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Research Article

Socio-Economic Implications of Abroad Mobility of Nepalese Students for Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Foreign mobility in higher education has been a persistent issue in almost every country especially in developing countries like Nepal for many years, resulting in a shortage of skilled and competent individuals within the country. This research investigates the socio-economic implications of students' mobility from Nepal to foreign countries. It aims to achieve two primary objectives: first, to identify the determinants driving students' decisions to study abroad and secondly to analyze the socio-economic implications of this mobility on Nepal. A qualitative research approach is adopted, incorporating both primary and secondary data sources. Six Nepali students studying in various foreign countries and six parents whose children are currently residing abroad are interviewed using a semi-structured format of questions to explore the determinants and motivations behind international education decisions. Additionally, a systematic review of related literature is conducted, drawing from academic databases, reputable journals, and official reports to provide a comprehensive analysis. The qualitative data are thematically analyzed, complemented by findings from the literature review. Ethical considerations have been adhered to throughout the study. The research has aimed to shed light on the impact of foreign mobility on students and their families in Nepal and contribute valuable insights to the field of international education. Understanding the factors that influence students mobility and the resulting outcomes is likely to be crucial for

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policymakers, educational institutions, and students themselves.

Keywords: Higher education, implication, international migration, student mobility, socio-economic implications

INTRODUCTION

International migration of students has become an increasingly prominent trend in recent years. With the rise of global connectivity and the growing emphasis on higher education, students are now seeking educational opportunities and further career beyond their home countries. Students' migration has been a global trend increasing over recent years and Nepal is not an exception. International student mobility refers to the movement of students across borders for educational or professional purposes (Cui et al., 2022). The pattern of students' mobility shows that the increasing numbers of students leave the country to the developed countries for their higher education with the hope of getting practical skills and knowledge and other valuable experiences to enhance their future career.

According to most foreign studies and the results of the present researches, the most significant motivation for academic migration is the expectation of higher incomes, social protection and access to opportunities for academic development (Khakhuk et al., 2021). This type of mobility is considered a career transition, which means that it involves a significant change in a person's career path (Albien & Mashatola, 2021). However, this transition is also fraught with uncertainties, which means that there are many unknowns and risks associated with it. The uncertainties may arise from various factors such as cultural differences, language barriers, financial constraints, and visa regulations (Khakhuk et al., 2021). Moreover, following the remarkable rise in the demand for education and training at global level, competition in attracting foreign students has increased significantly. Some countries are better able to attract and develop the best talent through the quality of their higher education and research infrastructure (Bouoiyour & Selmi 2014). Thus the increased competition among countries to offer high-quality education and research facilities is a key factor driving students to study abroad.

Students' migration does not depend only on the personal choice of people living in developing countries, but also on the policies of host countries. According to Haupt et al. (2010, as cited by Bouoiyour & Selmi, 2014) developed countries specifically analyze the implications of permanent settlement in the host country after graduation and prepare the human capital that has significant positive externalities. These facilities and opportunities

attract the students of developing countries and influence in decision making process of foreign mobility.

According to Ghimire (2023), in his news article published in University World News, as many as 114,000 Nepali students acquired the no objection certificate (NOC) letters to study abroad in the fiscal year 2021-22. The number has already reached 82,000 in the nine months of the current fiscal year. Highlighting the situation, Dhungel et al. (2013) emphasized that from the economical point of view as well, such migrants are taking a bulky amount to pursue their education and if such trend continues, it will have multi-irrecoverable adverse impacts in Nepali economy resulting into an alarming situation. While this trend symbolizes the pursuit of academic excellence and opportunities on a global scale, it may lead to a critical situation with the far-reaching socio-economic impact within the Nepali context.

In this regard, this study focuses to explore the determinants of students' foreign mobility and to analyze its social- economic consequences. Further, it aims to develop and suggest interventions to address the underlying causes of the foreign mobility and to mitigate its negative impact on Nepal's economy and society.

This research holds a significant importance as it provides a deeper understanding of the reasons behind Nepali students choosing to study abroad. This knowledge can help many to make informed decisions about higher education pathways. Secondly, it sheds light on how such choices impact Nepal's society and economy, which is crucial for policymakers, educators, and families to ensure that these effects are positive and beneficial. Additionally, the study focus on proposing interventions and solutions that can play an important role in mitigating any negative consequences of student mobility and fostering a more constructive educational environment in Nepal.

When examining the determinants of student migration, various theories such as push-pull factors, social networks or social capital, human capital, and rational choice play a crucial role in understanding the decision-making processes of those seeking international mobility.

Ravenstein (1885, as cited in Dhungel, 2013) in his "Law of Migration" concluded that migration was governed by "push-pull" process, that is, unfavorable conditions in one place "push" people out, and favorable conditions in an external location "pull" them out. Beside certain economic factors such as the level of economic wealth of the country, which sends its students abroad and the degree of its participation in the global economy, many other factors can be presented as push factors. The pull factors dominate in particular tuition fees of host countries, conditions of living and working, career opportunities, language of study and

the quality of higher education (Bouoiyour & Selmi, 2014). Hence, the decision of a student regarding international mobility is initially made under the influence of push factors. In the second stage, students choose their destination country according to pull factors that make some countries more attractive than others.

Another relevant theory related to students' foreign mobility is the social networking theory. The social networking theory of migration suggests that individuals are more likely to migrate to a particular destination if they have social connections, such as friends or family, already established in that location (Massey et al, 1993 as cited in Dhungel, 2013). These social ties can provide information, resources, and support, making the migration process easier and less risky. Social factor can be one of the useful factors for migrant to settle in the alien country. It is far more important particularly for the first time mover. One may use various forms of social networks such as family network, network of friends and neighbor and also sometimes through marriage bond. Sometimes social factors can be the reason for migration to many people (Tokas et al., 2023). It means that people migrate because their friends or their family members are already there in host countries.

Similarly, the other relevant theory which can be associated to students' mobility is the human capital theory. Schultz (1971, as cited in Dhungel, 2013) explains the human capital theory as an economic concept that emphasizes the role of education, skills, knowledge, and other attributes of individuals as valuable assets. It suggests that individuals can increase their economic success and opportunities through investments in their education, training, and personal development. Students from developing countries choose to study abroad in developed countries to access higher quality education and training, which enhances their human capital.

Besides, the determinants of international migration of students have also microeconomics, cultural and sociological aspects. Student migration does not depend only on the personal choice of people living in developing countries, but also on the policies of host countries. Haupt et al. (2010), as cited by Bouoiyour & Selmi (2014), have examined the impact of the international mobility of students on the education policy of the host country. They specifically analyze the implications of an increase in the probability that a student settles permanently in the host country after graduation. They think that a higher probability of permanent migration of students grows the host countries to improve the quality of their higher education and their human capital that has significant positive externalities. In general, it is reasonable to assume that individuals will prefer to live in countries where physical and

social security, civic freedoms , individual and economic rights are respected and protected (Solimano, 2006).

The process of globalization has significantly influenced the foreign mobility of students in recent years. Although there are some positive sides, the home countries have to face a number of challenges due to foreign mobility of students from higher education. One of the important impacts the developing countries have to face is brain drain. In most of the cases, highly skilled students who have chosen global north as their education destination , may choose to stay in their host countries permanently. Such migration of highly skilled individuals seeking education and employment opportunities abroad can exacerbate the brain drain phenomenon (Matsuzuka & Gérard, 2022). This loss of talent can hinder the country's progress in sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and technology. Additionally, the outflow of funds as tuition fees and living expenses paid to foreign institutions creates a financial burden on families and drains foreign currency reserves. This can impact the overall balance of payments and weaken the domestic economy (Adamyk & Dyachuk, 2023).

Mobility movements can be discussed from students' perspectives on different aspects of students' life. Three major perspectives are put forward by Albien and Mashatola (2021) is taken into consideration. The first perspective is that of economically influenced mobility; the second perspective is based on educationally influenced mobility; and the third perspective is socially influenced mobility. The first perspective related to international mobility of students in higher education is based on economic related factors. According to Prazeres (2013), as cited by Khakhuk et al., (2021), the movement of students from developing countries to higher education institutions in developed countries was described as “vertical mobility” to indicate economic advancement. This concept is tied to the concept of a boundary less career orientation, which is used in organizational psychology to facilitate successful worldwide movements in social, economic, cultural, and political interactions (Albien & Mashatola, 2021). From a student's perspective, the decision to pursue higher education in the global north brings forth several economic advantages as they often have the chance to engage in part-time work or internships during their studies, which can provide them with practical work experience, additional income, and a chance to establish professional networks (Bouoiyour & Selmi, 2014). Another perspective focused on mobility movements is about global demand for education, where students worldwide were attracted to prestigious educational programs especially in the developed countries. Research shows that global demand is higher to make their education destination in English speaking countries like USA, UK, Australia, Canada,

and New Zealand. The key findings were that students were attracted to higher education institutions of these countries, i.e., completing higher education in the home country but enrolled in a foreign university program (Zhai et al., 2019).

The determinants of student migration are multifaceted, encompassing various theoretical perspectives such as the push and pull factors theory, social network theory, and human capital theory. Among the many theories explaining student mobility, the push-pull factors theory is particularly relevant. This theory highlights how students' decisions to study abroad are influenced by a combination of push factors such as limited educational opportunities, political instability, or economic challenges in their home country and pull factors, which include better academic programs, career prospects, and the overall appeal of the destination country's culture and lifestyle. The interplay of these factors creates a compelling incentive for students to seek education in foreign countries, where they perceive greater opportunities for personal and professional growth.

DATA AND METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative research design, focusing on understanding the complex socio-economic implications of academic migration among Nepali students and their parents. The design is rooted in a phenomenological approach, which is well-suited for exploring the lived experiences, perceptions, and emotions of the participants. Data for this study is collected from both primary and secondary sources, ensuring a comprehensive exploration of the research topic. Primary data is obtained through semi-structured interviews with two key groups: Nepali students currently studying abroad and parents whose children are currently studying in foreign countries. Secondary data is drawn from a wide range of academic journals, government reports, and other scholarly sources, offering a strong foundation for contextualizing the primary data.

The population for this study includes Nepali students studying abroad and the parents, with a purposeful sampling strategy employed to select participants who can provide substantial insights into the research objectives. The sample consists of twelve participants—six students and six parents—carefully chosen to ensure diversity in destination countries and experiences. The research instrument used for data collection is a semi-structured interview guide, designed to extract detailed responses about the queries. To ensure the validity the questions were designed to be clear, open-ended, and relevant to the research objectives, ensuring that they effectively capture the necessary data. Reliability is further enhanced through consistent data

collection procedures and cross-referencing the interview data with secondary sources.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which were recorded and transcribed for analysis. During the interview process, data saturation was monitored, ensuring that sufficient data was collected to comprehensively address the research questions. As data analysis technique, thematic analysis is employed, focusing on identifying, analyzing, and reporting recurring themes related to the socio-economic implications of student mobility. Throughout the research process, ethical issues were carefully addressed. Participants are fully informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their rights, with informed consent obtained prior to participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously maintained to protect participants' identities and sensitive information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of Respondents

As the profile of the respondents, diverse group of individuals who have contributed valuable insights to this study on Nepali students studying abroad and the socio-economic implications of this trend are presented. Among the respondents, there are six students currently pursuing their education in five different countries. Complementing this, six parents, representing a range of demographic backgrounds are interviewed.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Respondents Students

Respondents pseudonym	Age	Gender	Host Country	Subject Studying
R1	21	F	Australia	Child Care
R2	21	F	UK	Business
R3	25	M	Japan	English
R4	24	F	Canada	Business
R5	31	F	Australia	Nursing
R6	27	M	New Zealand	IT

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of student respondents, including their pseudonyms, age, gender, host country, and the subjects they are studying, providing insights into the diverse educational backgrounds of the individuals interviewed. It reflects a diverse range of ages, genders, host countries, and occupations. The student respondents consist of a broad age range from 21 to 31 and represent a mix of male and female individuals. They are studying various subjects such as child care, business, English, nursing, and IT in countries like Australia, the UK, Japan, and New Zealand.

Table 2*Demographic Profile of Respondents Parents*

Respondents' pseudonym	Age	Gender	Occupation	Host country of Child
P1	50	F	Teaching	UK
P2	72	M	Retired Army	Australia
P3	51	F	Business	Australia
P4	60	M	Farming	Japan
P5	58	M	Farming	New Zealand
P6	57	F	Business	Canada

Table 2, on the other hand, presents the demographic profile of parents of the respondents, offering information about their pseudonyms, age, gender, occupations, and the host country of their children, shedding light on the variety of life experiences and roles within the families of the student respondents. The ages of respondents are ranging from 50 to 72. They also exhibit diverse genders and are engaged in occupations like teaching, retired army, business, and farming. They reside in Pokhara Metropolitan City, ward-13 and their children are currently studying in different countries including the UK, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and Canada. This combined demographic profile illustrates a wide array of backgrounds and life stages among the respondents and their families.

Determinants of Students' Mobility Decision

Push and Pull Factors

The motivations of Nepali students currently studying abroad emerged through a thematic analysis of their responses to the question: "What motivated you to consider studying abroad?" Different prominent themes emerged from the data. Firstly, a recurring theme was the aspiration to provide financial support to their families, as exemplified by one student who stated, "I am the eldest child. I wanted to earn and learn, so that I can help my family financially. Which I thought is better possible by coming in this country" (R1). This reflects the deeply rooted family-oriented values in Nepali culture, where the eldest child often feels a sense of responsibility to contribute economically. Studying abroad is perceived as a means to access better job opportunities and higher income potential, aligning with the financial aspirations of these students. This attraction of better job opportunities and potentiality of higher income developed countries represent the pull factors. Pull factors are conditions or characteristics that attract individuals or groups to move to a particular location or make a specific decision, often influencing their choices and actions in search of opportunities, benefits, or desirable conditions (Eder et al., 2010).

Secondly, uncertainty of future even after completing certain level of education in Nepal was a significant motivating factor. A student studying Chartered Accountancy (CA) qualification explained: “I was studying CA, thinking uncertainty of success my parents once raised the topic of going abroad. I also thought it as a better idea” (R2). This theme underscores how the pursuit of professional qualifications in Nepal can be fraught with uncertainty, prompting individuals to explore international education for a more secure and promising path. Parental influence played a role in this decision, highlighting the importance of familial guidance in shaping academic choices. One respondent, after receiving less-than-desirable results in the first year of a Bachelor of Business Studies (BBS) program, mentioned: “I better preferred struggling in Canada”(R4). This statement illustrates how academic performance concerns can lead students to consider studying abroad as an alternative to achieve better outcomes. It influenced as Push factors. As Eder et al., (2010) concluded that it created conditions, circumstances, or factors that compel individuals or groups to leave their current location or situation and seek alternatives elsewhere.

Responses from the student participants reveal that parents are more sensitives about the push factors than the students. One of the parents clearly stated, “What to do? No parents can be happy staying away from their children. We also wanted to be with our children in our old age. It’s because of country’s condition, bad politics, governance and lack of secured future which makes the parents to send their children abroad” (P1).

While the parents are not happy about sending their children abroad, they acknowledge the external factors that have compelled this decision. Factors such as the lack of better job opportunities, low income, political instability, and uncertainty about future career prospects in Nepal have driven them to accept their children’s decision to study abroad. This reflects the complex interplay between familial emotions and external circumstances, as parents deal with the realities of their home country. While they may not be happy about the separation, the challenging conditions in Nepal have compelled them to accept their children’s choices. These responses highlight the sacrifices made by parents and the complexity of the decision-making process in the context of Nepalese students’ foreign mobility.

Social Networking Factors

Talking about the determining factors, the influence of peers and the opportunities presented by studying abroad played a significant role. A student currently studying in Japan mentioned, “The opportunity the students were getting after flying abroad has influenced me to be like them” (R3).

The influence of friends who had already embarked on international journeys and the prospects that came with it acted as a compelling factor in the decision-making process. This suggests that the experiences and successes of peers can be a powerful motivator for others to follow the trend following the principle of social network theory which says, “Social network plays the influential role that existing interpersonal connections and relationships play in the decision to migrate” (Tokas et al., 2023). Additionally, the impact of external factors, such as the presence of friends already studying abroad and engagement in visa processing activities, emerged as a cause of taking the decision. One respondent currently residing in Australia admitted, “Actually I wanted to study in Nepal. But many of my friends were already flown away, and some of them were engaged in VISA processing activities. So I didn’t feel to continue my studies in Nepal” (R5).

A similar opinion is observed in some of the parents. One of the parents mentioned that they took their child’s interest in studying abroad “normal” because many of their friends were also doing the same (P4). This reflects the social influence and normalization of international education as a viable path among their child’s peer group. This highlights the network effect, where social connections and external activities influenced the decision to pursue higher education overseas.

It is found that the network phenomenon is equally influential in the selection of destination as well. The responses from the students indicated that the process of selecting the country and university or institution for higher education abroad among Nepali students is mainly influenced by social connections and peer networks. Most of their version regarding selection of destination was that they selected their destination as per the suggestions provided by their respective educational consultancies.

The findings of the study suggest that very few numbers of students give priority in reputation and global recognition of a country’s educational system in guiding the choice of destination. In this issue, the role of educational consultancies in recommending universities or institutions plays a dominant role. They have significant influence in shaping students’ choices, as they often provide guidance and information on suitable academic institutions based on the student’s preferences and qualifications. However, it is observed that when it comes to choosing a destination for higher education, English-speaking countries are increasingly attracting a greater number of students (Acharya, 2012). This trend can be attributed to the widespread use and global importance of the English language, making it advantageous for students seeking international exposure and opportunities.

Human Capital Factors

Regarding the career opportunities, the response from the Nepalese students studying abroad suggests that studying abroad has provided them with better academic and career opportunities as compared to studying in Nepal. For instance, one of the students has this opinion: “Any sort of job is equally respected here and even if we could not find job related with our studies, we can wait patiently” (R1). This implies that in their host country, there is a more inclusive and acceptance of human capital, which values diverse skills and qualifications. This contrasts with the situation in Nepal, where finding a job related to one’s field of study can be challenging. As a result, studying abroad has provided them with a broader range of employment opportunities, and they feel that even non-related jobs can lead to economic satisfaction. A student who had completed a bachelor’s degree in Nepal and was working in a private school of Pokhara shared, “I have been working in a private school since four years, but the salary I used to get was not enough for even my personal expenses. We could not get a job according to our qualification in Nepal. So I decided to come abroad” (R6).

This highlights the perception that career advancement and opportunities for individuals with higher education qualifications may be limited in Nepal, prompting them to seek further education abroad as a means of professional development. This follows the principles of human capital theory. According to Schultz (1971), as cited by Dhungel et al. (2013), “Individuals migrate in pursuit of improved economic and educational opportunities, viewing their skills, education, and potential for personal development as valuable assets that can be enhanced by moving to destinations offering greater returns on their human capital investment”

In the context of comparison of contribution made by the educational institutions of the host country in producing a competent human capital, the students were asked this question: What differences do you find in the education system of your host country and Nepal? On the basis of experiences shared by the students, there is not much significant difference in education procedure in Nepal and the countries they are studying presently. Despite the use of modern teaching technology abroad, some of the students shared that learning is more comfortable in Nepal due to the presence of a stronger sense of belongingness between teachers and students unlike in foreign countries. However, a third student highlighted differences in the teaching approach and student workload between the host country and Nepal. In this case, she mentioned: “Teachers in Nepal were more dedicated, while in their current location, we have to work more independently and handle a significant amount of assignments. Besides, if we fail we have to pay the additional fees which create more pressure to students” (R2). This

indicates a shift towards a more self-directed and hands-on learning approach, which can foster greater self-reliance and problem-solving skills among students. Moreover, the consequence of failing, which entails paying additional fees, can be seen as a strategy in the host country to motivate students to strive for excellence and maintain academic rigor. This approach may be geared towards producing a competent and motivated workforce, emphasizing personal responsibility and accountability for one's educational outcomes.

Socio –Economic Impact of Students' Academic Migration

Brain Drain

The brain drain theory suggests that individuals, especially those from developing countries, migrate to developed countries for better opportunities, including higher-paying jobs, access to superior education and healthcare, and overall improved living conditions (Lanati & Thiele, 2019). Although most of the respondents that have been interviewed are in the struggling phase, a question was asked: "Have you plan to return back to Nepal after completing your studies?" None of them clearly stated "Yes". One of the students provided a diplomatic answer by saying: "I want to return back but I'm not sure what happens in future, let's see" (R1). This suggests a pragmatic and future-oriented approach, where the decision to return is contingent on various factors, including career opportunities, personal circumstances, and the evolving situation in Nepal leading to brain drain. Such trend in developing countries deprives them of skilled professionals and experts, hindering economic and social progress (Docquier et al., 2007). Another respondent in this question replied: "Saying honestly, my parents do not see me in Nepal after few years, rather they see themselves here" (R2).

Most of the students emphasized on "wait-and-see" approach regarding the decisions of returning back to Nepal. Their response indicates that if they face adjustable situation they are planning to stay there permanently. The reasons behind this decision include economic prospects, job respect, security, and the availability of free time and entertainment. Almost all of them do have similar opinion about the motivating factors like better income, respect to each job, security and free life style. One of the students clarified: "After finishing my course, I don't have to pay fees and that will be the actual opportunity to earn. Why should I go back after this much struggle here?" (R3).

Additionally, the opportunity to secure permanent residency (PR) emerged as a significant factor, with the prospect of an easier life after obtaining PR being a strong motivator for students to stay in the host country enduringly. It is heavily difficult to accept that the

best trained human resources in the poor countries migrate to rich countries without any consideration. (Bouoiyour & Selmi, 2014). When students from Nepal, for example, decide to stay in a developed country and pursue PR, they are often motivated by the desire for a better quality of life and more promising career prospects.

Impact on Economy and Labor Market

The economic impact of foreign migration often involves outflow of capital from a nation representing a serious loss of foreign currency in the home country (Fry & Rao, 1984). A regular flow of remittances from students studying abroad has the potential to balance this trade deficit, but the scenario is different in most of the cases. Regarding the query about sending the remittances back, one student stated: “We have to collect fees for our study so it is quite difficult to send money regularly” (R6). Some of them acknowledged sending remittances in limited amounts as pocket money or covering specific expenses. Most of the students have felt that it is not that easy to send remittance back until the completion of their course. One of the parents whose single child is in Australia for more than a decade shared that “He use to send money before but it has been around five years that he has send a penny” (P2).

Moreover, the income and wealth distribution in Nepal can be affected by foreign student mobility. Families that can afford to send their children abroad for education may belong to the higher income brackets. This can exacerbate income inequality. The limited access to foreign education opportunities for lower-income segments of the population may contribute to disparities in wealth and opportunity. Developed countries have dominated international higher education markets and attracted the best and the brightest students especially from developing countries. Thus, those developed countries are particularly benefitted from the earning of education services (Acharya, 2012). Additionally, the host country often reaps economic and educational benefits from student migration, while the home country may simultaneously grapple with skill shortages resulting from the departure of its educated youth.

Impact on Social Environment

The social impact of students’ foreign mobility bears significant consequences on various aspects of society. As students venture abroad for their education, their absence from their home country brings changes in social dynamics, familial relationships, cultural influences, and community expectations (Matsuzuka & Gérard, 2022). Further, foreign student mobility can affect population demographics. Young individuals seeking education abroad may temporarily reduce the number of young adults in the country leading to a noticeable increase in the elderly

population who continues to reside in their home country. This trend can have implications for workforce dynamics and educational institutions in Nepal. These demographic shifts need to be considered in planning for the future workforce (Speck, 2021).

Thematic analysis of the responses from parents regarding the physical, emotional, and psychological impact of their child's absence due to migration for education sheds light on the social and emotional dimensions of this separation. The parents were asked these questions: What are your feelings about your child studying abroad? Are you happy?

Firstly, the overwhelming sentiment expressed by the parents is a sense of sadness and longing due to their child's absence. One parent openly stated, "I think no parents will be happy to stay away from their children. We miss him every time" (P4). This sentiment underscores the emotional toll that separation from their child has taken on these parents. It highlights the deep bonds between parents and their children and the inherent difficulty in being separated from them. Students express concerns about unspoken difficulties their families might face in their absence, particularly if they held certain responsibilities before departing. One student, the eldest in their family, believes that their family may be encountering challenges but chooses not to openly share them, potentially indicating a sense of responsibility and concern. She shared, "I am the eldest child of the family and used to support the parents in every household work including looking after the younger siblings. So presently in my absence they might have gone through hard times" (R1).

Many of the students shared that their parents make regular calls with their mother expressing sentiments and missing them deeply. This highlights the emotional scenario of separation with their families. For students who are the only child, the emotional impact on their families is more pronounced. One such student acknowledged that there is undoubtedly an emotional impact and expressed hope that it would diminish with time, indicating the enduring nature of this emotional separation. In one response, the parent acknowledged that the child's absence initially affected them emotionally, and they continue to wish for their child's return. This emotional burden is indicative of the deep attachment and sense of parents experience when separated from their child due to migration. Furthermore, the parent expressed regret, suggesting that they may question the decision to send their child abroad as they grapple with the emotional challenges of separation. Additionally, the physical implications of their child's absence are noted by the parents. One parent mentioned with panic appearance: "Our daughter has been married and the son is in Australia. Some time there will be no one to ask hot water when we get sick" (P5). This picturizes the concerns about the lack of someone to look after

them when they are sick, which evokes feelings of vulnerability and isolation. This physical impact underscores the practical challenges that can arise when a family member is studying abroad, particularly in situations where parents rely on their children for support in times of need.

CONCLUSIONS

In examining the determinants of students' mobility from Nepal to foreign countries, a complex range of factors emerges. While financial considerations, such as better income prospects and a desire for economic stability play a significant role, the motivations extend beyond mere financial gain. Family dynamics and responsibilities, peer influence, the pursuit of quality education, and perceptions of job opportunities in the host country all contribute to the decision to study abroad. Cultural values and familial expectations, particularly in the context of the eldest child, also shape these determinants, highlighting the interplay between individual aspirations and familial obligations. Ultimately, the determinants of students' mobility from Nepal underscore the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of individual goals and familial responsibilities in the pursuit of higher education abroad. Economic considerations, job prospects, security, and the pursuit of a better quality of life play pivotal roles in their decisions to stay abroad.

Furthermore, the impacts of studying abroad on families are multifaceted, with emotional separation and missed familial bonds being prominent themes. The decision to return to Nepal after completing studies abroad hinges on various factors, including career opportunities, family dynamics, and personal aspirations, indicating the nuanced nature of this choice. As Nepali students navigate the complexities of studying abroad, the government and educational institutions in Nepal are urged to consider enhancing the quality of education and encourage these students to contribute to the growth and development of their home country. Besides, the government and educational institutions in Nepal are advised to focus on creating employment opportunities that offer competitive salaries and address the basic needs of the population. These insights underscore the importance of addressing economic and career-related factors to retain talent and contribute to the development of Nepal's workforce and society.

To sum up, in fostering a supportive environment for education in Nepal, parents are encouraged to avoid prioritizing the idea of studying abroad for their children at an early age. Open communication between parents and children about educational and career aspirations

is vital for guiding informed decisions. Educational institutions are recommended to develop demand-based curricula to enhance the quality of education.

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