Population Crisis and Employment Opportunities for Immigrants: A Case of Current Issue

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INTRODUCTION

Migration, a process of human dynamism, is not a new phenomenon in the history of world population. Throughout it's history, people have been on competitive move for better economic opportunities .creating multi-dimension effects either positive or. negative where it occurs. The greatest migration took place in European countries between 1820 and 1930. During that period millions of people made the long journey from Europe to America and a smaller movement of people also took place in Asia.[1] Most people moved as a result of "push" and "pull" factors. The push factors were poor living conditions, shortage of land, or lack of religious and political freedoms and the pull factors were attraction to new lands, hope for the better way of life and new economic opportunities. For some people migration was largely involuntary, either they did not want to move or they had very little choice.

The push and pull factors may not be applicable as an exact within countries and regions and may vary. So the traditional migration factors may differ significant than that of modern one. It differs in developed and underdeveloped countries too. The developed countries- United States, Canada, Árgentina, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand whose national destinies were so strongly influenced by the millions of immigrants they received.[2] But immigrants are more burdensome in underdeveloped countries. In these countries efforts of economic development are paralised.

Though, a huge amount of investment is also being done with a greatest support of different international agencies to get rid of the problems of maladjustment, hunger, disease and malnutrition but are not still wiped out. And the most problematic factory for economic development has become the population growth. It has not only quiescenter the development efforts of the country but also has created different bottlenecks.

Nepal, a country of different bottlenecks, has also faced the problems of population growth. In a very short period of time she has an experience of different population growth rate. In between 1911-1920,

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population decreased by around 65 thousand and by 41 thousand in between 1920 and 1930. The average annual growth rate of population stood at 2.3 percent between 1941 and 1952/54 but again it increased to 1.6 percent in between 1952/54 and 1961. The average growth rate between 1961 and 1971 and 1981 is 2.1 percent and 2.7 percent respectively. This is an alarming development of Nepalese population. If the present growth rate remains the same it will take 26 years for doubling her population. This population growth rate is less than the growth rate of Middle-East and African countries and slightly ahead than the growth rate for Asian countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan and Philippines.

There is an uneven population growth rate in three ecological regions: the terai region recorded the highest growth rate of 4.2 percent followed by the Hill regions 1.7 percent and Mountain regions 1.1 percent. Out of total population: Mountain region accounts for 8.67 percent, Hill region 47-68 percent and the remaining percentage is in Terai region.

There is not a single reasonable factor that has caused the rapid population growth of Nepal. The multiple causes are equally responsible for the rapidity of the rate of population growth. Higher birth rate, decrease in the death rates and the rate of international migration, especially immigration, are the main variable which have been helping for the rapid growth of population.

The increasing trend of migration from rural to urban areas, the out going Nepalese people and the people from neighbouring country for better jobs and better economic opportunities have been the series of current issues in different academic forums in recent years. The volume of Nepalese immigration to India and Indian immigration to Nepal as a supply and demand for labour force in solving the problem of labour shortage in time of labour deficit seasons has increased in recent years. The terms and conditions that are mentioned in different agreement between Nepal and India in different time periods allow the exodus and influx of the people. Nepal, being a population exporting country for centuries, is not able to shoulder the influx of immigrants. The munificence towards immigrants bound to the social, economic, political and religious limitations of nation in the long run.

. METHODOLOGY

The objective of this paper is to analyse population crisis and employment opportunities for immigrants in Nepal. For this purpose the growth rate of population and the growth rates of five other economic indicators have been calculated by using cobb-douglas production function in semi-log form. The computed growth model is in the form $y = Ab^t$:

Where, $b = (1 + r)$

and r = percentage growth rate.

Here all economic indicators are taken as dependent variables and time is taken as an independent variable. The data are used for the period of 14 years from the fiscal year 1972/73 to 1985/86 (Table 1).

Table 1
Some Major Economic Indicators
(1971/72-1985-86)

Year	Population in Million	GDP Rs. in Million at Current Market Price	Food Grain Production Index Base (1972/73 100)	Overall Price Index Base (1972/73 = 100)	Development Expenditure Rs. in Million)	Amount of Foreign Aid (Rs. in Million)
1972/73	11.86	9969	100	100	608.6	173.03
1973/74	12.18	12808	112.5	118.2	751.5	257.6
1974/75	12.50	16571	114.2	138.0	967.2	346.1
1975/76	12.84	17394	118.2	137.0	1238.9	505.6
1976/77	13.18	17280	112.1	140.7	1498.3	556.9
1977/78	13.53	19732	108.7	156.4	1742.5	632.0
1978/79	13.89	22252	110.4	161.8	1978.9	989.4
1979/80	14.26	23351	97.3	177.6	2308.6	1340.5
1980/81	14.63	29073	115.8	201.4	2731.1	1562.2
1981/82	15.02	30988	120.5	222.4	3726.9	1723.2
1982/83	15.42	33761	101.3	254.0	4982.1	2075.9
1983/84	15.83	38184	129.8	269.8	5163.8	2547.5
1984/85	16.25	41738	127.4	280.9	5488.6	2676.4
1985/86*	16.68	49719	129.8	279.0	6730.0	4090.9
'A' Values**	11.5582	10278.82	104.26	98.169369	559.79516	174.7858
'B' Values**	1.0265581	1.116578	1.0116	1.0831839	1.2012722	1.255052
Growth-rate**	2.66%	11.66%	1.16%	8.32%	20.13%	25.05%

*Estimated.
Sources: Central Bureau of Statistics, HMG/N.

With the help of this time-series data the growth rate of major economic
indicators, such as: population, GDP, index of foodgrain production, over-
all price index, development expenditure and amount of foreign aid, have
been calculated. Time has taken as an artificial variable starting from
(1972/73 = 1) to n years.

To show the employment opportunities for immigrants, different sources
are quoted and datas are presented only in tabulated form.

Functional Relationship between Development Expenditure and Foreign Aid

Nepal has experienced a significant growth rate of development ex-
penditure from Rs. 608.8 million in the year 1972/73 to Rs. 6730 million
(estimated) in 1985/86. It has acquired a growth rate 20.13 percent
(Table 1), during the period of 14 years. Similarly the growth rate of
foreign aid also has increased significantly in the same period of time
and has acquired a growth rate of 25.5 percent. To indicate the relation-

ship between development expenditure and foreign aid here has been intro-
duced a model of constant elasticity or cobb-Douglas:

log (development expenditure) = log (a) + b log (amount of foreign
aid).

log y = log (1.0948702) + 0.7545659 log x

t - values   - (9.3996133)***

R^2 = .8804218,   F 1.12 = 88.352804***

(The figure in the parenthesis is t - value)

The Stars refer to the significance of the relevant statistic.

*** *(Three stars) indicate the significant at 1.1 probability level.

The amount of foreign aid has increased from Rs. 173.3 million in
1972/73 to Rs. 4090.9 million (estimated) in 1985/86. The contribution
of foreign aid to the government development expenditure has seemed
significant. The t-value on foreign aid is significant at 1 percent
probability level and the value of R^2 is high and F - test is also signi-
ficant at 1 percent probability level of significance. No doubt, foreign
aid has played a dominant role in Nepalese's economic development.

If 100 percent in the amount of foreign aid increases, only then
there will be an increase of 75.46 percent in the amount of development
expenditure. It indicates the dominance of foreign aid in Nepalese eco-
nomy. If the amount of foreign aid decreases what will be the result in
the development aspects of Nepalese economy ?

THE EFFECT OF GROWTH OF POPULATION

The effect of population growth must be viewed with the help of
several economic indicators. The growth rate of GDP at current market
price is 11.66 percent, whereas the growth rate of foodgrains production
index, overall price index, development expenditure and foreign aid is
1.16 percent, 8.32 percent, 20.13 percent and 25.05 percent respectively
(Table 1). The growth rate of GDP at current market price has been
sterilized by the growth of population (2.66 percent) as well as price
rise. The state of dependence in foreign aid in Nepalese   economic
development and insignificant growth of overall foodgrain production are
not being helpful to raise the living standard of the Nepalese people.

IMMIGRANT LABOURS IN DIFFERENT INDUSTRIES AND TOWN PANCHAYAT AREAS

Immigrant labours are found in each and every sector of the economy.
It is believed that 48.9 percent immigrants are found to be involved in
employment oriented jobs, 19.4 percent in trade and commerce, 12 percent
in relatives and family, 114 percent in education and 18.3 percent for

.other purposes.[3] They are from different countries, out of the total magnitude of immigrants 72 percent is Indian, 19 percent Chinese, 8 percent from European countries and the remaining 1 percent from other Asian countries.[4]

According to the population census of 1981 the Kathmandu valley constitutes the migration population of 8 percent, in which the estimated percentage of immigrants is 2.7 percent. The survey conductor in 1983 reported that the terai had 418,748 immigrants out of which 89.0 percent was concentrated in eastern and central terai only. The survey also reported that the annual growth of immigrants was 4.5 percent per year since 1958.[5]

Immigrants who are employed in industrial sectors are found more in terai regions than in the industrial sectors of Kathmandu and Pokhara valley.

Table 2 gives the number of immigrant labours in some selective industries.

Table 2
Number of Immigrant Labours Employed in Some Selective Industries

Industries	Nepalese labours	Non-Nepalese labours	Total	Percentage of immigrant labours
Jute	3474	2391	5865	40.8
Cigarette	1622	11	1633	0.7
Tea	3095	591	3686	16.0
Sugar	2366	329	2695	12.2
Match	968	156	1124	13.9
Textile	2671	337	3008	11.2
Soap & chemical	669	20	689	2.9
Total	14865	3835	18700	20.5

Source: Pitamber Sharma, Occasional Papers in the Humanities and Social Sciences, IOHSS, 1985, Vol. 2, Table 3, p. 83.

This data reflect that nearly 26 percent immigrant labours are employed in these industries.

Another source of information about immigrant labours is the different survey reports of labour market information. This work was conducted by HMG's Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Department of Labour Employment Research and Development Centre from different times in different town panchayats including their adjoining village panchayats of different districts. It has become the helpful statistics to provide

immigrant labour's involvement in different organised industrial sectors. This information is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Number of non-Nepalese Labours Employed in Different Town Panchayats and With Their Village Panchayats of Different Districts

Different Town Panchayats and with their village panchayats	Industrial units/firm units	Nepalese labours	Non-Nepalese labours	Total labours	Percentage of non-Nepalese labours
Dharan including Sunsari district –	–	176	83	259	32
Biratnagar –	15/–	5887	4657	4657	44
Birgunj –	11/75	3313	819	4132	20
Bharatpur –	6/24	152	26	178	15
Dhangadi –	6/11	341	210	551	38
Ilam & Jhapa –	2/11	2345	578	2923	25
Tea industries–					
Janakpur –	/10	1251	10	1261	0.8
Nepalgunj	/56	1175	525	1700	31
Lahan	/28	546	767	1313	58
Rajbiraj –	6/19	171	70	241	29
Tribhuvannagar–	4/21	162	122	284	43
Total –		15519	7867	23386	34

Sources: Department of Labour, Labour Market Information Survey Reports from 2038 to 2043.

    This table shows that out of total employed 23386 labours in orga-
nised industrial sectors nearly 34 percentage is found immigrant workers.
The concentration of immigrant labours is mostly found in brick, bidi,
rice and flouring,furniture, body making, jute, hosiery, loaf, printing
press and kattha industries. Extremely high immigrant workers are working
in the factories outside the industrial state in most of the town panchayat
areas. Seasonal influx of immigrant labours is reported mainly in agri-
cultural sector in times of sowing and harvesting seasons. Almost all
the town panchayat areas have reported the potentialities of providing
further employment prospects, if raw materials, financial aid and work-
shop facilities are easily available. Most of the industries and firms
require skilled and trained manpower. Due to the lack of trained and
skilled Nepalese labours, immigrant labours are getting employment oppor-
tunities. As the number of industrial units are being increased the

opportunities of employment for immigrant labours also increased, it is the case in most of the town panchayat areas.

Immigrant labours are not only employed in organised industrial sectors but they have also got equally working and earning chances in project works, house building in urban as well as rural areas of various town and village panchayats and infrastructure building activities in national level.

Besides these, immigrants are found to be involved in different earning activities such as: hair-dressers, shoe-polishers, cleaners, shoemakers, tailors, book-binders and contracts and commercial activities, specially in international market, they have dominantly made Nepal as a temporarily earning place.

CONCLUSION

The economy of Nepal is still on the path of fulfilling the basic needs. A huge number of unemployment and underemployment has existed throughout the country and a large number of new entrant is entering into the labour market every year. The development of economy is totally based on foreign aid and the growth rate of population has quiescented the development efforts of the country. A huge amount of investment is being made to control the growth of population but the efforts are unsuccessful. So, the Nepal is recognised as the state of population crisis. In such circumstances if the further expansion of employment opportunities in organised as well as unorganised sectors are fulfilled by immigrant labours, it will compelled to emigrate Nepalese labours in search of livelihood. The prevailing situation is that immigration has become the function of emigration which is a bad fact in national context.

FOOTNOTES

1. Rozina Visram (1987), People on the Move. Indians in Britain, B.T. Butsford Ltd. London, P. Foreword.

2. T. Lynn Smith and Paul E. Zopt. Jr. (1975), Demography: Principles and Methods, Alfred Publishing Co., INC; 75 Channel Drive, Port Washington, N.Y. 11050, p. 484.

3. NCP (1983), Report of Task Force on Internal and International Migration in Nepal. (Unpublished Translation), p. 11 (Preface).

4. Ibid.

5. Bal Kumar K.C. (1987),"Internal and International Migration in Nepal," The Economic Journal of Nepal, Vol. 10, No. 4, October-December, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 79-88.