



Implications of Migrant Skills and Knowledge Transfer for Socioeconomic Development in Nepal

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Abstract

The study looks into how skills and knowledge acquired by Nepali migrant workers shape socioeconomic development upon return, with a focus on returnee migrants in Belbari Municipality, Morang District. Using purposive sampling, data were collected from 275 returnee migrant households through surveys, interviews, key informant interviews, and field observations. The research explores the effectiveness of skill development programs, the use of remittances for business establishment, and broader socioeconomic changes experienced by returnee households. Most migrants were males aged 25-50 years from the Janajati and Brahmin/Chettri communities who had migrated to the Gulf countries and Malaysia for unskilled work in construction and manufacturing. While many invested their earnings in small agricultural enterprises, income levels remained low, averaging below NPR twenty thousand per month. Returnees also faced other challenges: low wages, health problems, and loan burdens. The findings indicate that the initiatives relating to skill development have hardly benefited them, mainly because many migrants do not have opportunities or the necessary government support to apply the skills they acquired abroad. The study has emphasized stronger skill development programs, accessible financial services, and a stable political and economic environment as preconditions for returnees to build sustainable livelihoods, and contribute constructively to local development.

Keywords: migrant and returned migrant, place of origin, country of destination, countries, skill and knowledge transfer

Introduction

Migration is driven primarily by economic factors, such as a better livelihood and higher-paying jobs in industrialized urban areas. In low-income households, migration increases income diversification to secure survival and improve family well-being. According

to Shrestha (2019), it "enables them to acquire some skills, knowledge, and experience that are important for personal development and future socioeconomic mobility" (SDGs,2015) target 10.7, which stresses that migration should be orderly, safe, well-managed, and respectful of migrant rights while enabling skills development.

At the international level, migration contributes significantly to socioeconomic development by enabling returnees to transfer human and financial resources, along with social capital. Returning migrants often utilize their acquired skills, ideas, and remittances to initiate enterprises, facilitate technology transfer, and innovate upon return, thus contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction in their countries of origin (ILO, 2016). However, unstable economic environments, weak institutional support, and poor reintegration policies still hinder the productive application of such assets in many countries of the South (Wahba, 2015).

In Nepal, labor migration has historical roots that began over two hundred years ago, starting with the Gurkha regiments and civil service. It expanded after the 1980s due to economic liberalization, oil-driven growth in the Gulf countries, and political changes. According to the 2021 Population Census, 7.51% of the Nepali population migrates abroad, while the 2022 Economic Survey reported 227,102 migrant workers, mainly to Malaysia and Qatar. The contribution of migration to skill acquisition, livelihood diversification, and poverty reduction among Nepalese workers was highlighted (IOM, 2021).

At the local level, areas such as Belbari Municipality provide opportunities and challenges for return migrants. Many invest remittances in small-scale enterprises or agriculture, but high taxes, market monopolies, and limited support by government agencies often reduce the profitability of these investments. Returnees acquire technical skills, entrepreneurial knowledge, and financial capital; however, these gains have often been underutilized, hindering their potential contribution to local socioeconomic development.

Even though the potential of return migration is recognized, research in Nepal has largely neglected the contribution of migrants' acquired skills and knowledge to the local communities. Challenges such as unemployment, bureaucratic barriers, and a lack of reintegration mechanisms inhibit the productive use of human and financial capital. The Nepal Labour Force Survey 2018 and Revenstein & Lee (1966) present evidence for this. This research paper seeks to fill a literature gap by exploring returnee migrants in Belbari Municipality, assessing the contribution of migrants' acquired skills, knowledge, and remittances to socioeconomic development, and identifying the barriers to their practical use.

The study contributes to academic knowledge and policy-making by providing empirical evidence on productive integration among return migrants. It provides input to planners, policymakers, and development practitioners on the design of supportive programs that leverage migrants' skills, financial resources, and entrepreneurship to enable sustainable local development. By highlighting the challenges and opportunities, this research will provide information on strategies to enhance livelihood outcomes, reduce poverty, and foster community development in Nepal.

Statement of Problem

In Nepal, a significant number of the population migrates for work; 2,190,592 departed for foreign employment in 2022, of whom 470,978 were expected to return to the country. Most returnee migrants acquire human, social, and financial capital, as well as new skills and knowledge. However, because of insufficient institutional environments that recognize the competencies earned, the productive use of this acquired capital remains minimal. In practice, most returnees fail to secure appropriate job opportunities or to utilize their acquired skills through entrepreneurship due to a lack of government support, the absence of soft loan schemes, and poorly designed reintegration programs. Moreover, weak market access, often dominated by brokers and large businesses, constrains the success of migrant-run enterprises. This domination of broker leads to economic losses, unemployment, and the wasted potential of many returnees despite their expertise and capital. The aforesaid challenges determine the study area as Belbari Municipality and constitute the rationale behind the selection.

Research Questions

- How do the skills and knowledge acquired by returnee migrants influence employment opportunities and income generation in Belbari, Morang District?
- What is the role that remittances play in supporting returnee migrants to establish enterprises, thereby improving their socioeconomic status?
- What are the main barriers and challenges that limit the effective utilization of returnees' skills, knowledge, and financial resources in local development?

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the impact of returnee migrants' transferred skills and knowledge on job opportunities and income generation.
- To study examines the contribution of remittances in facilitating the process by which returnee migrants establish enterprises and improve their socioeconomic status.
- To identify the challenges and barriers to the productive use of returnees' skills, knowledge, and financial capital in Belbari, Morang District.

Research Method

This study focuses on returnee migrant workers in Belbari Municipality, Ward No. 10, Morang District, Nepal, to assess how acquired skills, knowledge, and remittances influence employment and income generation for socioeconomic development. Using a purposive sampling method, a sample of 275 returnee migrant households was selected based on the criterion that they had stayed abroad for at least six months and returned within the last five years. This criterion ensured that participants had acquired sufficient skills and knowledge through foreign employment to help the researcher achieve the study's objectives. The data were collected from primary sources, including household surveys, semi-structured interviews, KIIs, and field observations, as well as secondary sources, including government reports and statistical records. In all, 340 potential respondents were identified from the preliminary survey, from which the sample size was calculated at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, with an estimated non-response rate of 1.5%.

Data collection on skill acquisition, use of remittances, entrepreneurial activities, and socioeconomic outcomes was guided by both structured and semi-structured questionnaires, supplemented by participant observation of local enterprises. Data were coded, edited, and analyzed using SPSS with univariate techniques. Pretesting and source triangulation were used in the study to ensure validity and reliability, while information from questionnaires, interviews, and observations cross-verified each other. The study excluded migrants currently working abroad, circular migrants, and those in unrelated professions, focusing specifically on returnees whose skills and knowledge could contribute to local socioeconomic development.

Result and Discussion

The findings show that returnee migrants in Belbari Municipality acquired diverse skills and knowledge abroad that influenced their employment opportunities and income generation. Remittances were often invested in small enterprises and agricultural activities, improving household socioeconomic status to some extent. However, the effective use of migrant skills and capital was hindered by limited market access, insufficient government support, and bureaucratic barriers. These findings are supported by other studies indicating that the productive use of migrants' skills and financial resources depends upon supportive institutional and economic environments (de Haas, 2007). This study emphasizes that while migration has contributed to knowledge transfer, entrepreneurship, and poverty reduction, addressing structural and policy constraints is crucial for maximizing the developmental impact of returnee migrants on local communities.

Identity of Migrant Respondents' Household

The study emphasizes that Nepali returnee migrants, mainly males aged 25-50 years from Janajati and Brahmin/Chhetri communities, are engaged in various skilled and unskilled work abroad, especially in Gulf countries and Malaysia, acquiring new skills, knowledge, and experience that can potentially contribute to the local economy. Although many invest remittances in small enterprises, particularly in agriculture and livestock, most investments remain meager, and returns are low due to a lack of government support, unfavorable political situations, bureaucratic barriers, and unfavorable economic situations. Those migrants who actively utilize acquired skills and knowledge in their businesses experience improvements in livelihoods, income generation, and household socio-economic status. However, these gains are often constrained by inadequate market access and high operational costs. The findings underline the urgent need for strengthened skill development programs, easy access to finance, efficient facilitation of markets, and enabling policies for returnee migrants to fully utilize their acquired skills and knowledge in improving incomes, creating jobs, and contributing significantly to household and community socioeconomic development and beyond

Table 1

Distribution of Identity of Migrant Respondents' Household

Characteristics	Percent	Number
Sex Group		
Male	95.2	262
Female	5.0	13
Age group		
<25 year	11.0	30

Characteristics	Percent	Number
25-50 year	85.0	234
>+ 50 year	4.0	11
Caste/ Ethnicity		
Brahmin /Chhetri	40.0	109
Janajati	51.0	140
Dalit	8.3	23
Others	1.1	3
Educational Level		
Literate	15.2	42
Primary	54.0	148
Secondary	29.4	81
10+2 higher	1.4	4
Total	100.0	275

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 1 reveals that, out of the 275 respondents, 95% were male and 5% were female. Of them, 85 percent were between the ages of 25 and 50, 30 respondents (11 percent) were younger than 25, and 11 respondents (4 percent) were older than 50. The bulk of sample respondents (51 percent) were from the Janajati community, followed by Brahmin/Chhetri respondents (40 percent), Dalit respondents (8 percent), and respondents from other groups (1 percent). Janajatis were found to be more prevalent in the research area. The majority of respondents (54%) had completed primary education, based on their educational backgrounds. One percent had passed the 10+2 level of education, 15 percent were literate, and 29 percent had passed secondary school.

Countries of Destination for Foreign Employment

The study analyzes countries of destination for migrant workers seeking employment, focusing on sex, age, caste/ethnicity, and educational level. The majority migrated to Gulf countries and Malaysia, with a small number to Korea/Japan. The study emphasizes the importance of safe, secure, and productive work opportunities.

Table 2

Distribution of Countries of Destination for Foreign Employment

Character	Malaysia		Gulf Country		Korea/Japan/Other		Total No.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Sex Group							
Male	83	96.5	173	95.1	6	85.7	262
Female	3	3.5	9	5.0	1	14.3	13
Age group							
< 25 year	10	11.6	19	10.4	1	14.3	30
25-49 Year	70	81.4	158	86.8	6	85.7	234
50 + Above	6	7.0	5	2.8	0	0.0	11
Caste/ Ethnicity							
Brahmin/Chhetri	31	36.1	75	41.2	3	42.9	109
Janajati	51	59.3	85	46.7	4	57.1	140
Dalit	3	3.5	20	11.0	0	0.0	23
Other	1	1.2	2	1.1	0	0.0	3
Education Level							

Character	Malaysia		Gulf Country		Korea/Japan/Other		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Literate	8	9.3	33	18.1	1	14.3	42
Primary	49	57.0	96	52.8	3	42.9	148
Secondary	28	32.6	51	28.0	2	28.6	81
10+2 Higher	1	1.2	2	1.1	1	14.3	4
Total	86	100	182	100	7	100	275

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 2 shows that 275 respondents are primarily concentrated in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Malaysia, with one-third having migrated to Japan/Korea/other due to government incentives and labor demand. However, the number of migrants to Malaysia has declined due to recruitment costs. The majority of male respondents are in Gulf countries, with 95% in Malaysia. Female respondents have low involvement, with 14% from Korea/Japan/and others. The majority of respondents are aged 25-50. Around 87% of Dalit migrants, followed by 69% of Brahmin/Chhetri migrants, migrated to GCC countries, with 57% pursuing primary education in Malaysia. Secondary education is also prevalent in 33% of Gulf countries, 28% in Malaysia, and Korea/Japan/and other countries. Malaysia is preferred due to the high labor-market demand for low-skilled Nepalese workers. However, unskilled migrants face challenges such as exploitation, discrimination, and health issues, making them vulnerable to violence upon return home.

Skills of Migrant Workers Engage Abroad

The study assesses respondents' skill work in destination countries, finding that most found work, while some did not learn any skills. Most migrated to increase earnings and meet labor market demands, changing their previous skill sets to meet those demands.

Table 3

Distribution of Skills of Migrant Workers Engaged Abroad

Character	Types of work in the destination country	
	No.	%
Agriculture /Livestock	10	3.6
Mason/ construction	48	17.5
Carpenter/ Scaffolding	21	7.6
Sales and service	8	2.9
Hotel / Restaurant	20	7.3
Transport and vehicles	16	5.8
Manufacturing /general labour/cleaner/ Security Guard	86	35.0
Electrician/Maintenance Operator	25	9.1
Steel fixture/ welder/ Painter	14	5.2
Domestic housemaid	14	5.1
Other	3	1.0
Total	273	100.0

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 3 shows that a majority of migrant respondents found skilled work in their destination countries. However, one respondent is not engage work because of illness and one respondent problem administration contract agreement therefore this respondent do not work

with 35% working in manufacturing, general workers, cleaners, 18% in mason and construction, 9% in electricians and maintenance operators, 8% in carpenters and scaffolding, and around 5% in transported vehicles, steel fixtures, welders, painters, and domestic works. Migrant workers often lack the proper skills and knowledge, leading to low-quality work and low wages. Key informant interviews indicate that most workers are employed in general labor, manufacturing, and masonry/contracting, as these skills are in high demand in the labor market. Without a skills certificate, they often work in complex, dangerous, and dirty jobs, resulting in health, physical, and mental challenges, as well as economic challenges, in working countries. This negative reflection highlights the need for improved education and skills certification for migrants.

Enterprises Established After Return At Home by Caste /Ethnicity Groups

The study analyzes Nepali returnees' enterprises, focusing on caste/ethnicity. Despite returning from abroad, many engage in skills occupations, but most fail to establish enterprises due to economic hardships and unemployment.

Table 4

Distribution of Enterprises Established by Caste /Ethnicity Groups

Characters	Brahmin / Chhetri		Janajati		Dalit		Other		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Mason/ construction	1	2.8	3	7.5	0	0	0	0	4
Agriculture /Livestock	11	30.6	16	40.0	0	0	0	0	27
Sales and service	7	19.4	5	12.5	0	0	0	0	12
Hotel / Restaurant	6	16.7	4	10.0	1	100	0	0	11
Transport and vehicles	7	19.4	6	15.0	0	0	0	0	13
Manufacturing /general worker	1	2.8	2	5.0	0	0	0	0	3
Electrician/Maintenance Operator	0	0	3	7.5	0	0	0	0	3
Carpenter /Painter	3	8.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Other	0	0	1	2.5	0	0	0	0	1
Total	36	100	40	100	1	100	0	0	77

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 4 shows that only 77 returnee migrants engaged in skilled occupations, while the majority (198) were limited by remigration and insufficient investment capital. Janajatis (36) and Brahmins/Chhetris (36) predominated in employment, with Dalits comprising 1%, reflecting traditional preferences for agriculture and other livelihood sectors. In sales and services, 19% of Brahmin/Chhetri and 13% of Janajati were employed, while Dalits were more represented in hotels and restaurants. Some returnees worked in construction (15–19%) or as skilled maintenance operators (3–8%), yet many faced physical, mental, and economic challenges abroad. Most returnees established agricultural enterprises supported by government loans and modernization policies. Traditional skills facilitated local market engagement, but high household costs, limited access to technology, and bureaucratic and political barriers constrained productivity, often prompting remigration.

Remittances Uses in the Enterprise's Business

The study analyzes Nepali returnees' enterprises, focusing on caste/ethnicity. Despite returning from abroad, most of them engage in skills occupations, but most fail to establish enterprises due to economic hardships and unemployment.

Table 5

Distribution of Remittances: Use the Enterprise's Business

Character	Less than 2 Lakh		2 - 4 Lakh		4-6 Lakh		Greater than 6 lakh		Total No.
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Sex Group									
Male	56	96.6	14	100	1	100	1	100	72
Female	2	3.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0	2
Age Group									
< 25 years	4	6.9	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	4
25-50 years	52	89.7	14	100	1	100	1	100	68
>+ 50 years	2	3.5	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2
Caste/Ethnicity									
Brahmin /Chhetri	25	43.1	8	57.2	1	100	1	100	35
Janajati	32	55.1	6	42.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	38
Dalit	1	1.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
Other	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Education Level									
Literate	3	5.2	1	7.2	0	0.0	0	0	4
Primary	41	70.7	8	57.2	0	0.0	1	100	50
Secondary	14	24.2	5	35.7	1	100	0	0.0	20
10+2 Higher	0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Total	58	100	14	100	1	100	1	100	74

Note. Field Survey, 2019

As indicated in Table 5, of the 75 respondents, 74 invested their remittances in enterprises, whereas one did not due to illness. A larger number of migrants (201) did not invest due to various problems they faced in accessing capital and finding good business opportunities. Most investments were small: 58 respondents had invested less than 2 lakh, 14 had invested 2–4 lakh, and only 1 had invested 4–6 lakh; no one had invested more than 6 lakh. Investment patterns differed by age, gender, caste, and education. The male, Janajati, and highly educated groups were found to be more likely to invest larger amounts. Although engagement levels were high across groups, entrepreneurs among returnees face various risks in Nepal, including a lack of government support, political instability, and poor market management. These have constrained the productive use of remittances, often resulting in business losses and economic burdens. These results call for better policy and institutional support to maximize the impact of migrant capital.

Size of Enterprises in Terms of Workers Hired

This study examines the number of workers hired by businesses, focusing on their sex, age, caste/ethnicity, and educational level. Most respondents have hired two or more workers, while very few have hired only one. Returning migrant workers provide self-employment opportunities for their family and friends, helping make better use of remittances.

Table 6
Distribution Size of Enterprises in Terms of Workers Hired

Character	One worker		Two or more worker		No.
	No.	%	No.	%	
Sex					
Male	21	100	52	96.3	73
Female	0	0.0	2	3.7	2
Age Group					
< 25 year	1	4.8	3	5.6	4
25-50 year	20	95.3	49	90.8	69
>+ 50 year	0	0.0	2	3.7	2
Caste/ Ethnicity					
Brahmin /Chhetri	3	14.3	26	48.2	29
Janajati	13	61.9	25	46.3	38
Dalit	5	23.8	2	3.7	7
Other	0	0.0	1	1.9	1
Education Level					
Literate	2	9.5	2	3.7	4
Primary	17	81.0	33	61.1	50
Secondary	2	9.5	19	35.2	21
10+2 Higher	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Total	21	100	54	100	75

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 6 presents the text discussing survey results on employment in agricultural businesses. A total of 75 people responded: 54 hired two or more workers, and 21 hired one worker. Most respondents are male (96%) and work in the agricultural or livestock sectors. About 95% of respondents aged 25-50 have hired one worker, and 91% have hired two or more workers. Additionally, 5% have hired either 1 or 2 workers. Across various caste and ethnic groups, 62 percent of Janajatis have one worker hired, followed by 48 percent of Brahmins/Chhetris. Additionally, 46 percent of Janajatis have two or more workers. Regarding education, a higher percentage of those with primary education have one or more workers in their businesses, with 81 percent having one worker and 35 percent of those with secondary education having two or more workers. There is significant involvement in local enterprises. Key informant interviews showed that many were self-employed and hired part-time family workers. One key informant had hired a worker to help run their business. In caste and ethnicity groups, 62 percent of Janajati have only one worker hired, while 48 percent are employed differently. Key informant interviews revealed that many respondents work only with family members. Other issues, such as students, other job holders, and health problems, mean that family members cannot participate fully. Because of this, they hire other part-time and seasonal workers, with most enterprises employing just one worker.

Earning Income Running Enterprise's Business

Migrant workers have started businesses after returning to their home countries. Many of them work in these businesses. A bit more than half of the workers are earning over twenty

thousand rupees monthly, while a bit less is earning below that amount. Most of the respondents report receiving monthly income from their businesses.

Table 7

Distribution of Earning Income from Running Enterprises Business

Character	Less than NRs.20,000 (per-month)		Greater than NRs. 20,000 (per month)		Total No.
	No.	%	No.	%	
Sex					
Male	35	97.2	37	97.4	72
Female	1	2.8	1	2.6	2
Age Group					
< 25 year	1	2.8	3	7.9	4
25-50 year	34	94.4	34	89.5	68
>+ 50 year	1	2.8	1	2.6	2
Caste/ Ethnicity					
Brahmin /Chhetri	13	36.1	16	42.1	29
Janajati	21	58.3	16	42.1	37
Dalit	2	5.6	5	13.2	7
Other	0	0.0	1	2.6	1
Education Level					
Literate	2	5.6	2	5.3	4
Primary	25	69.4	24	63.2	49
Secondary	9	25.0	12	31.6	21
10+2 Higher	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Total	36	100	38	100	74

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 7 lists 74 people running businesses to earn money, though one is not because of illness. Most have made profits, especially in agriculture and livestock, often with little investment. Of these respondents, 38 earn over 20,000 monthly, while 36 earn less. 97 percent of males earn under 20,000, and only 3 percent of females earn more or less than this amount. Among those aged 25-50, 94 percent earn 20,000 or less, while 90 percent of all respondents earn more than 20,000. Most Jantati earn 20,000 or less, with 58.3 percent in this group. In contrast, 42 percent of Janajati and Brahmin/Chhetri earn more. Among the primary group, 69 percent earn \$20,000 or less, while 63 percent earn more. Overall, most returnee workers earn over 20,000 each month. Interviewers observed that those earning more than 20,000 have improved their production and service abilities. Good customer relations and hard work on local land help them succeed. Many people earn less than twenty thousand rupees a month, but some earn more through hard work and seasonal jobs. Low expenses, along with self-employed workers helping their families, can boost their income. However, the actual potential earnings from their business activities are not clearly shown and are likely to convert into an average income for running a business.

Contribution of Returnees' Skills to the Livelihood of the Household/Community

The text discusses a research study focused on how skills and knowledge can enhance households and communities. It highlights that interviewers conduct over 20,000 interviews per month, examining variations in responses by sex, age, caste/ethnicity, and education. The

study reveals that few individuals use their skills and knowledge to better their livelihoods or community businesses, and most do not notice improvements in their situations. However, those who apply their skills and knowledge tend to experience greater fulfillment of basic needs and improved socioeconomic status.

Table 8

Distribution Contribution of Returnees' Skills on the Livelihood of the Household/Community

Character	Socioeconomic		Utilization of Skills/technology		of Change Livelihood		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Sex Group							
Male	6	100	2	100	12	100	20
Female	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Age Group							
< 25 year	2	33.3	0	0.0	1	8.3	3
25-50 year	4	66.7	2	100	11	91.7	17
>+ 50 year	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Caste/ Ethnicity							
Brahmin/Chettri	2	33.3	1	50.0	7	58.3	10
Janajati	1	16.7	1	50.0	4	33.3	6
Dalit	2	33.3	0	0.0	1	8.3	3
Other	1	16.7	0	0.0	0	0.0	1
Education Level							
Literate	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Primary	3	50.0	1	50.0	8	66.7	12
Secondary	3	50.0	1	50.0	4	33.3	8
10+2 Higher	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Total	6	100	2	100	12	100	20

Note. Field Survey, 2019

Table 8 reflects interviewers noted that out of 20 respondents, 12 focused on improving basic needs and livelihoods, six on socioeconomic changes, and two on skills and technology. More males are using changes for these improvements. Most respondents aged 25-50 primarily focus on basic needs, while 33% of those under 25 focus on socioeconomic factors. Critical informants reported that 58 percent of Brahmin/Chhetri respondents noted changes in their primary needs or livelihoods. Additionally, 50 percent of Brahmin/Chhetri and Janajati respondents experienced similar changes in their skills or technology. The majority, 67 percent, indicated improvements in basic needs and livelihoods due to increased involvement, while 50 percent stated that education enhanced their socioeconomic status and skills. Key informants emphasized that knowledge and skills contributed to better socioeconomic conditions and household livelihoods. The text explains how improvements in production quality, low costs, and service facilities can help migrant families. Many migrants use loans to support their families, but they often struggle to meet basic needs, such as health care and comfort. They have trouble repaying loans and face harsh living conditions, which affect their quality of life and that of their families. The majority of survey respondents are poor and struggle to improve their living conditions.

Conclusion

The study highlights that Nepali returnee migrants, primarily males aged 25–50 from Janajati and Brahmin/Chhetri communities, engage in diverse skilled and unskilled work abroad, mainly in Gulf countries and Malaysia. While many invest remittances in small enterprises, particularly in agriculture and livestock, most investments are modest, with limited returns due to insufficient government support, unstable political conditions, and economic challenges. Migrants who apply acquired skills and knowledge to their businesses experience some improvement in livelihoods and socioeconomic status, yet these gains remain constrained. The findings underscore the critical need for strengthened skill development programs, accessible financial and market support, and conducive policies to enable returnee migrants to fully utilize their skills, enhance income generation, and contribute effectively to household and community development.

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