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### Working Environment and Benefit Differences in Indo-Nepal Labour Migration

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#### Abstract

The open border between Nepal and India has encouraged people to migrate across the border for better livelihood. People from Sudurpaschim Province are disproportionately attracted to India for four important reasons: close distance, low travel cost, access to jobs and network. Likewise, Indian people from particularly from the border towns of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal States usually come to Nepal searching for employment or better opportunities. The burgeoning migration research in Nepal often ignores migration to India, and there has hardly been any research on Indian migration to Nepal. This paper attempts to make a comparative study of Indo-Nepal migration, focusing on working environment, i.e., work natures, working conditions, and their benefits such as income, and welfare benefits of both migrants' groups. Bhimdatt Municipality of Kanchanpur District was selected as the study area. A mixed methodology has been adopted for this study. For Quantitative data collection, sample survey was conducted with 650 respondents (370 for Nepali-labour migrants to India and 270 Indian labour-migrants to Nepal). Using ISCO/08, ILO (2012), skills classification framework, this paper shows Nepali migrants works lack technical skills (91% being at basic level, as menial workers) as opposed to the Indian migrants, majority of whom have some technical skills, such as operating machines (54.3% vs. 7.3%). This has reflection on their earning and welfare benefits and condition of work and living. Indian migrants earn an average of NRs. 40635.5 per month, compared to NRs. 19061.6 earned by Nepali migrants. In case of Nepali labour-migrants who work in registered companies, business houses along with mutual agreement for job get allowances, overtime facility, medical insurance however, it is not found in case of Indian labour-migrants working in different technical sectors in Nepal. Policy makers need to work on promoting skills of the migrant workers enabling them to take up better paid jobs at home and migration destinations.

**Keywords:** Working condition, benefit difference, labour migration, Nepal and India

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## **Introduction**

The types of jobs and the working environments for both groups of migrants in Nepal and India differ depending on the circumstances. This variation is related to factors such as the level of skills and training, income at their starting point and final destination, availability of overtime work, provisions for leave, salary increases, and the insurance policies offered to migrants at their destination. Additionally, this research examines the food and housing arrangements at the migrants' workplaces and outlines the reasons behind changes in their employment and destination.

Nepali individuals have been relocating to Indian cities in search of better opportunities, while Indian people have been coming to Nepal for similar reasons. However, due to the lack of access to accurate information about job prospects and destinations, limited awareness levels, and high illiteracy rates, people from the far western hilly regions struggle to make informed decisions about their destinations. Consequently, they often face various difficulties in their chosen destinations, fail to earn the money they hoped for, and ultimately return to their places of origin empty-handed (ICIMOD, 2010). Bhatt (2016) has also discussed the process of destination selection among Nepali labour migrants. He noted that, because of their limited awareness and modest economic backgrounds, they often choose their destinations based on personal networks, friends, or the recommendations of labour contractors (MATE) rather than considering their own skills or potential job opportunities. They often take loans from others to cover their expenses, leading them to opt for the cheapest transportation options and rely on the decisions made by their group of friends at transit points. There is a need to analyze the labour migration situation between Nepal and India specially by their nature of jobs and working conditions. The main objective of this study is to compare and contrast the nature of jobs and working conditions of labour migration in their destinations. This study contributes to analyze the relationship with Nepal-India migration and its role on generation of the remittance.

## **Methodology**

This study employed a mixed-method research design, grounded in a post-positivist philosophy, specifically pragmatism. It aimed to explore the multiple realities within the context of cross-border labour migration between Nepal and India, while also acknowledging the assumption that there is a singular reality underpinning the phenomenon of migration. The study focused on labour migrants from Nepal and India, with a particular emphasis on Bhimdatt Municipality in the Kanchanpur district. This area was chosen due to its proximity to the Indian border, which facilitates easy entry for Indian labourers who have been working there for an extended period. The exact population of migrant labourers in both destination

areas was not known. For Nepali migrants to India, Bhimdatt Municipality collected data on labour migrants for its 2020 profile, reporting that 4,865 individuals from different wards migrated to India for work. In Mahendranagar, Nepal, a survey was conducted to identify Indian labour migrants, with approximately 924 Indian labourers observed to be working in the town. Top of Form Using the simplified formula i.e. Sample Size (n) =  $N / [1 + N (e^2)]$  for proportion (Yamane, 1967) to derive the sample size and determined the 370 numbers of Nepali migrants to India and 260 numbers of Indian migrants to Nepal as a sample size.

This research primarily adopted a quantitative approach to gather information, supplemented by qualitative data to provide further clarification and specificity. It can be described as a QUAN-qual design following a deductive approach and an explanatory sequential design. Both qualitative and quantitative data were utilized, and the data collection process involved both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected through a questionnaire survey. To obtain quantitative data, the research reviewed various literature and developed structured closed-ended questionnaires. These questionnaires were administered to respondents through direct interviews. Quantitative data helped in generalizing information across a larger sample. However, to address specific research questions and provide greater depth, qualitative data was also necessary. Therefore, an explanatory sequential design was employed during the interpretation phase to uncover gaps and unknown information within the quantitative data. Qualitative data was obtained through focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs). The data were also analyzed using the facts and figures derived from SPSS and statistical inferences were drawn.

## **Results and Discussion**

The migration process between Nepal and India is strongly influenced by various economic factors, both at the origin and destination. These factors include unemployment, the lack of basic necessities, food insecurity, low wage rates, poverty, and indebtedness. Additionally, socio-political factors play a significant role in shaping labour mobility and livelihood. These factors encompass political conflicts, political instability, social discrimination, and social inequality. While natural or physical factors, such as natural disasters, have impacted migration in some cases, they are not prevalent. Intervening factors have a more pronounced effect on labour migration in both countries. These factors include distance, transportation costs, ease or difficulty of access, and social relationships. Personal factors, both demographic and psychological, also influence migrants' mobility, shaping their choices and limitations. These personal factors consist of age, gender, education, caste/ethnicity, marital status, family size, and personal interests or motivations. Additionally, there are pull factors that attract migrants from both countries. These include higher wage rates, job availability, better employment opportunities, favorable working environments, easy entry and exit due to open borders, social and cultural similarities, social networks and relationships, and the allure of city life and its amenities.

## Characteristics of Employment and Earnings at the Place of Origin

The type of employment and income level are crucial factors impacting the living conditions and livelihoods of migrants. This is a widely discussed topic in international migration studies, encompassing aspects like rural-urban migration, labour migration, and gender perspectives on migration. Analyzing the push-pull dynamics of migration necessitates an examination of the previous status of migrants at their place of origin, which includes factors like working conditions, income, security, and dependencies, among others.

**Table 1**

*Distribution of Labour-Migrants by Nature of Work, Income at Origin*

Nature of Work at Origin	Nepali Labour-Migrants to India		Indian Labour-Migrants to Nepal	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
No work/Free	242	65.4	139	49.6
Agri/Unskilled work	63	17.0	104	37.2
Self-employment (Business)	44	11.9	37	13.2
Involved on other job (office, company, security, driver, etc.)	21	5.7	-	-
<b>Pearson Chi Square Test</b>	<i>Value</i>		<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	34.778		3	0.000
<b>Income at Origin</b>				
No work at origin	273	73.8	139	49.7
8,000-10,000	35	9.4	25	8.9
10,001-20,000	62	16.8	96	34.3
20,001-25,600	-	-	20	7.1
<b>Pearson Chi Square Test</b>	<i>Value</i>		<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	61.279		3	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

In this study, as shown in Table 1, a significant portion (65.4% of Nepali and 49.6% of Indian) of migrants were unemployed at their place of origin before migrating, while 17.0% of Nepali labour migrants and 37.2% of Indian labour migrants were engaged in agricultural or unskilled work. However, their job characteristics changed upon reaching their destination. Migrants who were involved in various types of work at their place of origin began utilizing their own skills or acquired new skills through learning by doing. These skills might have been passed down from their parents, tied to their caste-based occupational traditions, or rooted in indigenous customary practices. Similarly, 11.9% of Nepali and 13.2% of Indian labour migrants had their own businesses at their place of origin, while about 5.7% of Nepali migrants worked in non-labour roles or services (e.g., office, company, security force, and driver) and then became unemployed after leaving these jobs.

Among the migrants, a majority of Nepali labour migrants (73.8%) and nearly half of Indian labour migrants (49.7%) did not engage in any work. The data indicates that approximately 9.4% of Nepali labour migrants and 8.9% of Indian labour migrants earned a monthly income between Rs. 8,001 and Rs. 10,000. Meanwhile, 16.8% of Nepali labour migrants and 34.9% of Indian labour migrants earned monthly incomes ranging from Rs. 10,001 to Rs. 20,000. Statistical significance tests reveal an association ( $p$ -value  $\leq 0.01$ ) between the type of work at the place of origin, income, and the reasons for seeking employment in their home countries.

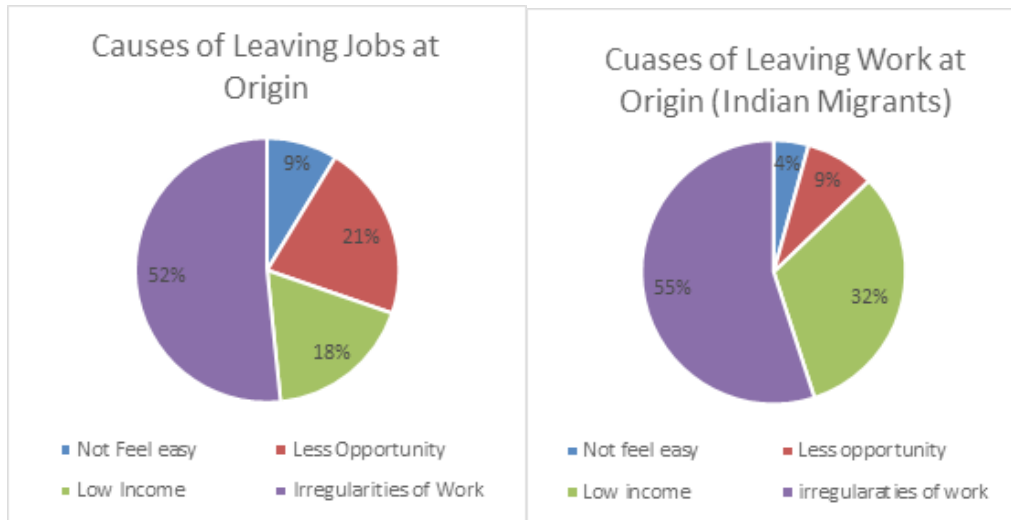
However, 7.1 percent of Indian labour-migrants (and no any Nepali migrants) earned NRs. (20001-25600) per month at their origin in India.

### **Factors Leading to Job Departments from the Place of Origin**

Generally, labour migrants have various reasons for departing from their place of origin, with economic migration being the most common factor. Among labour migrants, many were previously employed in various occupations at their place of origin but chose to resign from their positions and relocate to a different work destination.

**Figure 1**

*Causes of Leaving Jobs of Labour Migrants (Both Groups) at their Origin*



The above figure 1 illustrates that 9 % of Nepali labour migrants and 4% of Indian labour migrants found their work environment uncomfortable at their place of origin. They experienced harassment and were not inclined to engage in such work within their society. Furthermore, 52% of Nepali labour migrants and 55% of Indian labour migrants did not have consistent employment in their respective places of origin, which compelled them to leave their home regions. Additionally, 18% of Nepali and 32% of Indian labour migrants believed they were earning insufficient income at their places of origin, motivating them to cross borders in pursuit of better income in their destination. Finally, 21% of Nepali and 9% of Indian labour migrants felt there were limited opportunities at their places of origin, driving them to seek better prospects in new destinations.

From the above data, it becomes evident that Nepali labour migrants, despite having relatively more opportunities at their places of origin, still crossed borders due to their social networks. Some felt the need to visit different cities in the name of earning, following a tradition passed down from their fathers and forefathers who ventured to various cities in India for livelihood. On the other hand, Indian labour migrants typically come to Nepal seeking improved income and opportunities.

### **Skills and Training Status of Labour Migrants at their Place of Origin**

In general, labourers are typically employed based on their existing skill levels and training. However, in the context of migration from Nepal to India, it's noticeable that the

majority of labour migrants did not receive formal training at their place of origin. Instead, they relied on their general skills, often learned from their families and communities. Among these migrants, the majority, which constitutes 88.1% of Nepali labour migrants and 70.7% of Indian labour migrants, did not undergo any formal training, particularly in the realms of business and entrepreneurship, as indicated in Table-2. Some of them did receive training; for instance, 13.7% of Nepali labour migrants received training from government agencies, and 38.6% received training from private organizations. However, 47.7% of Nepali labour migrants (such as those employed in security forces, driving, and other official roles at their place of origin) had gained work experience on their own. Similarly, 82 Indian labour migrants who received training (100%) also acquired skills and experiences independently at their place of origin.

**Table 2**

*Distribution of Labour Migrants by Training Status at Origin*

<b>Status of Training at Origin</b>	<b>Nepali Labour-Migrants to India</b>		<b>Indian Labour-Migrants to Nepal</b>	
	<i>(N)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(N)</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Trained at origin</b>	44	11.9	82	29.3
<b>No any training</b>	326	88.1	198	70.7
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0
<b>Training provider institution</b>				
<b>Government agencies</b>	6	13.7	-	-
<b>Private institutions</b>	17	38.6	-	-
<b>Self-experienced at origin</b>	21	47.7	82	100.0
<b>Total</b>	44	100.0	82	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

The table above illustrates that there is no system in place to provide training to potential labourers at their place of origin before they migrate to their destination. In the case of a few Nepali migrants, this is observed because they already received training in their previous job roles, such as in the military and police. After their retirement, they found better opportunities in security and other business establishments in India. There is no established practice in either Nepal or India to provide training based on market demand or the nature of jobs at the respective destinations as part of a strategy to secure new and improved opportunities.

### Type of Employment and the Skill Level of Migrants at their Destination

The type of work and the skill levels of migrants differ at their destination. According to Table 6.3, the majority of Nepali labour migrants, specifically 91.4%, fall into skill level-1, which encompasses physical or labour-intensive occupations such as masonry, carpentry, agriculture labour, transportation labour, security guards, watchmen, domestic workers, hotel staff, and cleaners. In contrast, a small proportion, only 7.3% of Nepali labour migrants, and more than half, 56.4% of Indian labour migrants, are classified under skill level-2. This category includes jobs related to operating machinery and electronic equipment, driving vehicles, mechanical and electrical repairs, clerical work, hairdressing, and sales assistance. Additionally, only a few, about 1.3% of Nepali labour migrants, are categorized as having skill level-3, which involves complex technical and specialized tasks, often at the managerial level. It's evident that the majority of Indian labour migrants fall within the skill level-2 category, which enables them to earn higher incomes. This analysis reveals that Indian labour migrants coming to Nepal tend to possess relatively higher levels of skills compared to Nepali migrants.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of Migrants by Nature of Work and their Training Status at Destination*

Status of Training at Destination	Nepali Labour Migrants to India		Indian Labour Migrants to Nepal	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	%
<b>Company/Employer trained</b>	32	8.6	-	-
<b>Experience by Learning</b>	338	91.4	280	100
<b>Nature of work at destination</b>				
<b>Manager</b>	4	1.1	-	-
<b>Clerical Support Workers</b>	5	1.3	-	-
<b>Services and Sales Workers</b>	152	41.1	40	14.3
<b>Crafts/Trades Workers</b>	67	18.1	177	63.2
<b>Plant and Machine Operators</b>	15	4.1	-	-
<b>Elementary Occupations</b>	127	34.3	63	22.5
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0
<b>Pearson Chi Square Test</b>		<i>Value</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
		150.913	5	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Within the migrant population, 8.6% of Nepali labour migrants received training from companies or employers at their destination, but the majority of Nepali labour migrants



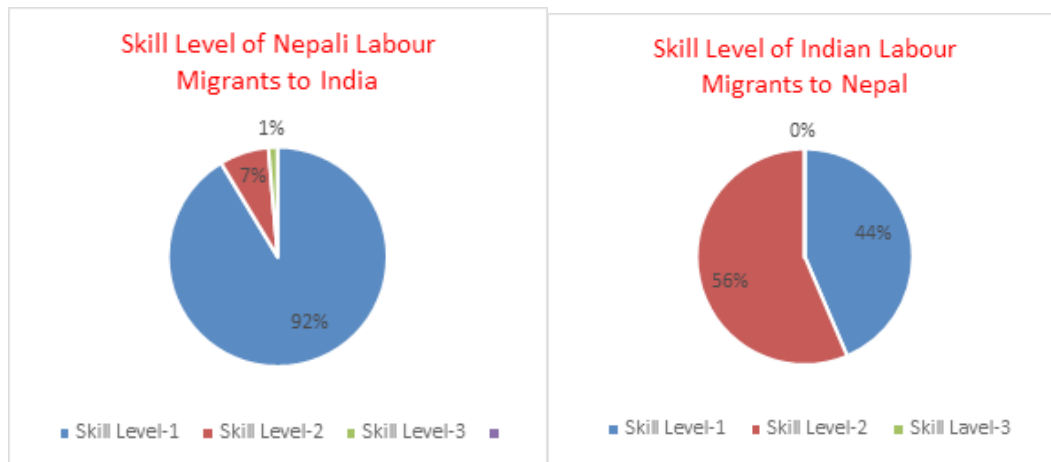
(91.4%) and all Indian labour migrants (100%) relied on their own acquired knowledge and experience in their destination jobs. Table 3 provides further insights into the diverse nature of employment for migrants and their families from Nepal and India. The range of job types is quite varied. Among Nepali migrants, the majority (41.1%) were engaged in services and sales, followed by 34.3% in elementary occupations, and 18.1% in crafts and related trades. There were only a few involved in managerial positions, clerical support, and plant/machine operation and assembly.

On the other hand, Indian labour migrants predominantly worked in crafts and related trades (63.2%), followed by 22.5% in elementary occupations, and 14.3% in services and sales roles. Additionally, Nepali females, who are family members of migrant workers, were mostly engaged in elementary occupations (87.2%), followed by service and sales roles (10.7%), and crafts and related trades (2.1%). Indian female family members predominantly worked in crafts and related trades (80%) and elementary occupations (20%) alongside their husbands for economic purposes. A Pearson Chi-square test revealed an association between the labour status and the nature of jobs at the destination with the country of origin.

This finding aligns with Devkota's (2016) research, which suggests that most migrants in Nepal were initially involved in agriculture or were students but worked in manufacturing, construction, and the hotel-restaurant sectors abroad. According to Devkota, a majority of international migrants in Nepal engage in skilled and semi-skilled trades in trade and services, including vending, plumbing, electrical work, carpentry, tailoring, and barbering. In contrast, labourers from Nepal working in India often serve as security guards, porters, domestic helpers, and general unskilled labourers. Notably, many young Nepali labour migrants in India prefer porter jobs for higher short-term earnings (Adhikari, 2015). Additionally, Sharma and Thapa (2013) found that Nepali labour migrants work in Indian states as part of Gorkha regiments and civil services, serving in various roles such as security guards, private sector employees, domestic workers, labourers in mines, tea estates, and dairy farms. A report from Nepal Rastra Bank (2009) also notes that migrants are involved in porter jobs, security guarding, hotel and restaurant work, construction, agricultural labour, driving, factory work, and even official positions.

**Figure 2**

*Distribution of Skill Level of Labour Migrants between Nepal and India*



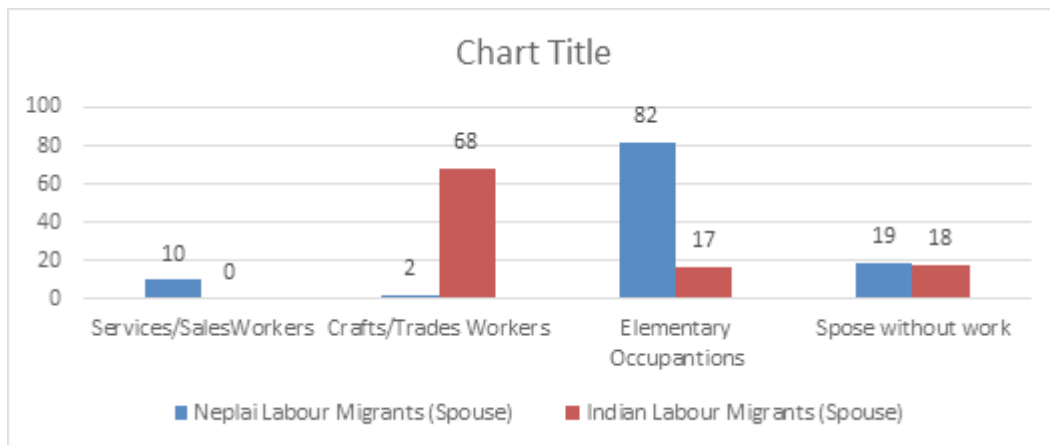
Migrant occupations range from skilled to less-skilled positions, which are influenced by the demand from the destination country. In the context of Nepal-India migration, a study by Samuels et al. (2011) reveals that male Nepali labour migrants in India are predominantly employed as restaurant/bar workers, followed by watchmen and factory workers. Female migrants, on the other hand, are primarily engaged as domestic workers, followed by housewives or factory workers. Furthermore, the majority of migrants view migration to India as beneficial for their families, resulting in remittances sent back to their home regions.

According to Subedi (1991), the lack of skilled and semi-skilled labour in industries in Terai created employment opportunities for migrants from North India. For Nepali non-agricultural emigrants, there are job prospects as hotel staff, port workers, and security guards in Indian towns. As for Indian workers in Nepal, Karki (2018) notes that they are typically involved in road construction, hydroelectric projects, and other construction endeavors. Despite this, many young Nepalese still seek opportunities abroad, often taking out substantial loans to work overseas. According to GIZ/ILO (2015), labour migrants from Nepal are predominantly males in the working-age group with lower education and skill qualifications. The majority of Nepali labour migrants heading to India lack certified skills, making it challenging for them to secure formal employment. It's worth noting that the International Labour Organization, ILO (2012), classifies occupations into four main levels under the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08). Skill level-4 is highly professional, involving decision-making roles; skill level-3 encompasses complex

technical and specialized tasks, often at the managerial level; skill level-2 includes jobs operating machinery and electronic equipment, driving vehicles, mechanical and electrical repairs, clerical roles, hairdressing, and sales assistance; while skill level-1 covers all physical or manual labour.

**Figure 3**

*Distribution of Nature of Jobs (Spouse) at Respective Destination*



From the analysis of job characteristics, the researcher also notes a diverse array of work and services. Specific jobs and services performed by Nepali labour migrants in India include garden labour (apple plantations), agricultural labour (vegetables), manufacturing labour, transportation and storage labour, mining and construction labour, hotel/casino management, casino service management, stock clerks (casino), cooking and waiting staff (hotel/restaurant), bakers and pastry cooks, dairy product production, food processing work, cleaning and assisting (domestic/hotel/office), domestic help (house servants), housekeeping supervision, watchmen, security guards (company), garment and related work, car and heavy truck driving, machinery mechanics and repairs, machine operation (paper), and machinery mechanism and repairs. Similarly, Indian labour migrants perform jobs such as agricultural labour (vegetables), bricklaying, floor laying and tile setting, hairdressing, painting, machinery mechanics and repairs, masonry (black road construction), carpentry, welding, and motor vehicle mechanics. However, agricultural and construction labourers are common job categories for both Nepali and Indian labour migrants at their destinations.

This variation in job types highlights the different labour markets in Nepal and India, which drive migration between the two countries as individuals seek opportunities. It's worth noting that other studies corroborate these findings. According to Bhattarai (2007), Nepali labour migrants are engaged in 11 different types of jobs, such as working in

restaurants (both big establishments and roadside ‘Dhabas’), factories, as watchmen, drivers, house servants, agriculture, porters, stone pullers, coal miners, rickshaw pullers, and Indian government services. The majority of men work as watchmen and car cleaners, while women are often involved in housekeeping. The job market is highly organized, with jobs being assigned and sold within networks, which is consistent with the findings of this dissertation.

Conversely, KC (2004) indicates that the majority of international migrants in Nepal from India are engaged in skilled and semi-skilled work in trade and services, particularly in the commercial and industrial sectors due to their strong networking and investments. According to KC, large numbers of Indian labour migrants work as vendors, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, tailors, and barbers in urban areas. In contrast, Nepalese in India do not have the same advantages and a similar working culture. Indian labour migrants tend to stay in the same job in Nepal for extended periods, gaining more experience compared to Nepali workers.”

### **Working Environment and Level of Satisfaction**

According to the International Labour Organization’s Hours of Work Convention No. 1 from 1919, the established standard for working hours is 48 hours per week or 8 hours per day, which is recognized as an international norm. This study has adhered to the same standard, in line with the regulations set by the Government of Nepal. Table 4 provides an overview of working hours, overtime availability, and the job satisfaction levels of the migrants. The table indicates that approximately 22.7% of Nepali labour migrants and 41.1% of Indian labour migrants dedicate 8 hours a day to their work, with the majority of Nepalis (65.7%) and more than half of Indian migrants (52.8%) working between 1 to 12 hours daily. Additionally, 11.6% of Nepali labour migrants work more than 12 hours per day. Furthermore, 6.1% of Indian labour migrants do not have fixed working hours, as they often work on a contract basis rather than a salaried arrangement. Statistical analysis indicates a relationship between working hours at the destination and the migrants’ country of origin, as the null hypothesis was rejected.

Regarding job satisfaction resulting from this migration, the majority of Nepali labour migrants (90.6%) express satisfaction, followed by 6.7% who are not content, and 2.7% who are very content. In contrast, the majority of Indian labour migrants (95.1%) report being satisfied with their jobs, with only 4.9% expressing dissatisfaction.

**Table 4**

*Distribution of Labour Migrants by Working Hour, Overtime Facility and Satisfaction at Work*

Working Hours/Level of Satisfaction	Nepali Labour- Migrants to India		Indian Labour- Migrants to Nepal	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	%
<b>8 hours</b>	84	22.7	115	41.1
<b>8-12 hours</b>	243	65.7	148	52.8
<b>More than 12 hours</b>	43	11.6	-	-
<b>Not fixed (depend as need)</b>	-	-	17	6.1
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0
<b>Pearson Chi Square Test</b>	Value		Df	Sig.
	76.924		3	0.000
<b>Having overtime facility</b>				
<b>Yes</b>	223	60.3	142	50.7
<b>No</b>	147	39.7	138	49.3
<b>Respondents' Satisfaction Level on Overtime Facilities</b>				
<b>Very happy</b>	6	2.7	-	-
<b>Happy (satisfactory)</b>	202	90.6	135	95.1
<b>Not happy</b>	15	6.7	7	4.9
<b>Total</b>	223	100.0	142	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Simultaneously, this study also assesses the salary provision and its increment process. Table 5 reveals that 43.2% of Indian labour migrants are compensated based on the quantity or volume of work, followed by 41.1% who are paid on a daily basis, 9.6% on a monthly basis, and 6.1% who do not have a fixed salary or wage provision. In contrast, for Nepali labour migrants, the salary/wage provision is distributed as follows: 73.0% on a monthly basis, 22.4% on a contract basis, and 4.6% based on work volume. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the null hypothesis is rejected, clearly indicating a relationship between the mode of payment and the migrants' country of origin.

In accordance with the International Labour Organization's Hours of Work Convention (No. 1) from 1919, the established standard for working hours is 48 hours per week or 8

hours per day, adhering to international norms. Most migrants report job satisfaction at their destination. This job satisfaction at the destination is considered a pull factor, while dissatisfaction and distress at the origin are viewed as pushing factors. In a study by Grimes and Wesselbaum (2019), it was emphasized that happiness influences migration flows independently of the average happiness level in a given country.

**Table 5**

*Distribution of Labour-Migrants by Mode of Payment*

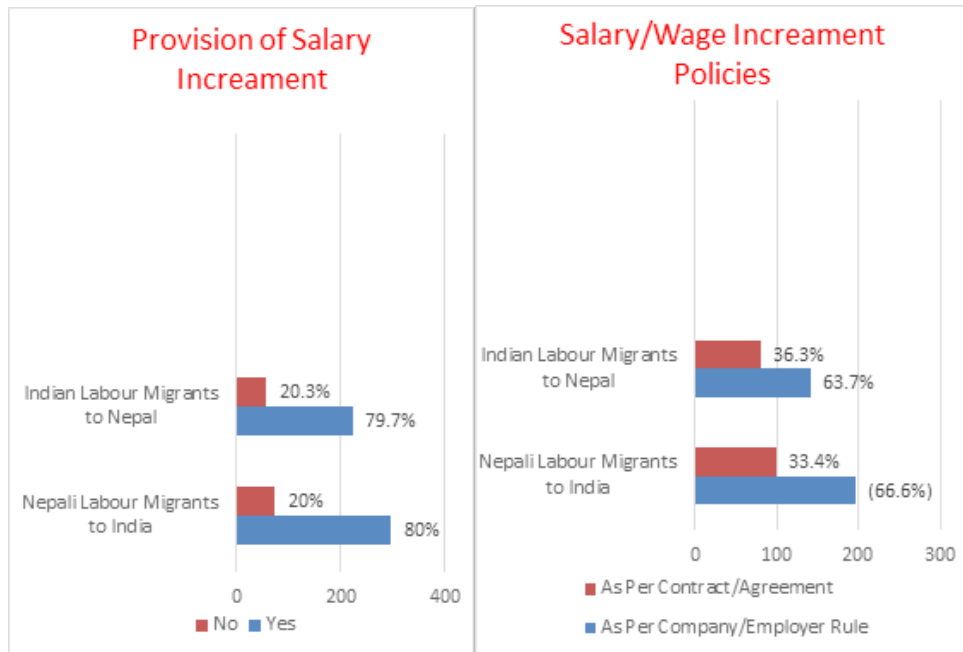
Mode of Payment	Nepali Labour-Migrants to India		Indian Labour-Migrants to Nepal	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	%
<b>Daily basis</b>	-	-	115	41.1
<b>Monthly basis</b>	270	73.0	27	9.6
<b>Contract basis</b>	83	22.4	-	-
<b>Work basis (Volume)</b>	17	4.6	121	43.2
<b>Not fixed</b>	-	-	17	6.1
<b>Total</b>	370	100	280	100
<b>Pearson Chi Square Test</b>	<i>Value</i>		<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
	489.110		4	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

The study also reveals that the majority of migrants, accounting for 80% of Nepali migrants and 79.7% of Indian migrants, have salary increment provisions in place, which are determined by company/employer rules (65.3%) and contractual agreements (34.7%). Furthermore, the study evaluates the salary provisions and their increment processes. In general, labourers are categorized as daily wage labourers, contract-based labourers, salary-based labourers, and work (volume)-based labourers. A significant number of Nepali labour migrants are employed in salary-based positions, while Indian migrants are primarily engaged in contract and volume-based jobs. Workers in the brick industry and hairdressing sector, for instance, are compensated based on the volume of work they complete per person or per production. Meanwhile, jobs in construction, carpentry, and agriculture typically follow contract-based payment arrangements, while other service sector positions are compensated on a daily basis.

**Figure 4**

*Provision of Salary/Wage Increment and its policies*



According to Bhattra (2007), there are about (15-20) thousands of such watchmen are estimated to be working in Delhi alone. They are not covered under any of the Indian labour laws because they have not formal contract of their job and employ to employer relationship. These cheap Nepali labour migrants provide security to the Indian society whole night carrying only a whistle and a bamboo stick in the name of security equipment. They collected (5-10) thousand per month.

### **Provision of Leave at Working Destination**

Table 6 shows that most of the Nepali migrants, i.e., 97.3 percent have the provision of leave where almost all (i.e., 100%) of Indian labour-migrants have that facility. The provision of leave facility is under the rule of company/employer (i.e., 30.5% for Nepali and 9.7% for Indian labour-migrants). Likewise, 38.4 percent migrants have leave facility as per their need and 40.2 percent take leave during festivals /urgent work only.

**Table 6***Distribution of Labour Migrants according to Provision of Leave at Working Destination*

Provision of Leave	Nepali Labour-Migrants to India		Indian Labour-Migrants to Nepal	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	%
<b>Having leave facility</b>	360	97.3	280	100
<b>Don't have facility</b>	10	2.7	-	-
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0
<b>Leave (according to rules of company/employer)</b>	110	30.5	27	9.7
<b>Self-depend (as per need)</b>	108	30.0	138	49.2
<b>Leave (in festivals/urgent works/others)</b>	142	39.5	115	41.1

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

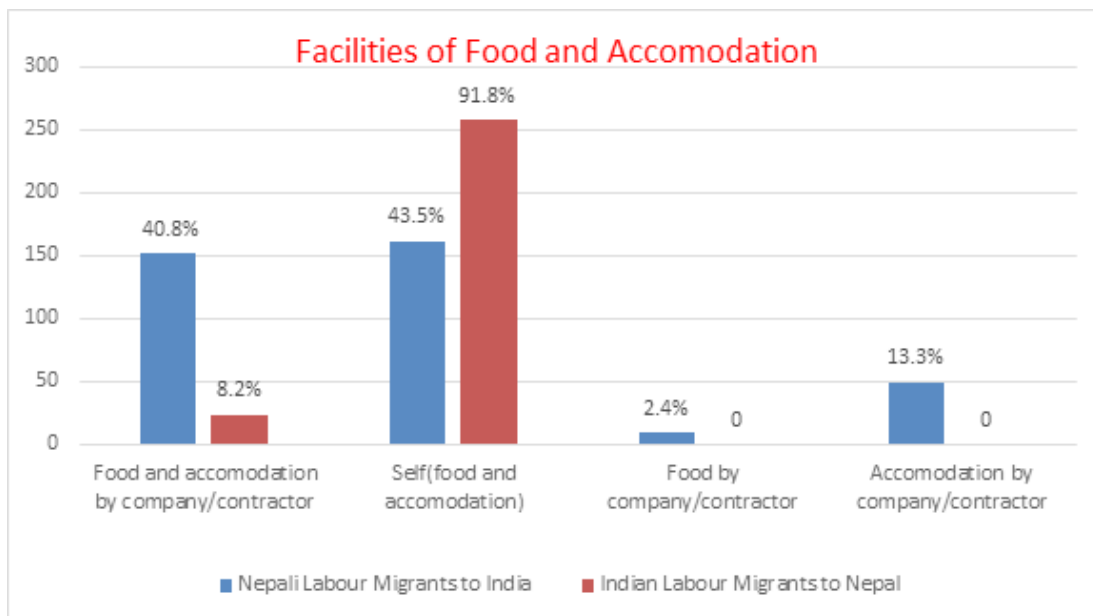
**Food and Accommodation Facilities of Migrants**

From the Figure 6, it is seen that less than half, i.e., 40.8 percent of Nepali labour-migrants and a few, i.e., 8.2 percent of Indian labour-migrants are provided food and accommodation facility by company/contractor. On the other hand, 43.5 percent of Nepali and majority, i.e., 91.8 percent of Indian labour-migrants are managing food and accommodation by them. Similarly, 2.4 percent of Nepali labour-migrants have provided food by company/employer and rest 13.3 percent of Nepali labour-migrants have provided the facility of accommodation only. It is seen that the food and accommodation are managed by the most of the migrants themselves (i.e., 64.3% in aggregate) indicating their independency on that. Statistically, there was association between provision of food and accommodation at work place to country of origin.



**Figure 6**

*Distribution of Labour-Migrants by Provision of Food and Accommodation Facilities*



### **Insurance Policy of Migrants and List of Physical Hazards and Facilities**

In general understanding, the availability of insurance scheme at destination could be a pull factor while the chances or incidents of physical hazards could be perceived as a pushing factor of the migration. From the Table 6.8, the findings about insurance policy, physical hazards and allocated responsibilities have been presented. This study reveals that a few (i.e., 10.3%) of Nepali labour-migrants have the provision of life insurance by employer in India. It is also calculated that 15.9 percent of Nepali labour-migrants encountered with different kinds of physical hazards cases during their work from which 24.9 percent of Nepali labour-migrants have provided treatment facility by Indian companies. Contrary to this, as 12.5 percent of Indian labour-migrants have faced the cases of physical hazards at their works, none of them got any kinds of support by the venders or contractors in Nepal. Thus, most of the Nepali labour-migrants (i.e., 75.1%) and entire Indian labour-migrants' (i.e., 100%) community have taken self-responsibility for their safety at the time of hazards.

**Table 7***Distribution of Labour Migrants by Status of Insurance Policy and Physical Hazards*

<b>Insurance Policy and Hazards Cases</b>	<b>Nepali Labour-Migrants to India</b>		<b>Indian Labour-Migrants to Nepal</b>		<b>Both Groups</b>	
	(N)	(%)	(N)	%	(N)	%
<b>Provision of life insurance</b>						
<b>Yes</b>	38	10.3	-	-	38	5.8
<b>No</b>	332	89.7	280	100.0	612	94.2
<b>Cases of physical hazards attempted by respondents</b>						
<b>Yes</b>	59	15.9	35	12.5	94	14.5
<b>No</b>	311	84.1	245	87.5	556	85.5
<b>Responsibility of care in case of physical hazards</b>						
<b>Company/contractor provides</b>	92	24.9	-	-	92	14.1
<b>Self-responsibilities of safety</b>	278	75.1	280	100	558	85.9
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0	650	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Despite the provisions of an open border agreement between Nepal and India as outlined in the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1950, this arrangement doesn't appear to offer complete benefits to labour migrants crossing into India. From the perspective of labour migrants, the open border is often marred by challenges such as deception, misbehavior, and threats from border security forces. These migrants also face exploitation by transporters and traders who physically coerce them into using specific modes of transportation and overcharge them. Moreover, upon crossing the border, migrants, despite their initial excitement, often encounter discipline and humiliation from both formal and informal gatekeepers. This treatment seems to be a way of producing a pool of low-wage earners in India. The unique arrangement allows Nepali labour migrants to travel and work in India without the need for extensive documentation, yet it leaves them in an ambiguous category, neither considered natives nor aliens.

Similarly, Subba (2003) sheds light on the working conditions and the situation of Nepali speakers in India. Many of them are subjected to harassment, humiliation, and eviction from their homes, especially in parts of North East India. This treatment often

compels Nepali speakers to hide their identity due to the sense of humiliation and continuous harassment they face. The exact number of Nepali speakers in India is not precisely known, but estimates suggest there are over six million residing in various Indian states, including Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, and Arunachal Pradesh. Some of them maintain immovable property in India and occasionally return to Nepal to visit their relatives.

Nepali labour migrants often report being cheated or harassed at their destination, both during travel and at the borders. Security forces at transit points and employers at the workplace are commonly responsible for this mistreatment. However, due to a lack of awareness, security, and knowledge, most migrants do not engage in legal processes or have an understanding of their labour rights. They also tend not to participate in trade unions. These findings raise questions about the level of awareness among migrants and whether their working conditions promote a sustainable livelihood from a rights-based perspective.

These findings are supported by the evidence from other studies, highlighting discrimination and exploitation experienced by Nepalese migrant workers in their destination countries. The exploitation and human rights abuses are observed throughout the migration process, from recruitment to working in destination countries. Effective measures are required to address these issues, involving government intervention and the cooperation of relevant stakeholders, including recruitment agencies and brokers in both the origin and destination countries.

In another context, Bhattarai (2007) portrays a tragic scenario where Nepali watchmen often lose their lives in accidents while on duty. Due to a lack of knowledge about the legal system, they are unable to seek compensation. Migrants from the far western region of Nepal tend to have a low socio-economic status and work in unskilled and informal positions such as watchmen and car cleaners. Their living conditions are often subpar, and some engage in unhealthy behaviors such as alcohol consumption, gambling, and having multiple sexual partners. Additionally, some women are involved in domestic work.

### **Monthly Income and Allowances**

The monthly income of Nepali labour-migrants is found comparatively less than Indian labour-migrants. From Table 7, it is clearly observed that 54.3 percent of Nepali labour-migrants have salary between NRs. 12,800 to 16,000, where it is just 2.1 percent of Indian labour-migrants in Nepal.

**Table 7***Distribution of Labour-Migrants by Monthly Income (Basic) and Allowances*

<b>Monthly Basic Income in NRs.</b>	<b>Nepali Labour- Migrants to India</b>		<b>Indian Labour- Migrants to Nepal</b>		<b>Both Population</b>	
	<i>(N)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(N)</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>(N)</i>	<i>(%)</i>
<b>12,800-16,000</b>	201	54.3	6	2.1	207	31.8
<b>16,001-32,000</b>	160	43.2	81	29.0	241	37.1
<b>32,001-48,000</b>	7	1.9	119	42.5	126	19.4
<b>48,001-65,000</b>	2	0.6	74	26.4	76	11.7
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0	650	100.0
<b>Mean Income</b>	19,061.6		40,635.5		28,355.1	
<b>Median Income</b>	16,000.0		40,000.0			
<b>Provision of Allowances at Destination (currency in NRs)</b>						
<b>Don't have allowances</b>	125	33.8	138	49.3	263	40.5
<b>2,000-5,000</b>	150	40.5	77	27.5	227	34.9
<b>5,001-10,000</b>	88	23.8	65	23.2	153	23.5
<b>10,001-16,000</b>	7	1.9	0	0	7	1.1
<b>Total</b>	370	100.0	280	100.0	650	100.0
<b>Mean Allowances</b>	5,711.0		5,707.7		5,709.8	
<b>Median Allowances</b>	4,800.0		5,000.0			

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Comparatively, the monthly income of Indian labour migrants appears to be higher than that of Nepali migrants. Approximately 97.5% of Nepali labour migrants in India earn between NRs. 12,800 and NRs. 32,000 per month, while only 2.5% earn more than NRs. 32,000. In contrast, 68.9% of Indian migrants in Nepal earn more than NRs. 32,000, and 29% earn between NRs. 16,001 and NRs. 32,000 per month. Among Nepali labour migrants in India, about 54.3% earn between NRs. 12,800 and NRs. 16,000, 43.2% earn between NRs. 16,001 and NRs. 32,000, 1.9% earn between NRs. 32,001 and NRs. 48,000, and only 0.6% earn between NRs. 48,001 and NRs. 65,000 as remittances from their destination. In contrast, 2.1% of Indian labour migrants in Nepal earn remittances between NRs. 12,800 and NRs. 16,000, 29% earn between NRs. 16,001 and NRs. 32,000, 42.5% earn between NRs. 32,001 and NRs. 48,000, and 26.4% earn between NRs. 48,001 and NRs. 65,000.

There is a significant difference between the mean income of Nepali labour migrants in India (NRs. 19,061.6) and Indian labour migrants in Nepal (NRs. 40,635.5). The concepts of migration and allowances are interconnected; however, allowances are typically analyzed in terms of remittances in migration studies. In this study, nearly half of Indian labour migrants (49.3%) did not receive any form of allowance, while around 34% of Nepali labour migrants in India did receive allowances. Additionally, migrants from both countries generally received relatively low amounts of allowances, with 34.9% sending between NRs. 2,000 and NRs. 5,000, and 23.5% sending allowances in the range of NRs. 5,001 to NRs. 10,000.

Table 7 indicates that the median monthly income for Nepali labour migrants in India is NRs. 16,000, while for Indian labour migrants in Nepal, it is NRs. 40,000. This means that half of the Nepali migrants earn NRs. 16,000 per month, while half of the Indian migrants earn NRs. 40,000 per month. To compare the mean monthly income of Nepali labour migrants in India (Group 1) and Indian labour migrants in Nepal (Group 2), an independent-sample t-test was conducted at a 5% level of significance. The results are as follows:

**Table 8**

*Group Statistics for Monthly Income of Nepali and Indian Labour Migrants*

		Origin of Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Monthly Income in NRS	Nepali Migrants to India		370	19,061.62	6,501.489	337.996
	Indian Migrants to Nepal		280	40,635.71	12,905.619	771.258
t-test for equality of means						
		F	Sig.	T	DF	Sig.(2-tailed)
Equal variances	149.45		.000	-27.83	648	.000
Assumed equal variances				-25.62	385.7	.000

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

Table 8 presents the findings related to the mean monthly income of the sample. It shows that the average monthly income of 370 Nepali labour migrants in India is NRs.

19,061.62, while the average monthly income of 280 Indian labour migrants in Nepal is NRs. 40,635.71. Therefore, the mean income difference between these two groups is -NRs. 21,574.093. To determine whether this difference in mean income is statistically significant, several steps are taken. First, the equality of variances is tested, and the Levene's test indicates that the variances of Nepali labour migrants in India and Indian labour migrants in Nepal are significantly different, as the probability value is less than 0.05 (the chosen level of significance).

Consequently, the assumption of equal variances is not met, and a two-tailed t-test is performed, resulting in a p-value of 0.000 with 385.701 degrees of freedom, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating a statistically significant difference in the mean monthly income between Nepali labour migrants in Nepal and Indian labour migrants in Nepal. Since the difference is negative, it implies that the mean monthly income of Nepali labour migrants is significantly lower than that of Indian labour migrants in Nepal.

Additionally, Table 8 displays the standard deviation of monthly income for Nepali labour migrants in India as NRs. 6,501.489, while for Indian labour migrants in Nepal, it is NRs. 12,905.619. The difference in standard deviation is significant at the 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that there is more income variability among Indian labour migrants in Nepal, indicating greater income diversity. Conversely, there is more consistency in monthly income among Nepali labour migrants in India.

### **Conclusion**

Migrants from both Nepal and India exhibit differences in their job patterns, both at their places of origin and their destinations. On average, approximately half of labour migrants from both countries did not have any employment in their places of origin. Some of them were engaged in agriculture or had small businesses and earned limited incomes. Training opportunities were generally lacking at their places of origin, leading to a situation where migrants had to learn and gain experience on their own. At their destinations, there are notable distinctions in the nature of jobs and the skills of these migrants. Most Nepali labour migrants fall into skill level-1, while Indian labour migrants tend to have skill level-2. Common jobs and services shared by both groups include agricultural labour and construction work in their respective destinations. Specific jobs performed by Nepali labour migrants in India encompass various roles such as garden labour (apple plants), agriculture labour (vegetables), manufacturing, transportation and storage, mining and construction, hotel casino, bakery, dairy, domestic work, watchman, housekeeping, security guard, garment work, driving, and various machinery operations. On the other hand, Indian labour

migrants in Nepal engage in agriculture (vegetable) work, bricklaying, floor laying and tile setting, hairdressing, painting, mechanical work, road construction, carpentry, masonry, welding, and motor vehicle machinery work.

Regarding working hours, most of them work around 8 hours per day, and some may earn additional income through overtime work. Notably, Indian labour migrants are more likely to work on a contract or volume-based basis, whereas Nepali migrants usually have monthly-based arrangements. Accommodation and food facilities vary depending on the job and location. Nepali labour migrants working in hotels and restaurants often receive accommodation and food provided by their employers. Some migrants only receive these facilities as per their agreements with employers. In contrast, many Indian labour migrants working as masons receive food and accommodation provided by their mates or contractors.

In terms of healthcare, companies or employers generally cover basic medical treatments for physical hazards, but there is limited availability of comprehensive health insurance. A noteworthy trend is the tendency for Nepali labour migrants to change jobs and sometimes even their destinations as per their convenience, while Indian labour migrants typically continue in the same jobs and destinations.

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