

# Migration and Livelihood: A Case Study Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika, Gorkha

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## Abstract

*Migration is defined as movement of people from own country, place or locality to another in search of better opportunities. Migration has been an important social process of human history, where people have been moving from one place to another in search of livelihood. This study looks at the relationship between migration and livelihood in Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika of Gorkha District in Nepal.*

*Concerning the research methodology, a cross-sectional survey design was employed, which only sought information at one point of data collection to determine migration aspects in the selected study area, as well as the adopted livelihood activities. Purposive sampling was used in which 65 respondents were selected using closed questionnaires. The nature of data was primary and quantitative which helped in presenting deeper picture of the existing issues and factors the study aimed at collecting rich data on migration and livelihoods in Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika.*

*In this study it is revealed that economic reasons particularly job seeking are found to be the main cause of migration and then come education mission and finally joining of family members. Migration has significantly impacted the people's way of living through increased employment opportunities in the formal sector and decreased employment opportunities in agriculture. This paper contributes to knowledge in the area of migration and its impact on the livelihoods with a view of informing policy and practice for the enhancement of the positive effects of migration and the minimization of the negative effects.*

**Keywords:** Changes, Effects, Livelihood, Migration, Socio - economic

## Introduction

Remittance significantly affects the Nepali economy as it forms a large percentage of the country's GDP and potentials of providing income to many families. Remittance

hence plays a vital role in the Nepalese economy, whereby most of this money is earned by Nepalese workers in foreign countries. The World Bank (2020) described that remittance is about 27% of the GDP in the case of Nepal and it has extremely essential role in poverty reduction and improvement of living standard of the Nepalese people. The study examines the interaction of flow migration and income of Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika in Gorkha District, Nepal; though this paper incorporated the blended research paradigm validated both quantitative and qualitative assessment to tackle this phenomenon.

Factors that have been found to spur migration in the case of Nepal and among the Nepalese are Employment – This makes cross border migration an important activity. The study by Seddon, Adhikari, and Gurung (2002) pointed out that the amount of money that came from labor migrants positively impacted the earnings of the rural households so as to pay for accommodation, health facility, and schooling. In the same way, Pant (2011) learnt that while, remittance not only helped in bearing the basic minimum expenditure but also invested in a small scale business which provided managerial diversification in the operation in the rural areas.

Of course, the economic effects of migration are noticeable and positive, however, the problem of migration has its concerns. Sharma and Thapa (2013) opined that migration negatively affected the local economy since the developments based on the migrant's remittances discouraged the growth of viable and sustainable local economies. In addition, Maharjan, Bauer, and Knerr (2012) stated that because of seasonal or temporary migration income generating activities might not be regular and this therefore creates income insecurity among these households. According to McDowell and de Haan (1997), they also postulated that migration heightens regional inequality and thus hampers balanced development in different regions.

Migration also leads to well-accomplished social changes in the structure of Nepalese society. The high fatality rate among men in the working population reduced the number of male bread earners available to support their families, therefore more women are accumulating working responsibilities in the home and the market place (Kaspar, 2005). In a way, Yamanaka and Piper (2005) claimed that although women are empowered by being economically active and productive, they are double bargained in that they are expected to perform household and economic work. SEL, According to Ghimire and Upreti (2012), the psychosocial problems experienced in

the migration family are the poor education and health facility affecting children due to long time father absences which also affect domestic and agricultural problems (Adhikari & Hobley, 2015). Maharjan et al. (2013) provide the detailed explanation of the psychological stress faced by children and the elder in such households, and expanded on the social implications of migration.

Thus, they perform a significant position for the economic development of Nepal. Through the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2010) it was establishing that international migration was useful which has aspects of being a capital originating from the foreign exchange and has been seen to benefit in the reduction of poverty especially in the rural areas. These funds are used most commonly in enhancing living standards, like; shelter and habitat, education, and health (Seddon et al., 2002). In the same regard, remittance is the other source of financing the development of new business ventures since it promotes small scale businesses hence business development and the doing of business in ventures. Nevertheless, dependency on the remittances also cause some implications. Sharma and Thapa (2013, p. 2448) argued that high levels of dependence on the remittances may have detrimental effects on the formation of endogenous economic structures since such communities can cease their path towards the development of sustainable, independent local economy. This view is also in line with Maharjan et al.'s (2012) observations that seasonality may provoke unsound income patterns as a result of periodic migration.

Migration also brings about substantial social transformations and these are mainly in the areas of gender and the family. Kaspar (2005) noted a fact that Working age males' migration resulted to increase women workload since they were forced to both undertake domestic errands, and income-generating activities. This shift has been viewed in the two folds; as a threat and a plus for women in their choice and opportunities. According to Yamanaka and Piper (2005), while the enhancement of women's roles in the economic sector could empower women, it at the same time exposed them to extra work or what they referred to as "the double burden".

Further, therefore, Maschi-main-ass explains that lack of fathers in the migrant households has been associated with the following psychosocial issues for children. Ghimire and Upreti (2012) pointed out that children in such households suffered from the aspect of development that was psychological and due to lack of paternal

figure this problem was much worse (Adhikari&Hobley, 2015). Maharjan et al. (2013) expanded on the children and the elderly psychological stress aspect in the migrant households, and the overall social consequences of migration.

The psychological aspect of migration is hereby very influential in determining the feelings of the migrants as well as those who are left behind. In the course of the migration, Adhikari and Hobley (2015) said that the families will experience loneliness, anxiety and depression. These psychological issues are most expressed in children, who can have problems connected with the lack of a parental figure, and, respectively, care.

Maharjan et al. (2013) also captured the aspect of psychological stress that migrants themselves undergo due to their migration. These aspects such as uncertainty and instability and the pressure on the need to send back a remittance back home deprives the migrants a good health mentally. This aspect of migration then points to the fact that psychological support for migrants and their families cannot be overemphasized.

Migration has long been an adaptive strategy for individuals and communities seeking better opportunities and improved livelihoods. In the context of Gorkha District, a region characterized by its mountainous terrain, limited agricultural productivity, and periodic natural disasters, migration plays a central role in shaping socio-economic dynamics. Understanding the factors that drive migration in this district requires examining both "push" and "pull" dynamics within E.S. Lee's theoretical framework. E.S. Lee's theory (1966) offers a comprehensive lens to analyze migration. It categorizes factors influencing migration into two main groups: Push Factors: These are conditions in the place of origin that compel individuals to move. Pull Factors: These are attractive features of the destination that draw migrants. Lee's Push-Pull Theory was developed by sociologist Everett S. Lee in the 1960s to analyze why people migrate and how different factors influence their decisions. Push factors often include adverse conditions like natural disasters, economic instability, or persecution, while pull factors may involve better living conditions or educational opportunities. The theory emphasizes that migration is not solely based on individual choice but is influenced by external conditions and circumstances.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Even though the topic of migration is discussed often within the development discourse, its analysis in the Nepalese context – especially at the local level – is

still rather scarce. In Gorkha District's Sahid Lakhani Gaupalika area, substantial problems exist, such as population emptiness, human capital erosion, and decline in social interactions. Recognizing these adversities is important for formulating the necessary policies and programs that can prevent emergence of negative effects of migration while at the same time promoting the positive effects. These are important in the overall development of impacted areas and more so ensuring that migration supports the development of the region's socio-economic structure nicely.

Migration in Sahid Lakhani Gaupalika has affected the type of employment also where there are more people shifting from Agriculture employment and getting more employment in the Formal sector employment. It has led to enhanced economic stability of many households that have shifted from one position to the other. In the course of the study, it was revealed that while pre and post NECP migration, only 23 percent of households said they had stable economic conditions, post-migration revealed that 53 percent of the same had the chance of improved stability. The results presented here therefore connote to the economic advantages of migration though they simultaneously point out how migration emphasizes socio-economic differences. Mitigating these disparities necessitates an appreciation of migration's effects on the domestic unit as well as the larger community.

It can, therefore, be ascertained that migration phenomenon of Gorkha District calls for the specific policies that will add value to sustainable economic growth of the region. When directed towards the socio-economic impacts of migration, the kind of policies in questions can seek to increase the beneficial features and minimize the negative impacts and thus be helpful to the general wellbeing of the society.

### **Research Questions**

The research question are: What are the socio-economic dynamics shaping migration patterns in the study area? And how does migration affect the livelihood strategies of individuals and households in the community?

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study are: to explore the socio-economic dynamics influencing migration patterns in study area and to examine the effect of migration on local livelihood strategies.

## **Significance of the Study**

This research presents an addition to the existing literature on migration and livelihood with special reference to the Gorkha District in Nepal's Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika area. Taking both the breadth and the depth of the research into account, this study focuses on the key factors causing migration, namely, job opportunities and education, and their important role in public's living. The results provide evidence of the existence of a positive change in post- migration household's economic status where there was a more evident inclination on non-agricultural employment. This shift highlights migration as a possible way of improving the economic issues hence eradicating poverty and upgrading the quality of life. At the same time, the findings of the study as to the socio- economic impact and distribution of advantages and drawbacks arising from migration are pertinent as they provide useful knowledge for legislation.

Migration and livelihood are two factors which are closely related to each other and depend on socioeconomic, culture and environmental characteristic of the area like Gorkha District. The theoretical importance of examining this relationship is, therefore, in improving the existing knowledge of migration as a way of dealing with livelihood risks, extending current theories on access to mobility, and resilience. There is an applied value derived from the impact this study holds in aiding policy formulation for migrant and their families that can facilitate their sustainable livelihood, and reduce on their susceptibilities. Scholarly, this case study contributes to migration studies by presenting local knowledge, providing quantitative material for similar projects, and encouraging further interdisciplinary research in sociology.

## **Limitation of the Study**

However, the following are some of the areas of improvement when implementing the study; Incident techniques are definitely beneficial, yet they have the some weaknesses; Firstly, the number of respondents was sixty five that is rather limited number and because of that conclusions may not reflect the situation in the whole population. Secondly, data collection was based on self-reports therefore, there is a possibility for the respondents to provide biased data depending on perceived impression or social desirability. Thirdly, the research's context specificity entails that the results cannot be generalized across the world, different geographical locations may have different socio-economic characteristics. These drawbacks point to the possible necessity of subsequent studies with a superior number of participants

and increased methodological quality to enrich the knowledge of migration's effects and to generate detailed, evidence-based public policies.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The study aimed at collecting rich data on migration and livelihoods in Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika. Purposive sampling was used in which 65 respondents were selected using closed questionnaires. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, which only sought information at one point of data collection to determine migration aspects in the selected study area, as well as the adopted livelihood activities. The use of quantitative data helped in presenting deeper picture of the existing issues and factors.

Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika was selected for the research as the majority of the population remain dependent on remittance and migrate frequently from place to place and hence the best site for studying migration and livelihood linkages. In this regard, purposive sampling technique was applied whereby only those respondents, who could provide the most relevant and detail information was selected based on the affected households by migration. The number of respondents included 65; migrant-sending households; selection criteria include; frequency of remittance, years of migration, and availability in Gaupalika for comprehensive variation and respondent representation to allow analysis to be done comprehensively.

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1**

*Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=65)*

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
16-25	10	15.4%
26-35	20	30.8%
36-45	18	27.7%
46-55	10	15.4%
56+	7	10.7%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	35	53.8%
Female	30	46.2%

<b>Educational Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No formal education	5	7.7%
Primary education	15	23.1%
Secondary education	25	38.5%
Tertiary education	20	30.8%

Table 1 shows that Most of the respondents were grouped in the 26-35 years age criterion with slightly more male participants than the female. Most of the respondents utilized secondary education; a good number also had some form of tertiary education, which makes the population relatively educated.

**Table 2**

*Socio-Economic Dynamics Shaping Migration Patterns*

<b>Reason for Migration</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Employment opportunities	30	46.2%
Educational purposes	15	23.1%
Family reunification	10	15.4%
Better living conditions	7	10.8%
Others	3	4.5%

Table 2 shows that the employment opportunities were the primary driver of migration among respondents, followed by educational purposes. Family reunification and the pursuit of better living conditions were also notable factors. This highlighted the significant influence of economic and social factors on migration decisions.

**Table 3**

*Effects of Migration on Livelihood Strategies of Individuals*

<b>Livelihood Strategy</b>	<b>Before Migration</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>After Migration</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agriculture	25	38.5%	10	15.4%
Informal sector	20	30.8%	15	23.1%
Formal employment	10	15.4%	30	46.2%
Unemployed	10	15.4%	10	15.4%



Table 3 shows that the analysis of data obtained in the studies show that the possibilities for making a living changed dramatically due to migration; a particular rising of formal employment. In terms of employment before migration, most of the respondents participated in agriculture and informal sectors however, there was a significant change after migration towards the more secure and more employed positions.

**Table 4**

*Household Economic Stability Pre- and Post-Migration*

<b>Economic Stability</b>	<b>Before Migration</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>After Migration</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Stable	15	23.1%	35	53.8%
Moderately stable	20	30.8%	20	30.8%
Unstable	30	46.1%	10	15.4%

Table 4 shows that the post-migration, there was a substantial increase in household economic stability. The number of households reporting stability more than doubled, while those experiencing economic instability significantly decreased. This indicated that migration had a positive effect on the economic well-being of households.

## **Discussion**

The results that were accumulated in the process of this study shows the significant impact of socio-economic factors on migration. Employment opportunity was the leading factor mentioned by respondents for migration as it indicated the sample's quest for improved economic conditions. This corresponds with earlier theories that have pointed to monetary push factors as some of the primary factors that cause people to move from one place to another.

Change in source of income after migration also supported the hypothesis bearing positive migration to individual and household economic status. These and the shift of people from agriculture and the informal sector into the formal employment noted that migration led to decent job offers and income security.

Also, the increase in economic position of the households after migration justified the escalation in the general standards of living in the households. This was evidenced by the enhanced feature of households that moved from reporting economic instability to those that enjoy economic stability.

Summing up, the study made it clear that migration was one of the most important factors that significantly influenced the enhancement of socio-economic state of the study area. With regards to the findings of the study, there was a strong debate of Policies on migration as an economic development and poverty reduction approach.

## **Conclusion**

Migration is one of the most important elements of determining the types of living and socio-economic activities that take place in Sahid Lakhan Gaupalika of Nepal. Although migration creates a positive outlook for economic transformation, the course of progress comes with the tests for community well-being especially on questions of cohesion and creativity. These issues can only be solved by complex approaches that focus on not only the direct management of migration but also the root causes that condition it and the opportunities for the development of migration processes.

Migration is also said to be very central in transforming the lives of Nepalese families as well as the whole nation's economy. Thus, although migration plays an important role in reducing poverty and ensuring stability in the economy through remittances, socio-economic impacts and issues related to migration are very costly, and thus warrant policy interventions. The need to enhance migrant workers' protection and support local sustainable development plays the vital role of adding value to the positive impacts of migration while reducing the negative ones.

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