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Impact of Foreign Migration on Cultivable land of Phalgunanda Rural Municipality Ward No. 4, Panchathar Nepal

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Abstract

Nepal is one of the countries most influenced by foreign migration not only in Asia, but globally. This study focused on foreign migration and how it affects the use of cultivable land in the eastern hilly site of Nepal. The main objectives of this study are to identify the condition and use of cultivable land and the identification of major reasons for not using cultivable land. The nature of analysis is quantitative including descriptive design. Similarly, most of the data used in this study are accumulated based on primary data collection procedure. Most of the migrant's population are preferred in Malaysia as a destination. Most of the migrant's population are found in the age group 25-34 years. Eighty five percent (221) have had cultivable land and only 15 percent have had not had cultivable land. But there was land that could not be used for cultivation. Majority of the migrants' households (62.9%) have been utilizing their land and 37.1 percent have not been utilization of cultivated land. Out of total household are not utilizing land for cultivation, more than 76 percent households have not been utilizing their cultivated land due to lack of working member of family. Out of 63 household, more than 77 percent (49) of households are found the cause of not enough member of household due to foreign employment for cultivation. It was noted that while all migrant households in the study area had land. Why is the number of people going other countries? It seems necessary to research for it. Therefore, there is need for the local government to formulate various policy and programs related to the quality of life in order to minimize the trend of foreign employment in this sector. While formulating local policies and programs, local knowledge and skills should not be forgotten.

Keywords: Foreign migration, destination, cultivable land, utilization of land

Introduction

Nepali rural population has historically relied on migration for foreign employment, with Gurkhas serving in the 19th century and increasing migration to Gulf countries in the

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1990s (Seddon, et al., 1998). Nepalese people have been emigrating to other countries since 1815, initially in coal mining and agriculture sectors in Northeast India. However, the growth of natural resource and construction sectors in the Middle East attracted Nepalese workers for low- and medium-skilled jobs. Population migration has shifted from eastward to southward directions (Gurung, 2001).

This large-scale outmigration has led to significant changes in the relationship between rural populations and their agricultural land. The commodification of land, driven by migration, has generated shifts in patterns of land use and tenancy relations. Additionally, the departure of working-age individuals has resulted in labor shortages, prompting diverse land management strategies among households, including both the deactivation and representation of agricultural practices (Sunam, 2015).

Todaro (1976) suggested that the rural-urban migration hypothesis based on perceived income and job prospects. Migration is largely driven by disparities in expected income between urban and rural areas, with migrants choosing the labor market that maximizes their predicted gains from migrating while taking into account real income differences and probability into account.

Sunam & McCarthy, (2015) revealed that the article explores the impact of international labor migration on rural poverty in South Asia, focusing on Nepal as a case study. It highlights land commodification, land utilization changes, and deactivation, suggesting that migration can both alleviate and exacerbate poverty (Sunam & McCarthy, 2015).

Charurasekhar & Sahoo, (2018) revealed that the choice of crops and livestock farming has a significant role to play in migration decision. Current initiatives to increase coverage of irrigation and facilitating access to formal finance could improve livelihoods of small and marginal farmers thereby reducing the probability of distress short-term migration.

In the context of Nepal, the phenomenon of foreign migration has had a profound impact on the utilization and management of cultivable land resources. Scholarly examinations have revealed a complex interplay between migration patterns, rural demographics, and land-use strategies adopted by households left behind (Kc & Race, 2020).

Nepal's economy is heavily reliant on migration, despite political instability and conflict. Despite global economic downturn, Nepalese continue to travel abroad for work, income, and technology transfer. Remittance revenue, accounting for 20% of GDP, helps prevent economic collapse (Khatiwada, 2012).

Jaquet et al., (2019) suggested that the impact of outmigration on land management in Nepal's highlands, emphasis on the local context and the influence of history and poverty on smallholder households' land management. It also highlights that the slow growth of Nepalese agriculture, highlighting the complexity of alternative solutions.

The commercialization of smallholder farming in Nepal leads to labor migration and landholding status issues. Research shows that one-third of farmers leave their fields, unmotivated, and face limited access to irrigation water, inefficient production methods, and low returns (GC & Hall, 2020).

This is the age of globalization. As a social animal, a person is continuously looking for a better life than the one they have now. People are continually moving, whether internally or outside, in quest of opportunities to maintain a respectable existence. The migration mostly involves productive male members of a family, which has a direct impact on the activities of the place of origin at the household and community levels. The effects might be social, cultural, economic, demographic, or production-related. Within this setting, my research focused on people's mobility and how it affected agricultural productivity in the study village.

In this situation, this study shows that the cultivable land status of families among those involved in foreign migration. This study will help to find out how much of the cultivable land is being used and what is the main cause of non-use in the study area. The study are to identify the condition and use of cultivable land and the identification the main reason for not using cultivable land who are involved in foreign emigrated households.

Methods and Materials

This study area was selected on Falgunanda Rural Municipality of Panchthar district in eastern hilly region of Nepal. Sample of this study was 260, sampling method was adopted by purposively. Nature of the study is mixed. This study is based both on primary data and secondary data. Results of the study is based on only primary data. Primary data were obtained through interview schedule. Design of this study is descriptive in this study.

Results and Discussion

Foreign Labor Migration by Age

Age is an important variable to determine the analysis of migration. The destination of migrants by age is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

Distribution of Foreign Labour Migration by Age

Destination		Age group						Total
		Below 25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	
Malaysia	n	9	11	19	9	6	1	55
	%	16.4	20.0	34.5	16.4	10.9	1.8	100.0
Saudi	n	5	9	16	3	8	2	43
	%	11.6	20.9	37.2	7.0	18.6	4.7	100.0
Qatar	n	8	4	3	4	4	0	23
	%	34.8	17.4	13.0	17.4	17.4	0.0	100.0
United Arab Emirate	n	7	13	3	6	5	0	34
	%	20.6	38.2	8.8	17.6	14.7	0.0	100.0
Kuwait	n	4	4	1	5	3	1	18
	%	22.2	22.2	5.6	27.8	16.7	5.6	100.0
Bahrain	n	0	5	1	2	1	0	9
	%	0.0	55.6	11.1	22.2	11.1	0.0	100.0
Japan	n	1	1	1	1	0	0	4
	%	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	100.0

South Korea	n	6	10	15	2	2	1	36
	%	16.7	27.8	41.7	5.6	5.6	2.8	100.0
India	n	6	9	7	5	6	1	34
	%	17.6	26.5	20.6	14.7	17.6	2.9	100.0
America	n	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
	%	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	n	46	68	68	37	35	6	260
	%	17.7	26.2	26.2	14.2	13.5	2.3	100.0

Source: *Field survey, 2023*

The study revealed that the most of the migrants' household migrants population (21.2%) was found in Malaysia as a destination followed by Saudi Arabia (16.5%), South Korea (13.5%), India (13.1%), United Arab Emirate (13.1%), Qatar (8.8%), Kuwait (6.9%), Bahrain (3.5%), America (1.5%), and only Japan (1.5%). The study showed that the destination of migrants by age. Out of total migrants' population, most of the migrants was found in age group from 25 to 34 years than other age group. Most of the migrants was found in the age group 25-29 and 30-34 years which was equal (26.2%). Similarly, the age group below 25 years was found 17.7 percent, followed by in age group 35-39 years (14.2%), in the age group 40-44 years (13.5%) and only 2.3 percent was found in the age group 45-49 years.

Out of the total migrant's population in Malaysia as a destination. Most of the migrants (34.5%) was found in 30-34 years age group and lowest (1.8%) in age group 45-49 years. Similarly. Most of the migrants (37.2%) was found in 30-34 years age group and lowest (4.7%) in age group 45-49 years in Saudi as a destination. More than thirty four percent (34.8%) was found in age group below 25 years and only 13.0 percent in age group 30-34 years as a destination of Qatar. More than 38.0 percent was found in age group 25-29 years and lowest (8.8%) in age group 30-34 years in United Arab Emirate as a destination. Most of the migrant's population (27.8%) was found in age group 35-39 years and equal (5.6%) in age group 30-34 and 45-49 years in Kuwait as a destination. In Japan as a destination, equal (25%) was found only in age group below 25, 25-29, 30-34-, and 35-39-years age group. More than fifty five percent (55.6%) was found in age group 25-29 years and equal (11.1%) in age group 30-35 and 40-45 years in Bahrain as a destination. Similarly, in South Korea as a destination, more than 40.0 percent was found in age group 30-34 years and only 2.8 percent in age group 45-49 years. More than 20.0 percent migrants' population was found in age group 30-34 years and only 2.9 percent in age group 45-49 years. Equal (50%) was found in age group 25-29 and 30-34 years in America as a destination. In shortly, seventy percent foreign migrants were found in the age group below 35 years.

Foreign Labour Migration and Cultivable Land/ Land Holding Status

Nepal is an agricultural country. Most of the people are involved in agricultural sector. Nowadays most of the people are avoiding for farming to transfer another sector. Land is the main component of poverty measurement in rural area of Nepal. The measurement of the land in hill regions is Ropani in our country. It is measured by Ropani. In the study area, all migrant's household have land. But only 221 households were found cultivable land. Besides

221 household, 39 household had no cultivable land. Because all land is not suitable for agriculture. The cultivated land in migrant's household is presented in table 1.2.

Table 1.2*Distribution of Migrant's Household and Cultivated Land*

Destination		Area of land (Ropani)								Total
		Below 10	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	Above 70	
Malaysia	n	1	14	22	6	4	1	0	0	48
	%	2.1	29.2	45.8	12.5	8.3	2.1	0.0	0.0	100.0
Saudi	n	3	13	11	4	1	0	0	1	33
	%	9.1	39.4	33.3	12.1	3.0	0.0	0.0	3.0	100.0
Qatar	n	2	4	8	2	2	0	0	2	20
	%	10.0	20.0	40.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	100.0
United Arabn Emirate	n	3	8	10	8	2	0	0	0	31
	%	9.7	25.8	32.3	25.8	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Kuwait	n	3	4	5	1	1	2	0	0	16
	%	18.8	25.0	31.3	6.3	6.3	12.5	0.0	0.0	100.0
Bahrain	n	2	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	8
	%	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Japan	n	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	3
	%	0.0	0.0	33.3	33.3	33.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
South Korea	n	3	11	4	5	3	0	2	0	28
	%	10.7	39.3	14.3	17.9	10.7	0.0	7.1	0.0	100.0
India	n	4	9	13	3	0	1	1	0	31
	%	12.9	29.0	41.9	9.7	0.0	3.2	3.2	0.0	100.0
America	nr	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
	%	0.0	33.3	0.0	0.0	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	n	21	66	78	30	16	4	3	3	221
	%t	9.5	29.9	35.3	13.6	7.2	1.8	1.4	1.4	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Out of total study of household, 39 migrants had not cultivated land but they had land without suitable cultivable. The study showed that most of the population (35.3%) was found cultivable land in 20-29 Ropani followed by 29.9 percent population had have in 10-19 Ropani land, 13.6 percent in 30-39 Ropani land, 9.5 percent in below 10 Ropani land, 1.8 percent in 50-59 Ropani land and equal only 1.4 percent had had in 60-69 and 70 and above Ropani land.

Out of total migrants' households in Malaysia as a destination, When the number of study household who went to Malaysia it is found that there are households with cultivable land up to 59. It shows that the cultivable land was found below 60 Ropani. Out of total cultivable land, most of the household's (45.8%) had had 20-29 Ropani and lowest (2.1%) households had had below 10 Ropani and 50-59 Ropani. Out of total migrants' household' in Saudi as a destination, When the number of study household who went to Saudi it is found that there are households with cultivable land above 70 Ropani. Out of total cultivable land, most of the household's (39.4%) had had 10-19 Ropani and lowest (3.0%) household had had below 40-49 Ropani and above 70 Ropani. Out of total migrants' households in Qatar as a

destination, when the number of study households who went to Qatar it is found that there are households with cultivate land above to 70 Ropani. Out of total cultivable land, most of the households (40.0%) had had 20-29 Ropani. Out of total migrant's household in United Arab Emirate as a destination, when the number of households who went to United Arab Emirates it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to 49 Ropani. Out of total cultivable land, most of the households (32.3%) had had 20-29 Ropani.

Out of total migrant's household in Kuwait as a destination, when the number of study households who went to Kuwait it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to 59 Ropani. Out of total cultivated land, most of the households (25%) had had 20-29 Ropani. Out of total migrant's household in Bahrain as a destination, when the number of study households who went to Bahrain it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to only 29 Ropani. Out of total cultivated land, most of the household (54%) had had 20-29 Ropani.

Out of total migrant's household in Japan as a destination, when the number of study households who went to Japan it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to 59 Ropani. Out of total cultivated land, equal (33.3%) of the households had have 20-29 Ropani, 30-39 Ropani and 40-49 Ropani. Out of total migrant's household in South Korea as a destination, when the number of study households who went to South Korea it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to 69 Ropani. Out of total cultivated land, m of the household (39.3%) had had 20-29 Ropani. Out of total migrant's household in India as a destination, when the number of study households who went to India it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to 69 Ropani. Out of total cultivated land, most of the household (41.9%) had had 20-29 Ropani.

Similarly, out of total migrant's household in America as a destination, when the number of study households who went to America it is found that there are households with cultivated land up to 49 Ropani. Out of total cultivated land, majority of the households (66.7%) had had 40-49 Ropani. Whatever, in short, most of the households have cultivable land for agricultural. It can be confirmed from the facts that those who went for foreign employment due to lack of cultivable land but went for other reasons.

Utilization of Cultivated Land

Nepal is an agricultural country but farming system is traditional. Although it is modernized, it is not widely practiced. Cultivable land is not being properly utilized and transforming into grass land.

Altogether 260 household members were asked whether they have used their land themselves. Eightly two households were not utilization their land and 139 households were utilization in this area. The utilization and not utilization of cultivated land in migrant's household is presented in table 1.3.

Table 1.3*Distribution of Utilization and Not Utilization of Cultivated Land in Migrant's Household*

Destination		Land utilization		
		All land utilized	Not land utilized	Total
Malaysia	n	29	19	48
	%	60.4	39.6	100.0
Saudi	n	23	10	33
	%	69.7	30.3	100.0
Qatar	N	13	7	20
	%	65.0	35.0	100.0%
United Arab Emirate	N	22	9	31
	%	71.0	29.1	100.0
Kuwait	n	10	6	16
	%	62.5	37.5	100.0
Bahrain	n	6	2	8
	%	75.0	25.0	100.0
Japan	N	1	2	3
	%	33.3	66.7	100.0
South Korea	n	13	15	28
	%	46.4	54.1	100.0
India	n	21	10	31
	%	67.7	32.3	100.0
America	n	1	2	3
	%	33.3	66.6	100.0
Total	N	139	82	221
	%	62.9	37.1	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The study revealed that most of the migrants' households (62.9%) have been utilizing their land and 37.1 percent have not been utilization of cultivated land. Forty-eight migrants' households in Malaysia as a destination, the study revealed that the 39.6% households have not been utilization their land and 60.4% have been utilization their land. Similarly, thirty-three migrants' households in Saudi as a destination, the study showed that the slightly one third (30.3%) households have not been utilization their land and 67.9% have been utilization their land. Twenty migrants' households in Qatar as a destination, the study revealed that the thirty-five percent households have not been utilization their land and 65.0% have been utilization their land. Similarly, thirty-one migrants' households in United Arab Emirates as a destination, the study revealed that the more than twenty nine percent (29.2.0%) households have not been utilization their land and 71.0% have been utilization their land. Sixteen migrants' households in Kuwait as a destination, the study showed that the more than 37.0 percent households have not been utilization their land and 62.5 percent have been utilization their land for cultivation.

Only eight migrants' households in Bahrain as a destination, one -fourth households have not been utilization their land and third-fourth have been utilization their land. Few

migrants' households in Japan as a destination, more than sixty-six households have not been utilization their land and only one-third households have been utilization their land. Twenty-eight migrants' households in South Korea as a destination, more than fifty percent households have not been utilization their land and about forty-six percent have been utilization their land. Thirty-one migrants' household in India as a destination, 32.3% households have not been utilization their land and 67.7% have been utilized their land. Similarly, only three migrants' households in America as a destination, most of the migrants' household (66.6%) have not been utilization their land for cultivation.

Analyzing the above facts, it can be further concluded that the utilization of cultivated land seems to be decreased due to most of the youths of the study area have gone for foreign employment day by day.

Causes of not Utilizing the Land

Altogether 260 household members were asked whether they have used their land themselves. Eighty two households were not utilization their land. The cause of not utilizing (cultivating) the land is presented table 1.4.

Table 1.4

Distribution of Causes of not Utilizing the Land

Causes of not utilizing the land	n	%
Not enough member of family	63	76.8
Land and home are at distance	12	14.6
Excessive amount of land	4	4.8
Unfertile land	3	3.6
Total	82	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The study showed that 82 households have not been utilizing their land, among them 76.8 percent households have not been utilization their cultivable lane land due to lack of working member of family, 14.6 percent of them have their land and home are at distance and five percent (4.9%) have excessive amount of land and only 3.6 percent of them have their unfertile land. It can be further concluded that the scarcity of working member seems to be the major causes. Most of the youths of the study area have gone for foreign employment. Secondly, they have their land to distance from home and it is not easy for them to work.

Causes of not Enough Member of Family for Cultivation

Sixty-three households are not utilization their land due to the causes of not enough member of family for cultivation. The cause of not enough member for family for cultivation is presented table 1.5.

Table 1.5*Causes of not Enough Member of Family for Cultivation*

Causes of not utilizing the land	n	%
Foreign employment of family member	49	77.8
Senior citizens and child at home	5	7.9
Small family	9	14.3
Total	63	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

The study revealed that majority of the respondents (77.8%) of households was found the causes of not enough member of household due to foreign employment for cultivation. Similarly more than 14 percent migrants' of households were found the cause of not member of family due to small size family for cultivation and 7.9 percent migrants' of household have senior citizen and child at home for cultivation.

Conclusion

Malaysia is the preferred destination for most people to foreign migration. The destination countries for migrants were Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, India, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Baharan, America, and Japan, with the majority of migrants found in the age group of 25-34 years. It is found that almost every family, at least a little has cultivable land. The study revealed that a majority of migrant households have been utilizing their land for cultivation, with 62.9% utilizing their land and 37.1% not utilizing it. The main causes of not utilizing the land for cultivation were identified as not having enough family members available for farming, distance between home and land, excessive land, and unfertile land. The study also highlighted that foreign labor migration has led to a decrease in the utilization of cultivated land, as most of the youths from the study area have gone for foreign employment. It was noted that while all migrant households in the study area had land. Why is the number of people going to Malaysia more than other countries? It seems necessary to research for it. Similarly, Despite the availability of suitable land for cultivation, it is serious problem that more than one third not of the households cannot use the cultivable land due to lack of manpower due to foreign migration. Therefore, there is need for the local government to formulate various policy and programs related to the quality of life in order to minimize the trend of foreign employment in these sectors. While formulating local policies and programs, local knowledge and skills should not be forgotten.

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