

Trends of Brain Drain in Remote Area of Nepal

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Article History: Received: 5 October 2025, Revised: 5 September 2025, Accepted: 20 January 2026

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Abstract

This article relies to a global phenomenon and is a highly debated topic on brain drain in rural people, to find out the impact of the respondents and challenges of the respondents of brain drain in migration. Issue of brain drain in Chaukune Rural Municipality, Surkhet district, is deeply tied to both economic challenges and aspirations for better futures abroad. However, the analysis also points to the resilience and potential of migrant contributions. A significant portion of remittance income is reinvested in education, local development, and health, demonstrating that migration, if managed wisely, can indirectly support development. Still, these benefits remain fragmented and are not a substitute for systemic, policy-driven improvements within Nepal. Hence, to reverse the trend of brain drain and harness its potential advantages, a multi-pronged, coordinated approach is needed. This includes economic development, institutional reform, quality education, and better utilization of migrant resources. The government, civil society, and international partners must work together to ensure that staying in Nepal becomes just as attractive as leaving.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Investment, Income, Production, Facilities

Introduction

The phenomenon of brain drain refers to the migration of educated and skilled individuals from their home country to other nations in search of better employment, education, and living conditions. This global trend has become a significant concern for developing countries, as it results in the loss of valuable human capital needed for national growth. Research by Docquier and Marfouk (2006) emphasizes the importance of brain drain in recent years, indicating that in 200, more than 50 percent of skilled migrants from Africa, 41 percent from Asia, and 34 percent from Latin America emigrated from their native countries. Moreover, the incidence of brain drain is greater in developing nations than in developed ones.

Brain drain leads to the departure of talented young professionals who share their skills with other nations. When the domestic market fails to satisfy the demands of educated people, they frequently seek improved prospects in the international market. Nepal, a place rich in ancient wisdom and education, is currently confronting the loss of its promising young people (Bhagwati, 2009). This research investigates the brain drain situation in Nepal, exploring its typical causes and effects on the economy (Crush, 2009)

In a globalized world, people migrate across countries seeking better opportunities (Khanal, 2011). This e-brain drain pattern typically involves the movement of professionals from developing to developed countries. Brain drain is a substantial e-brain drain of individuals with higher training from their home countries. It represents a net loss for the sending country, often driven by factors like internal turmoil or better pay abroad. The mass departure of talented individuals has created serious problems and significant losses for least-developed countries like Nepal. Skilled manpower is

attracted to developed countries through incentives, scholarships, and better services. (Mishra, 2007) Although remittances significantly contribute to Nepal's GDP, the long-term effects include reduced human welfare and economic growth (Choudaha & Chang, 2012). Brain drain involves the brain drain of skilled labor, rooted in developing countries for years. Causes include pull and push factors like unemployment, liberty, geographical challenges, salary, and better opportunities. The development of any country relies on its industrial sector, and a shortage of qualified workers slows development (Docquier & Rapopor, 2012).

Developed countries attract skilled workers from developing nations through various pull factors (Mountford, 1997). This imbalance in population and economic growth has led to brain drain, providing a good source of skilled manpower for developed countries but resulting in underemployment and scarcity of educated populations in LDCs and developing countries. Nepal exports substantial human capital, with thousands of youths migrating abroad, especially to Gulf, European, and American countries (Panta, 2016). Remittances, contributing around 28 percent to the national GDP, have positive effects, such as reducing poverty and transferring technology. However, large-scale brain drains of skilled and educated people creates a shortage of skilled human resources within Nepal (Gurung, 2006).

The economic growth rate and the country's current situation significantly influence the brain drain rate of graduates and skilled manpower (Zweing, 2013). High e-brain drain has reduced poverty through increased remittances, but it also reduces long-term human welfare and economic growth (Stark, 1997). The brain drain among agriculture and veterinary graduates is a major concern (Shrestha, 2017), as many graduates do not return after studying abroad, exacerbating the brain drain problem in Nepal. The status of skilled brain drain has led to negative growth effects due to the loss of productive resources. However, some emigrants use the knowledge and skills gained abroad to uplift local economic conditions and improve living standards in Nepal.

The outflow of international labor and educational brain drain has become one of the most pressing concerns for Nepal, creating substantial challenges for the government and policymakers (Wickramasekara, 2002). Every year, a large number of skilled and educated youths migrate abroad in search of better educational opportunities, employment, and improved living standards. This continuous departure of human capital weakens Nepal's domestic workforce, reduces innovation potential, and increases dependency on foreign labor markets, making it difficult for the government to retain talent and maintain economic competitiveness.

At the same time, labor migration has contributed significantly to Nepal's economy through remittances, which remain one of the largest sources of foreign currency inflow. Remittances have played a vital role in improving household income, reducing poverty, supporting education, and enhancing access to healthcare at the micro level. On the macroeconomic scale, remittances help stabilize the national economy by strengthening the balance of payments, increasing national savings, and boosting consumption and investment capacity. The inflow of remittances has also contributed to the expansion of financial institutions and increased liquidity in rural and urban markets alike.

Despite these benefits, the long-term economic impact of remittances depends largely on how they are utilized. When remittances are spent mainly on daily consumption rather than

productive investment, the country fails to gain sustainable economic transformation. Therefore, only the effective and productive mobilization of remittances such as in infrastructure development, entrepreneurship, industrial growth, and job-creating sectors can lead Nepal toward long-term prosperity and economic self-reliance. Without strategic policies for productive remittance utilization and mechanisms to reduce the ongoing brain drain, Nepal may continue to face economic stagnation, reduced productivity, and limited development outcomes in the future.

Objectives

The general objectives of the study to find out the situation of trends of brain drain in Chaukune Rural Municipality Surkhet district. The following are the objectives of this study are follows:

- To analyze the causes of brain drain in rural area of Nepal.
- To explore the impact of brain drain among migrated people.

Methodology

This study is carried out on the basis of descriptive research design. It is collected information from the field were organized and explained in a descriptive way and it also investigates the impact of economically active population brain drain in socio-economic development of the study area. As this study requires quantitative data. The information which are related to the present status of the out brain drain, socio-economic changes and utilization pattern of the remittance is based on quantitative way while the major pull and push factors of brain drain and negative impact or challenges faced by the society is presented in qualitative way.

Sampling Procedure

There is total 3244 populations in the study area. Among the 1193 household of the study area, 165 migration households were the universe populations of the study. Out of 165 household migrants, 25 sample household have been selected by random sample method.

Nature and Sources of Data

Quantitative data were used for this research. The primary data were collected in the field of different methods. The primary data were enough to explain comparatively presentation. It was necessary as well as helpful to take secondary data for the perfect presentation. Hence, the useful data were collected from secondary sources like government and non-government officer, published and unpublished booklets, paper, CBS and RMC records research and relevant books etc.

Data Collection Techniques

The study demands verification of data ranging from quantities and primary to secondary hence following were applied to pick the data from the field. The household survey was conducted as technique for which structured questionnaire was developed stool. The questionnaire was mainly covered to collect the information related to the household profile of migrated family, present status of economically active population brain drain, major pull and push factors of brain drain. Finally, utilization pattern of remittance i.e., how there pittance changing socio-economic condition of the community people. The information generated by the tools is largely quantitative in nature.

Data processing and Analysis

Data analysis by using questionnaire survey has been conducted to collect required data from the study area. After collecting the data, it was carefully checked to remove the possible errors. Data analysis according to research objectives was done. The collected data were analyzed by applying appropriate mathematical and statistical tools (frequency, percentage etc.). After analyzing the data, the frequency percentage were used to describe the nature of data.

Ethical Consideration

The issue of brain drain in the remote areas of Nepal raises several important ethical considerations. Brain drain refers to the migration of skilled and educated individuals such as doctors, teachers, engineers, and other professionals from their home regions to urban centers or foreign countries in search of better opportunities. In remote areas of Nepal, this trend creates moral, social, and developmental challenges that deserve careful examination. One major ethical concern is the inequality between urban and rural populations. When educated individuals leave remote areas, the local communities are deprived of essential services such as quality education and healthcare. This widens the gap between privileged urban residents and marginalized rural populations, raising questions about fairness and social justice.

The ethical dimensions of brain drain in remote areas of Nepal revolve around balancing personal freedom, social justice, and community responsibility. Addressing these ethical trends requires a combined effort from individuals, policymakers, and society to create conditions that encourage professionals to remain and serve where they are most needed.

Result and Discussion

Main Reasons to Go to Abroad of Respondents

Most people from Nepal, including those in this study, go abroad mainly for better opportunities and living conditions. Many leave to get a higher-quality education, as other countries often have better courses, research options, and hands-on learning than Nepal. A big reason for moving is the lack of good jobs at home low pay, few chances to grow in their careers, and job insecurity push skilled workers to look for better options overseas. People also want a better life and more financial security. Jobs abroad usually pay more and offer better benefits. Political instability, slow government processes, and corruption in Nepal make it harder for young professionals to feel hopeful about their future if they stay. Countries with better working conditions, recognition, and advanced tools or technology attract many migrants. Often, people also move to give their families better education, healthcare, and overall living standards. Some hope to settle abroad permanently. All these reasons, especially among educated youth, are causing more people to leave Nepal, continuing the problem of brain drain.

Table 1: *Main Reasons to go to Abroad of Respondents*

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Being poverty	7	28
Political instability	3	12
Future career	9	36
Socio and economic condition	6	24
Total	25	100

Source: Field Study, 2025

The data shows that the main reason people are leaving Nepal is to build a better future career. About 36% of the respondents said they migrated for better job opportunities and career growth, which means many educated people feel they don't have enough chances to succeed in Nepal. Poverty is another big reason, with 28% saying they left because of financial struggles. In addition, 24% mentioned poor living conditions, lack of basic services, and limited social progress as reasons for leaving. Although fewer people (12%) pointed to political instability, it still shows that some are unhappy with the country's politics, lack of good leadership, and unstable environment. The findings show that people are leaving Nepal due to a mix of personal challenges, economic difficulties, and dissatisfaction with the country's situation. They are looking for both immediate relief and better long-term opportunities abroad, which is adding to the brain drain problem.

Major Pull Factors of Brain Drain

The main reasons people leave their home countries, especially skilled and educated individuals, are the attractive opportunities and better living conditions offered by developed countries. One big reason is the chance to get better jobs with higher pay, job security, and more opportunities to grow in their careers. Many students and professionals are also drawn by the chance to study or train at top universities and research centers. A better quality of life in these countries such as good healthcare, transportation, and public services also encourages people to move. Stable politics, honest government, and low corruption levels make migrants feel safe and confident about their future. Developed countries also offer advanced infrastructure, modern technology, and good environments for innovation, which help professionals succeed. On top of that, many of these countries make it easier to get permanent residency or citizenship, which is attractive for long-term plans. All these factors make life abroad seem much better than what's available back home, leading more people to migrate and contributing to the brain drain problem.

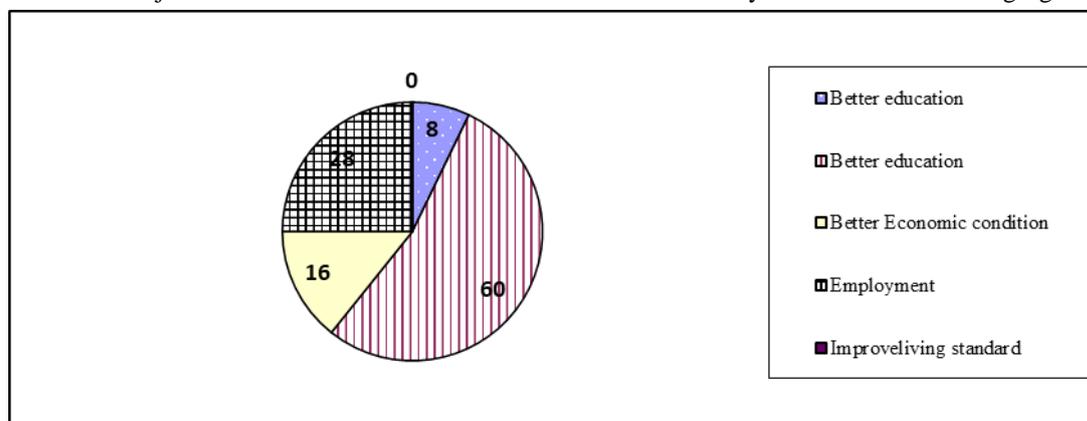
Table 2: Major pull factors of brain drain

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Better education	2	8
Better economic condition	12	60
Employment	4	16
Improve living standard of the family members	7	28
Total	25	100

Source: Field Study, 2025

The data from 25 respondents shows the main reasons why people are leaving Nepal for other countries. The biggest reason, mentioned by 60% of the respondents, is the better economic situation abroad. This means most people move to improve their financial condition and find better-paying jobs. Another important reason, mentioned by 28%, is the desire to improve the living standard of their family. People want to earn more so they can provide a better life for their loved ones. About 16% of respondents said they are attracted by more job opportunities and better career growth abroad. Interestingly, only 8% mentioned better education as a reason for moving, which shows that economic reasons are more powerful than educational goals when it comes to migration.

In short, most people are leaving Nepal to earn more money and improve their family’s lifestyle, which is a major reason for the brain drain. This information is clearly shown in the following figure.



Source: Field Study, 2025

Major Push Factors of Brain Drain

Brain drain from rural areas happens when educated and skilled people leave their villages for cities or other countries. This is mainly because there are not enough good jobs, and most work is limited to farming or labor, which doesn't suit their skills. Poor schools, weak healthcare, low income, and lack of career growth also push people to move. Bad roads, electricity problems, limited internet, and few entertainment options make life harder, especially for young people. Climate issues like droughts or floods affect farming, and the government often does little to improve rural areas. As a result, more people leave, hoping for a better life elsewhere.

Table 3: Major push factors of brain drain

Reason	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of proper employment	7	16
Low wage rate	11	44
In security of job	4	16
Lack of proper higher education	3	12
Total	25	100

Source: Field Study, 2025

A survey of 25 people showed that the main reason skilled and educated individuals leave rural areas is low pay. About 44% said that low wages are the biggest reason people move away. Another 16% said there aren’t enough good jobs in the village, and the same number mentioned job insecurity as a concern. Also, 12% said that the lack of higher education forces young people to leave for better studies and they don’t return. In short, the main reasons for brain drain in rural areas are low income, few job opportunities, unstable jobs, and limited access to higher education.

Negative Impacts of Brain Drain in Economy

When skilled people leave Nepal for jobs abroad, the country loses the talent it needs to grow. Going overseas is expensive, so many migrants take big loans for visas, agents, and travel and if the job isn’t as promised, they can end up in debt. Abroad, many face low pay, long hours, unsafe

conditions, and jobs below their qualifications. Families back home suffer from long separations, which can strain relationships and make raising children harder. Remittances help with daily expenses, but over time brain drain reduces Nepal's pool of skilled workers and increases reliance on foreign employment.

Table 4: *Negative impacts of brain drain in economy*

Description	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Loss of Talent and Skills	4	16
Brain Drain and Education Investment	7	28
Diminished Global Influence	6	24
Social and Cultural Impacts	8	32
Total	25	100

Source: Field Study, 2025

The information from 25 people shows that brain drain has several serious effects on Nepal. The most common concern, mentioned by 32%, is the social and cultural impact. This means people worry that when many young and skilled individuals leave, it affects families, communities, and traditional ways of life. Another major concern, shared by 28%, is the waste of investment in education. A lot of money is spent on educating people, but when they go abroad, Nepal doesn't get the benefit of that investment.

About 24% of respondents are also worried that losing educated people reduces Nepal's influence in the world, making it harder for the country to have a strong voice internationally. Lastly, 16% talked about the loss of talent and skills, which directly hurts the economy because there are fewer professionals working in important areas. Overall, brain drain affects not just the economy but also the social and cultural strength of the country.

Types of Advantages Migrated People

When people leave their community to work in other countries or cities, it can bring some benefits to the place they left behind. The money they send home (remittance) helps families with daily needs, education, building homes, or starting small businesses. This also boosts the local economy by increasing spending. When migrants return, they often bring new skills, ideas, and experiences that can help improve things like farming, business, or technology. Some also give back to the community by helping build schools, health centers, or roads. Their success can inspire others, especially young people, to work hard and aim higher. So, while brain drain has downsides, it can also lead to positive changes and development in the community.

Table 5: *Types of advantages of migrated people*

Advantage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Remittances	9	36
Knowledge transfer money	6	24
Entrepreneurial opportunities	7	28
Enhanced education and training	3	12
Total	25	100

Source: Field Study, 2025

The data from 25 people shows the benefits that migrants bring to their home communities. The biggest benefit, mentioned by 36%, is the money they send back, which helps families with daily needs and improves their living conditions. Next, 28% said migrants create new business opportunities by starting small businesses or investing in their hometowns, which helps the local economy and creates jobs. About 24% mentioned that migrants share new knowledge, skills, or technology they learn abroad, which helps improve farming, business, and education in the community. Finally, 12% said migration encourages families to invest more in education, and sometimes migrants return with better training or education. Overall, even though people leave, they still bring important benefits to their communities.

Utilized Sector of the Remittance

In Chaukune Rural Municipality district, the remittance received by families is mostly used for daily household expenses. This includes spending on food, clothing, healthcare, and education for children. Many families also use a significant portion of the money to build or repair their homes and sometimes to buy land. Additionally, some families invest remittance money in small businesses or farming activities to improve their income. However, the largest share of remittance generally goes toward meeting everyday needs and improving the overall living conditions of the family.

Table 7: Utilized Sector of the remittance

Sector	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Education/ Healthcare	8	32
Luxurious lifestyle	6	24
Housing	4	16
Savings and Investments	7	28
Total	25	100

Source : Field Study, 2025

The data collected from 25 respondents in Mangalsen Chaukune Rural Municipality shows how families use the remittance money they receive. The largest portion, (32percent), said they use remittance mainly for education and healthcare, helping to pay for their children's school fees and related expenses. Close behind, (28percent) reported putting the money into savings and investments, which could include saving for the future or starting small businesses. About 6 respondents (24percent) spend remittance on luxurious lifestyle, covering medical bills and health-related needs. Lastly, (16percent) use the money for housing, such as building or repairing their homes. Overall, the data shows that in Mangalsen Chaukune Rural Municipality, remittance plays a vital role in supporting important areas like education, health, housing, luxurious lifestyle and improving financial stability through savings.

Major Challenges Faced by Migrant Person in Abroad

Many people from Chaukune Rural Municipality who go abroad for work face several problems. They often have to work long hours for low pay in unsafe or unhealthy conditions. Language differences make it hard to communicate with bosses and coworkers. Being far from family causes loneliness and social isolation. Some workers face unfair treatment or discrimination because they are foreigners. Access to good healthcare is limited, so getting help when sick or

injured can be difficult. Migrants also struggle with legal issues like visa problems and lack of protection. Some are even cheated or abused by agents or employers, leading to unpaid wages or worse. These challenges make life tough for migrants from Chaukune working overseas.

Table 8: *Major challenges faced by migrant person in abroad*

Challenges	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Cultural Adjustment	3	12
Legal and Immigration Issues	4	16
Social Integration	14	56
Legal Rights and Protection	4	16
Total	25	100

Source: Field Study, 2025

Data from 25 people in Chaukune Rural Municipality shows the main problems migrant workers face abroad. The biggest issue, mentioned by 56%, is having trouble fitting into new communities and making friends because of differences in language, culture, and social habits. Legal problems, like issues with visas and work permits, were each mentioned by 16%, showing that migrants often struggle with paperwork and don't always get the legal help they need. Also, 12% said adjusting to new customs and ways of life is difficult. Overall, the data shows that social challenges and legal issues are the main problems for migrants from Chaukune, making their time abroad hard. This means better support is needed to help them adjust and protect their rights.

Role of Remittances Play in Mitigating of the Brain Drain

In Chaukune Rural Municipality Ward No. 7, remittances help lessen some of the problems caused by people leaving the area for work, especially those who are skilled or educated. While their absence can lead to a lack of workers, the money they send back home supports their families. This money is often spent on basic needs like food, health care, education, and housing, which improves living conditions. It also helps reduce poverty and boosts the local economy by increasing spending and encouraging small businesses. Sometimes, families save or invest the money, which helps them become more financially secure in the long run. Even though remittances can't fully make up for the loss of skilled people, they do make families more stable. And sometimes, when people return, they bring back useful skills and ideas that help the community.

Table 6: *Role of Remittances Play in Mitigating the Negative Effects of Brain Drain*

Negative Effect	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Economic Support	10	40
Investment in Local Development	23	92
Funding for Education	19	76
Health and Welfare Improvements	18	72

Source: Field Study, 2025

Above data from respondents highlights the important role remittances play in reducing the negative effects of brain drain in Chaukune Rural Municipality. The most commonly identified benefit, selected by 92 percent, is investment in local development, showing that remittance money is helping to build infrastructure, support small businesses, and improve community services. Following this, (76 percent) noted funding for education, indicating that remittances allow families to afford school fees and support children's learning, which helps prepare the next generation for better opportunities. Health and welfare improvements were mentioned by (72 percent), suggesting that remittances are also being used to access better healthcare and improve family well-being. Lastly, (40 percent) identified economic support, such as covering daily living expenses and reducing poverty.

The analysis shows that remittances are a vital source of financial support in Mangalsen Ward No. 7 Gutu. They help reduce the impact of brain drain by improving education, healthcare, and community development. While remittances cannot fully replace the loss of skilled individuals, they play a significant role in uplifting families and contributing to the local economy, thereby partially offsetting the negative effects of migration.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of brain drain in Chaukune Rural Municipality reflects the broader structural problems in Nepal's rural development, where the lack of quality employment, low wages, poor infrastructure, and limited educational opportunities compel skilled individuals to seek better lives abroad. While remittances help sustain households and local economies, they cannot compensate for the consistent outflow of educated professionals. The disproportionate migration of skilled youth results in a severe shortage of expertise in critical sectors such as healthcare, engineering, and education. However, the analysis also points to the resilience and potential of migrant contributions. A significant portion of remittance income is reinvested in education, local development, and health, demonstrating that migration, if managed wisely, can indirectly support development. Still, these benefits remain fragmented and are not a substitute for systemic, policy-driven improvements within study area. Hence, to reverse the trend of brain drain and harness its potential advantages, a multi-pronged, coordinated approach is needed. This includes economic development, institutional reform, quality education, and better utilization of migrant resources. The government, civil society, and international partners must work together to ensure that staying in Nepal becomes just as attractive as leaving.

Author's Biography

Mrs. Kritika Thapa holds a Master's degree (MA) in Rural Development from Mid-West University. Her academic interests include women's empowerment, sustainable tourism, community development, gender studies, and cultural dynamics. She is particularly interested in the intersection of gender and local development practices, promoting inclusive and participatory approaches in rural communities. She is also interested and engaged in social work, contributing to community-based initiatives that support social development and empowerment.

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