

Investigating Factors Influencing the Choice of Nepalese Students' Decision to Study Abroad

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Abstract

This study examines the factors influencing the choice of Nepalese students' decision to study abroad. Decision to study abroad is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of decision to study abroad on students' in Nepal.

The study shows that motivational factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad. It indicates that better motivational factors such as interests and passions, reputation of foreign universities lead to increase in decision to study abroad. Similarly, socio-economic factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad. It indicates that socio-economic factor like family's financial stability leads to increase in decision to study abroad. Likewise, educational factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad. It indicates that educational factors such as reputation and ranking of foreign universities influenced students' decision to study abroad. Further, cultural and social factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad. It indicates that cultural and social factors like family or friends who studied abroad leads to increase in decision to study abroad. In addition, personal factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad. It indicates that personal factors such as health and wellness and personal growth lead to increase in decision to study abroad. Moreover, government policies and programs also have positive impact on decision to study abroad. It indicates that flexible government policies and programs lead to increase in decision to study abroad.

Keywords: decision to study abroad, motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural, and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs

1. Introduction

Globalization has paved the way for the internationalization of education and has resulted in an unprecedented increase in the mobility of students' across national boundaries leading to phenomenal surge in Diaspora (Madge *et al.* 2014). This remarkable boost in the flow of students' aspiring to study abroad has been witnessed in the last two decades (Ahmad, 2015; Foster, 2014). Statistics released by the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) indicated that in 2020, the number of students' who chose to study and moved abroad had increased to 6.3 million from 2 million in the year 2000 (UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2022). Further, according to the forecast by OECD, the numbers of internationally mobile students' are expected to rise to 8 million by 2025 (TIME Association, 2021). Thus, it signifies a trend where a new generation of mobile young people is eager to learn and expand their horizons beyond their national borders. The global phenomenon of studying abroad is due to the allurements of foreign education, which offers a range of benefits like career building, global exposure, better quality of education, and gaining knowledge to get PR. Education is an asset for the younger generation in making their dreams come true. This high-quality education can be obtained through study abroad. The overseas education has benefits such as

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increasing self-confidence, broadening your knowledge, expanding your network, improving your academic and foreign language skills. However, this also has challenges and risks, such as high costs, difficult adaptation, and intense competition resulting in fluctuations in interest in overseas education from year to year. To be able to choose and carry out the overseas education, high school students' need several supporting factors, such as intrinsic motivation, family support, organizational commitment, and government support (Sariningtyas, 2016).

According to UNESCO, internationally mobile students' are those who cross international boundaries to participate in educational activities at receiving destinations. Benefits derived by international students' are not limited to their educational activities, but also include interactions with local communities and experiences that foster their personal and professional growth. The completely study-abroad experience is also associated with numerous opportunities for experiential learning and tourism (Tomasi *et al.*, 2020). There is no doubt that study-abroad programs were seriously affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many students' chose to either cancel or defer their plans to study in other countries. Although higher education institutions (HEIs) were quick to adapt to the situation by substituting in-person lectures with virtual options, pandemic restrictions ultimately impacted students' academic performance, exam results, the sense of safety and legal status in their host countries. In South Africa for instance, an Indonesian student on a brief visit to Cape Town during of the outbreak of the pandemic expressed his experience in the following words: "I was by myself, in a foreign country with no one I knew, in the middle of a pandemic" (Imanda, 2020).

Bozoglu *et al.* (2016) explored the motivations of Turkish undergraduate students' to participate in international student mobility programs and study abroad. The study identified that language learning, personal growth, leisure, academic considerations, and career opportunities are the significant factors that influence student mobility programs and study abroad. Similarly, Chao *et al.* (2017) investigated Chinese students' motivations for studying in the United States. The results indicated that Chinese students' are seeking education with a worldview and opt to break from the Chinese system of learning. Likewise, Pawar *et al.* (2020) analyzed the study to understand factors that motivate international students' to choose Indian higher educational institute as study abroad destination. The study found that 'University Characteristics' and influence of 'Social Networks' were the significant factors that motivate students'. The study also highlighted the importance of factors like teaching quality, university rankings, courses availability, and safety. Similarly, Yue and Lu (2022) investigated International students' motivation to study abroad. The findings showed that the decision to study abroad is a highly subjective and intrinsically driven behavior in which realizing one's self-worth or fulfilling one's purpose of life plays the most significant role. Likewise, Erdil *et al.* (2021) examined the information sources, choice factors and requirements of international students to understand their decision making process. The study found out that the university websites are the most used source of information. The study also found job opportunities and scholarships are the most important factors for international students'.

Pimpa (2004) examined the influence of families on Thai students' choice of international education. The study found five factors identified as influenced from family i.e., finance, information, expectation, competition and persuasion. The study also emphasized that there is positive relation between choice and these factors. However, the choices of international academic course and university are more choices that are personal. It means family did not influence the choice of program and university. Similarly, Kakkad and Nair

(2015) conducted a study on the factors influencing students' decision to study abroad with reference to aspiring students from Mumbai. The study found that the family members are the most important source of information. The study also found that the relatives are more influential to male than female student is. Cost, not meeting GPA requirements, lack of financial assistance are also major constraints in taking decisions. Likewise, Butkovic *et al.* (2024) analyzed the role of openness and cultural intelligence in students' intention to study abroad. The study found that students' who are younger, have higher adventurousness and higher motivational CI are more likely to study abroad. The study also found that the association between openness to experience facet adventurousness and intention to study abroad is partially mediated by the motivational aspect of CI. Similarly, Bodycott (2009) investigated the factors that mainland Chinese parents and students' consider important when choosing a higher education study abroad destination. The study found that the differences in parent—student ratings of importance and the consequent need for marketers to pay greater attention to cultural values when looking to recruit students' from Confucian societies.

Arar and Yehia (2013) described the characteristics of the flow of Palestinian students' from Israel to study in Jordanian Universities as alternative to study in Israel. The study found that the lenient acceptance policy, better chance to graduate, reducing cost and good future employment potential as main factors affecting the flow of students'. Further, Lewis (2016) examined the influencing factors to study abroad. The study found that the awareness levels, cultural factors, and financial ability most influence student decisions to study abroad. Similarly, Ahmad (2015) evaluated student satisfaction with the quality of education provided at international branch campuses. The study found that across the seven dimensions examined concerning education and non-education qualities – university reputation/image, program quality, lecturers and teaching quality, student learning environment, effective use of technology, counseling and academic advising support, and social life (direct/indirect) facilities – the students' are largely satisfied. Similarly, Yang (2007) investigated what attracts Mainland Chinese students to Australia higher education. The study found that the high quality of education in Australia as one of the main antecedents for students' to undertake overseas studies.

Zhu and Reeves (2019) examined “push-pull” factors influencing international student destination choice. The study found that the students' rated the reputation/quality of the country/institution as an important factor affecting their selection in the study abroad decision. Likewise, Jiani (2017) investigated why and how international students choose Mainland China as a higher education study abroad destination. The study found that instead of the reputation of the institution and high quality of education, the strong economic and future development of the country emerged as a major factor influencing the students' decision. Similarly, Ahmad and Hussain (2017) investigated the factors determining student destination choice for higher education in the United Arab Emirates. The study found that the low cost of education and living in comparison to Western countries as a reason for choosing to study in the UAE.

In the context of Nepal, Baral *et al.* (2024) examined unveiling motivational factors driving Nepali students to pursue higher education abroad. The study found a positive relationship between diverse career opportunities and Nepalese Bachelor-level students' seeking international degrees, while revealing no correlation between various educational factors and Nepali students' motivation to pursue higher education overseas. Similarly, Joshi (2022) investigated migration motivations and adaptation strategies of Nepali student

migrants in the Global North. The study found that the lack of employment opportunities, low wages, political dissatisfaction, and students' following the trend as the major push factors in this study and one major pull factor to foreign countries is the chance to live abroad permanently. Similarly, Shrestha (2021) explored the perception of students towards abroad studies. The study found that the quality education fitting the global markets needs attracted Nepali students' to foreign universities the most and the social network in a foreign country is a factor that encourages students' to pursue studies in that country. Likewise, Tamang and Shrestha (2021) assessed the student migrations in the context of Nepal. The study found that the quality of higher education and economic prosperity have become the significant reasons for Nepali students' to pursue higher studies abroad. Gurung *et al.* (2022) investigated institutional determinants of college choice decisions among business students' in Nepal. The study concluded that the reputation of the university/college, quality of educational facilities, cost and financial aid, and employment prospects after graduation are the most influential factors from the institutional perspective. Similarly, Gauttam *et al.* (2021) investigated about higher education as a bridge between China and Nepal. The study found that the China's increasing grip over Nepali students', using soft power by providing aid and collaborative opportunities to students in countries like Nepal to forward its diplomatic ties.

Kharel (2022) examined factors behind the steep rise. This study concluded that migration industries in Nepal and Japan, liberal visa policy, fewer language requirements and many part-time job opportunities are the primary reasons Nepali students choose Japan for further studies. Likewise, Thieme (2017) investigated on educational consultants in Nepal professionalization of services for students who want to study abroad. This study concluded that the roles of foreign education agencies and brokers and how the marketing fueled by such companies play a significant role in inciting students'. Upadhyay *et al.* (2013) examined the perspectives from Nepalese students. The study found that the nation's political instability, social injustice, insecurity, and uncertainty are the major push factors for Nepali students. Similarly, Sharma (2009) assessed a research on the cause of educational migration in Nepal. The study found that the lack of educational opportunity and opportunity in origin, unfavorable political situation, influences of 15 peer groups and network factors (social capital) influenced students' decision to study abroad. Further, Acharya (2012) examined Nepalese student migration to foreign countries for higher education in the globalized context. The study found that the major push factors included lack of quality education, employment, and career opportunities, choices of subject and modern labs, libraries and research facilities.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the factors influencing the choice of students' decision to study abroad. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the factors influencing the choice of Nepalese students' decision to study abroad. Specifically, it examines the relationship of motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural, and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs with decision to study abroad in Nepal.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data, which were collected from 125 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural, and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs and decision to study abroad. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

The model

The model used in this study assumes that decision to study abroad depends upon various factors associated with Nepalese students' of Nepal. The dependent variable selected for the study is decision to study abroad. Similarly, the selected independent variables are motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural, and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

Decision to study abroad = f (motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural and social factors, personal factors, government policies and programs)

More specifically,

Where,

DSA = Decision to study abroad

MF = Motivational factors

SEF = Socio-economic factors

EF = Educational factors

CSF = Cultural and social factors

PF = Personal factors

GPP = Government policies and programs

Decision to study abroad was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The decision to study abroad depends on the Motivational factors", "Socio-economic factor affects the decision to study abroad" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.929$).

Motivational factors were measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "You want to study abroad for quality of education", "Gaining international experience is crucial for your future career" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.918$).

Socio-economic factor was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the

respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “The availability of financial aids affects your decision to study abroad”, “Your family’s financial stability plays a significant role in your decision to study abroad” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.865$).

Educational factors were measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “The reputation and ranking of foreign universities influenced your decision to study abroad”, “You are keen on specific academic programs abroad” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.840$).

Cultural and social factors was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Learning a new language or culture is vital”, “Family or friends who studied abroad influence you” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.797$).

Personal factors was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “You handle change and new environments well”, “You consider yourself independent and adaptable to new situations” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.784$).

Government policies and programs was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 5 for strongly agree and 1 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Your home country promotes studying abroad”, “Visa and immigration policies impact your decision” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.771$).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

Motivational factors

Motivational factors refer to the internal and external elements that drive individuals to act or behave in a certain way to achieve their goals or satisfy their needs. Mazzarolet *al.* (2003) found that personal growth and development opportunities, such as experiencing new cultures and languages, significantly influence students’ decisions to study abroad. Similarly, Umesh and Kumari (2015) found that the desire for better career prospects and enhanced employability is a key motivational factor driving students to pursue education abroad. Likewise, Kinginger (2013) found that the social factors, including the desire to build international networks and form cross-cultural friendships, significantly impact students’ decisions to study abroad. Moreover, Ye (2016) found that career enhancement is a strong motivational factor for Chinese students choosing to study abroad and students perceive studying abroad as a means to gain competitive advantage in the global job market. Further, Varghese (2007) found that the academic factors, such as the availability of high-quality education and specialized programs not available domestically, strongly influence students’ decisions to study abroad. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between motivational factors and decision to study abroad.

Socio-economic factors

Socio-economic factors refer to the various aspects of society and the economy that influence and shape people's lives, opportunities, and behaviors. Byun (2012) found that higher family income positively correlated with the likelihood of students studying abroad. Furthermore, socioeconomic status influenced not only the decision to study abroad but also the choice of destination countries, with students from higher income families more likely to choose prestigious and expensive destinations. Similarly, Li and Bray (2007) found that financial constraints significantly affected students' decisions regarding studying abroad. The study also found that students from wealthier families were more likely to study abroad compared to those from less affluent backgrounds, indicating a strong influence of socio-economic factors. Similarly, Kim (2014) study found that parental education level played a crucial role in students' decisions to study abroad. Higher levels of parental education were associated with a greater likelihood of students opting for international education opportunities, suggesting the intergenerational transmission of educational aspirations. Likewise, Marginson (2012) found the significance of social capital in influencing the decision to study abroad. Students from families with higher social capital, including networks, connections, and knowledge about international education, were more inclined to pursue study abroad opportunities compared to those lacking such resources. Moreover, Teng and Zimmerman (2014) found that perceptions of financial risk significantly affected students' decisions to study abroad. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds were more likely to perceive studying abroad as financially risky, which acted as a deterrent despite their aspirations for international education. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between socio-economic factors and decision to study abroad.

Educational factors

The decision to study abroad is influenced by a variety of educational factors that can significantly shape a student's learning experience and career trajectory. Li and Bray (2007) found that high quality and reputation of the institutions was the main factor for the students to choose to study in overseas institutions because of the lack of internationalization of universities in their home countries. Similarly, Yang (2007) found that the high quality of education in Australia as one of the main antecedents for students to undertake overseas studies. Further, Mazzarol and Soutar (2002) and Zhu and Reeves (2019) found that the students rated the reputation/quality of the country/institution as an important factor affecting their selection in the study. Likewise, Mukherjee and Chanda (2012), Kakkad and Nair (2015) found that the higher cost of living and programmes as constraints in the way of study abroad. Similarly, Wu and Chen (2017) found that the reputation and ranking of universities significantly influence the decision to study abroad and prospective students are attracted to universities with high rankings and strong reputations, believing that attending such institutions will enhance their academic and career prospects. Moreover, Dervin and Mezger (2020) found that the quality of education and the availability of specialized programs or courses not offered in the home country are key factors influencing the decision to study abroad. Students seek educational opportunities that align with their academic interests and career aspirations, leading them to choose institutions that offer unique and high-quality

programs. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between educational factors and decision to study abroad.

Cultural and social factors

Cultural and social factors refer to the various elements within a society that influence individual behaviors, beliefs, values, norms, customs, and attitudes. Phang (2013) found that the family and friends have a positive influence on the decision of international students to choose studying in Sweden, because international students believe that information they receive from the stated sources are reliable and true. Similarly, Chirkov *et al.* (2007) study found that students who perceived higher levels of social support experienced smoother cultural adaptation and were more likely to choose to study abroad. Likewise, Ward and Kennedy (1993) found that students are more inclined to choose countries with perceived cultural proximity or similarity, which positively influences their decision to study abroad. Similarly, Kim and Lee (2011) study found that family support and social networks significantly impacted students' decisions, with familial approval being a major determinant. Moreover, Liu and Jin (2020) found that peer recommendations and exposure to positive experiences shared on social media platforms significantly contribute to students' motivations to study abroad. Further, Tarek and El-Anwar (2019) found that perceptions of better academic quality and prestige in Western institutions motivate Middle Eastern students to pursue education abroad. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between cultural and social factors and decision to study abroad.

Personal factors

Personal factors refer to individual characteristics, traits, experiences, and circumstances that influence a person's behavior, attitudes, preferences, and decision-making. Smith and Khawaja (2011) found that the students from collectivist cultures tend to prioritize family expectations and support when deciding to study abroad. They also found that students from such backgrounds often seek familial approval and guidance before making their decision. Similarly, Vande Berg *et al.* (2009) found that the students with higher levels of language proficiency and confidence were more likely to consider studying in a foreign country due to their perceived ability to navigate linguistic and cultural challenges. Likewise, Salisbury *et al.* (2010) found that students who were motivated by personal growth, intercultural competence, and enhancing their resumes for future careers were more inclined to pursue international education opportunities. Further, Um and Harrison (2018) found that students consider perceived academic benefits and the reputation of study abroad programs when making their decision. Factors such as program quality, accreditation, and the opportunity to study under renowned professors were cited as important influencers in students' choices to study abroad. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between personal factors and decision to study abroad.

Government policies and programs

Government policies and programs are formalized sets of rules, regulations, and actions established by governmental bodies to address specific issues or achieve certain goals within a society. Chen (2007) found that the difficulty in obtaining a visa and its speed pushed

the students away from their first choice of country and acted as constraints in the way of studying abroad. Similarly, Cerna (2016) found that the government funding for international education significantly influences students’ decisions to study abroad and the countries with robust scholarship programs attract students that are more international. Likewise, Helms (2018) found that the stringent visa policies act as barriers to international students and flexible visa policies, such as post-study work permits, positively affect the decision to study abroad. Similarly, Findlay (2011) found that the government regulations regarding work rights, residency, and immigration policies significantly affect students’ destination choices for studying abroad. Moreover, Montgomery (2014) found that the bilateral agreements initiated by governments between sending and receiving countries enhance student mobility by simplifying visa processes, providing scholarships, and promoting cultural exchange. Further, Zheng (2017) found that the government-sponsored promotional campaigns and cultural exchange programs shape students’ perceptions of study destinations and positive portrayals encourage more students to choose certain countries for education. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₆: There is a positive relationship between government policies and programs and decision to study abroad.

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients matrix

This table presents Kendall’s Tau coefficients between dependent and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 125 observations. The dependent variable is DSA (Decision to study abroad). The independent variables are MF (Motivational factors), SEF (Socio-economic factors), EF (Educational factors), CSF (Cultural and social factors), PF (Personal factors), and GPP (Government policies and programs).

Variables	Mean	SD	DSA	MF	SEF	EF	CSF	PF	GPP
DSA	2.165	0.944	1						
MF	2.032	0.909	0.483**	1					
SEF	1.992	0.805	0.408**	0.452**	1				
EF	2.373	0.822	0.486**	0.546**	0.451**	1			
CSF	2.325	0.764	0.406**	0.362**	0.424**	0.571**	1		
PF	2.152	0.705	0.484**	0.440**	0.478**	0.485**	0.566**	1	
GPP	2.603	0.804	0.367**	0.298**	0.396**	0.570**	0.488**	0.446**	1

Note: The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows the Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients of dependent and independent variables. The study shows that motivational factors are positively correlated to decision to study abroad indicating that better motivational factors lead to increase in decision to study abroad of students’. Likewise, socio-economic factors are positively correlated to decision to study abroad. This implies that socio-economic factor leads to the increase in decision to study abroad of students’. Similarly, educational factors are positively correlated

to decision to study abroad. It indicates that educational factors lead to increase in decision to study abroad of students'. Further, cultural and social factors are also positively related to the decision to study abroad indicating that cultural and social factors lead to increase in decision to study abroad of students'. Likewise, personal factors are positively correlated to decision to study abroad. It implies that personal factors lead to increase in decision to study abroad of students'. Moreover, government policies and programs are also positively related to the decision to study abroad indicating that government policies and programs lead to increase in decision to study abroad of students'.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs on decision to study abroad of Nepalese students'.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural and social factors, personal factors, and government policies and programs on decision to study abroad

The results are based on 125 observations using linear regression model. The model is $DSA = \beta_0 + \beta_1 MF + \beta_2 SEF + \beta_3 EF + \beta_4 CSF + \beta_5 PF + \beta_6 GPP + e$ where the dependent variable is DSA (Decision to study abroad). The independent variables are MF (Motivational factors), SEF (Socio-economic factors), EF (Educational factors), CSF (Cultural and social factors), PF (Personal factors), and GPP (Government policies and programs).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of						Adj. R_bar ²	SEE	F-value
		MF	SEF	EF	CSF	PF	GPP			
1	1.601 (7.760)**	0.317 (3.931)**						0.107	0.635	15.451
2	1.143 (5.568)**		0.408 (3.775)**					0.098	0.638	14.210
3	1.445 (7.450)**			0.371 (5.033)**				0.167	0.613	25.335
4	1.460 (8.022)**				0.383 (5.305)**			0.183	0.607	28.146
5	0.415 (5.842)**					0.415 (5.842)**		0.215	0.596	34.126
6	1.20 (6.178)**						0.475 (6.309)**	0.243	0.585	39.820
7	1.002 (4.997)**							0.288	0.567	50.034
8	1.091 (3.946)**	0.242 (2.896)**	0.299 (2.687)**					0.151	0.619	11.737
9	0.956 (3.513)**	0.170 (0.046)	0.160 (0.178)	0.252 (2.920)**				0.201	0.601	11.161
10	0.929 (3.473)**	0.129 (1.523)	0.076 (0.623)	0.181 (2.010)*	0.209 (2.297)*			0.229	0.590	9.993
11	0.848 (3.229)**	0.088 (1.049)	0.016 (0.12)	0.158 (1.784)	0.126 (1.339)	0.234 (2.648)**		0.267	0.576	9.808
12	0.705 (2.674)**	0.081 (0.987)	0.003 (0.027)	0.128 (1.470)	0.065 (0.679)	0.157 (1.708)	0.242 (2.490)*	0.298	0.563	9.574

Notes:

- Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- Decision to study abroad is dependent variable.

Table 2 show that the beta coefficients for motivational factors are positive with the decision to study abroad of students'. It implies that motivational factors have positive

impact on decision to study abroad of students'. This finding is consistent with the findings of Mazzarol *et al.* (2003) and Kinginger (2013). Likewise, the beta coefficients for socio-economic factors are positive with the decision to study abroad of students'. It indicates that socio-economic factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad of students'. This finding is consistent with the findings of Byun (2012). In addition, the beta coefficients for educational factors are positive with the decision to study abroad of students'. It indicates that educational factors have positive impact on decision to study abroad of students'. This result is consistent with the findings of Wu and Chen (2017). Further, the beta coefficients for cultural and social factors are positive with the decision to study abroad of students'. It indicates that cultural and social factors have positive impact on the decision to study abroad of students'. This finding is consistent with the findings of Phang (2013), and Liu and Jin (2020). In addition, the beta coefficients for personal factors are positive with the decision to study abroad of students'. It indicates that personal factors have a positive impact on the decision to study abroad of students'. This finding is similar to the findings of Salisbury *et al.* (2010). Moreover, the beta coefficients for government policies and programs are positive with the decision to study abroad of students'. It indicates that government policies and programs have a positive impact on the decision to study abroad of students'. This finding is similar to the findings of Cerna (2016).

4. Summary and conclusion

Education is an asset for the younger generation in making their dreams come true. This high-quality education can be obtained through study abroad. The overseas education has benefits such as increasing self-confidence, broadening your knowledge, expanding your network, improving your academic and foreign language skills. However, this also has challenges and risks, such as high costs, difficult adaptation, and intense competition resulting in fluctuations in interest in overseas education from year to year. To be able to choose and carry out the overseas education, high school students' need several supporting factors, such as intrinsic motivation, family support, organizational commitment, and government support. According to UNESCO, internationally mobile students' are those who cross international boundaries to participate in educational activities at receiving destinations. Benefits derived by international students' are not limited to their educational activities, but also include interactions with local communities and experiences that foster their personal and professional growth. The whole study-abroad experience is also associated with numerous opportunities for experiential learning and tourism.

This study attempts to examine factors influencing the choice of Nepalese students' decision to study abroad. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents.

The study showed that motivational factors, socioeconomic factors, educational factors, cultural and social factors, personal factors, government policies, and programs have positive impact on decision to study abroad. The study also concludes that government policies and programs is most significant factor followed by personal factors that influence the choice of Nepalese students' decision to study abroad.

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