

Consequences of International Migration: A Qualitative Study on Migrants and Migrant's Parents in Chandragiri Municipality-13, Kathmandu

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Abstract

Based on the primary information collected by using in-depth interviews among migrant students and their family members in Chandragiri Municipality-13 of Kathmandu, this paper explores some issues concerning the international migration of educated youths in sending society. In particular this paper explores the connection of those migrant students with their community of origin by means of remittance, investment and knowledge sharing and to examine consequences of such migrations in developing countries in general and in the community of origin in particular. Purposive sampling methods have been employed for selection of my participants for the study. Through the Saturation method fourteen respondents were selected for an interview. Among the respondents seven were migrants and seven were migrant's parents. This paper reaches two conclusions; first, Economic loss to sending society and second, they are unlikely to use knowledge and investment in sending society.

Key words: brain drain, migrant student, abroad study, sending society, educated youth

Introduction

Over the last five decades, a huge number of qualified youths from developing countries have undertaken higher studies and pursued lucrative occupations in developed countries. These developed countries include Australia, Canada, Norway, United Kingdom, United States of America and New Zealand (Master, 2016 cited from Konduah, 2018, p.1). The internationalization of higher education over the past few decades has resulted in significant movement of international students, i.e. students who migrate to study in another country. The number of international students enrolled in tertiary education across the OECD area increased by 7%, from 3.3 million to over 3.5 million between 2015 and 2016. In 2017, around 1, 450, 000 visas were granted to tertiary-level students, 1% more than in the previous year. There has been an almost continuous rise over the past decade, driven most recently by increasing flows to European and Asian destination countries (OECD, 2019). In OECD report, almost 2

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million of the total 3.5 million international tertiary-level students across the OECD area come from Asia, with Chinese students representing almost a fifth of all enrolments (789000). Other major Asian source countries of international students are India (262000) and Korea (100000). European students represent a fourth of all international students enrolled in OECD countries. Germany, France and Italy are the largest origin countries, with respectively 113000, 86000 and 63000 students in other OECD countries. Although only less than one in ten international students originates from Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, these regions experienced some of the fastest growth rates in emigration of tertiary-level students between 2013 and 2016. The enrolment of students from Africa and from Latin America and the Caribbean in OECD countries increased by approximately 17% in the last three years, compared with a growth of just 5% in international students from North America (ibid).

In the case of Nepal, an increasing number of educated individuals are choosing to study and work abroad. Over the past decade, the trend of moving abroad for study is increasing day by day. The number of Nepalese students in the US grew to about 10,104 in the 2013 academic year, similarly 6,397 for Australia, 5,044 for India, 1,826 for Japan and 1,498 for the United Kingdom (UNICEF, 2013). Due to the flexible policy applied by Japan, Australia, Canada and other European countries for foreign students, it directly impacted undeveloped countries like Nepal for chances of study abroad. According to UNICEF statistics, approximately 25,000 Nepalese students went abroad for study in 2013, mainly in the USA, India, Australia, Japan, United Kingdom, Canada and other European Countries (ibid). Similarly, MOE Report (2017) suggests that the total no of objection letters issued to students increased from 26,222 to 67,226 between 2010 and 2017. Among them 33,241 for Australia, 15,259 for Japan, 2,418 for USA, 192 for UK and 1,052 for Canada objection letter issued to students in 2017 (MOE, 2017). Above mentioned comment works here too, there is a substantial outflow of educated people from Nepal to the rest of the world. A significant number of educated people from Nepal choose to take advantage of overseas employment. A great proportion of them are part of the phenomenon of student non-return (except India) which means they have also gone through a period of training and education in their country of destination. This reflects in part the lack of opportunities for specialized study within the higher education system in Nepal, as well as the value placed on obtaining a “foreign” education in the Nepalese Society. Many research shows youths often went in the Gulf Country for employment, they are likely to send remittance and return back to their home country. But it is opposite to students who go abroad for the purpose of study in developed countries like USA, Australia, Japan, Canada and European Countries etc. they unlikely return back and rarely send remittance, instead they search for betterment of their life in their destination countries. Researchers argue

that many facilities in host nations lead to students to stay there permanently after their studies. Mitra (2014) as cited in Kounduah (2018) argues that the youths aspire to settle in developed countries where better facilities, remuneration packages and incentives are at the highest point of their livelihood. These better facilities coupled with quality of livelihood stimulate the decision of students not to return to their home countries after studies (Mitra, 2014, as cited in Kounduah, 2018, p.2).

The growing trend of such migration for study abroad from developing countries has serious effects on each and every aspect of social life. For example, Gribble (2008) argues that the trend for students to study abroad looks set to continue and with it the strong likelihood that many will remain in the country in which they study. Success in the knowledge economy rests on the availability of highly skilled and qualified people, and the loss of the highly educated can have a deleterious effect on the social and economic development of sending countries (Gribble, 2008). Also Conventional theories of economic development and growth focus on nation-states and consider education a major determinant of long-term growth in developing countries, leading to the conclusion that migration of the educated citizens will hamper their economic growth since they will inevitably be replaced by the less educated, lower skilled individuals (Lucas, 1988, Bhagwati and Hamada, 1974, Piketty, 1997, as cited in Chaichian 2011). Among the migrants in developed countries, how many migrants have returned back to their hometown? how many migrants used their knowledge and investment in their home country. This paper concerns following issues; do students remit to family? What are the consequences of such a trend of migration on sending society? Do they invest their knowledge and money into sending countries? To investigate such curiosity the following objectives have been formulated

- To explore the connection of those migrant students with their community of origin by means of remittance, investment and knowledge sharing.
- To analyze the consequences of such migrations in developing countries in general and in the community of origin in particular.

Methodology

Chandragiri Municipality- ward no 13 has been chosen as a research site I conducted in-depth interview with fourteen respondents to explore the facts and realities of migrants and migrant's parent's views on migration of educated youths towards the developed countries; as well as due to the lack of documents on the history of migration on Chandragiri, I have taken two key informant person to get information about migration history in Chandragiri.

To explore my research objectives, I have used a qualitative method. As I have used migrants and migrant's parents as a respondent to gather concrete real-life experiences in their own minds and in their own words on the issues of migration of educated youths to developed countries. Purposive sampling methods have been employed for selection of my participants for the study. Saturation method was used to select the sample size. I took interviews with migrant students and migrant's parents and reached in with adequate information when I finished the interview with seven students and seven parents. After that, information was repeated from respondents and did not get new information about what research question was looking for. Thus I stop to take interviews with other respondents.

Theoretical debate on International Migration

Modernization theory maintains that traditional societies will develop as they adopt more modern practices. Proponents of modernization theory claim that modern states are wealthier and more powerful and that their citizens are freer to enjoy a higher standard of living. In the case of migration, the modernization theory says that migration is the process of social mobility generated in the transition of the traditional society to a modern one (Rostow, 1960). Modernization theory gives priority to progress of traditional society to modernity by adopting characteristics of developed countries and explains migration is the key part of development for underdeveloped society which takes place from rural to urban or underdeveloped society to developed society or agriculture to industrial society or low income to high income for economic progress. It illustrates the consequence of such migration in sending society from the Eurocentric view and neglect sending society. The perspectives first and third generation brain gain debates motivated by this theory and generally argue that when people migrate from less developed to developed country, they learn advance technology, quality education, advance social and cultural values etc and remittance that can be important to develop the sending country after return. For example, Grubel and Scott (1996) as cited in Konduah (2018) suggest that flows of skilled migration the first generation brain drain does not have negative effects because the negative consequences produced by emigration of skilled labor are restricted and rewarded for by migrants' remittances (Grubel & Scott, 1996, as cited in Konduah, 2018, p.13). Similarly, the third generational argument also countered the second generational approach of brain drain debates and established the positive side of brain gain. For example, Gaillard & Gaillard argue that, after much criticism leveled against the brain drain phenomena, the concept resurfaced again with a more enthusiastic approach, designed to return highly skilled labor to their home countries to strengthen and reinforce the science and technology system.

On the other hand, Wallerstein (1974) in his book "The Modern World System" states that there is unequal economic relation in the modern world which creates economic dominance of developed to underdeveloped countries and leads toward disparity between countries. According to him, "World-system" refers to the inter-regional and transnational division of labor, which divides the world into core countries, semi-periphery countries, and the periphery countries. Core countries focus on higher skill, capital-intensive production, and the rest of the world focuses on low-skill, labor-intensive production and extraction of raw materials. This constantly reinforces the dominance of the core countries. Similarly, Andre Gunder Frank (1966a; 1969) was the frontrunner of the "dependency" theory, which hypothesized that global capitalism (and migration as one of its manifestations) contributed to the "development of underdevelopment". The dependency school views migration not just as detrimental to the economies of underdeveloped countries but also as one of the very *causes* of underdevelopment, rather than as a path towards development. According to this view, migration ruins stable peasant societies, undermines their economies and uproots their populations (De Hass, 2007, app.). Second generation debate on brain drain highly influenced by WEST/DT highly differences to first and third generation, this perspective advocates more on the negative effect of brain drain on sending society. For example, Dodani and Laporte in 2005 suggest brain drain is the migration of skilled human resources for trade, education, etc. Trained professionals are needed in every part of the world. However, better standards of living and quality of life, higher salaries, access to advanced technology and more stable political conditions in the developed countries attract talent from less developed areas. The majority of migration is from developing to developed countries. This is of growing concern worldwide because of its impact on developing countries. These countries have invested in the education and training of young professionals. This translates into a loss of considerable resources when these people migrate, with the direct benefit accruing to the recipient states who have not fork out the cost of educating them. The intellectuals of any country are some of the most expensive resources because of their training in terms of material cost and time, and most importantly, because of lost opportunity (p.487).

The World System and Dependency perspective opposes what modernization theory has argued about migration of educated people from undeveloped to developed countries. This perspective advocates that core countries import the semi skilled or less skilled human resources as raw materials to fulfill their labour shortage in market and many educated people migrate to developed country (USA, Australia, Japan, UK and other European countries etc.) from undeveloped country like Nepal either for employment or study with a hope of return to home country after learning advance

knowledge of developed countries or earning money to invest in home country. But later often they change their mind and stay there permanently instead of returning to return to their home country. This is the structure of the global capitalist economy which is composed of the unequal economic relation between core and periphery. In this way, less developed countries like Nepal lose their educated youth as well their investment over them and may lead to these countries on brain drain. This scenario of undeveloped countries bring more negative consequences on their development and make them more dependent on developed countries in contrast to what modernization theory suggests in the context of migration. Thus, in this paper I have explored the questions related to the ever increasing trend of students' exit from the country for the purpose of study and settlement in developed countries from the World system/Dependency perspective.

Data analysis and Consequences of such Migration on Study Area

1. Cost and Uses of Migrant's Income

Most of the migrants in the study area had paid a high amount to their respective university for fee. They even needed financial support from their parents to pay university fees during their study abroad. Most of the students did jobs during their study but their income was not enough for expenses (Food, accommodation, fees, travel cost etc.) in the host nation, which caused less saving for them to remit to their family. I had asked such questions to migrant students "*How much have you spent to go abroad?*"; "*where do you spend your income?*" to collect information about their cost expenses for abroad study and how they spend their income in host countries. Among the migrant respondents, 4 out of 7 had spent more than 20 lakhs whereas 3 out of 7 had spent less than 15 lakhs for abroad study. Study revealed that 2 out of 7 went abroad with a spouse, often they save money and send money to family; whereas others 4 migrants often do not send remittance. Four out of seven respondents who finished their study and already got PR or citizenship spent more than 40-50% of their incomes (after paying tax) on accommodation and foods; 10% to pay bills, 20-30% loan instalment (auto, home etc.) and some of spends on travel which led to less saving for them. In the case of students, three out seven said that they spend 70-80% of their income in tuition fees, accommodation and food; and remaining travel expenses. For example, one of my 30 years old female respondents said:

I think, in that time about 10 to 12 lakhs, I had spent to come here. During the study, I had a part time job and often I spent all my income for study and accommodation. But now, after tax paying, I pay 40% of income for loan installments and around 30 -40 % for groceries, electricity, phone and gas bills etc, and 20% saving which I invest for travel every year.

Similarly from the migrant's parent point of view, Study showed that only one parent among the parent respondents said his son went abroad on a scholarship, whereas other parents managed money either selling their land or taking loan from bank to send their children. Parents paid at least 15 lakhs (1.5 million) in low amount whereas maximum amount was 30 lakhs (3 million) for university fees. For example, one of my 56 years old respondents whose sons are abroad; one in Australia and another in Dubai for work. He sent his son to Australia by selling his land. He said:

Umm... I am not sure the actual cost of how much I had spent at that time. But I think approximately around 25 lakhs I had given to my son to pay his university fees. I had sold my 4 ana land to manage money for him.

Study showed that students have paid large amounts of money to go abroad for study. Approximately 13.5 million Nepali currency had been exported to developed countries from seven students in the study area for their study. It is just an example from the research area, the volume will be increased if we compare to national level. Which indicates developed countries earn a lot of money from foreign students as revenue. All migrants often engaged in jobs (part time or full time) during the study and after getting PR. Information gathered from respondents explain that most of the students have high expenses in host nations for different purposes which cause them to save less. For example, those students already got PR or citizenship, spent more than 80% of their incomes (after paying tax) in accommodation and foods, to pay bills, loan installments (auto, home etc.) and some spend on travel which led to less saving for them. In the case of students, three out seven said they spend 70-80% of their income in tuition fees, accommodation and food; and remaining travel expenses.

2. Do migrants remit?

Generally, people have a conception that those people who went to a developed country often earn lots of money and send remittance to their family. But in reality it does not happen to students who migrate to abroad for study. My study showed it is unlikely that students have sent remittance to family in the study area. They often needed support from their parents. I had asked such a question to migrants (students) "*Did you need financial support from your family during study?*" "*Do you send Remittance to your family?*" to know either migrant remit to home or they need financial support during their study from parents. Study showed migrants who went abroad with spouses in dependent visas, they never needed financial support from parents, and they often remit to support their parents in Nepal. In the cases of other students, most migrants needed financial support from their family for tuition fees during study. Four out of seven migrants argued that they did not remit to family because of expensive fees, accommodation, food etc. in the host country. Among the

PR or citizenship holders of the host nation, Two out of four often remit to family because one of them is building a home in Nepal, other has to pay loan installment. And other two PR holders do not remit to families in Nepal because they invest money in host nations for their betterment of life. For example, one of my female respondents who have already got citizenship of Australia argues:

When I came here, I got support from my family to pay the university fee, often I collected money but sometimes I need family support to pay the fee. I did not send any remittance to Nepal, I have to collect money here to make our future bright here. But some time as a gift I did. When I go Nepal that time I spend money for my family otherwise no..!

Similarly from migrant's parents perspective, Study showed that out of total seven parent respondents, only two parents said their children send remittance to pay loan installment, three out of seven said no remittance since they left for study in abroad; whereas one parent said his son remitted money for him about 20 lakhs in his entire time in Australia. One of the parents said his younger son does not send but the elder son sends money for family expenses. On the other hand, six out of seven parents said they helped their children during study, only one parent argued that he did not help his son because he went with his wife. Both could work there thus they managed their all expenses there.

The study revealed that those migrants went with their spouse on a dependent visa, they never needed financial support from parents, and they often remit to support their parents in Nepal. Most of the migrants needed financial support from their family for tuition fees during study and often migrants did not remit to family because of expensive fees, accommodation, food etc. in the host country. Among the migrants who hold Permanent resident (PR) of respective host nations, only two out of four remit to family because one of them is building a home in Nepal and the other has to pay loan installment in Nepal. But others do not remit to family in Nepal because they invest money in host nations for their betterment of life. This information from respondents shows there are less chances of remitting from students to sending countries. Similarly, the information gathered from parent respondents reveal that among the parent respondents, only two parents said their children remit them to pay loan installment but others said their children do not remit them. Most of the parent respondents said their children needed financial support during the study; only one parent did not help his son because he went with his wife. Both have jobs thus they manage all their expenses by themselves.

In the study area, most of the students needed financial support from their parents to pay tuition fees abroad. Even if they work full time or part time basis, their income is not enough to manage their all expenses in the host nation. Study reveals that even if

they become permanent residents of their respective country they are unable to remit in the sending country, because of their high expenses in living cost and future planning to make betterment of their life in the host nation. From these findings we can conclude that what we expect from student migrants, in reality it does not happen.

3. Investment and Use of Knowledge

The highly influenced by modernization perspective, First generation approach on migration debate argues sending countries benefits from skilled migration than loss. Sending countries benefit from remittance by migrants and highly used of learned knowledge after returnee of migrants to sending countries. This approach is more concerned on brain gain for sending society rather than loss to sending society (Adams, 1968). Similarly Third generation approach on migration also gives priority to brain gain for both host and sending societies. These theories talk remittance, return of migrants, Diasporas and brain circulation can be possibly beneficial for sending countries (Gillard and Gillard, 2008). Generally, both perspectives emphasized the positive effect of brain drain in sending society by receiving remittance and use of migrant learned knowledge after returnee to home country. The study from the research area already concluded that there is unlikely remittance from those students who migrate to developed countries for study. Rather they needed financial support to pay their tuition fees. This section has provided the possibility of investment by migrants and uses of knowledge learned from host to home country. To reveal such curiosity in the research area, such questions were asked to migrant's parents; *are there any chances to invest money & knowledge in home country by migrants? And would you like to stay there permanently or not?* for students. Study showed only one parent was confident about returnee of his son, others said, there unlikely to be returnee of their children to Nepal. 5 Out of 7 parents said their children have already got Citizenship of respective country; whereas one parent said, his son just finished studying and applying for PR in Australia and another respondent said his daughter is still studying, but she has decided to apply PR after study. Most of the parents said their children have decided to make their future in a host country, thus there is less possibility to invest money and use their knowledge in Nepal. But some said if the government can make policy to utilize their knowledge here by providing facilities and opportunity for them, they will come. For example, one of my 52 years old respondents argued that when his son told him, *"he has got citizenship of Australia"*. He felt he sold his son to others. He explored his frustration with the government and politics of Nepal. Even his son came back to Nepal to make future here but due to poor politics, lack of system, lack of opportunity, corruption etc he could not make his life better here. He said after completion of study of his son, he came to Nepal and stood here for three months, during that time he tried to do business here but he faced many

problems so later he decided to return to host country. He argued that even skills and educated people (abroad returnee) want to contribute their skills in Nepal but due to lack of government policy in proper management of returnee, they are forced to stay in the host country.

From the student's point of view, Study found that some students don't want to come; some said a 50-50% chance to return, whereas some migrants did not openly make the decision to either return or stay. Interesting thing was, among the migrants who said 50-50 chances to return, two have citizenship of host countries and one's wife has citizenship of host country. One of my 37 years old respondents who have US citizenship wants to return Nepal but due to the political, social and economic challenge for them, he does not want to return now. In the future, if the government creates an environment for them to return then there is a possibility for him to return. He said:

I want to come back to Nepal even though I have got US citizenship. There are still 50-50% chances to come to Nepal. My whole family is in Nepal and I am still unmarried and my family property is here. If political conditions become good in Nepal and the government provides facilities and creates opportunity for educated people then I will come. I am planning to do business here but nowadays the condition is not good. I hope government will succeed in creating an environment for us to come back to Nepal. If it does not happen then I will sell my property which can be helpful to invest in the USA.

A 22 years old female respondent who is studying her bachelor degree, she also said she doesn't want to return due to lack of quality life opportunities in Nepal. She said:

Right now, I am studying so I have not made any future plan yet. But in my opinion after completion of my study, I will apply for PR; my many friends have got PR. I am not thinking of going to Nepal and investing or doing a job in Nepal, because it's hard to get a good job, good living style and opportunity there.

Generally, student movement toward developed countries is highly motivated to return after completion of their study and making some money which they can use at home. Research area does not get rid of this concept. Often students from research areas went to developed countries in the hope of returning to home after completing their study and also parents had hope to return their children after learning and earning from abroad to home. My study found among the parent respondents, only one parent was confident about the returnee of his son and to engage in his previous work that he had done before at Nepal. But others said they are unlikely to return their children to Nepal. Study found most of the migrants unlikely to return. The study showed even migrants have a desire to return home, due to the political, social, economic challenges and lack of opportunity in sending countries, migrants are in wait and see situations with respect to

improvement of government policy and political stability in sending society. Most of the students decided to stay there for the betterment of their life rather than return home. This scenario of study area concludes less chance of using student's knowledge and investment in sending society, whereas most of the students do not contribute remittance to the sending country and they are planning to stay there permanently rather than return home.

Conclusion

Generally I found two conclusions; first, Economic loss to sending society and second, there is unlikely to use knowledge and investment in sending society. At first, in the study area, findings showed there were approximately 13.5 million Nepali currency had been exported to developed countries from seven students for their study. It is a simple example from a small study area. It increases when we compare to the national level. Parents had to spend a lot of money to send their children abroad for study either by taking loans or selling their land. Even family support financially to their children to pay tuition fees during their study except some students who went with a spouse on a dependent visa. Finding also suggests that most of the migrants were unable to remit to family during the study because of the expensive living cost and tuition fees. Even they do not remit to family after getting PR or work permit because they had to use most of their income to pay taxes, rent, loan installment (home, auto), mobile bills, accommodation cost etc and often they think to settle in host countries. This indicates loss of both the economy and human resources for the State.

Second, unlikely to use knowledge and investment in sending society. Findings show that after the completion of study, Students decide to settle in host nations rather than to return to sending countries to utilize their learned skills and knowledge. Study reveals that even some positive willingness from migrants to return home, but some lack in sending society (opportunity) than host country play a huge role to influence on their decision either return or stay. This information indicates that it is unlikely for them to return to sending society. Such a trend of migration leads to the disappearance of educated youth in the study area and it can be a challenging matter for them.

At last, I can conclude on the basis of my findings, the study area represents the periphery in the global economy who exports students to developed nations (Core countries) to fulfil labour shortage in key areas of the host nation. Host nations took maximum advantages from students by collecting revenue from tuition fees and maximum utilization of their labour during the study and after the completion of their study by keeping them as secondary citizens, which can be a huge contribution for national GDP of host countries. On the other hand, sending society gets less advantage

than the host country by exporting their educated youth to developed countries except maintaining some unemployment issues on a national level. Findings show that families invested a lot of money as well other social costs to make them youth from infant as a skilled human resource. Even they have to invest a high amount of cost to send them to developed countries for study and need to support them during their study. But in return, family and society get neither remittance from migrant nor presence of migrant at home to utilize their knowledge because of migrant decision to stay permanently in host country. This trend of migration and disappearance of educated youth from research areas leads to probable brain drain in research areas so research areas have largely to depend on developed countries for betterment of educated youth's life and in search of jobs.

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