confusing, leading to frustration and a sense of being misunderstood to some. Academic pressure, the need to excel

in a new environment, coupled with potential financial strain, can create anxiety and stress. Students grapple with feelings of inadequacy, especially if comparing themselves to peers from more privileged backgrounds. The field data shows that 62.7% have family members and 82.7 % have friends in the destination countries. These networks help them manage the problem. Regarding the earning while study, 10.9% respondents were found anticipating being self-dependent. In line with this theme, one of the students expressed,

*I have hardly prepared food myself. I do not like cooking either. My mother is so fond of feeding me a variety of dishes. If I fly, I will miss my mother most. I know I am disappointed with my mother deciding to study abroad. But my career matters more.*

Some respondents were found very positive to explore challenges that would foster resilience and independence. Embracing the new culture broadens perspectives and fosters personal growth. Successes in academics and social integration bring a surge of confidence and self-esteem. Given these optimistic sides, migration trend is increasing. The psychological impact depends on the individual's ability to adapt and the support systems available. Amidst these challenges, students dream of thriving and reaping the immense benefits of an international education. The dreams of the potential migrant students surpass the reality they would face in destination countries.

Student migration is a double-edged sword. While it benefits individual students greatly, Nepal grapples with the loss of skilled minds. Studying at well-equipped universities abroad offers exposure to advanced teaching methods, industry-relevant curriculum, and cutting-edge research, giving students a competitive edge. Students experience diverse cultures, gain new perspectives, and develop valuable communication and interpersonal skills. From the career prospects, prestigious international degrees often open doors to better career opportunities, both abroad and upon returning to Nepal.

At the same time there are numerous challenges, Nepal faces due to this migration. Nepal loses its highly skilled youth, potential leaders, and innovators. This can hamper economic growth and development as there are fewer qualified professionals to drive key sectors. Students who do not return home after studies contribute less to Nepal's knowledge base and development efforts. The families and Nepalese economy bear huge financial burden and capital flight. Financing overseas education is a strain on families. To mitigate these negative impacts, policies encouraging knowledge transfer can help to a great extent.

## 4.2 Discussion

Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies is multi-dimensional and multi-faceted entwined with various aspects. The push-pull theory (Lee, 1966) highlights factors like limited educational opportunities in Nepal (push) and prestigious universities abroad (pull) that influence a student's decision. Rational choice theory (Todaro, 1970; Borjas, 1980) suggests students weigh the costs (tuition, living expenses) and benefits (career prospects) of studying abroad. Social network theory (Massey, 1987; Wilson, 1994) explores the links and ties of kinship and friendship in origin and destination countries. Nepalese youth migration is motivated by these and other theories. The out migration of students is perceived by students, guardians and other persons of society very seriously. The trend of going abroad for studies is increasing every year. It has compelled all in Nepal to contemplate on this issue. From an individual (micro level), macro level (family) to state level (macro level), impacts of student's migration are very striking.

This discussion part has been based on the findings illustrated in the above sections. The statistical findings, the views of students, experts and KIIs are embedded to analyze the migration trend and its potential impacts in Nepal. A type of triangulation is made integrating both the kinds of data in this section. Presenting data within different sub sections explaining and analyzing them, the study has scrutinized trending out-migration of youths.

### 4.2.1 Quality education/globally accepted degree

Quality education is the quest of new generation. They seek such degree which is acceptable globally. Though Nepal has been increasing the annual budget in education, it has not been able to stop the out migration. During data collection, most of the students viewed that they were not getting opportunity to study the subject of their choices. The global ranking of universities of Nepal is far behind in international educational standard. The views of guardians regarding quality education were similar to the students' ones. Survey data shown in Table 4.2 depicted that 40% of the respondents viewed quest for quality education as a push factor in youth migration. Likewise, Table 4.3 showed that 48.2% of the respondents found quality education in the universities abroad as pull factors. In line to this finding, the views of guardians and KIIs further interpreted that students of this generation need globally accepted degree that is not available in Nepal. So, trend of leaving Nepal in the quest of quality education is increasing.

#### **4.2.2 Lack of opportunities and underemployment**

Nepal is facing dire unemployment and underemployment. Though, the official data shows that unemployment rate in Nepal in 2023 is only 10.92% (O'Neill, 2024). It is very difficult to afford the expenditure by the salary in Nepal. The demands of new generation are high. Even if one gets employment, he is not satisfied with the income. The parents shared that their employed children left the job and chose abroad study to earn more. The survey data (Table 4.2) depicted that 41% highest in number chose the lack of opportunities as prime factor of out migration. Working for the similar, time youths earn quite more amount of income in developed countries.

#### **4.2.3 Tendency of going abroad**

The age of globalization has affected the youths massively in Nepal. Access to information and knowledge has made youth aware of the opportunities around the world. The aspirations and capacities as viewed by de Haas et al. (2020) motivate youths for migration. Dreaming of the better job, happier life and more income in the developed world attracts them towards migration.

The age group 18-22 was found in the greatest number in survey with 24% males and 14% females. 22-26 was the second age highest group. Number of males was found dominant in out migration. In the trend, Bagmati province had the highest number and Karnali the lowest. It showed that the capacity and knowledge about study abroad is influencing student migration. Students from all provinces were found trying for abroad studies. McGill (2013) has viewed that international migration is a complex engagement of personal motivations, economic prospects, geopolitical factors, and cultural transitions. Nepalese youth migration is also multifaceted and increasing every year.

#### **4.2.4 The psychological pressure**

For many Nepalese families, abroad studies are associated with social prestige. Going abroad is not only the quest of knowledge but also the quest of social status and recognition. Studying abroad is being more knowledgeable and more competent. The respondent viewed that they sold their lands to send their children for abroad studies. The survey data showed that the guardians of 41% respondents had encouraged their children for the abroad studies. Some viewed that studying in Nepal evinced inferiority complex in children. So, they were

found trying time and again for the visa if rejected. Because of this tendency, neither do they want to work in Nepal after study. In line with this view, Smith (2006) stated that once they come back to their home country; they are more inclined to go abroad because they feel dignified there.

#### **4.2.5 Networks abroad**

Family and friend networks abroad in the case of Nepalese youth migration has played a significant role. These networks act as a social support system, offering guidance, accommodation assistance, and a sense of familiarity in a new environment. Taylor (1986) and Dutta (2017) had found that networks encourage migration. Existing connections have eased the transition process, reducing anxieties about cultural differences, academics, and daily life. Respondents viewed that, with established networks, they felt more confident navigating the application process. These networks they thought provides emotional support, combating feelings of loneliness and homesickness that are common when they leave home.

The survey data (Figure 4.1.8) manifested that 62.7 % of the respondents had family networks and 82.7 % had friends abroad. Students know about the lifestyles of the people in developed countries via different sources. The survey data found that 38.20% of the students were informed by friends; likewise, 28.20% by electronic media, 15.50% by parents. Teachers also have nominal role: 4.5%. Newspapers cover only 1.8%, the least in survey. It explicates that migration trend is more influenced by friend networks and social/electronic media. Overall, family and friend networks abroad act as a bridge between the home country Nepal and destination countries, influencing student decisions and promoting successful adaptation to studying abroad.

#### **4.2.6 Motivating factors**

Various factors work in migration process. Stouffer (1940) found that intervening opportunities cause migration. Todaro (1970) opined that the rational economic considerations influence migration. Likewise, Taylor (1986) and Massey (1998) had found that networks encourage migration. In the context of Nepalese youth, all these theories are found implied. They are lured by the lifestyles they see in the photos posted on social medias; their senior students share fascinating narratives. They groom amorphous dreams regarding the life in destination countries. These help youngsters plan to migrate at any cost. In micro level, as described by Todaro (1970), individual values and expectations determine

the decisions. Behind this decision, personal freedom, social status, stimulation, autonomy, and affiliation are associated.

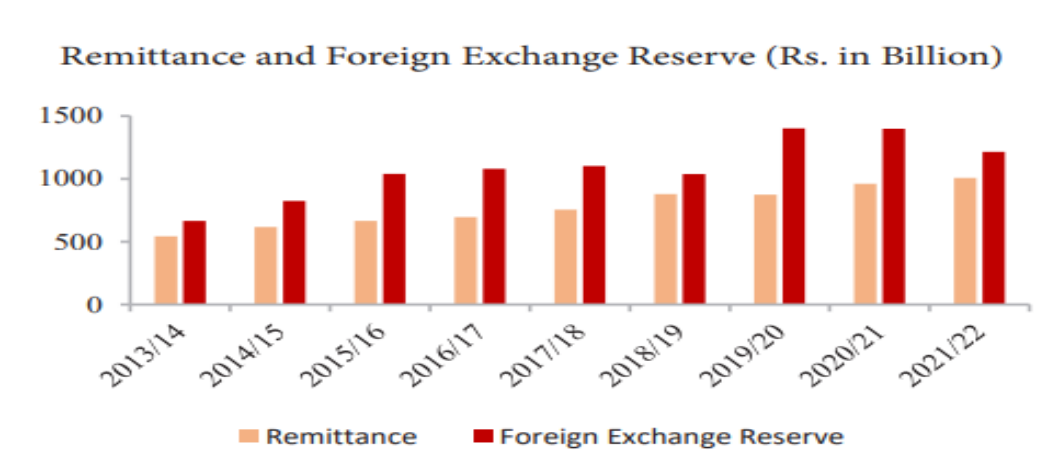
The survey data (Figure 4.9) presented that (62%) of the respondents were motivated by themselves. Likewise, motivating factors such as family (14%), friends (13%), relatives (5%), teacher (5%) and other (1%), found. All these are directly or indirectly associated with economics. Some guardians shared that sending their children abroad is like an investment. After their children go abroad, they become self-dependent and rather they start sending some portion of their income to parents. In this sense, abroad study is calculative.

#### 4.2.7 Economic impact of migration

Every year, the number of students choosing abroad studies is increasing. In the last five years, 404,139 took NOC as per the data of NOC Section of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. In 2023 alone 110,217 students took NOC. All students taking NOC may not fly. General secretary of Educational Consultancy Association of Nepal (ECAN) stated that about 80,000 students went for abroad studies in 2023. A large amount of foreign reserve drains out due to this abroad study. In 2022-23, Nepal sent 75 billion NPR for abroad studies in different countries. The figure below presents relational data of remittance and foreign reserve from 2013 to 2022.

**Figure 4.14**

*Remittance and foreign exchange reserve*



*Source:* Reciprocity of remittance and foreign exchange reserve. Adapted from (Ministry of Finance, [MOF, 2023], Economic Survey of 2022/23.

The above figure presents the overall remittance Nepal received. It clarifies that if remittance decreases foreign exchange reserve will also decrease. Nepal earns very small portion of GDP from industrial sector. Its export sector, in 2023, covered only 13% means that Nepal is losing its potential productivity and investment. Nepal is turning towards a customer-country. that could be used to develop the country.

The survey data (Figure 4.7) exhibited that students of the business family were in higher number 34.9%. It shows the capability of parents to spend in abroad study. Students from teacher families were in the minimum range 8.3%. As defined by capability and aspiration theory of de Haas (2020), those who possess the capability migrate. And Figure 4.10 illustrated that parents (60%) afford the expenditure of abroad studies and family members or relative abroad (27.3%), the second bearer. The capital of capable is draining out due to abroad study. That amount if spent within Nepal could ignite multiplier effect in economy.

Nepal gets 24% national income from remittance [MOF, 2023]. The contribution of students alone is also included in this amount. During the interview, I found that personally all were happy with the out migration of their children because they sent money for the family but all were worried regarding the sustainable income sources of Nepal. The KIIs indicated that Nepal will face appalling dependency and one day, Nepal will be a consumer country. In 2023, the contribution of industrial sector is about 13% in GDP. Having assessed this economic impact, the study found that Nepal's economic dependency will increase in the years to come if this out-migration is not addressed in time.

#### **4.2.8 Brain-drain**

The exodus of talented, energetic, and skilled human resources poses long lasting negative impacts in Nepal. In the scarcity of innovative and creative youths, entrepreneurship will be crippled in the economy. Nepal is increasing the budget in boosting the quality education. The more the government is allocating budget in education, the more students are going for abroad studies. The policies and execution are not aligned. As seen in survey data, (Figure 4.4), 51% of the respondents are first division holders and 23% are distinction holders in PCL level. More capable and more competent youth easily get visa permit or scholarships for abroad studies. Colleges are facing the appalling dropout rates. About 50 percent student leave the college by the end of the last semester in Bachelor level in most of the colleges in

Kathmandu valley (Ghimire, 2024). The table below depicts the latest data of education budget and issuance of NOC within the period of twelve years.

**Table 4.4**

*Number of students taking NOC for abroad studies*

Fiscal year (BS)	Budget allocated in education	No. of NOC issued
2068/69	46 Arab	10, 258
2069/70	57 Arab	16, 499
2070/71	64 Arab	28, 025
2071/72	63 Arab	30,696
2072/73	80 Arab	32,489
2073/74	87 Arab	50,649
2074/75	99 Arab	58, 758
2075/76	1 Kharab 34 Arab	63, 249
2076/77	1 Kharab 63 Arab	34, 094
2077/78	1 Kharab 71 Arab	27, 978
2078/79	1 Kharab 80 Arab	1, 17, 563
2079/80	1 Kharab 96 Arab	1, 10, 217
2080/81	1 Kharab 97 Arab	-----

*Source:* Adapted from Rauniyar (2023)

The data depicts the increasing number of students going for abroad studies despite increased budget allocation in education. The out-migrating students, as Upadhyay (2017) found, left the country for better future and better career. That hampers overall economy and hinders the

development of the country. Immediate effect in college with the lack of brilliant students instigates long term impacts in innovation, entrepreneurship and many more sectors. Out-migration of talent youths stops innovation. According to Kunwar and Ulak (2023), this phenomenon captures multiple reciprocal relationships at different points in the process of knowledge capitalization. Knowledge production, innovation and entrepreneurship are adversely affected by exodus of laborious, energetic and intuitive youths resulting in long lasting negative impacts.

Foreign Policy-2077, under Section 8.15, in No. 2 enumerates strategy and procedure to promote and contribute in aligning the skilled emigrants in Brain Gain Centre (BGC). But the result is not satisfactory. And it takes a long time to prepare human resources. Thus, this trend in all micro, meso and macro level will instigate long term impacts in Nepal.

#### **4.2.9 The loss of cultural identity**

By increasing out-migration Nepal is prone to loss of cultural identity. The offsprings of migrated generation will not assimilate Nepali culture. It will create a distance between their relatives and family members in Nepal and themselves. This will imbalance Nepalese cultural harmony. Cultural identity is existential identity. Nepal exists in its own distinct cultural norms and values. The people of destinations countries generally treat migrants as outsiders.

As per About Nepal (2023), 3,40,369 Nepalese left Nepal; 1,08,542 were the students among them. The students hardly return. Even if they return, they cannot stay and work in chaotic system of Nepal. As expounded by Harris and Todaro (1970), low salary (underemployment) is seen a prime drive for migration in the study. It is very hard first to bring back to Nepal and the next to retain them in the job. So, probability of migrants' return is nominal. Globalization sounds good for economic perspectives but culturally it disintegrates the culturally bounded people. In the case of Nepalese youth migration, new generation will face identity crisis after being disconnected from traditional practices, language and heritage.

The pressure to assimilate in new cultural environment in distant lands can create a feeling of being "in-between" cultures, neither fully Nepali nor fully integrated into the host society. One hope there that studying abroad can also foster a deeper appreciation for Nepali culture through comparison and self-reflection. If youths return with a broader perspective, it can potentially enrich Nepali society with newfound knowledge and skills. But contemplating Nepal's politico-economic condition, youths hardly return to Nepal.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses summary and conclusion. Trending migration of students for abroad studies has attracted a discourse in national level. Some studies have been made previously but many spheres of this migration are yet unexplored. In the context of Nepal, the appalling impacts of this out-migration phenomenon are anticipated. This study has made a thorough examination of student migration exploring the main causes (push-pull factors), interpreting the perceptions of students and guardians and assessing or anticipating the impacts from various perspectives. This study has adopted eclectic way of analysis and interpretation.

#### 5.1 Summary

The study covers Nepal's Nepalese student's migration for abroad studies. In the last 5 years 404,139 students took NOC and in 2023, 110,217 students took NOC. Having found the increasing trend of out-migration for abroad studies and having anticipated its impacts to a developing country like Nepal, I decided to conduct a study in this phenomenon. After identifying the statement of problem of the study, the research questions and objectives, were developed. The main purpose of this study is to explain and analyze Nepalese student out-migration for abroad studies and analyze the potential impacts in various sectors. To explain the migration trend and analyze the impacts, I have presented the perceptions of students and parents/guardians from the perspective of push-pull factors in the study.

I framed out the study in three research questions to guide the whole analysis of this study. They are; (1) What are the causes (push-pull factors) of youth migration to foreign countries for higher studies? (2) How do Nepalese youths and guardians perceive the out-migration of Nepalese youths for abroad studies? (3) What outcomes and impacts do the Nepalese youth migration instigate in Nepal?

The research question one was based on quantitative and sequential qualitative analysis; questions two and three focused on qualitative analysis. So, qualitative approach is dominant in the study. A conceptual framework aligning with major theoretical model was developed in guiding the being of the study under the chapter two, review of literature. Chapter three encompasses research methodology. Both primary and secondary data were used in the study. Adopted eclecticism, this mixed methods study has used 110 responses of questionnaires, 17

interviews of students from PCL to Master level, 11 interviews of guardians/ parents including 3 KIIs and two case studies in fulfilling the requirement of primary data. For secondary data, I visited university libraries, online databases and websites to obtain pertinent literature. Chapter four is the analysis part of this study. The findings based on three respective research questions and their subsequent discussions have been made.

Research question one deals with causes (push-pull factors) of student migration. The findings from quantitative data (110 responses of questionnaires) were cross checked and verified by the findings of qualitative data. The coding of the data, both deductive and thematic were conducted. The survey found lack of employment opportunities (earnings) in Nepal and underemployment, the most dominant (41%) push factor and lack of quality education (40%) in the second factor. Other push factors were found lack of choice of subjects, discriminations against scholarship, global ranking of university, career prospects etc. The students and their guardians weigh benefits as well as cost of migration. The capability of the students determines the migration.

The education-related aspirations equipped with capabilities as defined by de Haas et al. (2020) are found in this phenomenon. The survey found that 66% of the potential students had studied in private schools. The highest in number 34.9% of them were from business family. 60% of those respondents stated that their parents would afford their abroad study. Network of family members and friends has facilitated student migration to a great extent. The survey data shows that 82.7% of respondents had friend network and 62.7% have family network.

As pull-factors for abroad study, the study found that 58 of 110 respondents chose it for quality education and 37 of 110 chose employment opportunities. Their subsequent priority after study was seen employment. Other pull factors were quality education, practical education, reputed university, globally recognized degrees, education-friendly environment, application of higher education, and advanced research facilities abroad. Potential students expressed expectations and aspirations equally. It was influenced by both economic and non-economic factors. They found abroad cost effective; more like an investment.

The second research question is about the perception of students and guardians regarding abroad study. I approached students in colleges and NOC Branch Office in Sanothimi, Bhaktapur, 17 students, for interviews to understand and explore their perception. Most of

them had a mentality to leave Nepal for betterment. In the words of Acharya (2012), *Bidesh Padhna Janne Lahar* (a tendency of abroad studies). Especially for PCL level students, to go abroad was the solution of all problems in Nepal. Of the respondents, 27.3% had tried for abroad before and 72.7% were first timers. Reasons of choosing abroad universities and colleges are diverse. The study found that student's core motive of leaving Nepal is economic factor in the present context one way or other.

Students (respondents) were seen dissatisfied with the present situation of Nepal. Even after the new political system, federalism, no substantial economic upliftment is seen in Nepal, neither are seen any upcoming improvements. Psychological pressure on students seeing friends and kins abroad is rampant among potential students. They also wanted to live similar life. Unemployment and underemployment are disappointing new generation. They assess the salary in Nepal and abroad with needs. Lack of quality education is perceived one of main push factors. The ranking of universities of Nepal is not recognized in international arena. Another prominent factor is work and study opportunities abroad. Work permit of certain hours help them manage their expenditure. Students do not get this type of environment in Nepal.

The perceptions of guardians regarding abroad studies were taken into account in the study. At present, parents of those whose children were already abroad were found happy with quality education, better job opportunities, better and reliable social securities, better earning and many more. But when taking of Nepal's future, family and social responsibilities, their faces faded. They were not sure what the next would be. The survey found that the parent's role to motivate for abroad study was only 15.5%. 42% of the respondents stated that their parents did not encourage them. 17% were found neutral. But 41% encouraged. In general guardians expressed that happiness of their children was their happiness.

Guardians were found well aware of that new generation could not be confined in Nepal with in the conditions of rampant unemployment, underemployment, low salary, unnecessary administrative intricacies and corruption. Sending abroad to their children, for some parents, is like investment. After sending child abroad, they do not need to further invest on him or her. Some felt psychological pressure when they could not send their child for abroad study. Abroad study is seen as social status in Nepalese society.

Whatever different perceptions of guardians, all had a meeting point regarding the brain drain of Nepal. The exodus of talented, energetic, and skilled human resources has worried in intellectual cum policy level. The population of Nepal is decreasing. The age of bearing child of couples is increasing. According to Department of Immigration [MOHA], 70,915 left Nepal for after they obtained permanent residency abroad. Youths, excepts some business families, hardly return to Nepal and work. Later on, they permanently shift in the destination countries. In individual level, most of the parents of very migrated students were happy. But regarding the future of the family legacy and the future of Nepal, they were worried.

The third research question deals with the impacts of student migration. The multi-faceted impacts are both positive and negative. From an individual (micro level), meso level (family) to state level (macro level), impacts of student's migration are worth counting. The study observed the immediate impacts in colleges and universities. Some Colleges of Kathmandu Valley are facing 50% dropout by the fourth semester in Bachelor level (Ghimire, 2024). Nepal is not only losing skilled manpower but foreign currency. In 2022-23, Nepal sent 75 billion NPR for abroad studies in different countries. This type of capital flight is hampering economy.

Loss of cultural identity is another irreparable impact. The offsprings of migrants are exposed to new cultures and ways of life that can distance them from their Nepali roots. This weakens Nepal's social fabric. When generation crosses, there remains none to teach them culture. Children of migrants have no interests in their ancestral culture for they are not groomed with it. Likewise, an appalling indication of brain drain, lack of competitive human resources, impacts of remittance and technology causing dependency, lack of innovation, and psychological cost of migration are prime impacts. Massive chain effects are instigated due to student migration.

Eventually, the findings and discussions of are focused in educational opportunities (recognized degrees) abroad. Agenda hidden behind was found to be earning along with work and study opportunities in the destination. The main determinants of migration were employment opportunities and quality education. The findings from quantitative data were crosschecked and verified by the findings of qualitative data. The perceptions of potential students and guardians helped explore the migration phenomena. Impacts of youth migrations to the low-income country like Nepal are irreparable.

## 5.2 Conclusion

Student migration phenomenon, in Nepal, started since 1910 (Edusanjal, 2022). Nepalese student's abroad study also was considered as an investment theory of demand as viewed by Tuckman (1970). The trend of abroad study in quest of knowledge in foreign countries has been increasing continuously. In 2023, 110,217 students took NOC (Ghimire, 2024). The major destination countries were found Australia, Canada, Japan, UK, and USA, though Nepalese youth have gone to about 80 countries for studies (Personal Communication, 2024).

The main causes of student migration were found stimulated by educational as well as economic causes. Employment opportunities after obtaining quality education (globally accepted degree), availability of choices of subject, sophisticated lab and research facilities, in destination countries were seen pulling students for abroad studies. Additionally, social networks as defined by Taylor (1986) facilitate the migration. In the context of Nepal, unemployment in Nepal even if employed in a great problem for new generation. The "bidesh jaane lahar" as discussed by Acharya (2012), is imposing psychological and social pressure in both students and guardians.

Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies has posed both positive and negative impacts in Nepal. Outcomes are positive. In 2023, remittance covered 24% of the national income. Economic status of thousands of families has been uplifted due to abroad studies and subsequent employment. Impacts like brain drain, capital flight, loss of cultural and psychological losses have posed negative impacts. The destination countries are always in benefit. This eclectic study conducted in Kathmandu valley explored the causes of this phenomenon, interpreted the perceptions of students and guardians and analyzed the impacts in Nepal.

International migration is a complex engagement of personal motivations, economic prospects, geopolitical factors, and cultural transitions (McGill, 2013). Nepalese youth migrations are also motivated by numbers of factors and individual cum social factors. Every family in Nepal prefers to send their children for abroad studies. They seek and enjoy opportunities in various manifestations such as better employment, higher living standards, a luring lifestyle, stability and social securities. The youths see abroad study and then job opportunities in destination countries a fascinating idea. So, capable ones and those who can manage try for abroad study.

Nepalese youth migration for abroad studies in 2023, as per the Educational Consultancy Association of Nepal, has spanned over 80 countries. According to Brooks and Waters (2011, as cited in Acharya, 2012), globalization (neo-liberalism) drives much student mobility. Abroad studies are also commercialized at this time. Destination countries receiving students earn billions of dollars by selling education services to international students but origin countries like Nepal bear huge economic loss. The study showed that pull factors dominated the push factors. Students' capability and aspirations as defined by de Haas et al. (2020) were seen implied in Nepalese context. And respondents were found taking migration as investment and returns on education.

Regarding the migration worldwide, Lawder (2023) quoted World Bank's Senior Managing Director Axel Van Trotsenburg's saying that "migration can be a powerful force for prosperity and development. When it is managed properly, it provides benefits for all people in origin and destination societies." Remittance has uplifted the living standard of many families in Nepal. Globalization impacts of are spread to every corner of the globe.

Given the increasing trend of student migration, a worry of brain drain is appalling. If brilliant and capable youths leave Nepal, who will improve the present condition. Comparatively more competent, laborious and innovative youths' out migration will result in scarcity of skilled human resources. A vicious cycle of low-quality education, low quality administration, low quality service will further deteriorate whole state mechanism. Having anticipated the potential awful situation, the KIIs suggested to stop derailing as soon as possible.

Nepal's Foreign Policy-2077, under Section 8.15, in No. 2 enumerates strategy and procedure to promote and contribute in aligning the skilled emigrants in Brain Gain Centre (BGC). Thus, the brain drain can be managed by brain gain and brain trade. The government policies should generate opportunities and create conducive working environment for talents within Nepal. Educational institutions need to update the curricula and other academic systems, if possible, making them innovative. If not, it should be modified to align with international standard. To prepare the capable and competent future leaders and all stakeholders, the conducive policies to engage and stop youths in Nepal must be implemented as soon as possible (S. Rawat, personal communication, May 23, 2024).

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

Refers to page no. 35

#### PARTICIPANTS AND RESPONDENTS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

Students participated in survey questionnaires				
Number of respondents	Female	Male	Other	Age group
39	15	24	0	18-22
34	11	22	1	22-26
22	9	13	0	26-30
9	4	5	0	30-34
4	1	3	0	34-38
2	0	2	0	38-40
Total-110				
Students participating in interviews:				
Number of participants	Female	Male	Other	Age group
9	4	5	0	18-22
5	3	2	0	22-26
3	1	2	0	30-34
Total-17				
Guardians, consultants and KIIs:				
Number of participants	Female	Male	Category	
5	1	4	Guardians/ Parents	
3	1	2	Consultants	
3	1	1	KII	
Total-11				

**Appendix B**

Refers to Chapter IV

**SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS****(QUESTIONNAIRE)**

Name (Optional) .....

Age: .....

Tick any one of the following:

1. Gender: (a) Male (b) Female (c) Other
2. Permanent provincial home address:
  - (a) Koshi (b) Madhesh (c) Bagmati (d) Gandaki (e) Lumbini
  - (f) Karnali (g) Sudurpashchim
3. Caste: (a) Brahmin (b) Chhetree (c) Aadibasi (d) Dalit (e) Other
4. Mention the type of school/ College where you studied proficiency certificate level /10 +2 / A level.
  - (a) Govt. funded (b) Community (c) Private (Boarding) (d) Other
5. Where did you complete your proficiency certificate level/ 10+2 / A level?
  - (a) Koshi (b) Madhesh (c) Bagmati (d) Gandaki
  - (e) Lumbini (f) Karnali (g) Sudurpashchim
6. What is your division in the proficiency certificate level /10 +2 / A level?
  - (a) Distinction (b) First (c) Second (d) Pass
7. What was your faculty (area of study) in proficiency certificate level/ 10+2/ A level?
  - (a) Nursing (b) Pure science (c) Management (d) Engineering (e) Health

- (f) Education (h) Forestry (i) Economics (j) Other
8. What is the occupation of your parents/ guardians?
- (a) Farmer (b) Government service (c) Business (d) Teacher (e) Other
9. How did you come to know about abroad study programme?
- (a) Friends (b) Parents (c) Teachers (d) Electronic media  
(e) Newspaper (f) Other (mention)
10. Who advised you to go for abroad studies?
- (a) Parents (b) Myself (c) Teacher/ Professors (d) Friends  
(e) Relatives (f) Other (mention)
11. Who will bear the cost of your abroad study?
- (a) Parents (b) Family members/Relatives in foreign countries (c) Scholarship  
(d) Earnings abroad (e) Other (mention).....
12. Which country are you planning to go to?
- (a) USA (b) Australia (c) UK (d) Japan (e) European countries  
(f) Other countries (mention).....
13. Had you tried for any abroad studies to any countries before?
- (a) Yes (b) No
14. Do your family members live in foreign countries?
- (a) Yes (b) No
15. Do your friends live in foreign countries?
- (a) Yes (b) No
16. Are you thinking to return to Nepal after completion of your studies?
- (a) Yes (b) No (c) Uncertain

17. Do your parents encourage you to go for abroad studies?
- (a) Yes (b) No (c) They stay neutral; comply with my decision
18. Tick the following reasons that forced or pushed you for abroad studies.
- (a) Lack of quality of education in Nepal
- (b) Lack of employment opportunities (earnings) in Nepal
- (c) Choice of subjects are not offered in colleges in Nepal
- (d) Outdated or not reformed Curricula
- (e) No career prospects in Nepal
- (f) Frequent strikes (Hadtals) in campus in Nepal
- (g) Discrimination against scholarship
- (h) Discrimination against gender in college/campus
- (i) Prestige will be enhanced in Nepal if I study abroad
- (j) Because I have an excellent academic performance (higher marks)
- (k) Other (mention).....
19. Tick the following reasons that attracted/pulled you for abroad studies.
- (a) Quality education in foreign country
- (b) Employment opportunities and higher earnings abroad
- (c) Experienced and friendly professors
- (d) Reputed universities abroad
- (e) Availability of choice subjects
- (f) Chances of getting scholarship or subsidized fees

- (g) Multinational classmates
- (h) Democratic government and freedom
- (i) Security and social security measures
- (j) Developed countries with high per capita income
- (k) Other (mention).....

(INTERVIEW QUESTIONS)

- 20. What is the quality of education in your opinion?  
.....
- 21. What are your expectations of going for abroad studies?  
.....
- 22. What reforms are needed in higher education in Nepal so that students may continue to study in Nepal rather than going abroad?  
.....
- 23. How will your abroad study support Nepal?  
.....
- 24. How do you perceive staying abroad or returning to Nepal after study?  
.....
- 25. Do you have anything else to say/comments?  
.....

Date: April, 2024

**Appendix C**

Refers to Chapter IV

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS/ GUARDIANS/ CONSULTANTS AND KIIs**

1. In your opinion, what is the quality of education?  
.....
2. What are the aspirations of migrant students in life in the context of going abroad for higher education?  
.....
3. Now Nepal has also many colleges that impart education, even then why do students go to other countries for higher studies?  
.....
4. What are factors affecting quality in higher education in Nepal?  
.....
5. What are the positive and negative aspects of going abroad for higher studies?  
.....
6. What is your opinion about youths' intention to study abroad?  
.....
7. What are the improvements needed for reforming higher education in Nepal so that students may continue to study here rather than going abroad?  
.....
8. How do the parents/guardians manage the expenditure for the education of their children abroad?  
.....
9. Most of the students do not return to Nepal even after they finish their abroad studies, how do you perceive this situation?  
.....
10. Please, mention if you have any more to suggest.  
.....

Contact/Email: .....

Date- April, 2024