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**Unravelling the Motivations behind Students' Academic  
Migrations in Nepal: A Mixed-methods Approach**

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## Abstract

**Background:** Academic migration in Nepal is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors that impact students' decision-making processes. Policymakers and educators need to understand these motivations.

**Methodology:** This study investigates why Nepalese students are increasingly choosing to pursue academic opportunities abroad, and domestically. Using a mixed-methods approach, a cross-sectional time horizon was adopted in the Gulmi district of Lumbini province, Nepal.

**Results:** Results show that factors like educational quality, educational opportunities, and career opportunities play a role in motivating academic migration; there is not a significant association between domestic and international academic migration plans with their educational purpose ( $p = .681$ ), and with career purposes ( $p = .426$ ). KII and FDG highlighted the lack of learning and earning schemes, demanded courses, technical training for practical courses, career opportunities, and job opportunities for students forced to migrate.

**Conclusion:** The studies on academic migration highlight the complex factors driving students to seek education abroad, including attitudes towards staying in the host country, socio-economic and psychological impacts, and better career prospects. Economic considerations are a primary motivator, with personal attitudes and social networks also influential. For Nepalese students, interest in international migration is driven by perceived better quality of education, extra-curricular opportunities, and political stability. Chi-Square tests show no significant difference in migration plans based on educational or career purposes, indicating similar motivations for domestic and international migrants.

**Novelty:** The study's strength is in identifying the multifaceted reasons behind students' decisions to migrate, which include economic, social, and personal factors. It highlights the role of students' attitudes as a mediator in their migration decisions, a nuanced aspect not widely explored in previous research. Furthermore, the Nepalese context provides a unique perspective on how local conditions and perceptions of opportunities abroad shape migration trends.

**Keywords:** career, education, opportunities, planning

## 1. Introduction

Globalisation and industrialization have led to increased capital, labour and student's flows across borders (Rasiah, McFarlane, & Kuruvilla, 2015). In this scenario Academic migration, the movement of individuals across borders for educational or career purposes has become a prominent phenomenon in today's globalized world. Global student mobility, especially from underdeveloped to industrialised nations, has increased significantly (Pawar, 2024; Wei, 2013). Approximately 3% of the world's population (191 million people) live in a nation other than their birthplace, with 33% transitioning from a developing to a developed country (Odhiambo, 2012). United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, (2009) Growth in international student migration coincides with trends in higher education internationalisation that have gained prominence in recent decades, as well as societal developments such as the rise of the middle class in many non-western countries such as China and India, implying that

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international student migration (ISM) can serve as a social differentiation strategy (Weber & Mol, 2023). This trend is driven by a many of factors, including economic opportunities, access to high-quality education, career advancement prospects, and the desire for cultural exchange. As universities and research institutions strive to attract top talent from around the world, academic migration plays a crucial role in shaping the landscape of higher education and research.

Academic migration among students in Nepal is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by a countless of factors that shape their decision-making processes (Kharel, 2022). Students are increasingly migrating from poor nations that consist of Nepal, India, and Bhutan to wealthy countries like the USA, UK, and Australia (Tamang, 2019). Between fiscal years 2065/66 BS and 2077/78 BS, 416,364 students obtained a NOC (No Objection Certificate) to pursue higher education abroad from Nepal. Similarly, 227,780 students took the NOC in the years 2078/79 and 2079/80. The Foreign Education Department Chief indicated that 323972 students reached to get permission for higher studies aboard. Applying for study visa could be considered as the first step of international migration as they get support from their family for study aboard, while studying most of the students are able to engage in part time job and earn some money (Kharel, 2022).

Similarly, Domestic migration and urbanization have rapidly been happening in country. The CBS 2021 reports an alarming picture of domestic migration as the urban population of Nepal has increased steeply at 66.17 percent in 2021 from 17.07 percent in 2011, on contrary the rural population went down sharply to 33.3 percent in 2021 from 82.3 percent in 2011 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Preferred destinations for domestic migration are Kathmandu and Butwal, when it comes to domestic academic migration, Kathmandu and Butwal would be first and second choice for the students. In recent days, it has been observed that the federal, provincial, and local government has invested resources in further strengthening educational infrastructure (Government of Nepal, 2022). Understanding the motivations behind this migration is crucial for policymakers, educators, and stakeholders in the education sector. Nepal, a country known for its rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes, has seen an increasing trend of students pursuing academic opportunities abroad (Acharya, 2012). This trend raises questions about the underlying reasons driving students to leave their home country in search of educational experiences elsewhere.

The motivations behind students' academic migrations in Nepal are multifaceted and interconnected (Ghimire & Maharjan, 2014). Economic prospects play a significant role, as students often seek better job opportunities and higher earning potential in foreign countries (Sisavath, 2021). Additionally, social networks and peer influences can also impact students' decisions to pursue education abroad. Career aspirations, including the desire for specialized training or access to cutting-edge research facilities, are another driving force behind academic migration (Dhungel, Bhattarai, & Pangen, 2013).

Additionally, the quality of education and the restrictions placed on particular fields of study in Nepal might motivate students to explore into choices outside or inside of the nation.

Globalization and the world's increasing interconnection have made foreign education more accessible to students pursuing academic and professional success.

This study intends to provide information on academic migration of students from Nepal and make a significant contribution to the creation of policies and programmes that assist students in achieving their educational goals.

#### **1.1 Research Objective**

The specific objectives of this study are as below:

1. To identify the causes of Academic migration,
2. To analyse the association between domestic and international migration plan with the Educational Purpose and Career Purposes of students.

#### **1.2 Research Hypothesis**

The study has prepared two null research hypotheses based on the major two causative factors as below:

H01: There is no significant association between domestic and international migration plan with Educational Purpose of students,

H02: There is no significant association between domestic and international migration plan with career purpose of students,

### **3. Literature Review**

The study has reviewed some related previous studies to know the existing knowledge and further research gap in the Nepalese context.

The study by Nikou and Luukkonen\_(2024) employed quantitative methods to investigate the factors influencing students' desire to stay in their host nation. Their findings highlighted that students' attitudes towards staying play a crucial role, acting as a mediator between other influencing factors and the final decision to remain in the host country.

Tsegay (2023) conducted a comprehensive review article examining the socio-economic and psychological impacts of migration on both migrants and their home and host nations. This study underscored the broad effects of migration, indicating that it extends beyond individual migrants to affect entire societies.

Shrestha and Rana\_(2023) utilized qualitative methods to explore the motivations behind educated young people choosing to study overseas. Their research revealed that a lack of opportunities, social structures, and networking with peers in their home country are significant factors driving these students to seek education abroad.

Deshmukh and Sankpal\_(2022)\_also presented a review article, focusing on the factors influencing migration. They identified wages and the quality of education as primary determinants. This study adds to the understanding of economic and educational motivations behind academic migration.

Tamang and Shrestha (2021) conducted a qualitative study that demonstrated a link between high earnings expectations and the pursuit of foreign degrees. Their findings suggest that financial aspirations are a significant driver for students seeking education in other countries.

In another qualitative study, Shutaleva et al. (2021) found that the majority of students consider migrating to another region or country mainly for career reasons. This indicates that professional aspirations are a predominant factor in academic migration decisions.

Gherheș, Dragomir, and Cernicova-Buca (2020) used quantitative methods to identify the economic element as the key migratory motivator. Their research suggests that financial considerations are paramount in students' decisions to migrate for academic purposes.

Nghia (2019) employed quantitative methods, specifically independent samples t-tests, to reveal significant differences in the motives influencing the decision to study abroad between male and female students, as well as between prospective and current students. This study highlights the varied motivations across different student demographics.

Finally, Borozan and Bojanic (2015) used quantitative methods to examine the factors influencing academic migration in Osijek. They found that social networks were the only 'pull' factor, while economic considerations acted as a 'push'. However, the impacts of these variables were minor, suggesting other underlying factors may also play a role.

Together, these studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted factors influencing academic migration, highlighting the roles of economic considerations, social networks, career aspirations, and personal attitudes in students' decisions to study abroad.

#### **4. Research Gap**

The literature highlights various reasons for academic migration, such as economic opportunities, social connections, career goals, and educational prospects. However, there is a lack of research that specifically examines the association between motivations for migrating for education or career purposes. Similarly, the majority of the previous studies were based on qualitative or quantitative research methods, these studies cover this gap by adopting mixed methods. To fill this gap, it is essential to study how these factors influence migration decisions and explore the complex interplay between personal aspirations, societal influences, and global trends.

#### **5. Methodology**

This study was carried out targeting 3 secondary schools (10+2), namely Mahendra Ma. Vi, Siddha Baba Ma. Vi. and Resunga Ma. Vi. Situated in Resunga Municipality, Tamghas Gulmi. This study has been guided by the pragmatic worldview of research philosophy applying mixed method research design using a convergent approach. For this, 83 students studying at grade 12 were selected randomly having different major subjects, both male and female students were selected for this purpose. A survey questionnaire was designed and used for collecting

quantitative data. For collecting qualitative data, an in-depth interview and FGD checklists were developed, and interviews were conducted with the head teacher, representatives from parents and teachers' association and school management committee. In addition, 3 focus groups were conducted, one in each school having 8-10 students' representatives. Confidentiality standards were carefully followed, and all participants' acceptance was obtained before their participation in the study, ensuring ethical issues were addressed. In order to ensure the questionnaire's validity, a translation and back-translation process was used (Dhakal, Adhikari, Ghimire, & Neupane, 2018). The research followed to high ethical standards and used thorough procedures to assure the validity and reliability of the results. For this, Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the questionnaire's reliability, leading to a value indicating the questions' reliability.

**Table 1: Reliability**

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	Status
0.692	10	Taber, (2018)

Source: Field Survey, 2024

## 6. Result and Discussion

The study was conducted among 83 students to identify their academic migration plan. The study has presented both quantitative and qualitative data under different themes based on the objective of this study. This section covers the demographic information, and migration plan for educational purposes as well as career purposes.

### 4.1 Demographic information of respondents

The data presented in Table 2 gives detailed information on the sex, age, and faculty of a student, and their preferred location for further study.

**Table 2: Demographic Information**

Sex	Frequency		Percent		
	Male	Female	Mean	Std. Deviation	
	43	40	17.3976	.81060	
	83				
Age	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	83	16.00	20.00	17.3976	.81060
Faculty	Civil Engineering	6		7.2	
	Education	3		3.6	
	Law	4		4.8	
	Management	27		32.6	
	Science	43		51.8	
	Domestic	50		60.2	

<b>The preferred location for academic migration</b>	International	33	39.8
	Total	83	100.0

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The data includes information from 83 respondents divided into four categories. In terms of gender, 43 individuals identified as male (51.8%) and 40 as female (48.2%). The respondents' ages varied from 16 to 20 years, with a mean of 17.3976 and a standard deviation of 0.81060. The responders were from various faculties, including Civil Engineering (6), Education (3), Law (4), Management (27), and Science (43).

In terms of the preferred location for academic migration, 50 respondents (60.2%) were exploring internal migration. This suggests a significant inclination towards domestic educational institutions and possibly reflects confidence in the quality of education available within the country, affordability, or other socio-cultural factors. Besides that, a notable minority, 39.8% (33 out of 83 students), prefer to migrate internationally for their further studies. This substantial portion indicates a strong interest in pursuing education abroad, possibly driven by the perception of better educational opportunities, global exposure, higher quality institutions, or better career prospects internationally.

#### **4.2 Migration for Educational Purpose**

Educational migration can benefit a country in the long-range through the transfer of skillful manpower, and knowledge. At this pace, it is significant to identify the Nepalese students' reason to migrate for education. The study discussed with the students to identify their migration plan for educational purposes. The data presented in Table 3 shows the response of students on different types of educational purposes which mostly drives the student for academic purposes. The data is presented based on the preferred location for academic migration: domestic and international.

**Table 3: Migration for educational purposes**

<b>The preferred location for academic migration</b>	<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>Total</b>
Domestic	0.0%	10.0%	26.0%	24.0%	40.0%	100.0%
International	0.0%	0.0%	27.3%	21.2%	51.5%	100.0%
Total	0.0%	6.0%	26.5%	22.9%	44.6%	100.0%
<b>Quality of Education</b>						
Domestic	0.0%	10.0%	16.0%	28.0%	46.0%	100.0%
International	0.0%	6.1%	12.1%	30.3%	51.5%	100.0%
Total	0.0%	8.4%	14.5%	28.9%	48.2%	100.0%
<b>Extra Curricula Activities/ Research Opportunities</b>						
Domestic	2.0%	8.0%	22.0%	34.0%	34.0%	100.0%
International	12.1%	0.0%	18.2%	21.2%	48.5%	100.0%

Total	6.0%	4.8%	20.5%	28.9%	39.8%	100.0%
<b>Political Stability</b>						
Domestic	8.0%	22.0%	30.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
International	12.1%	18.2%	12.1%	27.3%	30.3%	100.0%
Total	9.6%	20.5%	22.9%	22.9%	24.1%	100.0%
<b>Migration for Specific Programs</b>						
Domestic	50.0%	16.0%	20.0%	10.0%	4.0%	100.0%
International	42.4%	24.2%	15.2%	9.1%	9.1%	100.0%
Total	47.0%	19.3%	18.1%	9.6%	6.0%	100.0%

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The distribution of individuals based on their perceived educational opportunities and their corresponding levels of interest in academic migration data shows that regarding domestic migration, 10.0% have a low interest, 26.0% have a moderate interest, 24.0% have a high interest, and 40.0% have a very high interest in pursuing educational opportunities. On the other hand, for individuals planning for international migration, 0.0% have a low interest, 27.3% have a moderate interest, 21.2% have a high interest, and 51.5% have a very high interest in seeking educational opportunities abroad. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration have a very high interest in pursuing educational opportunities compared to those planning for domestic migration.

The provided crosstab data in the quality of education and individuals' planning for domestic migration, 10.0% believe the quality of education is low, 16.0% perceive it as moderate, 28.0% consider it high, and 46.0% rate it as very high. On the other hand, among those planning for international migration, 6.1% think the quality of education is low, 12.1% view it as moderate, 30.3% regard it as high, and 51.5% see it as very high. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration have a perception of very high-quality education compared to those planning for domestic migration.

The provided crosstab data regarding extra-curricular activities and research opportunities, 2.0% have a very low interest, 8.0% have a low interest, 22.0% have a moderate interest, 34.0% have a high interest, and 34.0% have a very high interest in participating in extra-curricular activities and research opportunities. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 12.1% have a very low interest, 0.0% have a low interest, 18.2% have a moderate interest, 21.2% have a high interest, and 48.5% have a very high interest in engaging in these activities. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration have a very high interest in participating in extra-curricular activities and research opportunities compared to those planning for domestic migration.

The provided crosstab data regarding individuals' perceptions of political stability and their planning for migration, 8.0% perceive political stability as very low, 22.0% as low, 30.0% as



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moderate, 20.0% as high, and 20.0% as very high. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 12.1% perceive political stability as very low, 18.2% as low, 12.1% as moderate, 27.3% as high, and 30.3% as very high. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration perceive political stability as very high compared to those planning for domestic migration. This suggests that individuals considering migration abroad may prioritize political stability as a key factor influencing their decision.

The provided crosstab data regarding migration for specific programs, the distribution of interest levels is as follows: 50.0% have a very low interest, 16.0% have a low interest, 20.0% have a moderate interest, 10.0% have a high interest, and 4.0% have a very high interest in migrating for specific programs. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration for specific programs, the breakdown of interest levels is as follows: 42.4% have a very low interest, 24.2% have a low interest, 15.2% have a moderate interest, 9.1% have a high interest, and 9.1% have a very high interest in migrating for specific programs. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration have varying levels of interest in migrating for specific programs compared to those planning for domestic migration.

The study collected the qualitative data also to cross-validate the findings of quantitative data. Concerning the above finding of quantitative data, the Chairperson of the Teacher Parent Association Siddhababa Secondary School expressed his views regarding the reasons for students migrating for educational opportunities. *“There is no higher education in science, no confidence in available educational institutes. Those students we study in 11 and 12, need to leave this place for further study. The teaching method is very old, and the quality of higher education is not up to the level”*. Similar view was expressed by the Head-teacher from Mahendra Secondary School. He said *“There is no bachelor’s degree in science; students prefer to gain education along with a job. Students are going to other countries such as Japan, Australia, Dubai, and Kuwait. Some students are leaving this place as their family members are in other cities of the country, they are preparing public service commission and gaining government jobs as well and they encourage their family members to join and continue the PSC preparation and study. The quality of education in the city is better and they can have various facilities such as the library, cafeteria, and other exposures.”*

Similarly, a Principal of Siddhababa Secondary School adds *“Students come here from different parts of the district, after completing education in this school they prefer to go to other cities as they are already out of their home and consider cities to have better opportunities. Some families plan to buy houses in Butwal, or other cities and some students might have their family members in Butwal or Kathmandu which motivates them to leave their current place. Some are willing to change and somehow, they feel to get rid of teachers' control as 9-10/12 there is teachers or parents' control. There are very limited options in bachelor’s degree such*

*as IT, hospitality/ hotel management, scope of subjects, job opportunity; they prefer to do any kind of job in other places.”*

Further, a member of the School Management Committee of the Mahendra Secondary School expressed a slightly different perspective by emphasizing the importance of the learning and earning scheme for students. He said “*Due to lack of technical or skill building subjects like agriculture, forestry, driving, carpeting, and painting in our school which forced to migrate in search of such courses”*

### **4.3 Association between domestic and international Migration plan for Educational Purpose**

The study has run the Chi-Square test to test the statistical association between the domestic and international migration plans of students for educational purposes.

**Table 4: Association between domestic and international migration plan for Educational Purposes**

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>		
	<b>Value</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	13.798 <sup>a</sup>	0.681
Likelihood Ratio	16.002	0.524

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

Pearson Chi-Square Value is calculated to be 13.798 with an asymptotic significance (2-sided) of 0.681. Additionally, the Likelihood Ratio is 16.002 with an asymptotic significance of 0.524. These values indicate that the association between domestic and international migration plans for educational purposes is not statistically significant because the p-value is greater than .05 significant levels. Based on the Chi-Square test results and the provided data, it can be concluded that there is no association between individuals' plans for migration (domestic or international) with their educational purpose. This suggests that the decision to migrate or stay domestically does not appear to be influenced by educational goals or preferences in this context.

### **4.4 Migration for Career Purposes**

After completing their education, every student aims to board on a career journey. Hence, it is crucial to understand why students plan to relocate from one place to another in pursuit of better job opportunities or for other reasons. In this context, researchers need to measure the intentions behind career-driven migration. So the study asked the students about their career purpose along with their educational purpose who were planning for academic migration.

**Table 5: Planning for migration for Career purposes**

<b>The preferred location for academic migration</b>	<b>Very Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Very High</b>	<b>Total</b>
Domestic	0.0%	6.0%	28.0%	24.0%	42.0%	100.0%
International	0.0%	12.1%	15.2%	33.3%	39.4%	100.0%
Total	0.0%	8.4%	22.9%	27.7%	41.0%	100.0%
<b>Language Proficiency</b>						
Domestic	4.0%	18.0%	26.0%	28.0%	24.0%	100.0%
International	6.1%	12.1%	18.2%	27.3%	36.4%	100.0%
Total	4.8%	15.7%	22.9%	27.7%	28.9%	100.0%
<b>Global/National Exposure and Cultural Diversity</b>						
Domestic	4.0%	10.0%	24.0%	28.0%	34.0%	100.0%
International	6.1%	6.1%	21.2%	30.3%	36.4%	100.0%
Total	4.8%	8.4%	22.9%	28.9%	34.9%	100.0%
<b>Networking Opportunities</b>						
Domestic	2.0%	12.0%	32.0%	30.0%	24.0%	100.0%
International	6.1%	3.0%	36.4%	24.2%	30.3%	100.0%
Total	3.6%	8.4%	33.7%	27.7%	26.5%	100.0%
<b>Job opportunities</b>						
Domestic	2.0%	14.0%	24.0%	22.0%	38.0%	100.0%
International	15.2%	3.0%	15.2%	21.2%	45.5%	100.0%
Total	7.2%	9.6%	20.5%	21.7%	41.0%	100.0%

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The data presented in Table 5 regarding career opportunities and planning for domestic and international migration, 6.0% have a low interest in career opportunities, 28.0% have a moderate interest, 24.0% have a high interest, and 42.0% have a very high interest in pursuing career opportunities. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 12.1% have a low interest, 15.2% have a moderate interest, 33.3% have a high interest, and 39.4% have a very high interest in career opportunities. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration have a high or very high interest in career opportunities compared to those planning for domestic migration.

Provided table shows the migration of students for language proficiency and planning for domestic or international migration. 4% have very low interest, 18% respond low interest, 26% respond moderate interest, 28% have a high interest, and 24% respondents respond very high interest in migration for language proficiency. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 6.1% have a very low interest, 12.1% have low interest, 18.2% have a moderate interest, 27.3% have a high interest, and 36.4% have a very high interest in career opportunities. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals

planning for international migration have a very high interest in migration for upgrading their language proficiency when compared to those planning for domestic migration.

Regarding the distribution of Global/National Exposure and Cultural Diversity and planning for migration domestic or international, 4% have very low interest, 10% responded low interest, 24 % responded moderate interest, 28 % have a high interest, and 34% respondents responded very high interest in migration for Global/National Exposure and Cultural Diversity. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 6.1% have a very low interest, 6.1% have low interest, 21.2% have a moderate interest, 30.3% have a high interest, and 36.4% have a very high interest in Global/National Exposure and Cultural Diversity. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration respondents have a very high interest in migration for Global/National Exposure and Cultural Diversity when compared to those planning for domestic migration.

Similarly, data shows the distribution of Networking Opportunities and planning for migration domestic or international 2% have very low interest, 12% responded low interest, 32 % responded moderate interest, 30 % have a high interest, and 24% respondents responded very high interest in migration for Networking Opportunities. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 6.1% have a very low interest, 3% have low interest, 36.4 % have a moderate interest, 24.2% have a high interest, and 30.3% have a very high interest in Networking Opportunities. Overall, the data indicates that both for international migration respondents and planning for domestic migration interested to migrate for networking opportunities.

The provided table shows the distribution of Job opportunities and planning for migration domestic or international. 2% have very low interest, 14% responded low interest, 24 % responded moderate interest, 22 % have high interest, and 38% respondents responded very high interest in migration for Job opportunities. On the other hand, among individuals planning for international migration, 15.2% have a very low interest, 3% have low interest, 15.2% have a moderate interest, 21.2% have a high interest, and 45.5% have a very high interest in Job opportunities. Overall, the data indicates that a higher percentage of individuals planning for international migration respondents have a very high interest in migration for Job opportunities when compared to those planning for domestic migration.

the findings of quantitative data were validated from the qualitative data and found that a Head Teacher of Resunga Secondary School, expressed his view regarding the migration of students for career purposes by stating, *“Long time such as 4 years of bachelor’s degree for non-technical subjects which is too long, there is no job opportunity, no earning, and learning, the study should be on developing skill-based human resources, monitoring, supervision, and evaluation system needs to be improved as it doesn’t impart both practical and theoretical*

*learning. Attempts have been made to have practical sessions however evaluation is still traditional. All these things state students towards darkness, no light of career was seeing.”*

During the Focus Group Discussion (FDG) conducted with students at Resunga Secondary School, one student mentioned “*DV form has been filled in and if I am selected, I will go to USA. There is no preferred subject, career opportunity, job opportunity, political instability*”. Out of 10, six were willing to go abroad because they shared the reasons that there are no job opportunities and no other health and educational facilities.

Similarly, another Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with students at Sidda Baba Secondary School, highlighted some causes of academic migration like political instability, no equal opportunities for the same academic qualification, and no remuneration as per their labor in Nepal. But in the expectation of students, there is high-quality education, policies, and regulations are student-friendly thus students’ attraction is increasing to study abroad.

#### **4.5 Association between domestic and international migration for career purposes**

The study has checked the statistical association between the domestic and international migration plans of students with their career purposes. The researchers were interested to know the differences and similarities between those students who were planning for domestic and international academic migration.

**Table 6: Association between domestic and international migration for career purposes**

<b>Chi-Square Tests</b>		
	<b>Value</b>	<b>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</b>
Pearson Chi-Square	18.459 <sup>a</sup>	.426
Likelihood Ratio	23.007	.190

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

Pearson Chi-Square Value is calculated to be 18.459 with an asymptotic significance (2-sided) of 0.426. Additionally, the Likelihood Ratio is 23.007 with an asymptotic significance of 0.190. These values indicate that there was no significant association between the domestic and international migration plans of the student regarding their career purpose because the p-value is greater than the .05 significant levels. Based on the Chi-Square test results and the provided data, it can be concluded that there is no association between individuals' plans for migration (domestic or international) with their career purpose. This suggests that the decision to migrate or stay domestically or internationally have the similar types of career purpose.

#### 4.6 Major cause of Academic migration

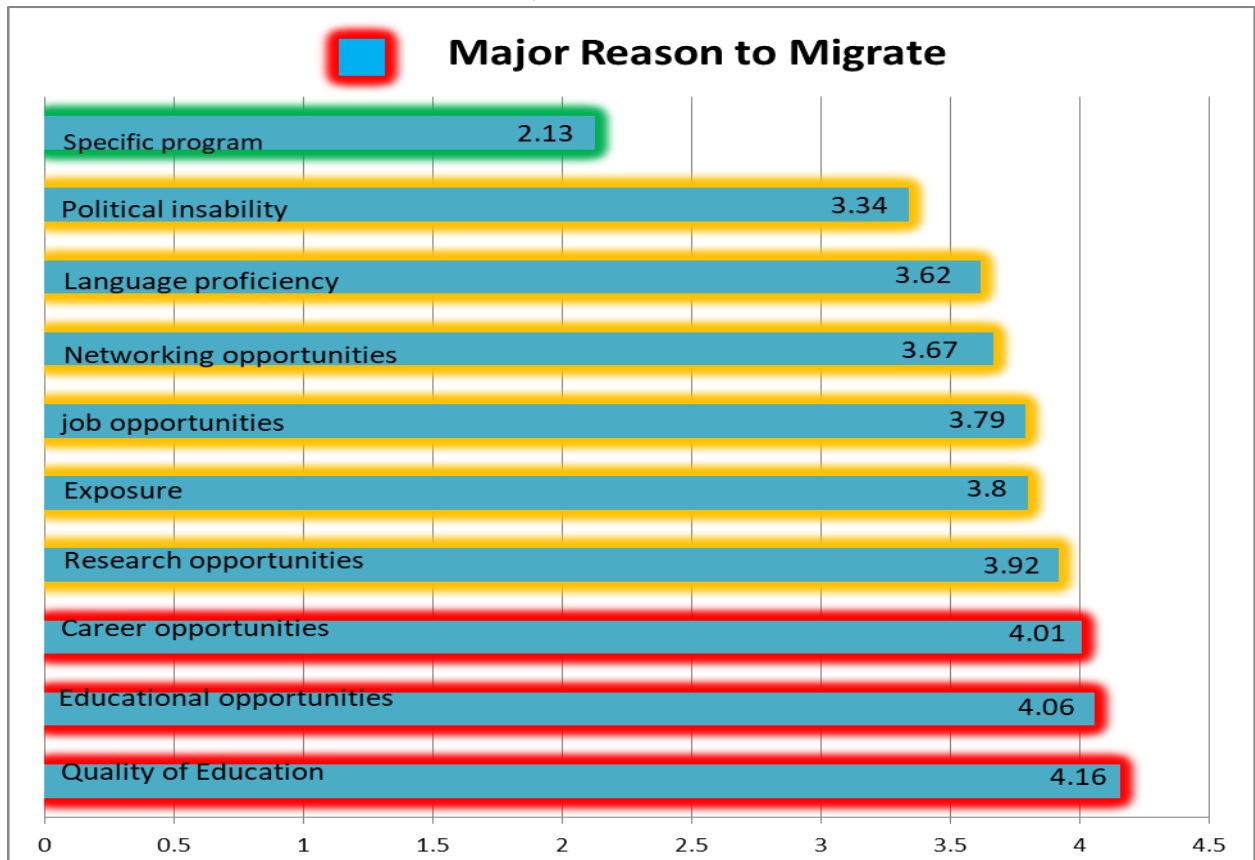


Figure1: Reason of Academic migration

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

The top four reasons for respondents' migration, based on mean values, are the quality of education (mean = 4.1687), educational opportunities (mean = 4.0602), career opportunities (mean = 4.0120), and research opportunities (mean = 3.9277). These factors indicate a strong emphasis on educational excellence, diverse academic programs, promising career prospects, and access to research resources among individuals considering.

### 7. Conclusion

The research findings propose that while various factors influence academic migration decisions, there is no significant correlation between planning for migration and educational or career purposes. However, the quality of education, diverse educational opportunities, and promising career prospects emerge as key drivers of academic migration. Addressing these factors could contribute to informed policymaking and interventions aimed at enhancing educational and career opportunities for students.

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