Factors Affecting Nepalese Youth Migration to Foreign Countries

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Abstract

This study examines the factors affecting Nepalese youth migration to foreign countries. Brain drain is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are employment, education, earning, skills and stability. The primary sources of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding employment, education, earning, skills, stability and brain drain. The study is based on the 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 factors affecting Nepalese youth migration to foreign countries.

The study showed a positive impact of employment on brain drain. It indicates that higher employment opportunities in abroad, higher would be the level of brain drain. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of education on brain drain. It indicates that increase in prompt education facilities leads to increase in brain drain. Likewise, the study showed a positive impact of earning on brain drain. It indicates that higher earning capacity in abroad, higher would be the level of brain drain. Further, the study also showed a positive impact of skills on brain drain. It indicates that positive perception of youths on skills enhancement leads to increase in level of brain drain. In contrast, the study showed a negative impact of stability on brain drain. It indicates that political stability in nation leads to decrease in the level of brain drain.

Keywords: employment, education, earning, skills, stability, brain drain

1. Introduction

The emigration of skilled workers is often qualified as a major problem affecting the economy of developing countries. Many researchers and academics have demonstrated the harmful effects of this phenomenon. This type of emigration is called Brain Drain. Migration behavior is a function of two groups of variables that determine it which is called the determinants of migration behavior that is the characteristics of the external environment and subjective needs of the migrant (Dolzhenko and Lobova, 2020). Migration can be in the form of immigration, which is described as the number of people entering a receiving area, or emigration, which refers to the flow of people from a country over a given period of time. Moreover, there are two types of migration: internal, when migrants move within their country; and international migration, a situation in which migrants live outside of their country of birth for at least one year (Poulain and Perrin 2001).

According to Dodani and Laporte (2005), brain drain is defined as the migration of health personnel in search of the better standard of living and quality of life, higher salaries, access to advanced technology and more stable political conditions in different places worldwide. Similarly, Baksys *et al.* (2015) stated that growing emigration flows to the countries with developed economies are associated with the misbalance of labor force

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between the supply and demand of labor in the countries of different economic development. Further, Gibson and McKenzie (2012) stated the incidence of high-skilled emigration seen among the best and brightest, estimates the impact of migration on the incomes and human capital of the highly-skilled, and attempts to measure the value of impacts on trade, foreign direct investment, and fiscal balance, as well as to provide evidence on the extent of various knowledge transfers. In addition, Docquier and Rapoport (2012) examined the globalization, brain drain, and development. The study found that the main channels to be covered are remittances, temporary and return migration, human capital formation, and network/diaspora effects on trade, FDI, technology adoption, and home country institutions.

Dibeh *et al.* (2018) examined the decision to emigrate amongst the youth in Lebanon. The study found that men are more likely to migrate than women. Likewise Fan and Stark (2007) investigated the brain drain, educated unemployment, human capital formation, and economic betterment. The study showed that the most common pull factors in the country of immigration are prospects of higher wages, opportunities for an improved standard of living and personal or professional development. Further, Rizvi (2005) argued that developing countries which are concerned about the loss of highly skilled workers. Similarly, Valentine *et al.* (2017) investigated new perspective on youth migration: Motives and family investment pattern. The study argued that education plays an important role in both determining and constraining youth migration. Further, Balaz *et al.* (2004) showed that migration can also bring about challenges for the places that young people emigrate from. Studies of rural to urban migration, for example, often associate youth emigration with the decline of rural communities. In addition, Zenteno *et al.* (2013) examined Mexican adolescent migration to the United States and transitions to adulthood. The study found that migration during youth is important as it can shape young people's subsequent adult lives and migration tendencies. Migration patterns of young people may be more flexible and dynamic than that of older people, involving multiple moves to different locations.

Ezaki (2019) investigated the enrolment patterns of individual children left behind in the trend towards quality education. The study found that educational opportunities and barriers often have great influence on young people's trajectories, whether in relation to the transition from school to higher education or from education to work. Similarly, Sanders *et al.* (2016) examined the role of teachers in building resilience of at risk youth. The study found that often young people and parents strongly believe that an individual's education will uplift the social and economic position of the family in society. Further, Jentsch (2019) found that both migrant flows from sending to receiving countries and movement within host nations have changed.

Lee (2019) examined a theory of migration. The study found that generally, people move, either temporarily or permanently, to enhance their lives. Similarly, Borjas (2016) investigated the impact of immigration on the labor market. The study indicated that immigrants tend to benefit the economy, particularly in developed countries, as they often take jobs not filled by natives and, being entrepreneurial, frequently start businesses that hire natives and immigrants. Likewise, Dolzhenko and Lobova (2021) investigated the factors affecting youth migration behavior. The study found that individual characteristics are more important determinants of migration than household characteristics. Likewise, Commander *et al.* (2004) investigated the brain drain: a review of theory and facts. The study showed that migration could be harmful mostly to the impact on wages and unemployment as well as

through fiscal costs. If screenings are applied such benefits may disappear or become smaller.

In the context of Nepal, Silwal (2019) investigated the assessment of brain drain and its impacts on the sending economy. The study found out that the primary reason for people to leave the country is education and majority of Nepalese leave their country in search of better education opportunity. But after getting used to the better lifestyle abroad, people might not want to come back to their home country. The results based on this study concludes that other factors like earning and contribution doesn't seem to matter much to people while deciding where to live. Likewise, Thapa and Shrestha (2017) examined the factors influencing brain drain among Nepalese nurses. The study found that better job and carrier opportunity, future security of family, better working condition and high salary are the major motivating factors for Nepalese nurses to migrate abroad.

The above discussion shows that the studies dealing with the factors affecting youth migration to foreign countries are of greater importance. Hence, this study focuses on the factors affecting Nepalese youth migration to foreign countries.

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. Hence, this study deals with the factors affecting Nepalese youth migration to foreign countries.

The major objective of the study is to examine the factors affecting Nepalese youth migration to foreign countries. Specifically, it examines the relationship of employment, education, earning, skills and stability with youth migration to foreign countries.

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. The data were gathered from 125 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on employment, education, earning, skills and contribution. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

The model

The model used in this study assumes that brain drain depends upon employment, education, earning, skills and contribution. The dependent variable selected for the study is brain drain. Similarly, the selected independent variables are employment, earning, education, skills and contribution. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

BD = *f* (employment, education, earning, skills and stability).

More specifically,

$$BD = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EMP + \beta_2 EDU + \beta_3 EAR + \beta_4 SKI + \beta_5 STB + e$$

Where,

BD = Brain drain

EMP = Employment

EDU = Education

EAR = Earning

SKI = Skills

STB = Stability

Employment was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "There are better employment opportunities abroad", "You can be stable over there" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.986$).

Education was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The education system is better than Nepal", "They support international students" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.988$).

Earning was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The earning is satisfactory than Nepal", "You can survive your livelihood" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.990$).

Skills was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The highly skilled people are only recruited", "The extra skills are developed" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.991$).

Stability was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The future is well secured", "There are various government facilities" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.989$).

Brain drain was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include "The upcoming youths should migrate to foreign countries", "It develops country's economic growth" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha = 0.997$).

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

Education

Education is central to development and to the improvement of the lives of young people globally, and as such has been identified as a priority area in internationally agreed development goals, including the millennium development goals and the world program of action for youth. Backman and Bjerke (2010) analyzed higher education and migration. The study found that there is a positive relationship between education and brain drain. Similarly, Ergin *et al.* (2010) investigated maternal age, education level and migration. The study showed a positive relationship between educational level and migration. Likewise, Giacalone *et al.* (2019) examined education and migration: the mobility dynamics of Italian graduates. The study found that education opportunities in abroad positively influences the brain drain. Further, Brezis (2016) concluded that education has a positive and significant impact on brain drain. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_1: There is a positive relationship between education and brain drain.

Earning

Young people often desire to earn a lot of money for various reasons. Some may seek financial security and stability for themselves. Bertoli *et al.* (2013) found that earnings significantly and positively helps to migrate youth in foreign countries. Similarly, Dun and Klocker (2017) investigated the migration of horticultural knowledge. The study showed a positive relationship between earning and brain drain. Further, Avery and Said (2017) examined the higher education for refugees. The study showed that earning has a positive and significant impact on brain drain. In addition, Lanahan and Lanahan (2017) revealed that earning plays a crucial role in brain drain. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_2: There is a positive relationship between earning and brain drain.

Employment

Graduates seek opportunities for job/education outside of the country, leading to the brain drain. Employment is the driving force of migration. Similarly, Wanniarachchi *et al.* (2022) examined the organizational perspective on brain drain. The study showed that employment opportunities directly influence brain drain. Likewise, Saenz and Lewer (2017) investigated the high skilled labor force brain drain and corruption. The study showed that employment has a moderate influence in brain drain. In addition, Naydenov (2017) analyzed the education and employment in South East Europe. The study showed that employment opportunities in foreign countries have significant and positive impact on brain drain. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_3: There is a positive relationship between employment and brain drain.

Skills

Brain drain can have significant impacts on the quality and consistency of learning experiences, innovation, and overall industry growth. Similarly, Chang *et al.* (2017) examined the effects of a major disaster on skills shortages in the construction industry. The study revealed that skills have positive and significant impact on brain drain. Likewise, Giampapa

and Canagarajah (2017) analyzed skilled migration and global English. The study revealed that skills play a crucial role in migration. In addition, Kerr *et al.* (2017) investigated high-skilled migration and agglomeration. The study showed a positive and significant relationship between skills and migration. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_4: There is a positive relationship between skills and brain drain.

Stability

A brain drain stimulates education, induces remittance flows, reduces international transaction costs, and generates benefits in source countries from both returnees and the diaspora abroad. Similarly, Saniuta and Jianu (2022) investigated the brain gain return migration stimulation public policies. The study showed a negative influence of stability on brain drain. Likewise, Garkisch *et al.* (2017) examined third sector organizations and migration: A systematic literature review on the contribution of third sector organizations in view of flight, migration and refugee crises. The study revealed that stability has a negative and significant influence on brain drain. Further, Zong and Lu (2017) investigated reconceptualization of "brain drain." The study showed a negative relationship between stability and brain drain. In addition, Mouritsen and Jensen (2017) examined leaving the Fatherland behind–Emigration and diaspora policies in Denmark. The study showed that stability in nation positively and significantly influences the brain drain. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H_5: There is a negative relationship between contribution and brain drain.

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 BD (Brain drain) and the independent variables are EMP (Employment), EDU (Education), EAR (Earning), SKI (Skill), and STB (Stability).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	BD	EMP	EDU	EAR	SKI	STB
BD	3.75	0.727	1					
EMP	3.32	0.639	0.438**	1				
EDU	3.87	0.588	0.379**	0.114**	1			
EAR	3.74	0.739	0.493**	0.275**	0.497**	1		
SKI	3.99	0.707	0.314**	0.318**	0.510**	0.438**	1	
STB	4.10	0.512	-0.352**	0.169**	0.266**	0.234**	0.242**	1

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

Table 1 reveals that employment is positively correlated to brain drain. It indicates that higher employment opportunities in abroad, higher would be the level of brain drain. Similarly, education is positively correlated to brain drain. It indicates that increase in prompt education facilities leads to increase in brain drain. Likewise, earning is positively correlated to brain drain. It indicates that higher earning capacity in abroad, higher would be the level of brain drain. In addition, skills is positively correlated to brain drain. It indicates that positive perception of youths on skills enhancement leads to increase in level of brain drain. Further stability is negatively correlated to brain drain. It indicates that political stability in nation leads to decrease in the level of brain drain.

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 employment, education, earning, skills and stability on brain drain.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of employment, earning, education, skills and stability on brain drain

The results are based on 125 observations using linear regression model. The model is $BD = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EMP + \beta_2 EDU + \beta_3 EAR + \beta_4 SKI + \beta_5 STB + e$ where the dependent variable is BD (Brain drain) and the independent variables are EMP (Employment), EDU (Education), EAR (Earning), SKI (Skills) and STB (Stability) .

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R^2 bar	SEE	F-value
		EMP	EDU	EAR	SKI	STB			
1	0.928 (3.670)**	0.793 (13.280) **					0.578	0.398	176.36
2	1.088 (4.614) **		0.791 (13.562) **				0.588	0.393	183.92
3	1.537 (7.156) **			0.061 (0.837)			0.561	0.407	164.31
4	0.932 (4.166) **				0.756 (14.990) **		0.636	0.370	224.70
5	1.709 (7.556) **					-0.612 (11.399) **	0.502	0.433	129.92
6	0.444 (1.923)	0.455 (6.281) **	0.453 (6.601) **				0.684	0.345	139.53
7	0.373 (1.722)	0.382 (5.452) **	0.453 (6.601) **	0.061 (0.837)			0.722	0.323	111.98
8	0.228 (1.078)	0.307 (4.389) **	0.453 (6.601) **	0.061 (0.837)	0.756 (14.990) **		0.747	0.309	95.23
9	0.169 (0.815)	0.277 (4.011) **	0.218 (3.014) **	0.061 (0.837)	0.265 (3.146) **	-0.153 (2.721) **	0.759	0.301	81.60

Notes:

i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
ii. The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
iii. Brain drain is dependent variable.

Table 2 shows that the beta coefficients for employment are positive with brain drain. It indicates that employment has a positive impact on brain drain. This finding is consistent with the findings of Saenz and Lewer (2017). Similarly, the beta coefficients for education are positive with brain drain. It indicates that education has a positive impact on brain drain. This finding is similar to the findings of Ergin *et al.* (2010). Likewise, the beta

coefficients for earning are positive with brain drain. It indicates that earning has a positive impact on brain drain. This finding is consistent with the findings of Bertoli *et al.* (2013). Further, the beta coefficients for skills are positive with brain drain. It indicates that skills has a positive impact on brain drain. This finding is consistent with the findings of Giampapa and Canagarajah (2017). In addition, the beta coefficients for stability are negative with brain drain. It indicates that stability has a negative impact on brain drain. This finding is similar to the findings of Zong and Lu (2017).

4. Summary and conclusion

The emigration of skilled workers is often qualified as a major problem affecting the economy of developing countries. Many researchers and academics have demonstrated the harmful effects of this phenomenon. This type of emigration is called Brain Drain. Migration behavior is a function of two groups of variables that determine it which is called the determinants of migration behavior that is the characteristics of the external environment and subjective needs of the migrant. Migration can be in the form of immigration, which is described as the number of people entering a receiving area, or emigration, which refers to the flow of people from a country over a given period of time. Moreover, there are two types of migration: internal, when migrants move within their country; and international migration, a situation in which migrants live outside of their country of birth for at least one year.

This study attempts to examine factors affecting Nepalese youth migration to foreign countries. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents.

The major conclusion of this study is that employment, education, earning and skills have positive impact on brain drain. However, stability has a negative impact on brain drain. The study also concludes that employment followed by education is the most significant factors that affects the brain drain.

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