

Exploring Dropouts as Challenges in Higher Education in Nepal: A Comprehensive Review

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to analyse the dropout rate of campus level of students in Nepal. The researchers adopted the process of scientific review as a meta-synthesis to analyse the dropout rate of the campus level students. An in-depth archival analysis followed by an intensive review would be strategies adopted during the scientific review. Secondary data was gathered by searching Google for scholarly publications and articles published between 2001 and 2024. The students want part-time jobs during the study. Such opportunities are less common in Nepal. The research study revealed that Nepali students gave their first priority to Australia, Canada, the USA, and Europe for their higher studies. After finishing their studies, they desired to stay there due to their job security. They applied for green card and permanently stayed there. On the other hand, Nepal lost young and skilled manpower who stayed abroad as immigrants. The study reveals that government can prevent brain-drain by proving financial assistance and employment opportunities to bachelor's level students. The Nepalese government should make appropriate policy to retain its young workforce. Otherwise, its adverse impact will be seen soon.

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions all over the world are now facing a serious and expensive dilemma with student retention. While many studies have been conducted on the topic of growing student numbers and diversity in higher education institutions, there are few on the relationship between student retention and entrance grades, particularly in the UK (Cherian, 2020, p. 1). Over \$9 billion is spent on the education of the approximately 30% of first-year students at US baccalaureate schools who do not return for their second year (Aulck, 2016, p. 16).

This paper examines the impact of academic engagement on students' decision to drop out of school. Prior research has repeatedly demonstrated a strong correlation between student achievement outcomes and involvement. The efforts of higher education stakeholders to raise engagement and, as a result, lower dropout rates, are also indicative of the increased attention paid to academic engagement in recent years (Truta, 2018, p. 1).

Over the past 20 years, policies supporting universal access to higher education have grown. Examples include specialized legislation, financial programs, and the establishment of universities

catering to underprivileged students. While evaluating universal access to HEIs, enrolment versus graduation rates continue to provide a significant conundrum, and institutions need to make sure that the students they admit successfully complete their degrees. We can already say that performance is a cause for concern when considering the drop-out rates in the face of increased access to the institutions, even though it is difficult to fully express the effects of increased access on the quality, equity, and performance of higher education at this early stage. Greater access to higher education (HE) has been having an impact on equity differently, depending on gender, urban/rural dynamics, income levels, and ethnic background (UNESCO, 2020, p. 10).

Higher education student dropout is a problem that is becoming more and more significant throughout Europe, yet there are significant differences between nations and institutions that imply that different policies and practices may have an impact on students' performance and retention (Cotton, Debby RE et al., 2017, p. 62).

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Thousands of young Nepalese students are going to study, but they have not returned from abroad. More students went to Australia, Europe, the USA, the UK, Japan and Korea. The Nepalese students want to stay in the USA, UK, Europe and Australia. Nepalese parents whose children are foreign get high respect in Nepal. Its main reason is there is a reduced graduate level of students on campus. Those students who are admitted to the Bachelor level are also absent, especially in B.Ed. and Humanities, on campus due to part-time employment. The situation shows that in the future, there will be no school-level teacher after one decay. Migrated students think there is no employment opportunity in Nepal. After graduation, we will go gulf for earning and manage family nurturing say youth in Nepal now. The main reason students drop out of Nepal is that they're young and don't want to stay in

Nepal and are not in full employment with an attractive salary in Nepal.

Research Objective

- To analyse the dropout rate of campus-level students in Nepal.

1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

According to Atherton, Graeme, et al. It seems that the four regions of the United Kingdom are following increasingly different routes in terms of higher education, aside from research policy and activities. England's higher education system and policies stand out in particular due to the presence of a regulator and its commitment to graduate outcomes and quality assurance. Student maintenance assistance is currently at an all-time low due to concerns about the value for money of their higher education experience and pressures from the rising cost of living (Atherton, 2023).

According to European Commission A target is to have at least 40% of people aged 30-34 finish their higher education. One of the main approaches to accomplishing this goal is to decrease dropout rates and raise completion rates in higher education. This is because it is thought to be essential for developing the advanced skills that Europe's knowledge-intensive economic sectors require, as well as for Europe's ability to innovate, promote productivity, and uphold social justice. This article discusses a comparative study on higher education completion and dropout rates in Europe (HEDOCE), which is relevant to this topic (European Commision, 2015).

According to Maher, M. & Macallister, H. Australia's government is dedicated to raising the proportion of its population with a bachelor's degree, emphasizing those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and those descended from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in particular. This small-scale study's findings indicate that these children would gain from a similar multi-layered support strategy. According to the authors of this article, meeting government targets is one thing, but what motivates them to keep working toward various forms of student mentoring support

is the improved social capital these students experience when they succeed and the severe harm done to their self-esteem when they don't (Placeholder9) (Maher M. &, 2013).

According to European Commission the European Commission's 2011 modernization agenda helps Europe's higher education systems meet the demands of a knowledge-based economy and society. More and more European residents need advanced information and competencies in order to promote advancement and broaden the body of knowledge. Therefore, promoting the creation of high-quality mass higher education institutions ranks highly on policy agendas across Europe and the United States (European Commission, 2014).

According to Xavier, Marlon & Meneses, Julio One of the biggest problems with online higher education is dropout rates. This study describes an institutional intervention that addresses learning design and academic support in order to promote first-year undergraduate student achievement and retention at the online and open Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) (Xavier, 2020).

According to Shaikh, UU and Asif, Z A growing number of people are taking courses online as social and educational technology advance. It has become as one of the most popular means of pursuing academic goals in the COVID-19 period. Online courses are convenient and have many advantages, but their completion rates are shockingly low. Even though online dropout rates were the subject of multiple earlier studies, educational institutions and providers of courses are still looking for a way to address this concerning issue. The primary reason for this is that different theories and methodologies were employed in earlier investigations (Shaikh, 2022).

According to Ryan, Alex from October 2011 to February 2012, the University of Gloucestershire's Sustainability Team worked on this project as part of the Graduate Challenge program. The university is investigating the links between student

skill development and learning opportunities and employability and sustainability as strategic concerns. As the UK attempts to recover from the economic slump and the public conversation around the "green economy" intensifies, both goals are becoming more and more relevant in higher education for employers and the government. The study's findings about national and student interest in sustainability and its connections to employability support should aid the university in developing its strategic work in these areas (Ryan, 2012).

According to Dawn, Bennett our focus should shift from graduate employment to the development of graduates who are ready to meet the challenges of life and work much beyond their subject if we are to educate for employability rather than employment, for life rather than a job. Employability needs to prioritize ability, be at the center of the curriculum, accept diversity, and incorporate metacognitive skills so that graduates of higher education are prepared for both the workforce and further education (Bennett, 2018).

World Bank groups summarized higher education serves purposes beyond just teaching pupils. Three separates but connected missions—teaching and learning, research, and community engagement—are frequently recognized by specialists. Globally, non-traditional students are driving an increasing amount of the demand for enrolment in higher education systems. Due to the current governmental institutions' limited ability to meet demand, the private sector has grown significantly. Employers are also in greater need of qualified and professional personnel, and in contemporary economies, research and development are crucial for boosting competitiveness (World Bank groups, 2017).

Mashburn, Anderew J. summarized according to the American College Testing (ACT), the proportion of students who complete their education from four-year colleges and universities in less than five years is still declining, having reached an

all-time low of 52.1% in 1998 (ACT, 1999a). Public four-year colleges had graduation rates that were much lower after five years (42.9%) than those of private colleges (56.2%). Over the past fifteen years, there has been a steady increase in the rate of students dropping out between their freshman and second year (Mashburn, 2001).

Maher, Marguerite & Macallister, Helen summarized Australia's government is dedicated to raising the proportion of its population with a bachelor's degree, emphasizing those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and those descended from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in particular. This small-scale study's findings indicate that these children would gain from a similar multi-layered support strategy. According to the authors of this article, meeting government targets is one thing, but what motivates them to keep working toward various forms of student mentoring support is the improved social capital these students experience when they succeed and the severe harm done to their self-esteem when they don't (Maher M. &, 2017).

According to Rahmani et al. Online learning platforms have grown as a result of higher education's increased access to technology. On the other hand, dropout rates in online higher education (OHE) are a major cause for concern. Student attrition presents a significant challenge in this dynamic environment that necessitates thorough research (Rahmani, 2024).

According to Dhakal, T. et al. Like in other nations, Nepal faces a significant problem with the retention rate of female students in education. The results of a qualitative investigation into how educational variables affect female students' retention rates in Nepalese high schools are presented in this research. The Ministry of Education's consolidated report's dropout rates for female students determined the sites for data collection (Dhakal T. a., 2019).

According to Devkota, S. Improving school attendance and achievement in emerging nations has made reducing

school dropout rates a difficult policy issue (Devkota, 2020). According to Dahal, A. This study focuses on the primary reasons why students drop out of Technical School Leaving Certificate programs. It then makes recommendations for actions that school administrators, parents of students, stakeholders, and future researchers should take to reduce student dropout rates (Dhakal A., 2020).

According to Barefoot, Betsy O. wrote most US schools and universities, the high percentage of students dropping out between their first and second year of college is an important concern. However, the effects of dropping out (or stopping out) of college vary across students based on a variety of reasons (Barefoot, 2004).

Behr, Andreas summarised a thorough analysis of the phenomenon of students leaving higher education is given by this study. A protracted decision-making process and intricate interactions between a number of factors lead to student disengagement. First, we give a summary of terminologies, theoretical frameworks, and viewpoints on dropping out (Behr, 2020).

Bernard, A., et al. not only may a university dropout have detrimental effects on the individual, but also on the institution and society at large. Despite the fact that this phenomenon has been extensively researched, more understanding of the environment in which it happens is still required. However, studies on the topic frequently concentrate on factors that are outside of a university's control even though they have an impact on drop-out rates. This makes developing practical preventive measures challenging (Bernard, 2018).

According to Costa, F.J. The antecedents of student retention and dropout rates in undergraduate management programs are examined in this article. An undergraduate management program at a Brazilian Federal University conducted empirical study. The number of semesters, student grades, gender, and the presence of failures or dropouts per course were shown to be characteristics that explained both the time it took to complete

the course and the likelihood of dropping out, according to the major results (Costa, 2018).

Subedi, Y.R. wrote this essay's main goals were to examine the causes of student dropouts and the variables affecting the bachelor's degree dropout rate. To explain the dropout rate, a survey research design was used, and 30 bachelor's degree dropout students were chosen as respondents using judgmental sampling in a non-random selection procedure (Subedi Y. R., 2022).

Subedi Menuka wrote the primary causes of female students' dropout rates were determined by looking at personal and student-related factors such as marriage, poor exam performance, and irregularities in the classroom; institutional factors included feedback, academic support, teachers' motivation and encouragement, issues with the institutional information system, and alternative teaching methods; family-related factors included various family issues and a lack of financial support; and finally, geographic factors included transportation issues and hostel facilities (Subedi M. , 2023).

The above literature shows all the students want a part-time job during the study. After finishing their graduation, they want a full-time job with an attractive salary to rear their family. In Nepal, there is no part-time job during the campus study time for poor rural students. All the Nepali student destinations are Australia, Canada, the USA, and Europe. The first priority for higher education is to go to study and to stay in the study country. The second target is Korea and Japan; there is a good opportunity to earn more within five years. Third, after the graduate, there is no employee opportunity in Nepal, so young people want to go gulf for mussels' power job.

A little bit of a dropout reason is marriage in girls' cases, not working manpower at home for boys. Quality and relevant teaching have implications for employability and the role of research and development in higher education. There is only theory study and how to pass and take

a certificate. It reduced students' quality in practice, so the students are reduced in higher-level study.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research adopted the process of scientific review as meta-synthesis to get a solution for students dropping out at the campus level. In this review, the researcher used deductive logic reasoning at large; however, the observation experience of the researcher arranged inductive logic reasoning during inference confined to adductive in a single sense for the completeness of the objective. In-depth archival analysis followed by an intensive review would be strategies adopted during the scientific review. The review was systematically conducted through the collection of research papers along with reports and data.

3. FINDINGS

Drop out of students in campus level Nepal are following

- Less of employment opportunity (part time, full time)
- Low income of family
- Migration for foreign study and stay in foreign
- Socio culture barrier (marriage, gender discrimination)
- Not coordination between 3 level entire
- Not enough budget and ethical or moral support, responsibility shifting culture (not our under)
- Not demand driven education in Nepal
- Not opportunity qualified and occupational manpower (attending, maintaining and returning)

4. SOLUTION/SUGGESTIONS

- Learn and Earn for Self-Sustain
- Anti-discriminatory awareness (traditional culture and daughter education)
- Provide financial support (for all).
- To link education with skill, skill with production, and production with happiness

- Allocate a budget 20% and above for higher education. Priority for higher education community-based campuses (public campuses) also.
- Policy: one province, one university and one plalika, one campus (up to the master level in rural areas).
- Product-demand-driven education
- Provide access to virtual education based in rural areas of Nepal.
- Focus on qualified and occupational manpower (attending, maintaining and returning).

5. CONCLUSION

The main reason Nepali students go to study in foreign countries like the USA, Canada, or Australia is that they found good opportunity to earn money (employment) after completing higher education. With the help of a residency card, these students were able to stay and work in developed countries. Some students who apply for student visa in Korea and Japan are actually purposefully seeking employment. There is no opportunity to get employment after finishing campus-level study in Nepal. The students drop out at the campus level in Nepal due to lack of financial support and family problems; some problems are marriage, pregnancy, death of earning family members, and unfavourable environment for study.

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