

**Labour Market Outcomes and Skill Endowment of Nepali Migrant Workers
in India: Case of Uttar Pradesh and Delhi**

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Abstract

Migration to India of Nepali workers is a historical phenomenon. Due to 'open border' and multidimensional inter-linkages, migration for work persists to this day. The importance and challenges of the labour market for Nepali migrants in India are yet to be recognized and studied. This study examines the existing skill endowments of Nepali migrant workers and strategies to enhance their labour market outcomes in India. The Indian labour market is fragile. Recruitment neither follows a strict rule or process nor are any specific skills required. From this standpoint, the situation of Nepali migrant workers is not much different than India's internal migrants. However, Nepali migrants are neither well documented nor properly recruited in the labour markets of India. Because of their low level of education and lack of skill, they are deprived of good job opportunities and their income is also low. Most of the Nepali migrants are not netted in by the social security scheme of India. This study suggests that education; training for skills and social security benefits can go a long way in improving the labour market outcomes of the Nepali migrants.

Keywords: Migration, Nepal, India, Skill endowment, Labour Market. Remittances

I. Introduction

Historically, specific patterns of Nepalese labour migration to India were engendered during the colonial period (pre-1950s) in India, which were mainly related to recruitment by the British army- later the Indian army, and in lower-level administration of the Indian bureaucracy. This pattern was supplemented by the migration of Nepali workers for plantations and other agricultural activities (Bashyal, 2014). Nepal-India Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1950 and the institution of ‘open borders’ introduced another peculiarity—that of unrestricted cross-border movement. This has led to a situation where there are no official or reliable estimates of the migration flows between the two countries. On the other hand, open borders have also facilitated circular migration and continuous return and re-migration of the Nepali labourers. A third peculiarity is related to the considerable amount of shared ethnic and linguistic characteristics between the Indian and Nepali population, especially in the border districts, making it difficult to distinguish labour migration from other forms of family and marriage-based migration. However, periodic estimates of the stock of Nepali migrants by government sources and researchers point to the expansion of migration flows in the last few decades (Bashyal, 2014, Prasain 2010, Sharma, 2007).

The colonial pattern of migration for the army and government services has declined significantly, while migration has expanded for both unskilled and semi-skilled labour in the manufacturing and services sectors, mainly in domestic and other personal services, and in the hospitality, textile and engineering industries (Bashyal, 2014, ILO, 2016).

If education levels have risen amongst the youths in Nepal, with consequent changes in aspirations, there have also been increasing complexities, diversification and enhanced skill requirements in the migrant employing sectors in India (services, construction, and manufacturing). It is, therefore, important to analyze the changing characteristics of migration and the skill needs in India to effectively promote income enhancement and social security of the migrants as well as to provide a skill-rich and efficient labour force to the employing industries. This study examines the existing skill endowments of the Nepali migrants and strategies to enhance their labour market outcomes in India.

Economic factor is the main cause of movement of people. The majority of people move only a short distance (eg Ravenstein, 1889). The neo classical migration theory perceives that individual decision plays a vital role in perfect information. The migrant calculates the cost-benefit and compares the present value of the expected present and future costs and returns of

migration (Sjaastad, 1962). The neo classical theory further says that international migration is related with the global supply and demand of labour. The amount gained could be monetary, or non-monetary in the form of attractive climate and environment. The increase in worldwide migration of skilled migration is a recent phenomenon. There is lack of data on skilled migrants and the changing nature of temporary vs. temporary migration. High skill mobility is well documented in advanced countries. Their recruitment policy is also highly selective preferring highly skilled workers.

This research is based on individual interviews, focus-group discussions and field observations. Hence, it is the understanding and perception of Nepali migrants residing in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh. The objective of this report is to explore the gap between the skill of labour migrants in India and its impact on the life of the Nepali migrants.

The methodology is descriptive; analysis is based on primary and secondary data. It is based on a qualitative research design. Purposive and chain sampling have been used to collect the primary data. In-depth individual interviews were used to get an understanding and interpretation of the Nepali migrants. It is exclusively focused on Nepali migrants.

The following section discusses Nepali labour migration to India from a historical perspective. Section III provides insights from the fieldwork conducted in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi to understand the linkages between labour market outcomes and skill endowments of Nepali migrants in India. Field work was conducted from March 2015 to February 2016.

II. Locating Labour Migration from Nepal to India

The major destination for Nepali labour has been India for a long time. In India, wage gap characteristics between formal and informal workers have been large, persisting and growing. In both formal and informal work, education and experience play a vital role to improve wage conditions. Female and low caste workers are at the bottom of the wage ladder in the organized sector. They remain marginalized because of a recruitment process that takes into consideration caste, sex, ethnicity, language and region. This creates the basis for capital to acquire low cost, highly flexible labour even for long hours and for dangerous work. Cheap labour is the dynamic of capitalist growth of India (Srivastav, 2019).

According to an ILO report, India has the largest number of workers in vulnerable employment, compared to other parts of the world or even the South Asia region. The report further says that 398.6 million workers have poor quality jobs in the 535 million strong labour force. The poor

quality of jobs and high informality are mainly to blame for the high level of “working poors” or those living on incomes of less than 198 rupees per day (ILO, 2019).

Nepali migration to India is influenced by a wide range of factors including geographic proximity, trade, cultural links and Nepal’s economic backwardness. The roots of modern migration from Nepal can be traced to the mid-19th-century treaty, in 1816, between Nepal and British India allowing for the setting up of Gorkha regiments in the British Indian army. The annexation of Assam by the British in 1826 opened new access there for Nepali migrants to work as unskilled labourers in mines, tea estates, land reclamation, lumbering, etc. It was after the 1850s that emigration accelerated, particularly across the border in Sikkim, Bengal, Assam, Darjeeling, Bhutan and Burma (now Myanmar) (Caplan, 1970). Over the years, recruitment of Nepali soldiers in the Indian army has been significantly reduced. Although no official explanation has been given for it, one reason could be the new recruitment policy that requires at least a high school certificate among aspirants: a significant portion of people in Nepal does not have formal educational degrees. Part of the reduction could also be because of work opportunities in other parts of the world (Thieme 2006).

Nature of Nepali Migration to India

While a small percentage of migrants from Nepal are working in government offices, police or army, the majority of young migrants are engaged in menial and low paying jobs in the informal sector. The demand for Nepalis to work as *chowkidars* (watchmen) in factories is declining, but there is an increasing demand for Nepali workers in hotels/restaurants, as domestic workers and caregivers for the elderly in middle-class households in metro cities, as security guards, and also in the construction, manufacturing and agricultural sectors. Interestingly, there is an increasing demand for them in smaller towns and cities in India. A recent study which examined the functioning and role of organizations of Nepali citizens in India reported that the main destinations of the Nepali workers in India are Delhi, Mumbai, Gujarat, Bangalore, Kerala, Pune, Ludhiana, Amritsar and the hill towns of Almora, Nainital, Shimla, and Pithauragadh (Bashyal 2014).

Social networks and generational links play a crucial role in sustaining the migration cycle between the original villages in the western hills of Nepal and specific destinations in India (Thieme, 2006). The nature of Nepali migration to India is circulatory (*aaune-jaane*). Most of the Nepali migrants start to work in India at a young age and they continue to travel back and forth until they are old. Some of them take their families to India while most migrants live without families. It is only when the migrants are unable to work further, or after they enter old

age, do they return to their villages (Sharma, 2007). Nepali migration to India is mostly subsistent; it does not help in the upward social mobility of the workers' households (Pfaff-Czarnecka, 1995). Specific patterns, such as the tendency to move from a specific area of origin in Nepal to specific areas of destination in India, are visible. It is observed that most migrants come from the mid- and far-western parts of Nepal.

One of the main reasons for Nepalis to migrate is the lack of work opportunity within the country. The fact that it was nearly impossible to travel to other parts of the world in the absence of a foreign employment policy of the Government of Nepal, more specifically, before the 1990s forced them to continue to travel to India for work (Thieme 2006). The legislative changes brought by the introduction of Foreign Employment Act of 1985 and Foreign Employment Regulation Act 1999 opened new avenues for labour migration beyond India. The irony is that these acts do not include India as a destination country. Similarly, India also has no migration or employment laws, which addresses the Nepali labour migrants in India.

III. Labour Market Outcomes of Nepali Migrants in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi

This section is based on the evidence generated from the fieldwork conducted in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, two major destinations of migrant workers from Nepal. There is a complex inter-linkage among social, economic and political factors that determine the labour market outcomes of Nepali migration to India. To unravel this linkage, the labour market situation of Nepali migrants is analyzed at different stages—the arrival at their migration decision, job search behavior, working conditions, mobility, political unrest, stigma, discrimination etc.

Decision to Migrate

Evidence from the field indicates that the decision to migrate and the choice of destination are determined by several factors. Of course, a major factor that influences the decision is the historical ties of recruitment of Nepalis in the British Indian Army and later in the Gorkha regiments of the Indian army. During field visit, we came across several Gorkha soldiers who have settled in the border regions of Uttar Pradesh after retirement. Interaction with these soldiers revealed that they often act as a medium for facilitating the migration of Nepalis to India (Field study, 2016). As there are no legal formalities involved, in most cases, their facilitation is limited to arranging a temporary place to stay and familiarising the new migrants with the conditions in the job market. Several studies have also indicated that historical ties and free border movement have led to strong social networks facilitating the movement of Nepali

workers to India (Thieme & Müller-Böker, 2004), particularly to destinations that are closer to Nepal, like Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.

Recruitment Process

As noted earlier, the Indian government was the main employer of Nepali workers until recently. Many older generation Nepali workers, who came to India before the 1990s, seem to be working in various low-level government positions like peons, helpers or security guards. Very few of them have secured employment in the middle level or officers' posts. However, observations in the field indicate a shift in this pattern. Respondents indicated that, in recent years, it has become difficult for Nepali workers to obtain employment in the government sector. During an interview, a respondent noted:

Earlier, say till the end of the 1990s, it was easier to be recruited to government jobs. Public sector job has been reduced drastically in India; this is even true for Indian nationals. (Respondent, 42, UP)

This researcher came across only one respondent who joined a government school in Lucknow in 2005. All other respondents in government jobs, with whom we interacted were recruited before 2000. Earlier, the recruitment for government jobs and other sectors was through informal social networks and personal contacts, such as relatives already working in India. Most of the respondents who are currently in government jobs came with their parents, friends or relatives at a young age, leaving their school education behind. Most of them were first employed as domestic workers, security guards and the like, and had to switch between several jobs, before securing government jobs or other permanent positions. Apart from the government sector, Nepali migrants work with different kinds of employers in the private sector, including private companies, factories, hotels, restaurants and houses as domestic workers. Employers are adopting varieties of recruitment or selection practices to get suitable candidates.

A couple of respondents in Bareilly and Gorakhpur said that there were also cases where a next of kin was recruited as a replacement when a worker died during active tenure of the service. In one such case, the wife was hired as a replacement when the husband passed away while on the job. Interestingly, some respondents also revealed that there is also a tradition of buying and selling of job, especially when somebody wants to leave the job and go back to Nepal. Such cases were reported in the security sector, where a private watchman from Nepal sold his job for

30,000 rupees before leaving for Nepal. The price of the job is said to be dependent on the level of the salary one would draw.

Most of the respondents revealed that they came through their personal, informal social network, either with their relatives or friends or on their own. Although a couple of respondents said that they were hired through contractors, even they were contacted through the network of friends and acquaintances. It is also interesting to note that one respondent, who was an employer himself, said that workers were hired through personal contacts. An employer, who came to India about two decades earlier and now operates a restaurant in Delhi, said that most of the employees in his workplace came through social networks.

I have been operating this restaurant for 20 years. I recruit Nepali workers only. The number of Nepali workers searching for a job has gone down in recent times, because nowadays there is a tendency, particularly among Nepali youths interested in migrating abroad to work in hotels and restaurants to opt for Gulf countries as their potential destination rather than India. Ten Nepali workers are working with me now. All of them came through informal networks and references.

(Hotel/Restaurant Owner)

The majority of the male migrants interviewed were working as night watchmen and cleaning cars in the mornings; those jobs had been handed over to them by friends and co-villagers. For women workers from Nepal, the situation was much more difficult. The majority of them came to India, not for work, but to seek medical treatment or join their partners. They stayed on in India mainly to seek a better education for their children. Women from Nepal make use of the social networks of their husbands or male kin, who organize jobs for them and the men, accompany their women to negotiate with their employers (Thieme & Müller-Böker, 2004).

Skills and Qualifications

Pieces of evidence from the field indicate that the majority of the Nepali migrants in India possess low educational attainments and skills. Among the respondents, the education qualification of almost all, including old and new generation workers, was below the 10th grade in high school, with a few exceptions. Some workers were recruited at lower-level positions in government offices only after several years of working in the houses of senior-level government

officers who then recommended them for the government posts.

Nepali workers prefer to work in big cities and the new generation of migrants is reluctant to engage in manual labour. Interestingly, workers who are relatively less qualified and unskilled seem to be working in Gorakhpur and the border regions. One respondent summed up the situation succinctly:

Those who are unable to go anywhere else work her. Those who can get good jobs all go to Hyderabad, Delhi, Bombay and other metropolitan cities. Those who want some work and also want to enjoy being here...

(Respondent, 32)

While the poor skill endowments of the first generation Nepali workers in India can be attributed to the lack of educational opportunities and poverty, to a large extent, but even the second-generation migrant workers seem to be lacking marketable skills.

Working Conditions

The majority of Nepali migrants working in factories reported receiving minimum wages. An interaction with a factory manager during a field visit revealed that the factory had 350 to 400 workers, out of which 250 were on the company payroll and the rest were contract workers. Those on the company payroll have a graded job and receive the provident fund. Earlier, the minimum education qualification for recruitment was the 10th class of high school, which has now gone up to the 12th class. Semi-skilled workers, who have received training from Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs), are engaged in machine maintenance as apprentices who are later recruited in the engineering department. All employees receive salaries above 10,000 rupees, which is above the legally prescribed minimum wage. Most of the workers are from UP and a few are from Bihar. Nepali workers are sometimes hired through contract, mostly as unskilled workers. During our field survey, one of the managers cited technical reasons for not hiring workers from Nepal. He said that the firm had to obtain Labour Department clearances to engage Nepali workers. However, it may be noted that there is no provision in the existing labour laws which prescribes such clearance. Interviews with Labour Department officials in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh revealed that such a perception regarding the hiring of Nepali workers could have emerged because if any problem regarding employment/employment conditions of Nepali migrants emerges, there is a tendency to treat it immediately as a law and order issue

rather than a labour issue. This would mean that the case gets referred to the police rather than to the labour department. Such a situation often works in contradiction to the treaty between Nepal and India.

The salaries received by Nepali migrant workers varied according to office, position, and experience. Those working in government offices received better salaries, benefits and job security than their counterparts in the private sector hotels and restaurants. There were a few exceptions where some Nepali workers working in reputed hotels and restaurants were drawing higher salaries. However, the majority of the Nepali migrant workers received relatively low salaries in the private sector. The condition of hotel and restaurant workers in Gorakhpur seemed to be wretched. The regular salary they received was so low that several respondents were hesitant to reveal it. A hotel owner too did not reveal the salaries, but defended the amount, saying that although the workers' regular salaries were low, a good worker can make money from other indirect payments, such as tips from customers. Another hotel manager dismissed the allegation of low salaries received by migrant workers from Nepal and held a strong view that:

Nepali workers are more concerned with enjoyment and drinking alcohol. Salary is negotiable depending on qualification and skills of workers.

(Hotel Manager, Gorakhpur, UP)

It was also found that most of the Nepali workers were unable to negotiate their salaries while joining a job. However, this is not true in all situations and was more applicable in instances where the migrants were illiterate and belonged to poor income households. In some other cases, workers were in a position to receive better salaries and move up the occupational hierarchy, after they switched jobs or migrated to different cities after gaining the requisite work experience. Most respondents attributed work experience as more important for their promotion and salary increment. One respondent shared his experience:

I came to Gorakhpur for the first time in 1997. I worked for seven months for about 5,000 rupees per month in a hotel. Then, I went to Mumbai with friends where I worked in another hotel and by 2009 I could earn 10,000 per month. But, I came back to Gorakhpur again, where I was offered 15,000 per month as a cook in a hotel.

(Respondent, 32 years, UP)

During the fieldwork, this researcher came across several Nepali migrants who were engaged in self-employment activities. They began their businesses after they worked as domestic help or in hotels and restaurants. Such migrants were mostly engaged in maintaining their *momo* and *chowmein* stalls. It is reported that there are more than 250 hotels and restaurants, and about 1,000 *momo* stalls operated by Nepali migrants in Delhi itself. To operate such *momo* stalls by the roadside, they need to pay bribes to security personnel and local government authorities. The Nepali operates the hotels and restaurants with Indian owners, on lease or in partnership. Nepali workers have been operating garment factories, retail shops, beauty parlours, travel agencies, transport services and catering services, among others. Before setting up their own businesses most of them had to switch between several jobs in other companies and businesses. Those who were engaged in low-budget self-employed businesses had invested their own money from the earnings saved up while working in India.

The salaries of workers ranged from very meager to much higher, according to the worker's qualification and level of experience and the sector the person is working in. Several cases suggested that Nepali workers who initially worked in low paying jobs managed to gain confidence, along with developing skills, and then set up their own business, employing other workers.

IV. Institutional Mechanisms to Improve Skill and Labour Market Outcomes

Most of the Nepalese workers whom we approached were working in hotels and factories, or as security guards or domestic workers, and they were unskilled. However, over time, some workers in hotels and factories gained experience and skills to pursue better prospects and salary. According to one study, about 60 per cent of the respondents learned some skills when they worked in India, such as welding, cooking, management skills, mechanical work, photography, textile dying, washing machine operation, carpentry, hotel management, tailoring, steel rod works and electric work (Adhikari and Gurung, 2009). But a few of them used their newly acquired skills on their return home to increase their income in Nepal (Field study, 2016).

There were cases where many Nepalese workers were working with the hope of learning to cook, waiting or stewarding to gain experience for higher paying jobs abroad in the future. But, what is interesting is that most of these informally acquired skills are not certified. One respondent in Delhi clearly articulated the situation:

I have been operating this restaurant for 20 years. I recruit Nepalese workers only. The number of Nepalese workers looking for a job has gone down in recent times. These days, several workers come here for training and they want to go abroad. In the last five-six years, 49 workers have gone to Japan and four to Qatar after working here. I have not charged fees for on-the-job training here. Among the workers, the salaries range from 5,000 rupees for the helper to 11,000 for the cook. People known to me had recommended most of them. After working here for a couple of months, when they have picked up the cooking skills, I provide them an 'experience letter' of 10 years. That way, it will be easier for them to get a job abroad.

(Hotel Manager, Delhi)

In this way, several private sector employers are performing an important role in imparting training and skills. This also highlights the fact that just like skills are necessary for jobs, jobs could also enhance skills. Several sectors in India provide job opportunities for Nepalese workers. During our field visits, we came across a lady from Nepal running a beauty salon in Delhi, where she also provides training to new entrants. She said:

There are 150 workers in my parlor. We have 15-16 outlets in Delhi and Gurgaon. About 70 per cent of the workers are Nepalese. The ratio of male and female workers is 50-50. The skilled workforce consists of 70 per cent and 30 per cent is unskilled. Around 25-30 per cent of newly joining workers are unskilled. We also give training to them for 50,000 rupees. After they have worked with us for more than a year, we consider them qualified. The opportunity for this kind of job is higher in India than in Nepal. Government institutions are providing less practical training, which is not so useful. The main reasons Nepalese workers are recruited are their smiling faces, politeness, good looks and the fact that they don't complain. This beauty parlor is rated four stars. In Delhi and the NCT region, 10,000 workers are involved in such four-star rated parlors. Of them 40 per cent are Nepalese. This field has a great potential for the future.

(Owner, Beauty Parlour, Delhi)

Those Nepalese workers having some skills after some years of experience and training are likely to have better opportunities and better salaries.

Discrimination and Social Stigma

There are also instances when workers from Nepal are targeted for petty crimes, an allegation often faced by several migrant communities. But, what is more recurrent is the discrimination they face at the workplace, where they are often allotted the most difficult and menial jobs, have low chances of promotion and, in many cases, do not even have their names figuring in the muster rolls. A migrant worker engaged in a factory in Govind Puri, Delhi, notes:

Just because of my nationality, I was not promoted or given an increase in wages. As I am a contract worker, the only option left with me is to accept the conditions or leave the company.

Indian employers, who hired the Nepali migrants with whom we interacted, considered these workers to be hardworking, honest and loyal. A point that emerged during discussions with employers and government officials was that with the majority of Nepalese migrants lacking certified skills, it was difficult for them to access formal jobs, which could provide them with some kind of social security. Certificates issued by educational and vocational institutions in Nepal are accepted in India. However, during our fieldwork, we hardly came across any worker who had obtained such formal and certified vocational training in Nepal. While second-generation migrants were reported to be taking advantage of the academic and skill development infrastructure in India, the first generation ones had to struggle relatively more to acquire skills and to be recruited in the Indian job market.

Different social organizations were observed working to organize and support Nepalese workers. They were seen organizing get-togethers, celebrations, cultural programmes, sports activities, etc. Some of these organizations operated at the all-India level, while others were doing so at the local level, targeting specific regions. Some were helping the Nepalese workers who faced various problems like trafficking, lack of payment of salary by employers, or who were left stranded. These organizations include Nepal-Bharat Pravasi Sangh, Mool Prawah Akhil Bharatiya Ekta Samaj, Nepal Jana Samparka Samiti Bharat, Nepal-Bharat Ekta Munch, Nepal-Bharat Ekta Samaj, etc. These organizations are directly or indirectly associated with the political parties of Nepal. The representatives of these organizations with whom we interacted acknowledged that they had not been able to work effectively to resolve the problems faced by Nepalese migrants in India. This could be attributed to two factors: one, lack of adequate

financial and human resources with the organizations, which limit their areas of operation and the services they provide; two, in some instances, lack of support extended by the bureaucracy within the Indian establishment hinder their efforts to provide services to the migrants. Interviews with the representatives of certain organizations revealed that in most cases, when they approach the concerned authorities like provident fund officials to address issues regarding problems encountered by Nepali workers, their immediate response is a bit of advice to contact the Nepalese Embassy for sorting out the issues.

There is also a provision of trade union membership to protect the rights and interests of workers in India. Enterprises employing more than 10 employees are required to have a mandatory trade union. But, the awareness, or membership of trade unions, was quite low among the workers. Even if some workers were aware of the trade union provision, it was not easy for them to become members. Many factories and hotels employing more than 10 workers were found to not have a trade union. One of the respondents shared an interesting story: an employer would fire the worker if he came to know the worker had taken union membership. Additionally, the employer discouraged union membership by providing the workers with some monetary incentives and benefits. Providing such benefits were advantageous for the employer because that enabled him to escape from providing social security benefits and other entitlements, such as provident fund, ESI (Employment State Insurance), etc. to the workers. With employers firing anyone about to take union membership, workers were found to be unwilling to take the risk. The workers seemed prone to exploitation without trade union membership.

Conclusion

Nepali migrants are neither well documented nor properly recruited in labour markets of India. Because of low level of education and lack of skill, they are deprived of better opportunities and income is also low. Most Nepali migrants are not included in the social security net in India. Insights from the field revealed that Nepali migration is becoming more heterogeneous. In contrast to the earlier norm, labour migration in Nepal is not only limited to border regions of Uttar Pradesh and Delhi but is spread to other areas as well. Workers from Nepal in search of jobs now adopt a circular migration route, for example, first coming to Uttar Pradesh, and then moving to distant places like Kerala or Kashmir depending on the tourist season. More importantly, other places like Malaysia, Qatar, Kuwait, and other Gulf countries are becoming attractive for Nepali migrants. As legal restrictions on migration to foreign countries continue to

be stringent in Nepal, some migrants go to India, gain some experience there, and then migrate to their preferred destinations. Most of these people are young and have attained secondary/high school level education. This study has revealed that a majority of them use social/kinship networks in India to establish contacts with recruiting agents in India to obtain the relevant visa/work permit to migrate to different countries from there. It is also important to note that an overwhelming majority of Nepali workers, particularly those migrating to the Gulf countries, emigrate to work as low skilled workers like helpers, guards, etc.

The fact that an overwhelming proportion of migrants move from Nepal to India using informal/social networks also means that there is an absence of synergy between the formal plan to fill the demand-supply gap and the informality with which recruitment occurs. In the coming years, the demand for workers is projected to increase in sectors like construction and hospitality. The number of vehicle drivers and sales personnel are also seen to be growing. This means that there is a strong need to strengthen the linkages between skill development institutions in Nepal and private employers/industry in India so that there is a synergy between the skills demanded and the skills imparted. Such measures could significantly increase the employability of Nepali youth both in the domestic labour market as well as the labour markets of other countries. Most Nepali migrants engaged in manufacturing and services establishments are currently left out of their legitimate social security entitlements. In many instances, the migrant workers themselves opt out of social security schemes, such as ESI and EPF (Employment Provident Fund) intending to increase their take-home pay and for fear that such benefits lack portability. Measures to ensure the portability of social security benefits can go a long way in improving the labour market outcomes of the Nepali migrants.

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