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## International Migration in Nepal: Rates, Drivers and Impacts

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### **Keywords:**

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### **Abstract**

*Migration is the process of change in usual place of residence which is taking place both as internal and international having diverse short-term and long-term outcomes. This paper explores these outcomes by analyzing mainly the international migration rates and drivers in Nepal. Using the secondary sources of data, this paper first gives an account on how migration rate is calculated which is a rigorous process and for which authentic data are needed by utilizing the verified sources of data. The paper then highlights the social, demographic, economic, environmental and political drivers of migration. Some drivers primarily influence migration decision-making in the areas of origin while others influence them to pursue for betterment of life. Some more push and pull factors, mainly the disasters and conflicts as 'push' and growing student migration as 'pull' have also drawn a larger and growing attention of policy makers. Nepal being one of the labour sending countries to Malaysia and gulf countries makes its almost one-third of the economy through remittance. Problems related to livelihood and quest for life have been the usual phenomena which are analyzed in this article as drivers. The paper concludes that there is no association between the types of migration drivers and their impacts. Whatever the drivers are, Nepali people migrate to access improved economic and employment opportunities.*

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## Introduction

Migration is defined as the process of change in usual place of residence (IOM, 2019). With the growing development paradigms with regards to both infrastructure and technology migration is taking place both as internal and international and the outcomes of them are seen as long term and seasonal, diaspora, student migration, travel for family reunion and visits.

The factors that lead people to migrate, voluntarily or involuntarily, permanently or temporarily, and that perpetuate movement once it has begun, are commonly referred to as “drivers” of migration. People have always moved in search of better living conditions for themselves and for their loved ones. The two major drivers were the fundamentals of the ‘push and pull’ theory, proposed by Lee (1966) encompassing economic, environmental, social and political factors pushing out from the individual homeland and attracting him/her towards the destination country (Castelli, 2018). Different social, demographic, economic, environmental and political drivers impose people to move. Whereas some drivers primarily influence migration decision-making in areas of origin (Castles et al., 2016), improved physical facilities in the destination also attract more and more people. The push factors are due to the governmental imbalances termed as macro drivers of mobility. Other push factors including fears of disorder or of persecution on grounds of race, religion or politics in the areas people live and inequalities are the meso drivers of mobility (Dubey, 2015).

Recruitment of Nepali youth by the British East India Company during the Gurkha War from 1814 to 1816 is known as the first record of Nepali youths' migration to abroad (Kansakar, 2003). No authentic record is available, however. The available documentation shows that during the First World War, over 200,000 of the country's male youths were recruited by the British Army and left Nepal (Khatiwada, 2014).

Over time, it became increasingly common for young Nepali to move abroad in search of jobs and education, becoming a livelihood strategy for a large part of the rural population in Nepal. Recent trends have been seen Nepali migrating to the Gulf countries and Malaysia for work. In the last decades, over four million labour permits were issued by the Government of Nepal for these migrant workers and many others have left Nepal on student or visitor visas. An estimated five million Nepali are employed in foreign countries, of which around 40 per cent are in India, while the remaining 60 per cent are in other countries, primarily the Gulf, Malaysia, Lebanon and the Republic of Korea (MoLESS, 2018). The frequent flow of Nepali and Indian workers in one another country is very high, this data is unrecorded not only by the major surveys of Nepal but also by the population censuses (MoLESS, 2022).

Nepal has observed a significant increase of absent population over the two most recent census periods. According to 2001 Population and Housing Census, 762,181 persons were reported to be “absent”, meaning not residing in Nepal which increased by more than double, that is, 1,921,494 in 2011 (CBS, 2012) and 2,190,592 in 2021 (NSOa, 2023).

Using the secondary sources, the first part of this paper aims to calculate the international migration rates based on 2011 population census. Then it explores various international migration drivers and their impacts using the secondary sources. Although the population and housing census 2021 report has come out, the official rates of migration by National Statistical Office is still in planning and thus this paper uses these rates based on 2011 population and housing census.

### Methods and Materials

As is the case for most countries in the world, data on migration that is available in Nepal is limited and fragmented with identified gaps. Migration data is not comprehensively collected and recorded by the Government of Nepal. Rather, varying sources of demographic and other data need to be examined to extract relevant migration related information. The UN Statistics Branch has recognized that, worldwide there are “huge gaps at country level” which need to be addressed in terms of migration data (UN, 2019). In general terms, there are three main sources of migration data, each of which have their strengths and weaknesses. These are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

*Sources of Migration Data, Strengths and Limitations*

Source	Examples of Source	Strengths	Limitations
Statistical data: Collects data for the creation of official statistics. In Nepal, NSO is the responsible entity.	Census	Universal, cross-country comparability, socio-economic characteristics, details data on small population groups	Infrequent, costly, difficult to administer, lack of information on causes and consequences, limited questions on migration, unreliable emigration and immigration data.
	Household surveys	Information on causes and consequences, flexibility with questions, possibility for timely data, can target specific groups	Issues with sample size and coverable, unreliable source of emigration data (e.g. where whole households have emigrated), can be costly, migration may not be main focus
Administrative data: Collects data primarily to support administrative processes rather than to produce official statistics.	Visa/residence/work permit	Data is already being collected on an ongoing basis, therefore inexpensive and usually timely, covers a broad range of issues	Definitions, coverable and availability are not comparable between countries or even among Ministries in the same country. Does not cover undocumented residents or irregular migration. Records registration processes not actual movements.
Innovative data	Social media	Wider publicity	Validity and reliability

*Note.* Migration Data Portal (2019).



8.	Absentee population	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
9.	By age, sex			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
10.	By VDC/ Municipality						Y	Y	Y
11.	By education						Y	Y	Y
12.	duration of absence				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
13.	reason for absence			Y		Y	Y	Y	Y
14.	Absent within country but another district	Y	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
15.	Destination abroad by sex	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
16.	Age at time of absence				Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
17.	Citizenship		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
18.	Nepalese by sex, age		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
19.	Non-Nepalese by sex, age		Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

*Note.* CBS (2011); Khatiwada (2014); NSOa (2023). Y = Yes; blank = No (not included).

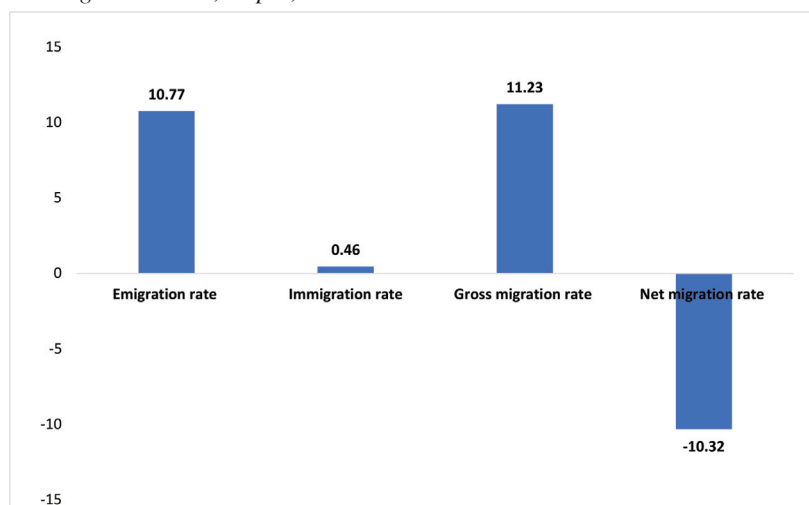
## Discussion of Findings

### Migration Rates

Calculating migration rates is a recent trend worldwide as a growing mobility observed in connection with foreign labour works. However, no authentic data for calculation are available. Population Reference Bureau PRB (2006) introduced the concept of calculating immigration and emigration rates. However, it does not categorically specify the sources of data whether to use census or vital statistics or else in this respect. Using the 2011 population census data, CBS has used absent population to calculate emigration rate and foreign-born population to calculate immigration rate (CBS, 2012; Khatiwada, 2014).

### Emigration Rate

Emigration rate is defined as the number of emigrants over a given period divided by the person-years lived by the population of losing country over that period (mid-year population) is termed as emigration rate. It is expressed as number of emigrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). Emigration rate for 2011 is estimated at 10.77 per thousand populations.

**Figure 1***International Migration Rate, Nepal, 2011*

*Note.* CBS (2014) Adopted from the report of Central Bureau of Statistics (2014).

### **Immigration Rate**

Immigration rate is defined as the number of immigrants over a given period divided by the person-years lived by the population of receiving country over that period (mid-year population), expressed as number of immigrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). Immigration rate from NPHC 2011 data stands at 0.46 per thousand populations.

### **Gross Migration Rate**

The number of immigrants plus the number of emigrants over a period, divided by the person-years lived by the population (mid-year population) of the receiving country over that period is known as gross migration rate. It is expressed as gross number of migrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). The gross migration rate for 2011 is estimated at 11.23 per thousand populations.

### **Net Migration Rate**

The number of immigrants minus the number of emigrants over a period, divided by the person-years lived by the population (mid-year population) of the receiving country over that period is known as net migration rate. It is expressed as net number of migrants per 1,000 populations (PRB, 2006). The net migration rate for 2011 is estimated at -10.32 per thousand populations.

### **Drivers of Migration in Nepal**

While migration is also for seeking better economic opportunities, among the poor this is often primarily a survival strategy who migrate because of a crisis to the survival of their families and communities. More than 8.1 million Nepali live in poverty with rising inequalities such as Gini coefficient being 0.49. Women and girls are more likely to be

poor, despite the significant contribution they make to the economy, especially through unpaid care and household work (HAMI, Oxfam & SAAPE, 2018). Destruction of livelihood options due to war and conflicts occurred in Nepal for 10 years, climate and environmental crises emerged due recurrent floods, landslides and earthquake have been the major drivers of migration in Nepal. While the poor are forced out across state and national borders, they often face hostility in the migration destination.

Nepali migrant workers pursuing labour work in abroad without caring of their safety must face up to loss of democratic rights, xenophobia, absence of any social security protection, and the loss of a protective community. The most vulnerable sections are those who are weakest in traditional societies – often women and children, religious minorities and the socially disadvantaged (SAAPE, 2019).

### **Demographic and Socio-economic Drivers**

One of the major issues rising in Nepal is unemployment and underemployment which have significantly contributed to poverty rates in Nepal. In 2016, the unemployment rate was around 3.4 per cent. Eventually, the unemployment status of the people leads to poverty. Of the people living in Nepal, 25 per cent are living below the poverty line, having just U.S. 50 cents per day. This makes Nepal one of the poorest countries in the world (Merchant, 2018).

The number of tertiary students in Nepal has increased by 407 per cent between 2000 and 2013, from 94,041 students to 477,077 students in 2013. Since then, however, the number of students has leveled off and fallen to 361,077 students in 2016. The overwhelming majority of these students (88.3%) were enrolled in bachelor's programs in 2016. The number of graduate enrollments remains small and accounted for only 11.3 per cent at the master's level and less than 0.5 per cent in advanced graduate and doctoral programs. In 2010/11, fully 80 per cent of higher education institutions (HEIs) offered only Bachelor's programs, while 19 per cent also offered Master's programs and only the main university campuses (less than one per cent of all campuses) had PhD programs in place (Dilas, Cui, & Trines, 2018).

The major issue is the lack of tertiary level education in Nepal which motive the students to migrate. The other thing is the job placement that the universities offer to the skilled population. Although, the statistics seem to be low; these students are also not getting employment opportunities in the country which drives them to abroad where there are both higher education as well as better employment opportunities. The highly prevalence of favoritism and nepotism in the country like Nepal is the other cause that influence skilled personnel to move (ILO, 2016) .

### **Environmental Drivers**

Environmental factors, including those related to climate change and natural disasters, directly and indirectly impact the resilience and vulnerability of individuals, households and communities, and may lead to migration (Castles et al., 2016). With an already struggling economy and low political stability level, earthquakes in Nepal are another factor of the country's instability (Merchant, 2018). These slows the undermining

livelihood stocks of the people leading to lack of productive land, increasing hunger and deteriorating health of people. Thus, it results in movement of people from the place of origin.

It is also accepted that the driving causes of such climate changes started with the industrial revolution, are mainly anthropogenic in nature and are largely due to the emission of greenhouse gases (CO<sub>2</sub>, methane and nitrous oxide) by industrial activities from carbon-based energy. It has been estimated that 97 per cent of such emissions occur in industrialized rich countries, leaving a mere 3 per cent emission coming out from low-income countries (Castelli, 2018).

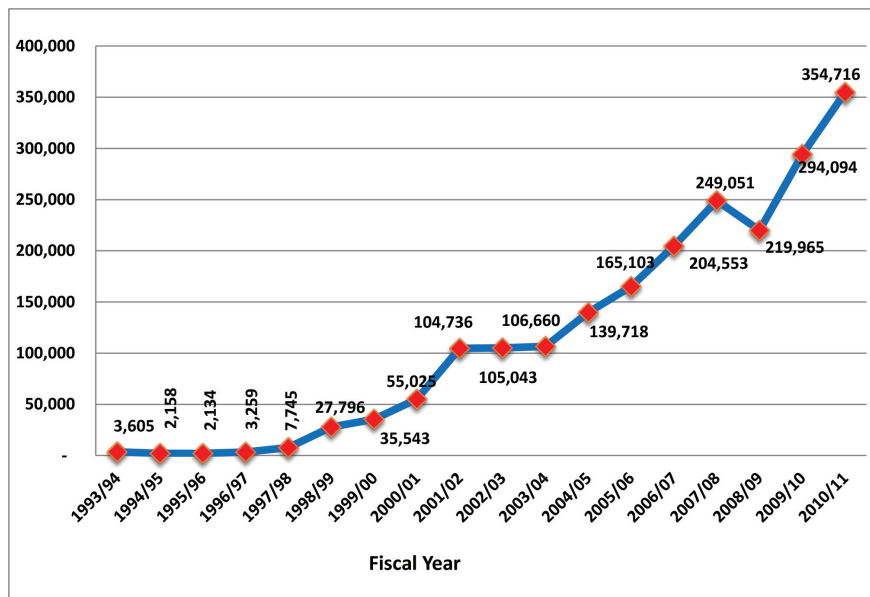
**Political Drivers**

Nepal has experienced several civil wars and the most recent one, People's War, ended in 2006 and continued for 10 years. This war influenced heavily on poverty rates, healthcare and the possibility of a healthy job market (Merchant, 2018). The lack of respect for international human rights and humanitarian law has compounded growing displacement of many because of their deteriorating living conditions. The vast majority of people displaced by conflict stay within their country (Castelli, 2018).

While just over 3,000 labour permits had been issued at the beginning of the insurgency, this figure rose dramatically to 165,103 by the end of the insurgency in 2005/6. The upward trend of foreign labour migration continued after the conflict ended (Sijapati & Limbu, 2012). Figure 2 shows the labour permits issued during and a few years after the insurgency.

**Figure 2**

*Surge in Labour Permits During the 10-Year Insurgency*



*Note.* Adopted from the calculation based on DoFE data (2011).



Not only the poor and the vulnerable people turned displaced but also the leaders and workers of political parties displaced during the armed conflict. Their issues of return and live with dignity in their respective places, their rights to claim/reclaim homes, land and property seized and carry out political activities without any hindrance became a crucial issue during peace process in Nepal (Khatiwada, 2016).

### **Impacts of Migration**

Nepal has been experiencing multi-faceted impact of migration on various sphere facing impact of both internal and international character. In recent years, the international migration has a cause to promote substantially the internal migration. The rural households due to at least one member away for earning purpose do not only receive money back home by their migrant members but also get exposed the advantages of migrating to the urban areas or nearby town. As a result, they take decision to abandon the birth place and come to a new destination (Khatiwada, 2006).

There has been a steady pattern of migration in Nepal from rural to nearby district headquarters and from hill and mountain regions to Tarai which is fertile agricultural area along the southern border of Nepal. The major cause of shift from mountain-rural to a plains-urban society is called “The Great Turnabout” which is causing a great deal of tension in the Tarai (Shrestha, 1989). Furthermore, deforestation, soil erosion and flooding are also some of the problems. Over the past decade, Nepal has seen a ten-fold increase in the number of migrant labourers leaving the country to work abroad, and the majority are youth. Despite the continual rise in the number of people migrating for foreign employment; there is rise in human trafficking, human smuggling, rise in the number of refugees, poverty, health related issues and eventually underdevelopment of Nepal (The Asia Foundation, 2017).

### **Migration and Human Development**

The starting point of human development approach is based on Sen.’s expansion of capabilities, and the main focus of development is well-being of human life by expansion of choices that a person can be and do, such as awareness in terms of education, long and healthy life, and decent standard of living in the community (Ullah, 2017). One of the indicators human development index (HDI). Between 1990 and 2017, Nepal’s HDI value increased from 0.378 to 0.574, an increase of 51.9 per cent. Between 1990 and 2017, Nepal’s life expectancy at birth increased by 16.3 years, mean years of schooling increased by 2.9 years and expected years of schooling increased by 4.7 years. Nepal’s gross national income (GNI) per capita increased by about 111.6 per cent between 1990 and 2017 (UNDP, 2018).

Nepal’s GDP per capita reached to \$1399 in 2023 compared with 866.476 USD in 2017 (NSOb, 2023; CBS, 2018). So, the mobility has created favorable environment for the people to develop and channelize their competencies and skills for the improvement of living standard and wellbeing in terms of educational attainment. Mobility of migrants is an important factor which enhances the education, healthcare services, knowledge, freedoms, and human development (Ullah, 2017).

## **Migration and Economic Impact**

From the views of different philosophers, migration is seen as beneficial for the country. The neo-classical theory of migration explains that migration is the form of optimal allocation of production factors that benefits both the place of origin and place of destination. The balanced growth; reallocation of labour from rural to urban, is considered as prerequisite for economic growth. The free movement of labour creates unconstrained market environment which leads to price equalization among the labours (Reinkowski, 2010).

Similarly, the deterministic theory developed by Zelinsky (1971) explained that the growing per capita income in developing countries is accompanied by higher rates of emigration called migration hump.

In Nepal, in-flow of remittance has been increasing the standard of living, particularly, of people in rural areas and covering basic needs such as food education, health and housing. The remittance inflows increased by 12.5 percent reaching USD 724.05 million in 2023 against the decrease by 17 percent in 2022 (NRB, 2023).

The developed industrial countries are inviting the labour migrants to come and work and this has spurred a never-ending cycle of attracting migrants to migrate and do the 4Ds; dirty, dangerous, difficult (Nicander, 2015) and demeaning jobs that the natives in the receiving countries will not partake in.

As explained by Lewis (1986) and Entzinger (1985) the migrants and their families do not invest their money productively but rather spend their money on “conspicuous consumption” which are non-productive. About 90 per cent of the remittances are spent on everyday consumption like purchase of land, use of remittances to hire workers, labour replacing mechanization, high payment for bride prices, feasts, funerals, construction of pompous and luxurious houses and so forth. Such unproductive expenses are thought to weaken local and regional economies and increase dependency resulting to “leakage of remittance investment” and under-development (Hass, 2016). In absence of remittance, the nation’s economy will be worsened in the future. Since most of the earning is spent on consumption, it has no contribution in capitalization of the economy. No visible improvement can be seen in the nation as a consequence of migration in the future (Dubey, 2015).

## **Migration and Employment/Labour Market**

Nepal's current unemployment rate for youth aged 15-29 is 19.2 per cent which is 2.7 per cent for the whole population. An estimated 400,000 young people are believed to enter the labour force each year (ILO, 2023). These figures justify the worst scenario of unemployment problem in Nepal. On an average the salary of Nepali migrant workers ranges from \$190 to \$900. The highest of it is found in the Republic of Korea, while the lower salaries are found in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. About 1,600 men and women leave the country. The top-five destinations for Nepali migrant workers are Malaysia (40.9%), Saudi Arabia (22.9%), Qatar (20.3%), United Arab Emirates (11.2%) and Kuwait (2.1%) (ILO, 2017b).

The unprecedented increase in foreign labour migration from Nepal has had an impact on various aspects of the economy and society. The national economy is increasingly becoming dependent on remittance as explained in the section of economic impact. While the inflow of money is helping reduce poverty and has become a means of sustenance for hundreds of thousands of families, the number of labour migrant is increasing every year. Growing foreign labour migration in Nepal has seemed to create an imbalance in local labour markets both in origin and destination. For instance, it has been reported that about 30,000 Bangladeshi workers are fulfilling the labour shortage in the brick industry in the Eastern Tarai (Sijapati & Limbu, 2012). The working and living conditions in the destination countries were reported to be very hazardous and diseases, workplace injuries and deaths were common. Unequal wages prevailed among the migrant workers, exploitation by foreign companies in the workplaces are some of the negative impacts that the migrants from Nepal is facing. In most of the workers' agreement paper, their affiliation with a trade union is prohibited that has hindered them their rights (Parajuli, 2015).

There is no social protection rather exclusion, restriction on mobility and travel, withholding of paper and identity for migrant people in host countries (Parajuli, 2015). Nepali female migrants working as domestic workers face multiple forms of abuses-mental, sexual and physical from their employers. The trend of Nepali going abroad using fake documents and through third countries like, India are highly at risk of being the victims of human trafficking (Sijapati & Limbu, 2012).

Nepali migrants face enormous risks when they engage in foreign employment. Besides not being paid on time, working in difficult conditions, being exposed to harassment and abuse such as passports being taken away by employers, Nepali migrants have been dying in ever greater numbers than before. According to the Government of Nepal, 726 migrants died abroad in 2013, which was an increase of 100 persons later year. Many of the deaths were due to cardiac arrest among the young people of age between 20 and 44 years of age (Parajuli, 2015).

In 2017, the workers registered more than 2,000 complaints ranging from fraud, exploitation and physical and sexual abuse by middlemen and foreign employment agents at the Department of Foreign Employment. Some 227 workers stranded across the world appealed to the Nepali Government to rescue them (Shrestha, 2018). Thus, this is how the migration is affecting the employment and labour market of Nepal. The prompt action should be taken by the stakeholders and the authority to boost up the positive impact of the migration in all the sectors.

### **Migration and Social Impact**

Social impact of migration is closely associated with social development. As the success of every society is linked to the well-being, social development aims investing in people. (Brunswick, 2009).

In the South Asian countries like Nepal, the social status of the people is increased when it comes to migrants. The migrants in his/her place of origin are treated better from the

so-called higher caste and class people. It is because they have cash money and can purchase small piece of fertile and grass land. However, migration has some negative aspects in social factors. One of them is "demonstration effects" and 'ratchets' effects.

### **Migration and Health**

Migration has both positive and negative effects on health. Some migrants may be healthier than the population due to the access of better health facilities and climate in the place of destination whereas some remain the victims of chronic patients due to hazards of different kinds. The relationship between migration and health is thus complex and its impact is considerably across migrant groups and from person to person within such groups (Migration Data Portal, 2019). Nepal has experienced an unprecedented surge of a sizeable out-migration of health personnel, especially doctors and nurses, to countries of the global North a sizeable out-migration of health personnel, especially doctors and nurses, to countries of the global North for foreign employment. Older adults often migrate to warmer and better health care destinations like Spain, Florida. In case of Nepal, the older adults especially migrate to Kathmandu valley from rural areas for better health care (ILO, 2017a). So, the movements result in better physical and mental health and longer life for migrants as a consequence of diet changes, access to better health services and safer work (Macpherson, 2000).

The most common is HIV transmission and other STDs among the wives of the emigrants especially those from the India (Gautam, 1999). Moreover, Nepal is facing the problem of "inequitable distribution of health workers"; the health worker-to-population ratio is 0.67 doctors and nurses per 1,000 individuals, which is significantly lower than the WHO's recommendation of 2.3 doctors, nurses and midwives per 1,000 individuals (ILO, 2017a). The high cost of health services, privatization in health sectors, lack of inter-personal relation (IPR) among the patients and health personnel, delay in receiving care are some of the facts that Nepali people are encountered with. (ILO, 2016). The prolonged absence of parents (either father or mother) affects the social-psychological atmosphere within families and exacerbate problems undermining marriage and family stability, relations between generations, and the children's upbringing. The movement to elite countries have emerged malnutrition due to dietary excess, sedentary behavior, obesity, and other chronic diseases in middle- and upper-class population (ILO, 2017a). Similarly, more than one-third of Nepal's children under 5 years are stunted, and 10 per cent suffer wasting due to acute malnutrition. Without a concerted effort to tackle inequality and pursue policies that benefit the many rather than the richest few, the poorest and most marginalized Nepali will continue to be excluded from progress (HAMI, Oxfam & SAAPE, 2018).

### **Migration and Education**

The migrants as the means for the exchange of thoughts, skills, ideas and practices across the place of destination can help to make the place an innovative center. Emigration to developed countries helps to seek tertiary level (higher level) of education. The emigrants can achieve quality education. The way of teaching is among the heterogeneous group (people from different countries). So, there is competitive market

between place of origin and destination. The acquisition of education in foreign countries is as “learning centers” such that individuals may choose to return to their countries of origin in order to apply the skills acquired. Several countries have started to issue a special residence permit to foreign graduates for the purpose of seeking a job, including the United Kingdom, France, Germany. This creates an individual to get placed after attaining higher education (Dustmann & Glitz, 2011).

Statistics show a rise in proportion of Nepali students by almost 46 per cent to around 12,000 members out of the total 190,000 foreign students who had applied for courses in Australia during July-December 2017. While USA had 1.08 million international students as of November 2017, Nepal alone saw a 20 per cent (around 11,607 students) rise in number of its students enrolled for higher education courses in US institutions. Nepal ranked 12 out of the top 25 countries with its students for undergraduate and graduate courses in USA. Nepali students accounted for the highest growth rate of 42.4 per cent for undergraduate courses among all the 25 countries. The mobility of Nepali students is even observed in India. More than 500 Nepali students are pursuing higher education at Sharda University, India (Nepali Sansar, 2017).

Migration results in brain drain and talent shortage in Nepal. The professionals like in the field of medicine and health, technology will remain limited. This sort of practice can cause the hindrance in human development and nation (Dubey, 2015). The educational skills of emigrants may not be easily transferable to the host country’s labour market due to language deficiencies and a highly skilled emigrant is unlikely to command the same wage as a native-born worker with the same educational background (Dustmann & Glitz, 2011).

### **Climate Change, Water Stress and Migration**

Potential pathways from climate change to migration are through increases in the frequency and intensity of weather and climate related risks that include sudden and slow-onset events. Extreme weather events are sudden-onset events that tend to have immediate impact and are the most direct linkages between climate change and migration. The loss of place of residence or economic disruption due to extreme weather events results in population displacement of a largely temporary nature (Banerjee & Misha, 2016). Similarly, natural disasters caused by these sudden-onset events often displace rural populations because of damage to their assets or production losses. Combined with food insecurity and poverty, these impacts contribute to drivers of migration (FAO, 2015).

Despite its relatively small area, Nepal has very diverse climatic conditions, ranging from tropical in the south to alpine in the north. Due to diversity, the country is at higher risk of facing climate related disasters like flood, glacial lakes and glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF), landslides, earthquake, forest fire, drought and famine, extreme temperatures can occur resulting in the movement of people from unsafe place to safer place (Dixit, 2007).

The climate change is increasingly being considered as a significant stress on local

farming in Nepal. Due to the area's rugged topography and the limited availability of land suitable for farming, migration is a more common option for households facing increased food insecurity. Therefore, local farmers predicted that increased climate variability would lead to increased migration (Gautam, 2019).

Seasonal migration is one of many strategies Nepali hill people pursue to cope with the impacts of the natural hazards. Changing land uses and livelihood diversification in Nepal have pushed for centuries the Himalayan herders and farmers to survive in the low hills and inner Tarai. The study further reveals after flowing through the lowland Tarai region of Nepal enclosed in embankments, the river flows over the Koshi barrage and enters North Bihar of India (ICIMOD, 2009).

### **Migration and Left Behind Population**

A central principle of the 2030 Agenda, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is inclusivity; it includes a pledge to "leave no one behind" and to endeavor to reach the furthest behind first. To achieve this, the vulnerable groups must be considered in all aspects of implementing the SDGs and targets. Migrants, children, women are numerous and can be particularly vulnerable group affected by multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination, and therefore deserve particular attention (IOM, 2016).

In the case of migration, the separation of migrants from their families is a stressful event that severs the support network of both migrants and family members of migrants. This is also one of the categories of left behind population. The families must adjust themselves socially, financially and are always concerned about their spouse's work situation (physical and mental) and worried about their relationship. Additionally, most of them who migrate leave behind huge amount of loans for families to pay off, but they do so with the hope of building a happy family and easing of their livelihood. Perceived perception of stress can be modified only with the availability of support system and family resources. Lacking of social support system will lead to the inability to adjust healthily (Thapa et al., 2019).

The other rising issue is socio-psychological anxiety. The whole family cannot afford the cost to migrate that is why, a person must migrate for seeking better jobs such that his/her family would live prosperous life. One of the family members emigrate at a time resulting in eroded family structures and relationships. As described by Emilio (2007); the longer the separation between the migrating parents and their children, the more children lose parents' reference in the management of the household, their authority and their role as providers of love and material care (Ratha, et al, 2011).

Adolescents left behind are also commonly overrepresented in adapting risky behavior, and absence of mothers has been found to be associated with the involvement of children with violence, the abuse of drugs and alcohol as well as reduced school attendance has been observed among children left behind by migrants (Ratha et al., 2011). Thus, it is very important to address these issues as these are the matters of major concern. There are different interventions conducted in international and national level in Nepal.

## Conclusions

Nepal follows the global migration phenomena in terms of migration trends and characteristics, that is, permanent, temporary and seasonal in nature although a general perception is that migration is pre-determined by individual and personal characteristics. Nepal being a sending country, the emigration rate stands at 10.77 per thousand populations against Immigration rate of 0.46 per thousand populations and the gross migration rate of 11.23 per thousand populations. This shows Nepal's net migration rate being -10.32 per thousand populations.

Nepal witnessed an evidence-based driver of migration related to economic, demographic, environmental, social and/or political. Whatever the drivers are, Nepali people migrate to access improved economic and employment opportunities. Whereas some migrate due to poverty, inequality or a lack of fundamental human rights at home as an outcome of both the natural and man-made crises and environmental degradation, for many it also becomes the part of human tendencies. Since many years Nepali both domestic and foreign migration has been a major livelihood option for many Nepalis. Nepal is equally prone to displacement of large number of people due to various natural and human induced calamities which has drawn a larger attention of the policy makers.

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