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Abstract

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Perception and Satisfaction of Sociology Graduates

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The main aim of this paper is to identify perception and satisfaction of the sociology graduates of Prithvi Narayan Campus Pokhara, regarding their degree in sociology. It attempts to know the educational background of sociology graduates and reason behind selecting the degree as well. Academic happiness is seen to be one of the most crucial variables influencing students' academic success along with their willingness and drive to continue their education. This will ultimately have an impact on their future careers. The population in this study are the Sociology graduates of Masters Level of Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara who had submitted their thesis in year 2073 and 2074 B.S. after the separation of Sociology and Anthropology departments. Attempt was made to do census among 112 graduates but only 55 responses have been collected for the study. The study was completed through descriptive research design. The data collected were analyzed through presenting it into table and graphs. The sociology graduates perceive sociology degree as quite positive and responsible. The study reveals out that they are satisfied with sociological knowledge but majority shows dissatisfaction with the earning of sociology degree.

THE SATISFACTION AND the graduates' perception regarding the sociology degree are significant to understand as it provides valuable insight for both the upcoming generation and the department of sociology. Analyzing the graduates' perceptions can provide feedback on the relevance and applicability of the sociology degree in today's world. Sociology is the youngest of the social sciences. Its major concern is the society. It is the scientific study of society along with the patterns of social relationships and culture resulted through the social interaction. It does this by examining the dynamics of constituent parts of societies such as institutions, communities, populations and gender, racial, or age groups. Sociology includes the field of social stratification, social

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movements, social change, and societal disorder and so on. Sociology is a discipline, historically oriented, structurally intelligent, cross-culturally informed, highly abstract and conceptual technique of identifying and examining patterns in the concrete social lives that we all lead (Mishra, 2009). It promotes critical thinking and social awareness and encourages those that are marginalized and excluded from the mainstream of development. It saves individuals' deeper understanding of social aspects that saves their entire life.

The end of Rana regime in 1950 A.D. has open the door for the development of sociology and anthropology in Nepal. The department of Sociology and Anthropology at Tribhuvan University was founded in 1980, under the chairmanship of Professor Dr. Chaitanya Mishra. One of the main branches of the Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies (INAS), the department of Sociology and Anthropology, was founded on July 15, 1973 to train postgraduate research assistants and students in M.A or Ph.D. programs (Bhattachan, 2008). The Department of Sociology/Anthropology and Rural Development at Prithvi Narayan Campus was established in 1989 as a wing department of the Department of Political Science. In 2002, it separated and evolved as an independent department, introducing the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Master's (MA) programs in Sociology/Anthropology. Sociology and anthropology have also been separated and has their own respective department.

Understanding the perceptions and satisfaction of sociology graduates is important for several reasons. First, sociology graduates represent a significant portion of the college-educated workforce, and their skills and knowledge are in demand across a range of fields. Second, sociology graduates may face unique challenges in the job market due to the interdisciplinary nature of their education and the lack of clear career paths associated with the major. Third, understanding the factors that influence graduates' perceptions of the value of their degree and their satisfaction with their education can inform efforts to improve the quality of sociology programs and the job prospects of sociology graduates.

This study draws on a range of theoretical perspectives to explore the perceptions and satisfaction of sociology graduates with symbolic interactionism. The study uses a self-administered questionnaire to understand the complex factors that shape graduates' perceptions of the value of their degree and their satisfaction with their education and job prospects.

This paper aims to find out the perception and satisfaction of sociology graduates of Masters level of Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara, regarding their degree in sociology. Sociology is a popular major subject that provides students with a broad understanding of social systems and the tools to analyze social problems. However, there is limited research on the perceptions and satisfaction of sociology graduates regarding their education and career prospects. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring the perceptions and satisfaction of sociology graduates with their degree and job prospects.

The findings of this study may have important implications for sociology programs, career services, and policy makers. By providing a better understanding of the perceptions and satisfaction of sociology graduates, this study can inform efforts to improve the quality of sociology programs, enhance the job prospects of sociology graduates, and support the development of policies that promote the value of a sociology degree

Literature Review

Strong satisfaction with sociology as a major with more than 9 out of 10 strongly agreed that they had learned basic sociological concepts such as socialization, culture, institutions, social problems and stratifications (Roth et al., 2006). Sociology majors are interested in people and like

to work with people. -The major reason why students select to enroll in sociology program is due to their personal interest to pursue behavioral sciences. The students of BA perceive sociology as a useful text as it aided them in developing criteria thinking among the students (Mujer Quintos & M.Nelson, 2013). It highlights the practical value of studying sociology and indicates that sociology measures are well-equipped to analyze complex social issues.

Symbolic interactionism is a theoretical perspective that emphasizes the importance of subjective meanings and interpretations in shaping social life. According to this perspective, the perceptions and attitudes of sociology graduates are shaped by their individual experiences and interactions with others (Carter & Fuller, 2015). Symbolic interactionism would suggest that graduates who have positive experiences with their education and who perceive that their degree is valued by others should be more satisfied with their degree and more confident in their job prospects.

Overall, the theoretical perspectives offer complementary insights into the experiences and perceptions of sociology graduates. By drawing on these perspectives, this study aims to provide a more understanding of the complex factors that shape graduates' perceptions of the value of their degree and their satisfaction with their education and job prospects.

Previous research has found that sociology graduates generally view their degree as providing them with valuable skills and knowledge. The highly educated may be able to better measure their expectations for the job or make use of their resources to reduce stress and increase job satisfaction (Solomon et al., 2021). Students were quite satisfied with their undergraduate sociology education according to the survey by the American Sociological Association (Senter et al., 2012). The majority of sociology graduates believed that their degree had prepared them well for their current job. While sociology graduates generally view their degree as valuable, there is some evidence that they may face challenges in finding employment in their field. However, other research has found that sociology graduates have a wide range of career options, and that they may be well-suited for jobs in fields such as education, social services, and research.

Overall, research suggests that sociology graduates are generally satisfied with their education and the skills they gained during their degree. A study by Peterson and Spencer (2012) found that sociology graduates were more likely than graduates in other fields to report that their education was intellectually stimulating and that they had gained a wide range of skills. However, some research has identified areas where graduates feel their education could be improved, such as the need for more hands-on, practical experience and better job preparation. Sociology graduates generally have a positive view of their degree, although they may face challenges in finding employment in their field. Graduates are generally satisfied with their education and the skills they gained during their degree, but there is room for improvement in certain areas. Future research could further explore the experiences and perspectives of sociology graduates and how they can be better supported in their career paths.

Interpersonal influences from a teacher or in a course and interest in the subject matter are primary reasons for selecting sociology as a major (Mckinney, 2005). The students' satisfaction is a method to obtain students' feedback on their academic experience, perceptions and the expectations from the education institution to evaluate their satisfaction level (Kanwar & Sanjeeva, 2022).

Applied sociologists work in a variety of settings. Applied sociology is the use of sociological theory, methods, skills, and research to address specific difficulties in real-world contexts (Applied and Community Engaged Sociology, n.d.). The discipline of sociology needs to better understand applied sociology as a specific sociological practice. (Zevallos, 2012) Applied

sociology uses sociological knowledge and skills to promote and improve the social well-being of individuals and communities. It seeks to bridge the gap between theory and practise by using sociological concepts, methods, and strategies for real-world phenomena. French philosopher Auguste Comte (1798-1857) was known as the father of sociology and he is the first to see the significance of connecting sociology with science. According to Comte, sociology is the study of society or the science of human behavior (Shubhi, n.d.). Social inequality, race, gender, sexuality, family, education, religion, crime, deviance, stratification, power relations, globalization, social change, etc. of sociology. In general, it provides a meaningful understanding of social phenomena.

Applied sociology is using sociological concepts outside of a university environment to comprehend a particular aspect of society that calls for data collection and analysis (Zevallos, 2009). Applied sociology apply sociological theories and methodologies outside of academic contexts. It even refers to the utilization of sociological expertise to address research topics or issues as specified by certain interest groups. Applied sociologist might have studied sociological theory, methods, and findings in accordance with related fields like urban planning, community development, communications, criminology, social work, women's studies, gender studies, critical race studies, indigenous studies, religion, demography/population studies, and others. They might work for local government, the commercial sector, research organizations, international organizations, academic institutions, or community organizations. They could also work independently as field sociologists. This paper wants to reveal the involvement of sociology graduates in the applied field of sociology.

Research Methods

Research design. This study is mainly based on descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is used here to describe the graduates' perception regarding sociology degree and satisfaction with the degree. The self-administered questionnaire was sent to the respondents from Google form to know the perception and satisfaction of sociology graduates of Prithvi Narayan Campus regarding the subject sociology.

Population and sample. The population in this study are the Sociology graduates of Masters Level of Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara who had submitted their thesis in year 2073 and 2074 B.S. i.e after the separation of departments of sociology and anthropology. A name list of 112 sociology graduates were provided by the department of sociology of Prithvi Narayan Campus. Attempt was made to contact all 112 sociology graduates (Masters Level) but many contact numbers provided by the sociology graduates to their department came to be changed and out of reach. The self-administered questionnaire was sent to 60 graduates and only 55 of them responded to it. Thus, it is a census study.

The primary data has been used in this research. The 55 responses were collected through self-administered structured questionnaire from the Google form and the statistical tools such as frequency and percentage are used. The frequency distribution charts and bar diagram are used to analyze the collected data.

Results and Analysis

This chapter has highlighted the socio-demographic profile of the respondents including age group, gender, education level, educational background and employment status as well. The presentation of the result is based on primary data.

Gender Composition

The census of Nepal 2021 A.D. recorded 48.96 percent of male population and 51.04 percent of female population. This data shows the population of female is higher than that of male. Table 4.1 shows the gender composition of the study on perception and satisfaction of sociology graduates of Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara.

Table 1

Gender Composition of the Respondents

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male | 28 | 50.9 |
| Female | 27 | 49.1 |

Source: Field study, 2021

Age Composition

Age is the demographic composition. The age structure of population affects a nation's key 'socio-economic' issues. It also can be used to help predict potential issues of society/nation. Table 2 describes the age composition of the population in which the perception and satisfaction on sociology of the sociology graduates of Prithvi Narayan Campus of Pokhara was studied.

Table 2

Age Composition of the Respondents

| Age level | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| Up to 25 yeras | 2 | 3.6 |
| 26 to 36 years | 35 | 63.6 |
| 37 to 47 years | 13 | 23.6 |
| 48 and above | 5 | 9.1 |
| Total | 55 | 100 |

Source: Field study, 2021

Table 2 indicates that the majority of the respondents were in the age range of 26 to 36 years old, while the smallest group were those up to 25 years of age. The information provided in this table is helpful to understand the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study.

Educational Status of Study Respondents

Studies examining the educational status of sociology graduates seek to understand the level of education achieved by individuals who have completed a degree program in sociology. It can contribute to our understanding of the role of sociology education in shaping individuals' perspectives and the broader social landscape.

Table 3 illustrates the clear number of respondents with their educational report. However, there is the huge differences between the marks obtained and knowledge. Knowledge gained will endure forever. The collected information finds out the examination scores of respondents. Many of the respondents have passed out their different levels in second division according to the data collected. The students with higher grade lacks interest in sociological field of study.

Overall, the data suggests that the majority of sociology graduates across all levels of education performed well in their studies but did not achieve the highest level of distinction. However, a small proportion of graduates did perform exceptionally well, while a smaller propor-

tion did not perform as well. It is also noteworthy that there are cases of "No response" for each division level, which indicate that some graduates chose not to disclose their division level.

Table 3

Educational Background Status

| | SLC | Intermediate | Bachelor | Masters | MPhil |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------|----------|---------|-------|
| <i>level</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | | | | |
| Distinction | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| First Division | 12 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 1 |
| Second Division | 36 | 36 | 38 | 35 | 0 |
| Third Division | 0 | 5 | 5 | 10 | 0 |
| No response | 6 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 0 |
| Total | 55 | 55 | 55 | 55 | 55 |

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Previous Educational Background

Understanding the previous educational background of sociology graduates can provide valuable insights into the educational trajectories of individuals who have pursued a degree in sociology and can help identify trends and patterns in the educational background of sociology graduates. The previous educational faculty of sociology graduates have shown that individuals with diverse educational backgrounds may choose to pursue a degree in sociology.

Table 4

Previous Educational Background

| Faculty | Intermediate level | Bachelor level |
|------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Humanities | 27 | 35 |
| Science | 4 | 3 |
| Management | 5 | 2 |
| Education | 19 | 15 |
| Total | 55 | 55 |

Source: Field study, 2021

Among 55 respondents, 27 respondents are from Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, 4 of them are from Faculty of Science, 5 of them are from Faculty of Management and 19 are from Faculty of Education in their Intermediate level. Similarly, 35 respondents are from Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, 3 of them are from Faculty of Science, 2 of them are from Faculty of Management and 15 are from Faculty of Education in their Bachelor level. Most of the respondents are from Faculty of Humanities and Social Science in both Intermediate and Bachelor level. Likewise, there is the second highest enrollment of respondents in Masters in Sociology from Faculty of Education in both levels. Very few are interested in Masters in Sociology from the Faculties of Science and Management. Understanding the factors that contribute to these differences in interest can help to improve recruitment and retention efforts for students in these faculties who may be interested in pursuing a degree in Sociology.

Employment Status

Employment status refers to an individual's current work situation, indicating whether they are employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force. Understanding the employment status of sociology graduates can provide valuable insights into the career paths and opportunities available to individuals with a degree in sociology. It can also help inform efforts to improve job prospects and career development opportunities for sociology graduates. Additionally, tracking the employment status of sociology graduates over time can provide important information on trends and changes in the job market and the broader social landscape.

Among the 55 sociology graduates, 87 percentage of study population are employed where as 13 percentage of them are unemployed. The study highlights that not all the graduates are able to earn while the majority are employed. Among the employed respondents 39.6 percentage are employed in governmental sectors. Likewise, 41.7 percentage are in private sector. Only 18.7 percentage are involved in non-governmental organization. All the unemployed respondents are looking for the job.

Reasons for Majoring in Sociology

Following their interest in sociological concepts, 69.09 percent of graduated reported that they heard good things about the sociology department of this campus whereas, only 30.91 percent disagreed on it. Almost 80 percent of the respondent agreed that they enjoyed the first course they had in sociology and only 20 percent of them disagreed. This indicates that they found meaning in the subject matter and had a positive experience with it. Around 52 percent of the respondent major in Sociology thinking that it would prepare them for the job they want. Likewise, 21.82 percent respondents majored in Sociology just to get a degree whereas, 78.18 percent disagreed. Graduated seniors accept that they gained the ability to describe and explain sociological concept and social issues along with the degree. The report shows that 56.36 percent of respondent joined Sociology course to contribute in teaching field. The highest percent of respondent are also engaged in teaching which reflects how individuals actively construct their goals and aspirations based on the meanings they attach to their chosen field of study.

To understand the intricate web of the society 92.73 percent of the respondent majored in sociology and 7.27 percent disagreed on this. Among the graduated respondent 96.36 percent agreed on the statement that they majored in sociology thinking that it would prepare them to help to change the society, which aligns with the symbolic interactionist emphasis on individuals' agency and their ability to create and modify social structures. 81.82 percent of the respondent thought to contribute in NGOs/INGOs or in any international level platform after majoring in sociology whereas, 18.18 percent disagreed. The government gives space for sociology graduates as a human relation officer. Among 55 respondents 58.18 percent of respondent agreed and 41.82 percent disagreed to work in government sector as a human relation officer as a reason for majoring in sociology.

In addition, the fact that many respondents, 78.18 percent thought that it would help them to understand their life after majoring in sociology reflects the symbolic interactionist idea that individuals' self-concept is constructed through their interactions with others and with society as a whole. Around 87 percent of the graduates major in sociology thinking that it would prepare them to do different kinds of research and 12.73 percent disagreed. 72.73 percent of respondents majored in sociology for a more general major rather than one focused on a specific career but 15 percent disagreed on this. The collected information shows that the respondents have positive response towards the course. They have mentioned that the degree in sociology would prepare them for the jobs they want and let them know the intricate web of the societies.

Studying Sociology- 'Best Decision Ever'

Sociology is a field of study that focuses on understanding human behavior and social structures through systematic observation, analysis, and interpretation of data. Studying sociology can provide individuals with a deep understanding of the complex social issues and challenges facing our society, as well as the analytical tools and research methods needed to address them. Among total respondents 65.45 percentage of them think that it was the best decision ever to study sociology, 29 percentage of them are neither agreed nor disagreed to it and 5.45 percentage of them disagreed. The study shows that a majority of sociology graduates have a positive perception of their education and believe that studying sociology was a good decision. However, there is a small proportion of graduates, who do not share this positive perception. The respondents who were uncertain or ambivalent about their decision to study sociology represent an interesting group that warrants further investigation.

Financial Satisfaction of Sociology Graduates

The study illustrates that 18 of the respondents are satisfied, 1 is highly satisfied, 9 of them are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 3 are dissatisfied and only 1 is dissatisfied with the financial gain after graduation in Sociology. This shows that the majority of respondents are satisfied because they have found a way to interact with their surroundings in a way that meets their needs.

Achievement of Goal and Expectation after Completion

Sociology is a social science that helps to make sense of the way society works. Sociology graduates are capable of comprehending and evaluating sociological concerns, as well as proposing possible remedies and improvements through addressing social disparities related to elements such as class, gender, racism, poverty, and so on. Studying sociology helps students better understand their own life. Among 55 respondents 51 of them finds sociology a very helpful subject whereas 4 of them denied it.

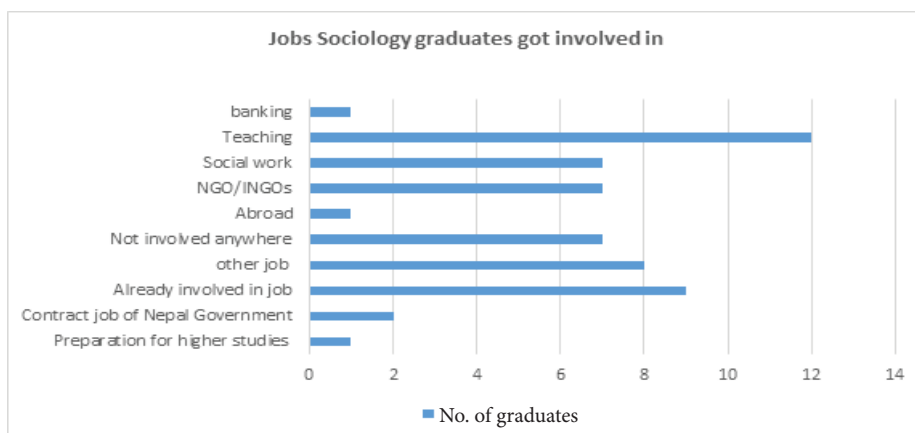
After graduation, common high-level goals include getting a job and repaying student loans. Only few students i.e., 22 percent join the higher-level studies for a degree certificate. Students join higher-level studies with long-term life and career goals. This sets a purpose and a direction for students. Among 55 respondents 32 of them achieved their goal and expectation after completion of their Masters level whereas, 23 of them did not achieve their goal and expectation. The study reveals out that only 41.8 percent of graduates support to the statement that the degree in sociology helps them financially but more than half of them, 58.2 percent are not able to earn with sociology degree. Here, the first data point refers to the perception of studying sociology, while the second data point pertains to the attainment of career goals and financial well-being. There is no direct relationship between the two data points, as they represent different aspects of the graduates' experiences. However, it is possible that graduates who achieved their career goals and are financially successful will have a more positive perception of their sociology degree, and vice versa. Alternatively, some graduates have a positive perception of their sociology degree regardless of financial success, while others feel negatively towards their degree despite achieving their career goals.

Sociology Graduates Engaged Recently after Completion of Degree

The engagement of graduates in any sort of work can provide them with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills to address social issues and make a positive impact on their communities.

Figure 1

Engagement of Graduates after Degree



As the study was fully based on the sociology graduates, it aims to know the jobs they had undertaken right after the completion of the degree. The youth must be financially independent so that the nation could be economically strong. Sociology subject has wider range of scope in various field. It can open the door for its graduates to different path as per the interest of them. The respondents worked as a counselor, teacher, banker, social worker and other different field too. Most of the respondents thought of working as a sociologist rather than as a part of financial office, a part of consultancy and a teacher of primary level. This proves that the sociology graduates are economically independent but dissatisfied with it. Most respondents prefer to work as sociologists; but they also work in other positions. However, despite having job opportunities, the data suggests that they are not satisfied with their financial situation. Only 41.8 percent of graduates supported the idea that the degree in sociology helped them financially, and more than half of them, 58.2 percent, reported that they were not able to earn with their sociology degree.

Sociological Contributions to the Graduates after the Completion of Degree

Sociology is a social science that helps to explain how society functions. Sociologists must understand society, patterns of social connections, and social culture. Sociology students will become competent in understanding and analyzing sociological issues, as well as developing alternative remedies and improvements, such as addressing social disparities based on characteristics such as class, gender, race, and poverty.

The study shows that majority i.e., 70 percent of them agreed on the statement that sociology degree helped in becoming a good citizen and 75 percent of the total respondents have submitted their views as Sociology degree always helped in understanding the cause-effect relationship of social problems. Likewise, 39 respondents agreed on the statement that sociology degree always aided in gaining knowledge of the society. The study visualizes that out of 55 respondents 34 respondents agreed that sociology degrees helped them to form a social relation. It also reflects that the majority of the sociology graduates i.e. 34 always get help in finding out the solutions to community problems. Among 55 respondents, 21 of them said that sociology taught them to be objective and critical. Similarly, Sociology degree always helped to develop a socialized behavior to 37 respondents.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study highlights the perception and satisfaction of sociology graduates with their degree. The majority of respondents found sociology to be an inspiring subject that helps them understand human social life from its roots. They also found sociology useful in training them to think critically about human social life and the cause-effect relationship of social

issues and problems. However, the study also reveals dissatisfaction with the economic gain from the degree, as many graduates are not actively engaged in the field of sociology. The lack of a clear path associated with the sociology major has kept graduates far from economic satisfaction, despite the wide range of scope associated with the degree. Almost 93 percent of the sociology graduates have suggested the upcoming generation to study sociology though they all are not economically satisfied with the degree. Overall, the study emphasizes the importance of sociology as a tool to socialize and change individuals' perspectives regarding life and society, while highlighting the need for more economic opportunities for graduates in the field. The graduates of sociology perceived sociology as a truly inspiring subject as it help student to know life from roots. Graduates who have positive experiences with their education are satisfied with the sociological knowledge but equally are not satisfied with the income as most of them are not actively engaged in the field of sociology.

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