

# A Comprehensive Analysis of Students' Enrollment Trends in Tertiary Education

Noda Nath Trital<sup>1\*</sup>, Suman Kharel<sup>2</sup>, and Bisna Acharya<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Curriculum Development Centre, T.U., **Orcid ID:** <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3969-1985>

<sup>2</sup>Central Department of Rural Development, T.U., **Orcid ID:** <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4675-9157>

<sup>3</sup>Mahendra Ratna Campus, T.U.

\*Corresponding Email: [noda.trital@tu.edu.np](mailto:noda.trital@tu.edu.np)

## Abstract

*The present study aims to analyze the enrollment patterns of students in tertiary education in Nepal. This paper also presents a comparative analysis of Tribhuvan University (TU) and other Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs) in terms of their production of both technical and non-technical graduates. The descriptive and analytical research design has been applied to analyze the data which was collected from secondary sources over the period of 10 years. The collected data has been thoroughly analyzed and expertly presented in a variety of graphics. The findings of the study reveal a consistent annual increase in the number of students pursuing higher education, with a notable upward trend among female students. Over the past decade, there has been a notable increase in the number of students obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOCs). Tribhuvan University (TU), a highly esteemed tertiary education institution in Nepal, plays a crucial role in providing over 76% of tertiary education in the country. The enrollment patterns in tertiary education reveal that a significant number of students have obtained NOCs from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MOEST) to pursue higher education abroad upon completing their secondary education. The extensive research, socioeconomic, demographic, and institutional factors interact to affect higher education enrollment. The existing guidelines, policymakers, educational institutions, and other stakeholders can create inclusive, equitable, and flexible higher education systems that meet students' diverse needs and advance social and economic progress.*

**Keywords:** Student enrolment, tertiary education, trend, universities, human resources

## Introduction

Universities of any nation reflect its economic, social and all human development. Male and female enrollment provides valuable insights into a nation's educational environment. The government of Nepal has prioritized female scholarship recipients over males and encouraged female enrollment in educational institutions. The University's faculties, institutes, research centers, schools, departments, and campuses support and improve teaching and learning. They also train, study, and coordinate academic, athletic, and welfare programs. Higher education accessibility is the goal of these programs (UGC, 2020).

However, many students still have a strong desire to pursue education abroad, even though there are plenty of technical and non-technical institutions available at the local level. This leads to an examination of the factors that influence students' choice to pursue higher education abroad after completing secondary school, which in turn affects the enrollment trends in local tertiary education institutions. This study aims to analyze the enrollment trends in Nepalese tertiary education over a period of ten years. It also aims to assess the performance of Tribhuvan University (TU) in comparison to other Technical Education Institutions (TEIs) in terms of producing skilled individuals in both technical and non-technical fields.

This study aims to analyze higher education enrollment patterns using empirical research, theoretical frameworks, and statistical analysis. This analysis could be essential for policy, institutional, and educational planning. Evidence-based tertiary education promotes inclusivity and responsiveness. The researchers study enrollment patterns to develop strategies that promote higher education equality, fairness, and quality.

## Review of Literature

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs, 2015) have enlisted quality education in its goal four, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030. Following this goal, the Government of Nepal has also allocated budget with focus on the tertiary education sector to invest for research and development, to empower citizens and to produce skilled manpower in different sectors. Enrolment of students is directly related to achieving this goal for educational attainment.

Tertiary education is expected to diversify throughout its growth to preserve elite higher education's responsibilities in mass higher education. Diversification also supported mass higher education as universal higher education became a reality. This philosophy shaped higher education at the time. Trow (1974) states that Trichandra College in

Kathmandu founded modern tertiary education in Nepal in 1918 AD. The rulers wanted to protect tradition and communal leadership. This institution was founded to prevent Nepalese students from studying in India and from being influenced by anti-British groups. In 1956, the Nepal National Educational Planning Commission recommended competitive tertiary education that was connected with the country's geography, culture, and economy (Shakya, 1984).

Poverty and restricted economic prospects caused by poor education are major challenges in Nepal. All educational development activities in the nation aim to create a relevant, cost-effective, useful, and competitive tertiary education system. Bajracharya et al. (1998) report that a trend of studies and predictions have focused tertiary education enrollment. The increase in students' enrollment and its effects create great impacts. The rising trends of enrollment of students in economically developed countries warrant an evaluation of its effects on higher education and other fields.

Trow's (1974) research on tertiary education development aims to maintain the historic roles of elite mass education. Shakya (1984) emphasized the political tendency to prevent Nepalese youths from studying in India and instead join Indian political groups. Global involvement, graduate employability, and skill-building professional studies are significant components of higher education. In developing higher education, the nation struggles to create an academic atmosphere, ensure sustainability, and apply effective and responsive management techniques. Since 1997, efforts have been made to promote higher education fairness and inclusivity in access, efficiency, quality, and relevance (Bajracharya, 2020).

Dahal (2010) examined the association between higher education and Nepal's real GDP. The study shows a complicated link between higher education and economic growth. The research implies that real GDP affects higher education enrollment. However, the direct link between real GDP and school instruction is unclear. Nepal's higher education system emphasizes theory above practice and skills. Nepal's tertiary education includes both theoretical and vocational degrees.

Educational performance is more correlated with women's employment in countries with fewer income-generating jobs. Higher-educated women excel in limited-opportunity jobs. Higher-educated people are more resilient than others. Using 139 years of World Values Survey (WVS) data, Bussemakers et al. (2017) examined the relationship between women's education and employment in 74 countries. This relationship differs significantly between the countries analyzed.

According to Regmi (2019), the policies and practices of tertiary education in Nepal have undergone significant transformation due to the rise of neoliberal instrumentalism in

education. The adoption of an updated human capital theory demonstrates a significant shift in perspective. This theory emphasizes the economic value of education and its capacity to enhance individual productivity and competitiveness. Nepal has a gross enrollment ratio of about 15% in 2017. The rise in female tertiary enrollment is notable. The ratio rose from 19% in 1980 to 23% in 1990 and 52.6% in 2017 (Bajracharya, 2020).

The majority of worldwide governance indicators insignificantly explained the educational performance across the years from 1996 to 2018. Government effectiveness is found to be a negative significant predictor of educational performance. The findings have suggested a reform in the existing level of WGIs for better educational performance (Khadka, 2021). The students' enrolment trends in Dhankuta Multiple Campus show that the number of students in geography has been declining and students' enrolment has fluctuated at the campus. The study has prescribed geography as a compulsory subject at school level curricula to make the subject survive at the campus level (Linkha, 2021).

The World University Ranking (WUR) has used the number of students as one of the indicators. Tribhuvan University (TU) has been ranked within the range of 1200-1500 in the WUR for 2024 which was ranked within the range of 800-1000 in 2023. It became ranked within the range of 200-250 in the Asian University Ranking (AUR). TU is one of the largest universities not only in Nepal but also in the world in terms of enrolment of students. TU has its' enrolment of students' around 80 percent of tertiary education institutions in each year (Times Higher Education, 2023).

Tertiary education institutions are universities and independent institutes that create new knowledge and teach technology. Tertiary education begins after twelve years of elementary and secondary school. It includes Bachelor's, Master's, Master of Philosophy, and Doctorate Degrees. Bachelor's degree programs take three to four years, while Master's degree programs concentrate on programming for two years. Tertiary education in Nepal began in 1918 with Tri-Chandra College, connected with Patna University in India. The TU Act established Tribhuvan University (TU) in 1959, including Tri-Chandra institution as a constituent institution.

Tertiary education in the area was solely supplied by TU until the late 1980s. Now, the number of private and regional universities is rising. Since 1977, the World Bank and other foreign organizations have provided grants and loans to Nepal's tertiary education sector. The successful implementation of tertiary education requires five critical elements: educational curriculum, research, operational tactics, community engagement, and evaluation and reporting. Collectively, these characteristics maintain institutional growth. Educational institutions' community outreach is shown via student enrollment. Universities may use innovation and change theories to embrace and institutionalize global sustainable development ideas.

Pokhrel et al. (2016) examined private college admission factors and their findings showed that BBA and MBA admissions were heavily influenced by friends, family, and relatives' recommendations. The survey also found that college websites and media advertisements encouraged the applicants. Because of many extracurricular activities, extensive library resources, and cutting-edge IT, students value the BBA curriculum better. While choosing an MBA program, the students consider the instructors' credentials, teaching methods, career prospects, and job opportunities.

The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MEST), the University Grants Commission (UGC), universities, constituent campuses, and privately owned and community-managed colleges affiliated with universities make up tertiary education's main organization. This initiative has prioritized institutional autonomy, academic program quality and relevance, research and innovation, quality assurance and accreditation, and performance-based financing (Bajracharya, 2020).

By reviewing the above studies, the researcher identified that many scholars have extensively analyzed the patterns of tertiary education enrollment and how they affect a nation's progress. An in-depth examination of enrollment trends among students in higher education necessitates a comprehensive study of the patterns and variations in student enrollment over a specific time frame. This approach considers a range of factors, such as demographics, academic disciplines, and institutional dynamics. The enrollment data could be valuable for researchers as they help identify changes in student preferences, demographic disparities, and emerging trends in the tertiary education sector. This comprehensive investigation provides valuable insights for educational policymakers, institutions, and stakeholders, thereby deepening our understanding of the changing trends in tertiary education enrollment.

## Methodology

This study has employed a descriptive and qualitative research methodology to analyze the enrollment patterns of tertiary education students in Nepal. The secondary data have been collected from the Ministry of Finance (Economic surveys), universities of Nepal, UGC Report, and Statistical Year Book Report.

The available data have undergone a rigorous analysis and have been compared in terms of changes across the years. The collected data were organized into tables and figures, which are then evaluated and compared to provide a comprehensive description. This study examines the enrollment and output of students in recent years in other institutions in comparison to TU. This paper has omitted the examination of the aspect pertaining to the quality of tertiary education. The debate on students' enrollment patterns in tertiary education in Nepal has been restricted to the analysis of accessible quantitative data.

## Result and Discussions

### Historical Trends of Students' Enrollment

The data presented below illustrate the participation of students in the first ten convocation ceremonies, as well as the number of enrolled and graduated students in convocations since the academic year 2010/11.

**Table 1**

*Number of Graduates from Tribhuvan University*

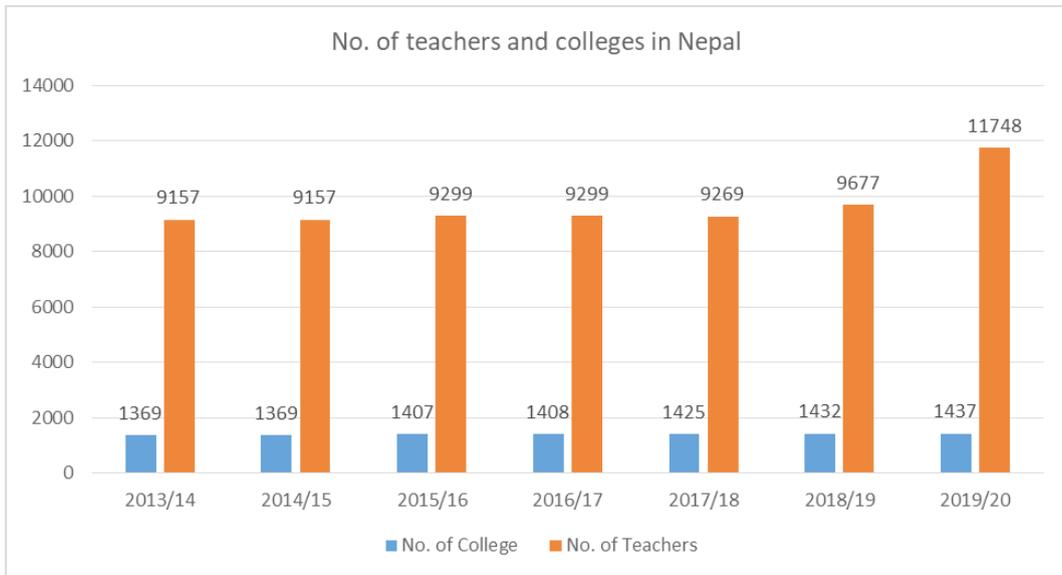
Year	No. of Production	Percentage	Year	No. of Enrolment	No. of Production	Percentage
1950/51	327	3.76	2010/11	389460	52896	13.58
1961/62	399	4.59	2011/12	373846	71230	19.05
1962/63	378	4.35	2012/13	604437	54775	9.06
1963/64	463	5.33	2013/14	405341	53178	13.12
1964/65	723	8.32	2014/15	298990	61716	20.64
1966/67	865	9.95	2015/16	360254	83425	23.16
1967/68	878	10.10	2016/17	367427	68292	18.58
1968/69	1219	14.02	2017/18	392400	73901	18.83
1969/70	1568	18.04	2018/19	415482	70077	16.87
1970/71	831	9.56	2019/20	415777	56713	13.64
1971/72	1043	12.00	2020/21	422653	29729	7.03
Total:	<b>8694</b>		2021/22	537869	63132	11.34
			<b>Total:</b>	<b>4983936</b>	<b>739064</b>	<b>14.83</b>

**Source:** TU History (Part-1) & MOF, Economic Survey (2023)

Table 1 shows the comparison of students' graduation since the establishment of TU and recent years. The number of students graduating from TU was less than a thousand in the establishment periods. Among the first to tenth convocations of TU, less than a thousand students graduated for seven convocations. During three FYs 1968/69, 1969/70 and 1970/71, the number of students graduated above thousand. In the data from 2010/11 up to 2021/22, the maximum number of enrolment was six lakh four thousand four hundred thirty-seven and the maximum number of graduation was 83 thousand four hundred twenty-five in 2015/16. Only 29 thousand seven hundred 29 students graduated in 2020/21.

### Tertiary Education Institutions and Faculties in Nepal

The following figure shows the trend of increasing faculties and institutions of tertiary education in Nepal.

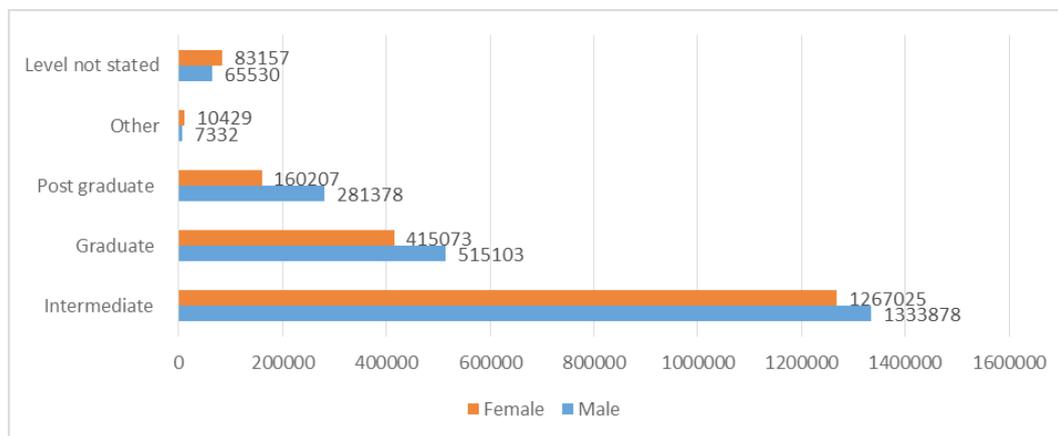
**Figure 1***No. of Colleges and Faculties in Nepal*

**Source:** Statistical Year Book of Nepal, 2021

The TEIs are one thousand four hundred thirty-seven and total number of faculties at TEIs are 11 thousand seven hundred 48 until FY 2019/20. Number of colleges has increased from 1369 up to 1437 since FY 2013/14 to FY 2019/20. Similarly, the number of faculties has also increased from 9157 up to 11748 since the same period. It shows the increasing trend of the number of colleges and faculties involved in tertiary education every year.

### **Educational Attainment Population in Nepal**

Male and female students who completed different levels of tertiary education and achieved their qualification were surveyed during the National Population Housing Census, 2021. There are 4 hundred 41 thousand people who have postgraduate level and equivalent educational attainment. Similarly, nine hundred thirty thousand population graduated and 26 lakh nine hundred more population got tertiary education of intermediate level. This educational attainment population is presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3***Educational Attainment Population in 2021*

**Source:** National Population and Housing Census, 2021

The female students' enrolment is more than the number of male students in TU, Purbanchal, and Far-Western universities. Far Western University has 61.65 percent female students enrolled. More than 40 percent of students are female at Mid-Western University, Kathmandu University, Agriculture and Forestry University, Pokhara University and Rajashri Janak University. Nepal Open University has only 11.34 percent female students enrolled which is the lowest percentage of female students than other universities. TU has 54.66 percent of female students' enrolment in FY 2078-79. It shows the trend of female students' enrolment is increasing in tertiary education.

**Table 4***Gender-wise Enrollment Status in Tertiary Education*

Name of University	Constituent Campus		Community Campus		Private Campus		Total		Grand Total	Female's Ratio	Total %
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M			
Tribhuvan University	56738	66548	86549	45749	51647	49423	194934	161720	356654	54.66	76.77
Pokhara University	1462	1681	0	0	12805	16636	14267	18317	32584	43.79	7.01
Purbanchal University	716	846	446	248	13257	12014	14419	13108	27527	52.38	5.93
Kathmandu University	3511	5375	0	0	5171	4586	8682	9961	18643	46.57	4.01
Sudurpashchim University	6225	3872	0	0	0	0	6225	3872	10097	61.65	2.17

Madhya Pashchim University	4579	5175	0	0	0	0	4579	5175	9754	46.94	2.10
University Agriculture and Forestry	1567	2299	0	0	333	229	1900	2528	4428	42.91	0.95
University Nepal Sanskrit	621	1944	37	106	53	67	711	2117	2828	25.14	0.61
University Nepal Open	132	1032	0	0	0	0	132	1032	1164	11.34	0.25
University Lumbini Boudda	130	200	0	0	87	278	217	478	695	31.22	0.15
University Rajarshi Janak	78	108	0	0	0	0	78	108	186	41.94	0.04
University Total:	<b>75759</b>	<b>89080</b>	<b>87032</b>	<b>46103</b>	<b>83353</b>	<b>83233</b>	<b>246144</b>	<b>218416</b>	<b>464560</b>		

**Source:** UGC Report, 2020

### Areas of Enrollment in Tertiary Education in 2021

The data of population aged 15 years and above with 10+2 or equivalent and tertiary level of education by major field of study in 2021. Male in total, more than the female population got tertiary level education. Among them, the management sector has produced more human resources in total than other sectors followed by the education sector. It shows that the population has got tertiary education in the non-technical sector rather than technical sector. In comparison, the highest number of male are in management sector tertiary education and the highest number of females in the education sector.

**Table 6**

*Population of Tertiary Education by Major Fields of Study in 2021*

Category	Male	Female	Total
Humanities & social science	245101	213115	458216
Management	786334	608976	1395310
Education	523834	665722	1189556
Science and technology	187158	94729	281887
Health/medical sciences	69912	103896	173808
Engineering	102892	17741	120633
Law	20925	8870	29795
Agriculture	15069	10863	25932
Forestry	7844	5076	12920
Animal sciences/veterinary/fisheries	6616	2693	9309

Computing and Information Technology	34802	11078	45880
Other	42498	28534	71032
Not stated	87374	71012	158386
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,30,359</b>	<b>18,42,305</b>	<b>39,72,664</b>

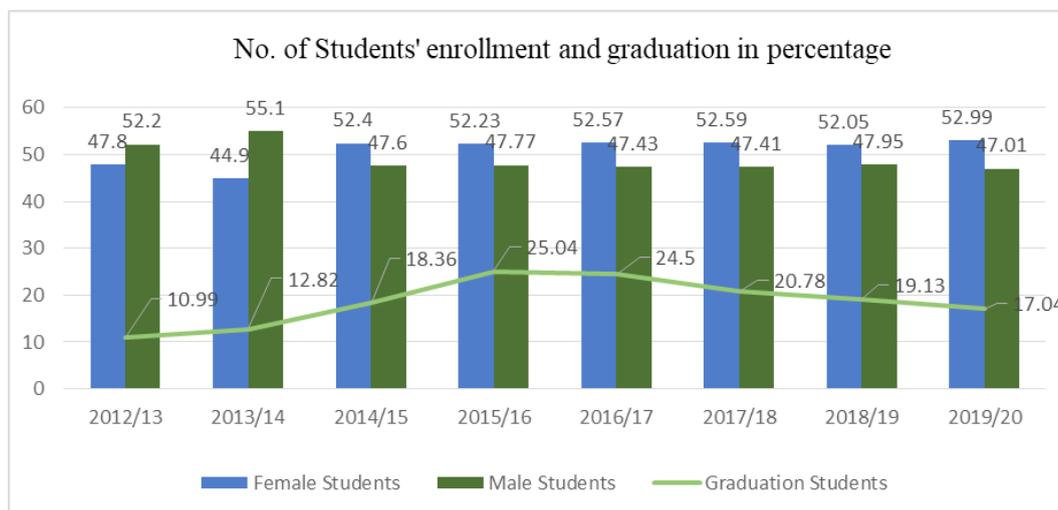
**Source:** Government of Nepal, National Population and Housing Census, 2021

### Year-wise Number of Students in Tertiary Education

Female students’ enrollment was less than male students’ enrollment in 2012/13 and 2013/14. Female students’ enrollment trend increased gradually but male students’ enrollment has decreased from 52.20 percent to 47.01 percent since 2012/13 to FY 2019/20. Female students’ enrollment has increased from 47.80 percent in 2012/13 to 52.99 percent in 2019/20.

**Figure 2**

*Students’ Enrollment and Graduation Trend in Tertiary Education*



**Source:** Statistical Year Book of Nepal, 2021

The output of tertiary education was seen in the result of graduation. The graduation in 2012/13 was 10.99 percent whereas till 2019/20, reached 17.04 percent graduation of total students. It seems that the result of tertiary education has gradually increased during this period though the enrollment number of total students is comparatively decreased in 2019/20 than in 2012/13.

### Sector-wise Students' Enrollment in Tertiary Education

The student enrollment in the management sector was 42.25% in 2018/19 and 43% in 2020/21 but the number of students decreased to 19% in 2021/22. The same trend of students' enrolment also continued in 2021/22. The Number of students decreased in the education sector from 24.83% to 13% but in the humanities and social science sector, the number of students increased from 10.87 % to 26% from 2018/19 to 2021/22. Student enrollment decreased from 9.78 to 8% in science and technology but increased from 4.69 to 6.38% in engineering.

Students increased in medical education from 5.34 to 5.98% during this period. Similarly, 20.3% of students were enrolled in technical subjects. In general subjects, 79.7% of students were enrolled and 20.3 percentage students enrolled in technical education in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The number increased in technical education and a few percent decreased in general education.

**Table 3**

*Students' Comparison in Tertiary Education (In percentage)*

Indicators	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
General Subject	77.83	77.83	79.7	79.7
Technical Subject	22.17	22.17	20.3	20.3
General sector	42			
Management Sector	19	43		42.25
Education Sector	13	19		24.83
Humanities and Others	26	13		10.87
Science and Technology	8	8		9.78
Engineering	6.38	6.38		4.69
Medical	5.98	5.98		5.34
Law				1.71
Forestry				0.34
Agriculture & veterinary Science				0.008

**Source:** OAG Reports, 2021/22 and 2022/23

### Trend of Students' Enrollment in Tertiary Education

The number of students has increased in TU, Purbanchal, Lumbini Boudha, Mid-Western, Agriculture and Forestry, and Far-Western universities for five years. It shows that the trend of student enrollment in tertiary education institutions is increasing each year. The domination of student enrollment trend has been occupied by TU and it has enrolled more than 80 percent of students in its constituent and affiliated colleges. The comparison of enrolment of students during five years has been shown in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*No. of Students in Tertiary Education*

Tertiary education institution	Year				
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Tribhuvan University	392400	415482	415777	422653	537869
Nepal Sanskrit University	3765	2791	2641	3049	3355
Kathmandu University	18253	18436	18860	16847	15469
Purbanchal University	28422	46190	49260	48858	51347
Pokhara University	29425	30749	32584	32484	34151
Lumbini Boudha University	714	713	526	1011	1265
Mid Western University	3268	5721	9735	8656	11915
Agriculture and Forestry University	3091	3871	3323	4427	5399
Far Western University	4395	10113	9003	14002	17244
Open University	405	680	1659	969	2831
Rajashri Janak University	80	191	174	399	401

**Source:** MOF, Economic Survey, 2023

### Students' Gross Enrollment rate

The progress rate gross enrolment trend as baseline rate was 12% in 2018/19. The target gross enrollment rate for 2020/21 was 18% but the actual achievement was 15% at the end of the year. The actual progress came to 14.1% that year. Tribhuvan University has enrolled 76% of students and only 24% of students admitted and read in other universities. In this fiscal year, the target of students' enrollment was 13.7% and achievement reached 14%.

**Table 5**

*Gross Enrollment Rate in Tertiary Education (%)*

Year	No. of Students (.000)		No. of Students (%)		
	TU	Other Universities	Baseline	Target	Progress
2018/19					12
2020/21	466	76	10	18	14.1
2019/20	540	76	24	13.7	15
2021/22	557	75.45	24.55		

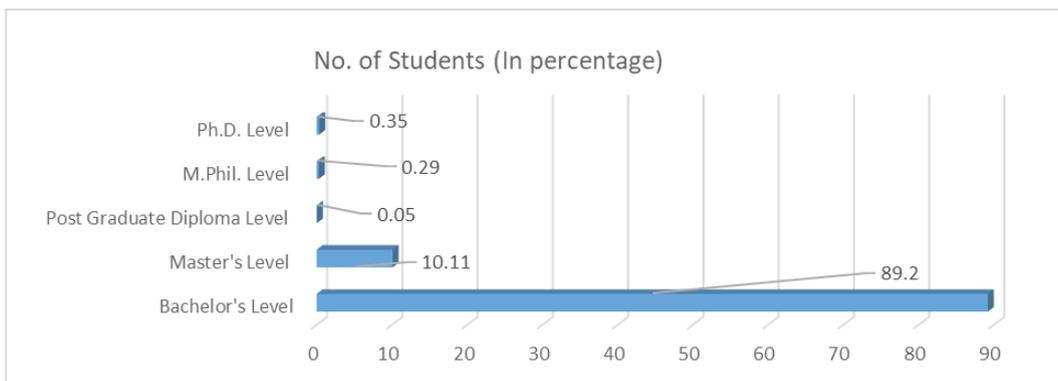
**Source:** OAG Report, 2021/22

**Total Students' Enrollment of Tertiary Education**

Tertiary Education reveals the status of human resources for the nation. Universities are providing tertiary education for producing technical and non-technical human resources. TU has the highest number of students enrolled and the production also the highest in number than other universities. The following table shows the number of students enrolled in different levels:

**Figure 4:**

*Total Students' Enrollment of Tertiary Education in 2021-2022*



**Source:** UGC Report, 2021

**Students Enrollment and Production in Tertiary Education**

There are 6 lakh 81 thousand 2 hundred 40 students enrolled in tertiary education during 2021/22. Among them, 5 hundred 37 thousand 8 hundred 69 students enrolled at different levels and faculties in TU and 63 thousand 1 hundred 32 students (11.74%)

became successful in different levels of tertiary education at TU. Purbanchal University has enrolled the second-highest number of students this year. 12.43% passed out from this university. Similarly, Pokhara University has a 16.58% pass percentage of the students. Kathmandu University has passed out 20.45% of students and Nepal Sanskrit University has produced 42.32% of students. In comparison, Nepal Sanskrit University has a higher percentage than other universities but TU has the highest number of production.

**Table 7**

*Students' Enrollment and Production in Tertiary Education in 2021-2022*

Name of University	Enrollment	Production	Percent (%)
Tribhuvan University	537869	63132	11.74
Nepal Sanskrit University	3355	1420	42.32
Kathmandu University	15469	3164	20.45
Purbanchal University	51347	6384	12.43
Pokhara University	34151	5661	16.58
Lumbini Boudha University	1265	83	6.56
Mid-Western University	11915	690	5.79
Agriculture and Forestry University	5399	456	8.45
Far Western University	17238	2783	16.14
Open University	2831	143	5.05
Rajashi Janak University	401	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>681240</b>	<b>83916</b>	<b>12.32</b>

**Source:** MOF, Economic Survey, 2022

### **Students Enrolled and Production in Ph. D., M.Phil. and Postgraduate Level**

The highest level of education is the Ph.D. level in Nepal. There are a total of 874 students enrolled in this level in 2021/22. The production of this level is 23% (i.e. 201). TU has 314 students enrolled and 136 students passed out this year. Similarly, Kathmandu University has 186 students enrolled and 24 students passed out. Agriculture and Forestry University has 134 students enrolled and 10 students completed this year. Lumbini Boudha University has 122 students enrolled and only 4 students completed that year.

**Table 8***Students Enrolled and Production in Ph.D., M.Phil. & Post Graduate Level*

Name of University	Ph.D. Students			M.Phil.			Post Graduate		
	Enrollment	Production	Percentage	Enrollment	Production	Percentage	Enrollment	Production	Percentage
Tribhuvan University	314	136	43.31	564	144	25.53	0	171	
Nepal Sanskrit University	75	23	30.67						
Kathmandu University	186	24	12.9	568	73	12.85	217	22	10.14
Purbanchal University				34	5	14.71			
Pokhara University	12	3	25	60	55	91.67	15		0
Lumbini Boudha University	122	4	3.28						
Mid Western University	2	1	50	37		0			
Agriculture and Forestry University	134	10	7.46						
Far Western University	16		0	142		0			
Open University	13		0	283	39	13.78			
Rajashi Janak University									
<b>Total:</b>	<b>874</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1688</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>18.72</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>83.19</b>

**Source:** MOF, Economic Survey, 2023

There are 1688 students enrolled in master of philosophy in 2021/22. Among them, 18.72% of students passed out from M.Phil. Level. Tribhuvan University has enrolled 564 students and produced 144 students during this period. Kathmandu University has enrolled 568 students which is the highest number of enrollment and produced 73 students in this year. Some students are enrolled in postgraduate level in universities. The number of students enrolled is 232 and production this year is 193 students from the universities.

### **Students' Enrollment and Production in Master and Bachelor Degree Level**

Out of total student enrollment in TU, 18.71% produced in master's level tertiary education was graduated. There are 1 lakh 19 thousand nine hundred 27 students enrolled in this level. Tribhuvan University (TU) has the highest number of student enrollments. There were one hundred two thousand two hundred and seventy-six students enrolled in TU and 18.45% produced in this year. The second highest number is 5 thousand 5 hundred and 72 at Purbanchal University (PU) and produced 20.85% of students. Nepal Sanskrit University (NSU) has enrolled 181 students and passed out 70.72% which was the highest percentage graduation of this year. The details of students' enrollment and production of master's and bachelor level in tertiary education are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9***Total No. of Students at Master Level in 2021-2022*

Name of University	Master Degree Level (2021-2022)			Bachelor Degree Level (2021-2022)		
	Enrollment	Production	Percent (%)	Enrollment	Production	Percent (%)
Tribhuvan University	102276	18870	18.45	434580	43811	10.08
Nepal Sanskrit University Kathmandu	2595	570	21.97	11903	2475	20.79
Purbanchal University	5572	1162	20.85	45741	5217	11.41
Pokhara University	3447	830	24.08	30617	4773	15.59
Lumbini Boudha University	468	49	10.47	675	30	4.44
Mid Western University	2047	248	12.12	9829	441	4.49
Agriculture and Forestry University	908	112	12.33	4357	334	7.67
Far Western University	1371	454	33.11	15709	2329	14.83
Open University	1035	20	1.93	1475	73	4.95
Rajashri Janak University	27	0	0	374	0	0
<b>Total:</b>	<b>119927</b>	<b>22443</b>	<b>18.71</b>	<b>557496</b>	<b>60047</b>	<b>10.77</b>

**Source:** MOF, Economic Survey, 2023

Table 9 shows that there were 5 lakh 57 thousand 4 hundred 96 students enrolled at bachelor level. Tribhuvan University has enrolled 4 hundred 34 thousand 5 hundred 80 students and produced 10.08% this year which is the highest number of student enrolment. Nepal Sanskrit University has the highest percentage of production in this FY.

### **Number of Students Received NOC for Abroad Study**

There are many universities and other TEIs for different opportunities to study technical and non-technical disciplines in tertiary education, Nepali students continue to go abroad for tertiary education after completion of school education in Nepal. The trend of migrating youths and students to abroad for the purpose of getting tertiary education is increasing every year. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number decreased and after the end of the pandemic, the trend is again increasing. The following table shows the number of students who received a No Objection Certificate (NOC) for abroad study from the government:

**Table 10***No. of Students Received NOC for Abroad Study*

Year	No. of Students
2011/12	10258
2012/13	16499
2013/14	28025
2014/15	30696
2015/16	32489
2016/17	50659
2017/18	58758
2018/19	63259
2019/20	34094
20220/21	27978
2021/22	117563
2022/23	110217
Total:	<b>5,80,495</b>

**Source:** Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2023

Based on the data in Table 10, around 600,000 students have acquired a certificate of no objection (NOC) for pursuing their studies overseas within a span of 12 years. During the 2021/22 academic year, a significant increase in the number of students receiving NOCs was observed compared to the previous year of 2020/21. This rise can be attributed to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Conclusion

The trend of students' enrollment is vital to know for the understanding of the social, cultural and economic activity of the society. This study has found that the trend of students' enrollment in tertiary education has been increasing in Nepal. The tertiary education institutions are increasing as well as the faculties are also increasing in the universities. The female students are enrolled in gradually increasing trends in tertiary education than male students in TU, Purbanchal, and Far-Western universities. TU has the highest number of students of the total students enrolled each year. The population has got tertiary education in the non-technical sector rather than the technical sector. Comparing the data, the management sector of tertiary education produces the most males, whereas the education sector produces the most women.

Tertiary education enrollment in Nepal has been rising. The university enrolls around 80% of tertiary students. Both technical institutions and general faculties at TU have seen students' enrollment rise. This study shows that more female than male students

attend tertiary education. The enrollment of male and female students at all universities has been rising. In 2012/13 and 2013/14, female students' enrollment was lower than male enrollment. Some years saw gains in female student enrollment, while others decreased. Technical education enrollment is also rising. However, more men than women have university degrees. Tribhuvan University (TU) has the most student enrollment and production capacity among all universities of Nepal.

This tendency has grown, especially after the COVID-19 epidemic. The government struggles to reduce the number of students studying overseas and must adopt regulations to improve local colleges' education. The authority has advised that government policies and initiatives favor tertiary education and research and development (R&D). Universities should keep academic calendars, provide high-quality education, and promote technical education to attract students and boost enrollment. Finally, the conclusion reveals that the trend of student enrollment is significantly positive in tertiary education in Nepal.

The researchers have examined how enrollment patterns affect policymakers, educational institutions, and students who care about the issue. The researchers recommend proactive measures to improve higher education accessibility, fairness, and quality to meet changing needs and create inclusive learning environments. This extensive analysis seeks to better understand the complex factors that influence students' college choices. This provides a foundation for evidence-based policies, institutions, and educational interventions. The researchers aim to create equitable and inclusive tertiary education systems.

## References

- Bajracharya, H. R. (2020). Nepal's Higher Education System and Policy. In P.M. Sarangapani, & R. Pappu (Eds.), *Handbook of Education Systems in South Asia*, Global Education Systems (1-27). Springer Nature Singapore. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3309-5\\_63-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-3309-5_63-1)
- Bussemakers, C., Van Oosterhout, K., Kraaykamp, G., & Spierings, N. (2017). Women's worldwide education-employment connection: A multilevel analysis of the moderating impact of economic, political, and cultural contexts. *World Development*, 99, 28-41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2017.07.002>
- Dahal, M. P. (2010). Higher educational enrolment, school teachers and GDP in Nepal: A causality analysis. *Economic Journal of Development*, 11&12 (1-2), 69-91. <https://doi.org/10.3126/ejdi.v11i0.6107>
- Government of Nepal (2021). *National Population and Housing Census 2021*. Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers, National Statistics Office, Kathmandu, Nepal. Retrieved from <https://censusnepal.cbs.gov.np/results>
- Khadka, J. (2021). Effect of governance on educational performance in Nepal. *Journal of Education and Research*. <https://doi.org/10.51474/jer.v11i1.502>
- Linkha, T. R. (2021). Trends of students' enrolment in Dhankuta Multiple Campus. *The Third Pole: Journal of Geography*, 20-21, 33-46. <https://doi.org/10.3126/tp.v21i01.41616>
- Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2023) *Nepal: Education sector analysis*. Kathmandu Retrieved from <https://nepalindata.com/resource/NEPAL--EDUCATION-SECTOR-ANALYSIS-2022-2023-BS/>
- Ministry of Finance (2022). *Economic survey 2021-22*. Government of Nepal, Kathmandu. Retrieved from [https://www.mof.gov.np/uploads/document/file/1674635120\\_Economic\\_Survey\\_2022.pdf](https://www.mof.gov.np/uploads/document/file/1674635120_Economic_Survey_2022.pdf)
- Ministry of Finance (2023). *Economic survey 2022-2023*. Government of Nepal, Kathmandu. Retrieved from [https://www.mof.gov.np/uploads/document/file/1710323031\\_Economic%20Survey%20English%202022-23%20Eng%20Final%20for%20WEB.pdf](https://www.mof.gov.np/uploads/document/file/1710323031_Economic%20Survey%20English%202022-23%20Eng%20Final%20for%20WEB.pdf)
- National Planning Commission (2022). *Nepal Statistical Year Book 2022*. Central Bureau of Statistics. Kathmandu. Retrieved from <https://cbs.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Statistical-Year-Book-Final.pdf>
- Office of Auditor General (2021). OAG 58<sup>th</sup> Yearly Report-2021. OAG, Kathmandu. Retrieved from <https://oag.gov.np/uploads/files/bg1-Some%20sections%20of%20Annual%20Report%202078%20English%20Version..pdf>
- Office of Auditor General (2022). OAG 59<sup>th</sup> Yearly Report-2022. OAG, Kathmandu. Retrieved from <https://oag.gov.np/menu-category/930/en>

- Pokhrel, S., Tiwari, A., & Phuyal, R. K. (2016). Impact of education marketing on enrolment of students at private management colleges in Kathmandu. *Journal of Business and Social Sciences Research*, 1(1), 23-36. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jbssr.v1i1.20947>
- Regmi, K. D. (2019). Higher education in Nepal: A handmaiden of neoliberal instrumentalism. *Higher Education Policy*. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41307-019-00138-0>
- Shakya, S. B. (1984). *Establishing and development of Tribhuvan University 1955–1973*. TU Research Division. Retrieved from [https://library.nasc.org.np/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=8768&query\\_desc=su%3A%22Education%22](https://library.nasc.org.np/cgi-bin/koha/opac-detail.pl?biblionumber=8768&query_desc=su%3A%22Education%22)
- Trow, M. (1974). Problems in the transition from elite to mass higher education. In OECD (ed.), *Policy for Higher Education*, 51-101. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED091983>
- UGC (2021). *University Grants Commission Annual Report, 2020/21*. University Grants Commission, Nepal. Retrieved from <https://ugcnepal.edu.np/uploads/web-uploadsfiles/UGC%20Final%20Annual%20Report.pdf>