

Dwindling Social Prosperity and Migratory Youths

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Abstract

Migratory trend in Nepalese society is an ever growing trend. Nepalese have migrated abroad through different ways in different time like recruitment in army, as cheap manpower and now to pursue the foreign degrees. Whatsoever the excuses are, country is losing the skilled youths in present context jeopardizing the socio economic development of the country. This study investigates the influencing social factors that motivate educated youth to leave their country in the name of education. Similarly this study has also sensed the integrity of youth towards their own country. It should help concerned scholars to have a bit more concern about their role to choreograph the structure and function that favour the social welfare and development. Youths attempting to enroll themselves for IELTS test in British Council were surveyed and this study adopted an exploratory and descriptive research design. It is found that youths are tempted to go abroad with the motive to settle in there as the native structural and functional aspects of the society are not found justifiable. Moreover youths have placed the foreign degrees in higher priority to access in a decent job anywhere. Lastly the study has concluded that the execution of the policies in every field should not be manipulated instead fair competition and strict bureaucracy in the system must be practiced. However the trend of employment in foreign must also be accepted with dignity.

Keywords: social development, youth, foreign degrees, social function, migratory culture, unemployment, higher studies

1. Introduction

Social norms and values support the social development however social values once considered to be justifiable may not be true at another time and Nepalese society possessing unique characteristics is not an exception. Instead people have suffered in many ways because of such social norms and values. When certain part of the world is consciously and carefully dealing with human values for social welfare and dignity, certain values in Nepalese society are deep rooted victimizing many people. For some examples gender discrimination has deprived many women from education and other rights devouring them in an agony of domestic violence. Violence against women in Nepal shows that 93% had

exposed to mental and emotional torture, 82% were beaten, 30% raped, 28% forced in to prostitution, 64% reported polygamy (SAATHI, 1997). Similarly child marriage has yanked off childhood from children life in our society. According to UNICEF source 40% of all women in Nepal are married before the age of 14 years which is highest in SAARC countries. Child marriage is often seen in the families with limited sources as a way to provide for daughter's future (CARE, 2009). Superstition has bewitched many people constraining them in primitiveness, far away from logical world. A belief like practicing witchcraft has kept many people under the illusion while several people have been victimized thoroughly.

Moreover abuse of power and corruption in many parts of the bureaucratic system in Nepalese society has paralyzed the socioeconomic development. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2013 Nepal ranked 116 out of 177 with the score of 31. It is not that Nepalese society lacks the policies and rights but the implementation seems to be very fragile. Like Article 20 of Nepal's Interim constitution has guaranteed the right of women as well as article 2 which reads 'no one shall be exploited in the name of any custom, tradition and usage or in any manner whatsoever' (Bhandaree et.al. 2013) but sadly thousands of Nepalese women still suffer from 'Chhaupadi' a Hindu tradition of pushing women into isolation during their menstruation period through a fear that they were unclean. These types of violation of law are seen also in the case of child marriage, practicing witchcraft and many more. Such weakness and certain superstitious social practices have jeopardized the quality of life of Nepalese people. Thus according to the Human Development Index Nepal ranked at 157 out of 186 countries from around the world. Lack of social prosperity in Nepalese society has turned out to be one of the important push factors driving many people out of the country. The main reason for migration has been found to be poverty and temptation to be better economically. It is seen in general that youths are equipped with right age for the migration. Basically youths are the prospects of the society. Socio cultural development depends on the moral excellence and the competencies of the youths. While the globalization drifts across the whole world boosting up several states, in terms of socio-economic consolidation and development, others face a huge gorge to be bridged in order to catch up with rest of the world. Survival and establishment is already a big challenge in developing countries. Moreover people's temptation towards extravagantly prosperous lifestyle has caused them to look for a better opportunity elsewhere rather than in their own

society.

Migration is nothing new to Nepal and the total stock of Nepalese nationals working overseas (excluding one mission in India) in different capacities is estimated to be about half a million (ILO-DFID,2002). Nepal has a long history of migration however the trend of migration encompasses various excuses. In the beginning of the 19th century Gorkhas migrated to the city of 'Lahore' (Punjab) to join army and after a war in the Gorkha area with British East India Company (1814-1816) a trend of joining British army in India begun. Ever since Nepalese started migrating rapidly. With the approval of the labour Act of 1985, the Government of Nepal officially recognized the potential value of foreign labour migration "Overseas" from 1980s onward. According to a research in 2002 by the Nepal Institute for development Studies for the Women's Fund at the United Nation (UNIFEM) approximately 170,000 or more Nepalese were in east or south east Asia, with nearly 36000 in Europe and over 10,000 in north America and over 465000 Nepalese were working in countries such as Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Observing the trend of migration in Nepal, the form of migration has changed from time to time. With the impact of globalization and modernization, mode of migration has appeared in a new phase again, that is study in abroad. When zeroed in on this fact it is seen that huge number of youths make their way across the border to pursue higher studies and because of this tendency educational consultancies have mushroomed dramatically in the country. This has facilitated more youths to be advantageous in enrollment process and also in issuing student visa for migration. Basically the youths after completing their Higher Secondary and Bachelor's degree flock in the language institutions and educational consultancies where the competent youths are further trained and polished to face the expensive language proficiency test like IELTS and TOEFL. Many students sail through the test and eventually head towards foreign countries to pursue costly foreign studies. According to 'Saishik Paramarsha Sang' 47 different countries have been the destination of the students. The popular destinations for the students are America, United Kingdom and Australia (Awasthi, 2009). What could be the youths perspective on foreign degrees and what could be their insight on native social development, are some of the questions that strike everyone's thought. British Council conducting IELTS exam along with many other courses has become a focal point for every youth anticipating the foreign degrees. Youths training themselves

in one way or the other round ultimately come to the council for the IELTS registration. These youths helped me to understand their integrity.

2. Statement of Problem

Social development depends on skilled manpower who feels the responsibility for their social prosperity. Only pouring in more money for development can't actually fix the problems. In fact there is an urgent need to have a change in our perspective and vision towards the element that nurture the socioeconomic development. Over the decades our society has obviously gained quantitative scholastic development however there is a question mark for its quality. Trained and skilled manpower with the value of moral excellence is slowly fading out. Responsible and skilled manpower required for the overall development is slowly draining out. Conversely the developed countries are giving out the quality of life to the people on the basis of their competency. There is a genuine value of the education and education itself is a threshold for the employment and quality of life in such countries. Consequently people are attracted to such countries for the better life and our society is not an exception.

Youths fail to find a fair competition for the better opportunity due to political crisis and economic disparity, whereas foreign degree provides everyone with a strong competency, a chance to live and earn in that country and furthermore if they even had to return to their own country there is a higher priority for foreign degrees. Possibilities of getting a decent job is higher. Youths intending to go abroad give back a kind of impact on their native society and development. Migratory culture is looming in stronger than ever before leaving social welfare at jeopardy. Youths are already skeptic about a better life in their own society, though a telltale sign of recovery is felt, an immediate turn out of prosperity is still a pie in the sky. Therefore there is a need of study to find out about how strongly the migratory culture is taking its shape. In this regard, this study has focused to answer the main questions such as:

- ❖ Which demographic group is more interested to migrate out?
- ❖ What are the perspectives of youths on foreign degrees?
- ❖ What do people do after getting foreign degrees?
- ❖ How concerned people are about the development of their own society?

3. Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the general characteristics of the respondents.
2. To find out the perspective of youth towards foreign degrees.
3. To know the youth's plan after achieving the intended foreign degree.
4. To know the youth's insight about demolishing socio economic condition in the society.

4. Research Methods

This study adopted an exploratory and descriptive research design. In the study factual elements that influence youth's perspective about foreign degrees and youth's perspective about demolishing socio economic condition in the society were studied. The accidental sampling method was applied to 40 youths for this research from the pool of available universe. About the data collection techniques, questions prepared in the questionnaires and unprepared questions were asked. Interview was taken as per the youths' appropriate time.

5. Findings

Quoting respondents general characteristics it was found that mostly respondents in 16-20 years of age group were activated in the process of migration which comprised 40%, similarly 32.5% of respondents falling into 26-30 years of age group occupied second highest position in the list whereas 31-35 years of age group shared third position with 17.5% and with only 10% of total respondents belonging to 21-25 years of age group were least active in the process. Observing the respondents from the gender based dimension males with 55% were found to be more active for the migration. Findings show, as expected, unmarried respondents occupied the study result with 77.5% and rest married, when their marital status was studied. When the family types that respondents belong to were studied it was found that 72.5% of the respondents were from single family and rest i.e. 27.5% were from joint family. One of the important eligibilities to pursue the higher studies in abroad was one's qualification. The study revealed that they could be categorized under three categories. They were higher secondary (+2) level, bachelor's degree and master's degree. It was found that higher the qualification, the respondents were less migratory. Hence 45% of the respondents had completed higher secondary level, 32.5% and 22.5% of respondents had completed bachelor's degree and master's degree respectively. It can be seen further that main reason for pursuing the higher studies in abroad was to find employment. Out of two

groups viz. unemployed and employed, 67% of the total respondents were unemployed and rest employed.

Moving on to the second module of the study that pertained the respondents' perspective towards foreign degree and their strategy. The facts disclosed were as follow. It was seen that the main purpose of visiting the British Council was to learn English that comprised 67%, however their ultimate target was to sit for IELTS examination. Besides 33% of the respondents visited the council just to be registered for IELTS exam. International English Language Testing System (IELTS) was one of the criteria to get an eligibility to go abroad for higher studies. The study discovered the respondents' immediate plan, if they got through IELTS with desired band score, was to apply for the students visa in their intended destination so that they could find employment along with their higher studies. This category shared 55% from the total respondents. Whatsoever 72.5% of the respondents were genuinely interested in the scholastic achievement and 5% of the respondents were only intending to meet the visa procedure, so that they could settle in abroad. Moreover when the respondents were asked about their perspective on foreign degree, number of insights were expressed like 55% thought that foreign degree was advanced, 17.5% believed that foreign degree escalated the employment opportunity and another 17.5% of respondents thought that foreign degree was more valuable. Besides respondents believing foreign degrees equivalent to their native certificates, and respondents considering foreign degrees to have better recognition all over the world shared 5% each. Furthermore respondents' ultimate purpose of gaining foreign degree was expressed in number of ways. 45% of respondents had a plan to earn money and degree and return to own country, similarly 32.5% of respondents had plan to find job in abroad but invest in their own country. 12.5% and 10% of respondents had a plan to find a decent job in abroad to settle there forever, and to find a job either in abroad or in their own country respectively.

Another module of the study was to find the views of respondents in regards of weakness of social function, their challenges and their roles in such society. Firstly, there were diverse root causes responsible for the development of migratory culture. 27.5% respondents believed that poor economy of the country was mainly responsible for flourishing migratory culture, while 22.5% considered political crisis and abuse of power to be the main reason, and two equal groups with 17.5% respondents in each expressed different views of which one group believed unemployment problem and the

other group considered high market prize and political crisis as the main reason for the development of migratory culture. Moreover three groups comprising 5% respondents in each had considered different reasons for such happening, of which first group believed inefficient government with poor policy implementation, while second group considered poor security, and the third group considered low earning and saving to be the root causes of the development of migratory culture in the society. Secondly the respondents' insights about their own culture were found to be various. 60% of the total respondents found the native culture as means of unity, entertaining and their identity. Conversely 22.5% of the respondents found their culture as discriminative and expensive. Similarly 12.5% considered their culture not fashionable hence there were no liberty and 5% of the respondents found their culture typical, old and impracticable. Thirdly, the respondents' opinion about contrast relation between Nepalese culture and modern lifestyle was highlighted and mainly three social functions were considered unsatisfactory. Gender discrimination was considered as the most unsatisfying social function by 75% of the total strength of the study whereas other two groups comprising 12.5% in each found early marriage system, and blind faith and superstition as the most disappointing social values respectively. Furthermore when they were asked about whether or not the Nepalese culture was supporting them to live modern lifestyle. 40% of the respondents admitted that it had restricted them to live modern lifestyle whereas 60% admitted that they had been partially restricted to the modern life style. Hence in totality Nepalese culture was found to have restricted youths from living a complete modern life style. Fourthly, the respondents were asked about the role of the social function in social development especially in regards of migration and development and numbers of opinions were expressed. 32.5% of the respondents thought that society could balance migration and social function for the overall social development. 27.5% of the respondents thought society could provide the elements of quality of life without promoting migratory culture. However another 27.5% and 12.5% of respondents opined that society could promote migratory culture along with economic aspects for overall social development, and society could motivate youths in developmental activities giving least priority to migration respectively. Fifthly, the respondents views on how did the migratory culture have supported Nepalese culture, have been portrayed in this study and there were three different insights drawn. 40% of the respondents believed that migratory

culture had supported economic aspect in the society, 37.5% believed that it had supported people to live quality of life and remaining 22.5% of the respondents believed that it had favored the social welfare by improvising their belief and life style. Sixthly, three opinions regarding the causes of slow development were collected, of which 67.5% of the respondents considered lack of opportunity to be the main cause of slow development. 22.5% considered nepotism and favoritism in the bureaucracy to be the main cause, while 10% considered lack of trained manpower to be the main cause for the slow development of the society. Seventhly, when respondents were asked for how they could support the socio-economic development? 40% of the respondents thought that youths could rectify some of the social values with the conservation of their culture. 27.5% of the respondents believed that youths could concentrate only in resource mobilization. 10% said that youths must solely concentrate in economic development, while 5% thought that youths must conserve socio-cultural aspects. Remaining 17.5% of the respondents responded that the youths must consider all the above mentioned ideas. Lastly, respondents were asked about the prevailing weakness in socioeconomic development, and in response 45% of the respondents blamed the political crisis to be the weakness, 27.5% of the respondents admitted that lack of self reliance to be the weakness, 22.5% of the respondents believed that there was a lack of hard work, honesty and sincerity which eventually declined the socio economic development and 5% of the respondents thought that there was a lack of security and peace thus social development was straining.

6. Conclusion

Mainly the youths from 16 years onwards were seen desperate to migrate for higher studies. Older the youths were, less the migratory tendency. Mainly the youths from single family were migratory but once they got married their migratory tendency dropped dramatically. Youths who had completed their higher secondary education were found more suitable for higher education in abroad and an access in bachelor's degree program seemed to be easier. However there was no age bar to sit in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. The basic strategy of youths to have desired band score in IELTS was to get eligibility for enrollment in the intended scholastic program in abroad.

Youths' perspective on foreign degree was very positive and optimistic. Most of the youths were genuinely interested in the scholastic achievement

and for others; foreign degrees were very advance, valuable and better recognized all over the world which had escalated the chances for employment anywhere. It was found that the primary reason for pursuing higher studies in foreign countries was to earn money along with foreign degree however most of them had planned to invest their earned money in their own country. Few were seen with intention to migrate forever and many had planned to return to their own country at last.

Youths' insights about consolidating migratory culture in their society were because of poor economy, political crisis, unemployment problem and market inflation. Besides inefficient government, poor securities etc were also in youths' mind responsible for developing migratory culture in the society. Regarding youths' views about their culture, their understandings were polarized as some believed their native culture to be supportive and it was the reason for unity, whereas others were not happy as there were lots of restriction and discrimination. As a result their native culture had restricted them from living a complete modern life style.

Youths' were aware that every society had a power to change for betterment and youths' view on specific elements on this regard were various. They also believed that migratory culture had favored social welfare in various ways that ranged from economic aspects to social aspects. Moreover youths' insights on reasons of development at creeping pace were various. Lack of fair competition nepotism and favoritism in the bureaucracy and lack of skilled manpower were some of them.

Youths' were aware that serious commitments like resource mobilization, economic development and conservation of their culture should be considered in order to develop their socioeconomic condition of the society. Youths had also identified some of the weakness for not being able to develop the socioeconomic condition of the society like political crisis, lack of self reliance, lack of hard work, honesty and sincerity, and lastly the lack of security.

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