

## **Scenario of Migration in Federal State Nepal : An Anthropological Discourse**

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### **Abstract**

Nepal is a land link country where industrial growth is limited making land the most important economic asset. During the period of colonization, land in Nepal was more abundant and people could obtain large amounts of land and all Nepalese people engage the agriculture sector. In recent years, there has been a challenging pattern of migration in Nepal from the hill and mountain regions to the Madesh (Tarai). The Madesh is a fertile agricultural area along the southern border of Nepal. The 2011 national census indicated a pronounced shift from a mountain-rural to a plain-urban and a plain-urban to overseas-abroad due to this every Nepalese household loosed their young and educated member from the family, only female, old people, children and physically weak person have been staying their household. The migrants hope to make a better life for themselves by moving to agricultural hub of the country. However, these migrants are having difficulty finding betterment of their life. the latest people's movement (2002/2003) had a dramatic impact on economic development as well as social and political structures in Nepal leading to, among others, changing migration patterns. While migration within Nepal and from Nepal to India have been practiced for decades, migrant destinations such as the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Europe, North America, and Australia have attracted an increasing number of young Nepalese in search of better livelihoods. The issue of mobile populations, both within the country and across national boundaries poses particular challenges to the ongoing state restructuring process.

### **Keywords**

Land link , Colonization, Overseas , Coherence, Federal

## **Introduction**

Nepal is a land-linked country between two giant neighbors, India and China. With an area of 147,181 sq km, Nepal is home to 26.6 million inhabitants representing over 120 ethnic groups and 100 languages. The share of female population is 51% and 48% of the people are children and youth under 18 years. The density of population is 181/sq km and an average family size is 4.7. Around 83% of the population live in rural areas and the remaining 17% reside in urban areas. In addition, some two million Nepalese have migrated to live outside the country mostly as labour migrants and some are NRN. Nepal is divided into seven federal state and 77 Districts Coordination Committee including 6 metropolitan cities, 11 sub-metropolitan cities, 276 municipalities and 460 rural municipalities (MFAGA, 2018). Migration has become an integral part of the current global economy. Both internal and international migration can have major development and poverty implications for individuals and their families, for origin and destination areas, as well as for national economies. The aim of this paper is to review existing literature, and find out evidence on linkages between migration and Population in Nepalese context. Recently, evidence has emerged on the linkages between migration and Population at national levels. Migration itself is not a new phenomenon in Nepal and even in recent years, there has been only but a modest increase in the absolute number of migrants. What is new is that there has been a significant diversification in terms of destinations of these migrants. Until the early 2000s migrants predominantly crossed to India in search of seasonal agricultural work as well as other jobs. In the mid-1990s, the wave of economic as well as political liberalization led to removal of restrictions on obtaining passports and visas that were required to seek work in international destinations outside India. Concurrently, the Government of Nepal entered into a series of labor agreements with fast-growing countries in East Asia (Malaysia, South Korea) and the Gulf region (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar) resulting in a large outflow of unskilled, predominantly rural, working age males to these destinations. Since the contracted wages in these countries are much higher in comparison to local wages and wages that could be expected in a variety of jobs in India, the transfers that these workers were able to remit back to their villages have been unprecedented. In the following sub-section we discuss the history of migration in Nepal and display document how the composition of migrants as well as the destinations has changed in recent years in a greater detail.

## **Objective**

The main objective of this paper is to show the socio-economic scenario of migration in reality and to see the general attitudes pattern of the people towards this population

mobility. Besides these, the specific objectives of this paper are listed as below :

- To study the socio-economic impact of both internal and external migration
- To discuss the motivational and contusive factors of attraction towards the migrants in Nepal.

### **Methodology**

An exploratory cum-descriptive as well as analytical research design had been applied to analyse and interpret the quantitative data collected from the available literature. But this research design has focused on quantitative aspect rather than qualitative. Both descriptive and analytical research design have been based on archive as well as secondary sources of data.

#### ***Nature and Sources of Data***

Relatively qualitative types of data have been used in this paper. Similarly, mainly secondary data have been used and most of the findings uses for this paper are secondary in nature to make more effective and authentic. Secondary data have been collected from the previous literature using the tools/techniques such as different publications, periodicals, CBS report Nepal, books, journals and research papers.

#### ***Reliability and Validity of Data***

Researcher has used the accurate data by the sources of CBS Records, government's records, NGO/INGO records and other related sources. During the study, several data collection methods and cross checking procedures to enhance the reliability and validity of the data and analysis, I have written about the research process in this paper. Likewise, I have convinced the concerned authority that the purpose of this short-research is for academic publication. Similarly, I have maintained their individual, social as well as organizational privacy rigorously and original field notes and other documents have been stored in a safe place where the access of public is almost impossible. So, this study has maintained the ethical guideline of the research and I do hope that the present paper is reliable, credible and plausible.

### **Pattern of Migration in Nepal**

Nepal's history of international labor migration goes back at least 200 years. The earliest Nepali migrants were mercenaries in the army of the Sikh ruler Ranjit Singh in Lahore in modern day Pakistan. It is perhaps from here that the colloquial Nepali term for migrants, "lahure" is derived. After having established their reputation as fierce warriors in various regional wars at the time, including the Anglo-Nepal war of

1814-1816, Nepali soldiers became willing recruits to the British Army. After India independence, the Gurkha regiments of the British army were preserved although a significant number of erstwhile Gurkhas joined the Indian army. From this day an estimated 50,000 Nepalis work in these two armies alone. (Seddon, Adhikari, and Gurung, 2002) In addition, a significant number of Nepalis were drawn to the tea plantations, construction, coal mining and land reclamation in the Indian states of Assam, Bengal, Darjeeling, Kumaon and Garhwal in the late 1800s (Thieme and Wyss, 2005). While a majority of these early migrants settled in these areas permanently, a lot of the newer migrants started to move to industrialized areas such as Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore where employment was easier to find in the growing service sectors. Temporary migration across the open border to India in search of seasonal employment in agriculture in the bordering states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Punjab has also been a fairly common phenomenon over the years. The advent of democracy in 1990 and the subsequent liberalization of the economy throughout the 1990s opened up newer destinations for Nepali migrants. Obtaining travel documents and passports became easier and together with the reduced costs of acquiring information, international destinations that were either previously unknown or inaccessible to those outside the migration networks became feasible options. Toward the mid-1990s, the Government of Nepal made provisions by which Nepali workers could be recruited directly through procedures involving the Ministry of Labor and registered Kathmandu-based manpower agencies acting on behalf of recruiters in countries like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Iraq, Malaysia, Brunei and South Korea (Seddon, Adhikari, and Gurung, 2002). As a result of this "liberalization of international migration", the share of international migrants opting for these newer destinations increased dramatically between census years 1991 and 2001. Although there was a modest increase in the number of absentees between 1991 and 2001, migrants per 1000 people actually declined from 35 to 32 between 1991 and 2001. In terms of the composition however, whereas 90 percent of those absent from home were in India in 1991, the share had dropped to 75 percent in 2001. During this period, the fraction of migrants that were in the Middle East increased from 1 to 12 percent and the fraction of migrants that were in East Asian countries went up from roughly 2 to 4 percent. Historically, the primary reason for migration out of Nepal has been inadequate round the year employment within the villages. This is also reflected in the stated reasons for migration in recent censuses. In 2001, 65 percent of the population absent from home were away seeking employment. This number had increased to 78 percent in 2011. Given the cultural practice of patrilocal exogamy, it is not surprising that dependency after marriage is the second largest self-reported

reason for migration. While 95 percent of all international migrants seeking work were in India in 2001, the number had declined to 75 percent in 2011. In contrast, the Middle East which hosted 1 percent of all employment-seeking international migrants in 2001 was hosting 18 percent in 2011. There was a similar increase for East Asia as well. The importance of social networks in determining the paths of migration is well documented (Munshi, 2003). Geography is clearly an important component of social capital. For example, specific villages in the district of Achham in Nepal are linked to particular localities in Mumbai and the primary destination for migrants from villages in Bajhang district is Bangalore. But linkages based on kinship, caste and ethnicity are equally important. The British Army for example has a formal, well-structured recruitment procedure. Yet they recruit mainly from certain ethnic groups, notably those from the Gurung, Magar, Rai, and Limbu caste groups. The significantly higher up-front costs notwithstanding, the opening up newer destinations did universalize access to international migration to a large extent even for potential migrants living in villages with no prior history of migration.

### **Impact of Migration in Nepal**

Beside the political, economic, religious and cultural impact, basically Nepalese societies have been facing two levels of long-term impact of migration such as :

#### ***Impact on Social Coherence***

Migration has in recent decades changed the composition of households along age- as well as gender-lines. There is a relative absence of family members in the reproductive age group, and there is a relative absence of men compared to women. At the same time, rural villages have been depopulated because of migration. Simultaneously, staying family members have become increasingly dependent on reception of remittances from abroad.

#### ***Impact on National Prosperity***

Migration has played a significant role on National prosperity. Youth and educated groups are obviously beyond state, they could give innovative knowledge in development, the federal democracy and prosperity. The political process and the various interests involved in the discussion of whether Nepal should be a prosperous state or not, the total belief and justification of federalism may be collapse and loses the peoples' faith, ultimately it can invite great crisis in prosperity, nationality, federal state-sustainability process and broad sustainable development of country.

The young and full of energy population are the labor migrants. They need special care from the government to train them at least a minimum level of spoken language of to be destined country. The social-cultural aspects and dos and don'ts dos in certain social-cultural context are critical points for the out going labor migrants. The insurance for happenings and earning the compensation, assurance and guarantee of the agreed amount and conditions are basic requirements that government can assure through agreements with the receiving countries. Women labor migrants require special care and arrangements that should not be taken for granted by the government. The policy of control has proofed ineffective in the real situation. The restriction and non-facilitation by the government did not and could not stop labor migration through illegal channels. The government have to have agreement directly if not it has to make special arrangements with other friendly country to look after the Nepali labor migrants till direct arrangements can be materialize. The understanding and need assessment of the probable labor market can be helpful to train would be labor force. The government should start doing basic required training as a prerequisite for applying for foreign employment. The training program meant for the outgoing labor migrants is not taken seriously by all the parties. It needs to be taken seriously. Security, earning, living, remittances, and safe back home are the prime necessity of the labor. It has to be seen these issues in the context of a person coming from a rural context without any formal education and is going in the country he/she does not know anything, the single motivating factor to be there is poverty at home and prospect of earning in the foreign land. Open and transparent manpower supply scheme at home is also equally critical to making labor migration as a service industry.

### **Conclusion**

The labor migrants are contributing receiving country by contributing on their development by providing cheap competitive labor force. The sending countries are getting benefits of socio-economical betterment with the remittance and some level of skills learned from the host country. The local development, education, living of the family is being better. But The age, sex, place of residence, marital status, education, employment were the main determining factors of labor migration. Therefore, labor migration also affect of age and sex structure of the population of the Nation. It is directly affect the demographic dividend issued of Nepal. So, it is concluded that the current labor migration trend needs to be addressed to gain the benefit of the demographic dividend of Nepal. The government needs to channelize its efforts to

support the time, contributions and sacrifice made by the labor migrants. Bearing in mind that a large and increasing proportion of the population is residing outside Nepal, it is important for the policy-makers of Nepal to adequately address these issues.

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