

Exploring the Happiness and Life Experiences of Nepalese People Living in the USA

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Abstract

Background: Nepal has been experiencing the rising academic and labor migration, and major labor migration to Europe, North America, Canada, and other countries in Asia, and seasonal migration to the Gulf and other nations of Asia. Whereas migrants to the Gulf and Asian destinations are notorious to go back to their home countries after the expiry of the contract, the migrants to Europe, North America, and Australia will tend to seek paths of legal settlement or permanent residence. This paper discusses some of the main questions associated with the experiences of Nepalese migrants in the United States: how happy they are, why they decide to stay longer, and how they communicate with their families in Nepal.

Methods: The research design followed a mixed research design guided by the constructivist worldview. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (29 items, six-point Likert scale) was used to collect the data because it was supplemented with 14 demographic and socioeconomic statements (five-point Likert scale) and six open-ended questions focused on adjustments. The respondents were surveyed in both face-to-face and virtual formats and included 31 respondents representing various states such as Texas, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and California and with different visa statuses.

Results: These results indicate that the mean Nepalese migrant in the US claims that they are usually happy; they believe that there are job opportunities available, they find working hours to be manageable and they communicate with their family members in Nepal on a regular basis. But they are also sad because of physical separation with their families and a significant part

of their income is spent on living. In general, the quality of life, educational level, employment, and income greatly determine the level of happiness.

Novelty: Happiness is strongly influenced by quality of life, educational attainment, employment opportunities, social and cultural adjustment.

Keywords: Adjustment, Earning, Happiness, Migration, Pushing factor

Introduction

Emigration has rapidly increased in the last few decades worldwide, despite the efforts made by countries to limit migration. Compared with resource-poor countries, developed nations face greater immigration challenges ([Alesina, Tellab, & MacCulloch, 2004](#)). The happiness of a country plays a critical role in the influx of immigrants worldwide; notably, emigration has rapidly increased in countries with high happiness indicators, whereas unhappy countries have experienced a decline in the number of immigrants. Thus, there is an association between happiness and emigration ([Polgreen & Simpson, 2010](#)). The underlying drivers of both source and destination countries are mainly microeconomic conditions, income, policies, and political stability, including language and culture ([Clark, Hatton, & Williamson, 2007](#)) ([Hatton & Williamson, 2002](#)). Happiness depends broadly on different variables, such as unemployment and government policy ([Tella & MacCulloch, 2006](#)). Happiness is measured through the aggregated well-being of people as well as income, inflation, government policy, income inequality, and the political conditions of a country ([Graham, 2005](#)). Happiness is conceived to a degree in which an individual judges the overall quality of his/her life favorably. In other words, happiness can be called life satisfaction or an attitude toward one's life ([Veenhoven, 1991](#)).

Academic migration of Nepalese individuals in the USA has increased rapidly over the last decade; however, it has not been adequately addressed in academic discourse ([Mishra, 2011](#)). Given their limited job opportunities (learning and earning), lack of technical subjects, and traditional teaching learning approaches, students migrate either to urban centers of their own country or other parts of the world for higher studies where they see more opportunities ([Aryal, Karki, Mahat, & Neupane, 2024](#)). It has been observed that being financially independent or having job opportunities after the completion of study plays a critical role in being happy. A total of 83489 Nepalese individuals, including students, tourists and businessmen, entered the USA from 1998--2006 in the non immigrant visa category ([US Department of Homeland Security, 2009](#)). Over 167,000 people from Nepal have immigrated to the United States since 2000 ([US Department of Homeland Security, 2023](#)). The internal armed conflict that erupted in Nepal in the 1996 contributed significantly to the migration of the Nepalese population from rural to urban centers as well as foreign destinations, particularly Gulf countries, as seasonal migrant workers, and Europe, the USA, Australia and Canada, for various purposes. In many instances, students and business people have tried to permanently settle in Europe, America and Australia due to the political turmoil back home. As of 2007, there were 29176 Nepalese individuals in the USA ([Pew Research Center , 2008](#)). Likewise, the US Diversity Visa Program provides opportunities for Nepalese migrants to permanently settle in the USA. Nepal

had 3,863 selected entrants and ranked third among Asian countries in DV-2024 (NEPYORK, 2023). Nepalese immigrants living in the USA send remittances infrequently to their native country in addition to holding professional positions and drawing relatively handsome salaries (Mishra, 2011). The USA is the second preferred destination for the majority of young students to pursue higher education, whereas the first preferred destinations are the UK (48.30 percent) and Australia (11.82 percent) (Acharya, 2012). However, very few graduates return home after completing their studies; brain drain has recently become a key challenge for developing nations (TODARO & SMITH, 2012). Cultural values and emotions are closely linked with the subjective well-being of people, whereas different cultural values and emotions may have different levels of satisfaction or happiness (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Happiness varies across cultures in its meaning, the ways in which people pursue it, and the factors that predict it (UCHIDA, NORASAKKUNKIT, & KITAYAMA, 2004). A study conducted in China indicated that migrants report lower happiness due to unmet aspirations shaped by new urban reference groups, despite improved living conditions (Knight & Gunatilaka, 2008). It is interesting to study the happiness of people who are adolescents in Eastern culture and living in Western culture and how they consider well being as well as happiness. The situation postulated above raises the critical questions outlined below, and this research also explores how to find answers to these questions:

Research Questions:

1. What is the level of happiness of Nepalese people living in the U.S.?
2. Do Nepalese individuals feel well-adjusted in American society?

This study aims to determine answers to these research questions. A total of 31 Nepalese people who live in different parts of the USA, mainly Texas, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland and California, with different visa statuses, such as citizenship, green cards and students, were consulted. The overarching goal of this study is to obtain a better understanding of Nepalese immigrants' level of happiness in the U.S.

Research Objectives:

1. To analyze the happiness of Nepalese people living in the U.S. with different visa statuses critically.
2. To examine Nepalese migrants' perceptions of their adjustment within U.S. society.

Methodology

The study is designed on the basis of a constructive worldview, adopting a mixed approach. A cross-sectional survey employing survey questionnaires and open-ended questions was conducted. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire, developed by psychologists Michael Argyle and Peter Hills at Oxford University (Hills & Argyle, 2002), was used along with additional questions that aimed to gather information about their adjustment in the USA and their plan of coming to their native country. The first 10 survey questions included demographic information, and the second part included 29 statements about happiness, with one to six scales. The third part of the questionnaire includes 9 statements with a five-point Likert scale, and the last part of the survey questions include 6 close- and open-ended questions. The scoring method

for the second 29 statements was followed according to instructions given by psychologists Michael and Peter. The third part of the 9 questions was scored on a five-point Likert scale, and the open-ended questions were summarized via narrative/content analysis.

Given the logistical issues and feedback received from the respondents, the survey questionnaire was converted into a Google Survey. While doing so, out of 31 respondents, 16 responded to the survey form in a hard copy, whereas 15 respondents responded to Google Survey. Informed consent was obtained before the survey was completed. The main author had visited Texas, New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland in the last quarter of 2024 and shared the survey questionnaire and communicated the objectives of the study.

Limitations of the study:

- a) Small sample size – This study includes limited number of responses of Nepalese immigrants, which may not fully denote the varied experiences and socioeconomic realities of the wider Nepalese diaspora in the USA.
- b) Self-reported data – The findings of this study are developed on the basis of respondents’ own perceptions about social, cultural and economic adjustment, earnings, and happiness, which might have influenced by individual bias, remembrance recall, or social prestige.

Conceptual Framework: The principal direction for this study is portrayed from Diener, Oishi, and Lucas (2015) and Berry (1997). Based on these theoretical basics, a conceptual framework was created to explain the interrelatedness among the key study variables (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2015) (Berry, 1997). The conceptual framework is displayed in the Figure 1.

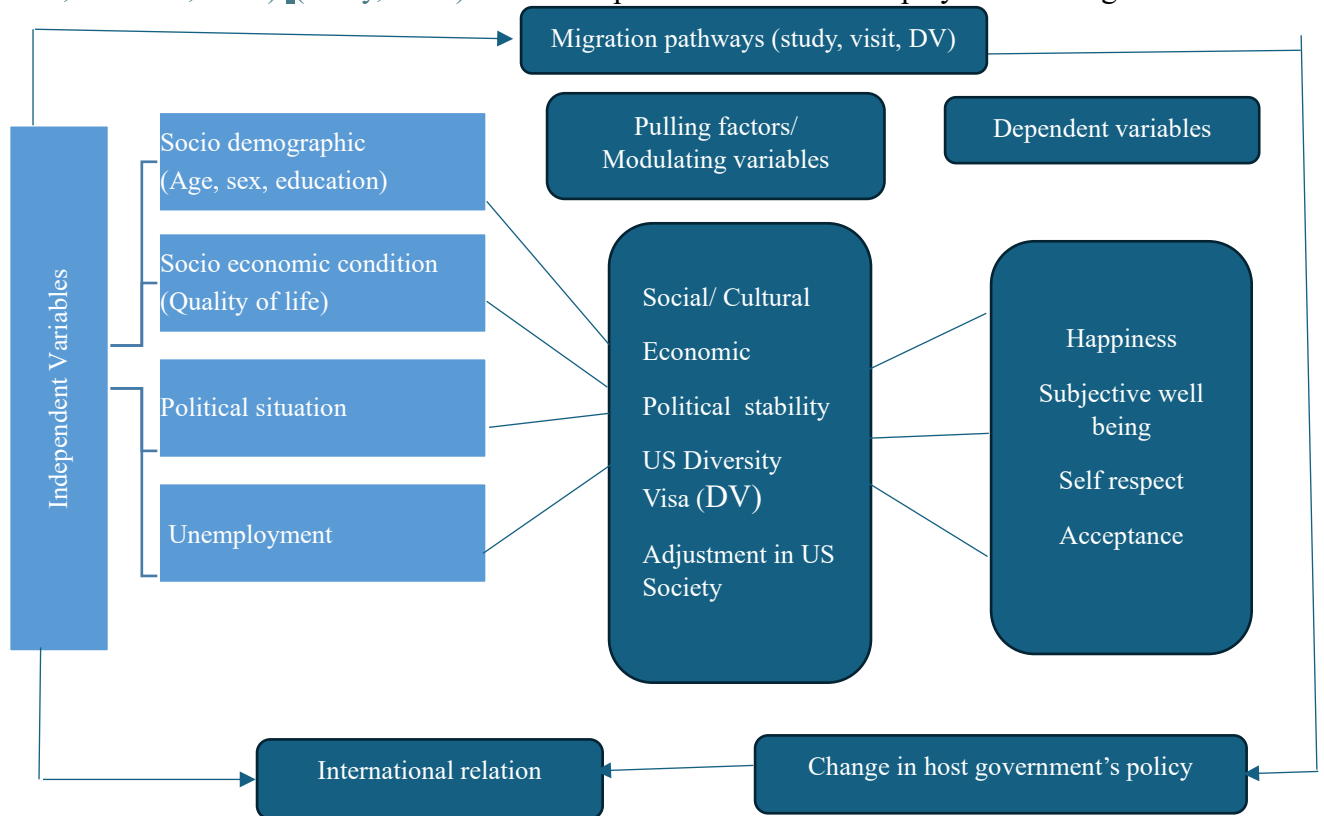


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Theoretical Ideas adopted from Diener, Oishi, & Lucas (2015), and Berry (1997).

This framework identifies that socioeconomic circumstances and feature of life often act as motivation factors, encouraging people to leave their home country. Moreover, a blend of sociodemographic, economic, and sociocultural factors in the destination country—such as the United States—serves as pull factors that shape how Nepalese migrants adapt to their new surroundings. The process of adjustment becomes a serious process that facilitates it and not only their ability to settle, but their general pleasure and well-being. Although economic strength offers a requisite grounds of protection, ethnic belonging and supportive social networks are as well crucial in raising the positive change, and enhancing the life satisfaction.

Findings

Table 1 explains the demographic information as outlined below.

Table 1: Demographic Information

		Frequency	Percent			
Gender	Female	9	29.0			
	Male	22	71.0			
	Total	31	100.0			
Education	Graduate	22	71.0			
	Under Graduate	9	29.0			
	Total	31	100.0			
Descriptive Statistics						
		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	
Current Age		31	28	54	38.87	
At what age did you come to the USA?		31	18	51	28.61	
Year of experience (living) in the USA		31	1.00	25.00	10.2903	

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The respondents in this study were of a middle-aged age bracket with the mean age of 38.87 years and a range of 28-54 years. They mentioned that they had entered the USA in the age category of 18 to 51 years old with an average age of 28.61 years as their ages of entry indicating the presence of both the early and mid career immigration experiences. The time spent in the USA was also very diverse, as it was between 1 year and 25 years and the average time was almost 10 years. This provides an indication of a combination of relatively recent migrants and long resident groups, which gives an informed picture of the initial experience of adapting as well as long-term assimilation trends.

Level of education by gender: The Figure 2 shows the distribution of education levels by gender.

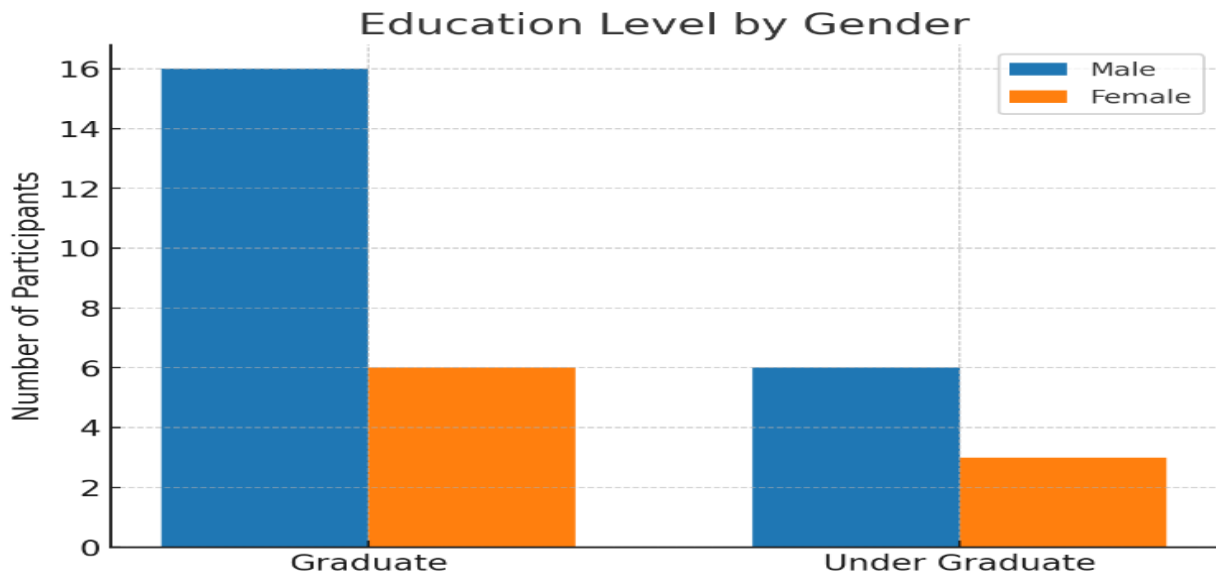


Figure 2: Educational level by gender

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In this study, a sample population of 31 participants was used, and there was also a significant gender difference. Almost three-quarters (71 %) of the participants were men (22 people), and one-fourth (29%) of the participants were women (9 people). This implies that men are better represented in the group and this could open up views based on the context of the research.

Education wise, most of them had a relatively high education level of 71% in a graduate (22 participants) to 29% in an undergraduate degree holder (9 participants). This implies that mostly the respondents are highly educated which can affect their experiences and perception about life in the USA.

Happiness level: The degree of cheerfulness is depicted in figure 3. The percentages are represented by the y-axis whereas the level of happiness are being represented by the x-axis as discussed on page 5.



Figure 3: Level of happiness

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The bar chart indicates how the respondents were distributed in terms of the level of happiness, in percentages. Most people are included in the folk of somewhat happy or moderately happy category which comprises 54.84 of the total population. This shows that over fifty percent of the respondents exercised moderate degree of satisfaction in their lives.

The second-major population, which is 35.48 percent of the respondents, is classified under the category of rather happy; pretty happy. This demonstrates that a good percentage of people claim to have a rather high level of happiness.

In fact, the small portion of the population only goes to both ends of the continuum. Approximately 6.45 per cent of the respondents rated themselves as the somewhat unhappy, but the tiniest minority of 3.23 per cent said that they were too happy. This upward-downward split suggests that very few individuals experience the highest level of disappointment or extreme happiness, but most individuals experience moderate amounts of well-being.

All in all, the diagram indicates that the individuals should be predisposed towards a positive affective state, moderate joy being the most frequent experience. Policymakers or organizations that aim at determining the general well-being and happiness levels of a community may appreciate this perception.

Gender wise Happiness: Figure 4 illustrates gender-wise distribution of happiness among respondents.

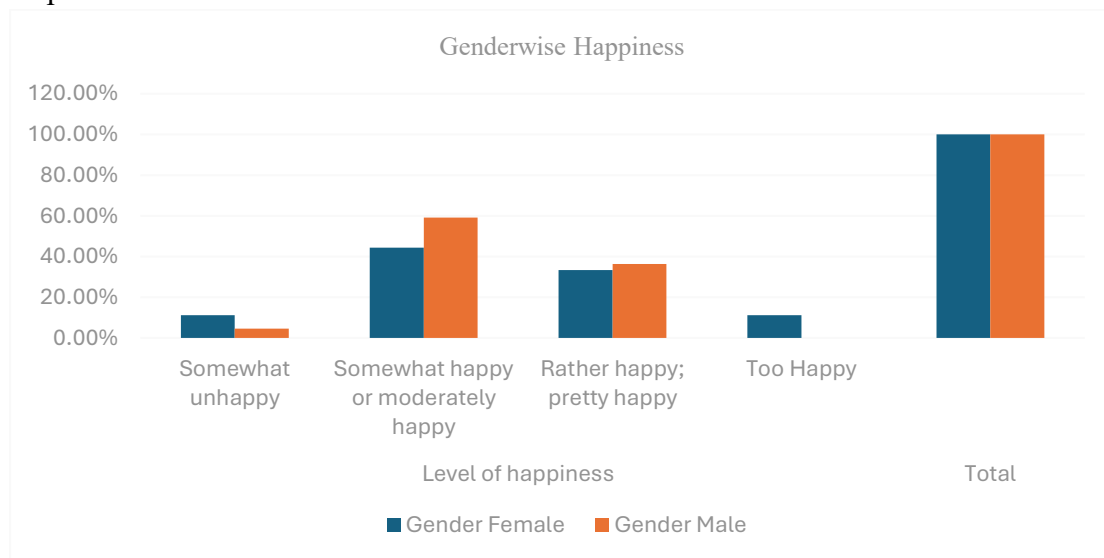


Figure 4: Gender Wise Happiness

Source: Field Survey, 2024

As shown in the above bar diagram, 11.1 percent of the female population and 4.5 percent of the male population were not very happy. Conversely, the respondent percentages were 11.1% too happy among the female respondents. Females reacted that they were moderately happy 44.4 percent and males 59 percent.

Age-wise level of happiness: The age wise happiness is stipulated in the table 2.

Table 2: Age-wise Level of Happiness

		Current Age		Total
		Up to 40 Years	Above 40 years	
Level of happiness	Somewhat unhappy	13.3%	0.0%	6.5%
	Somewhat happy or moderately happy	73.3%	37.5%	54.8%
	Rather happy; pretty happy	6.7%	62.5%	35.5%
	Too Happy	6.7%	0.0%	3.2%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The comparison of joy among the ages emphasizes the outstanding distinctions of the way young and elderly individuals see their welfare. The majority (73.3) of the respondents below the age of 40 had reported as being somewhat happy or moderately happy, with minor proportions calling themselves as somewhat unhappy (13.3) or too happy (6.7). On the other side, the degree of happiness was more evident among the persons above 40 years with 62.5% reporting to be rather happy or pretty happy and just 6.5% saying to be somewhat unhappy. It is interesting to note that the younger ones showed an increased level of moderate happiness; however, older respondents were more likely to derive more sense of happiness. All in all, these findings suggest that, although moderate happiness moderates when younger, there is a possibility that this extends with age accompanied to more balanced and increased feeling of happiness which may be correlated with increased life experience, permanence, and satisfaction.

Educationwise level of happiness: Table 3 stipulates the level of happiness by educational attainment, which is grouped into two categories mainly graduate and undergraduate.

Table 3: Educationwise level of happiness

		Education		Total
		Graduate	Under Graduate	
Level of happiness	Somewhat unhappy	9.1%	0.0%	6.5%
	Somewhat happy or moderately happy	50.0%	66.7%	54.8%
	Rather happy; pretty happy	36.4%	33.3%	35.5%
	Too Happy	4.5%	0.0%	3.2%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Dissemination of the level of happiness through scholastic achievement shows some similarities and some slight differences between graduates and undergraduates. Half of the graduates (50.0) depicted themselves as somewhat happy or moderately happy and a large number (36.4) described themselves as either rather happy; pretty happy. A lesser proportion reported that they were somewhat unhappy (9.1%), or too happy (4.5%). Compared to, undergraduates showed a somewhat higher preference toward moderate happiness, 2/3 (66.7) reported themselves as being somewhat happy or moderately happy and 1/3 (33.3) reported themselves as being rather happy; pretty happy. It is worth noting that no undergraduates indicated that they were too happy. On the whole, the results suggest that although both groups have equal or similar degrees of happiness, undergraduates are more inclined to moderate happiness whereas graduates are a little more predisposed to sounder feelings of happiness, glittering possible differences in life chances, career security and contentment with their life associated with higher education.

Level of Happiness Based on Years of Experience Living in the USA: Table 4 presents happiness levels according to years of dwelling in the USA, characterized into up to five years, five to ten years, and more than ten years.

Table 4: Level of Happiness Based on Year of Experience Living in the USA

		Year of Living Experience in America			Total
		Up to 5 years of Living experience	5 to 10 years of Living experience	Above 10 years of Living experience	
Level of happiness	Somewhat unhappy	16.7%	7.7%	0.0%	6.5%
	Somewhat happy or moderately happy	83.3%	61.5%	33.3%	54.8%
	Rather happy; pretty happy	0.0%	23.1%	66.7%	35.5%
	Too Happy	0.0%	7.7%	0.0%	3.2%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Evaluation of the happiness against years of living experience in America seems to be a slow progression of well-being perceptions over time. Of those with experience of less than 5 years, the larger proportion (83.3) described themselves as somewhat happy or moderately happy, although a high 16.7% reported being somewhat unhappy at the start of the adjustment period. The levels of joy among those with 5 to 10 years experience have been more fluctuated with 61.5% reporting to be moderately happy, 23.1% reporting to be rather happy and a small percentage (7.7) reporting to be too happy. Surprisingly, even of the people who had over 10 years of experience, the happiness coincidentally became balanced at a greater level, with two-

thirds (66.7%) saying that they were rather happy; pretty happy and that none were unhappy. On the whole, the results suggest that the initial years in the USA can be difficult in terms of well-being, but the longer the settlement, the sounder and more consistent is the feeling of well-being, which can then be explained by the adaptation and socialization, as well as belonging. These story statistics indicate that the respondents who have been living in the USA longer report a higher level of happiness.

Differences in the level of happiness: The table 5 presents the level of happiness across demographic characteristics, namely gender, education and age.

Table 5: Differences in the level of happiness (independent sample text)

Demography		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Gender	Male	22	4.4045	.66295	-.268	.790
	Female	9	4.4778	.75627		
Education	Graduate	22	4.4136	.71401	-.153	.879
	Undergraduate	9	4.4556	.62472		
Current Age	Up to 40 Years	15	4.1200	.68681	-2.662	.013
	Above 40 years	16	4.7125	.54879		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The comparison of the level of the cheerfulness in the demographic characteristics presents some coincidences and great differences. The gender factor did not make a significant contribution as both males ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.66$) and females ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.76$) narrated nearly the same amount of happiness ($t = -0.27$, $p = .790$). Similarly, education did not play a significant role, with graduates ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.71$) and undergraduates ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.62$) registering the same scores of cheerfulness ($t = -0.15$, $p = .879$). Contrastingly, age had a statistically significant difference: respondents who were older than 40 years reported a much better happiness ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 0.55$) compared to respondents younger than 40 years ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.69$), $t = -2.66$, $p = .013$. These findings recommend that gender and education fails to bring out expressive differences in happiness levels, but age seems to be a crucial parameter, as elderly people report a more and more positive sense of happiness than younger respondents do.

ANOVA – level of happiness based on the year of living experience in the USA: The table 6 below illustrates the level of happiness by year of residence in the USA.

Table 6: Level of Happiness by Year of Living Experience in the USA

Year of living experience	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		F	Sig.
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Up to 5 years of living experience	6	3.9333	.41793	.17062	3.4947	4.3719	4.085	.028
5 to 10 years of living experience	13	4.3231	.78650	.21814	3.8478	4.7984		
Above 10 years of living experience	12	4.7833	.46872	.13531	4.4855	5.0811		
Total	31	4.4258	.67920	.12199	4.1767	4.6749		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) shown a statistically significant difference in happiness levels based on the number of years individuals had lived in America, $F(2, 28) = 4.09, p = .028$. Respondents with up to 5 years of settling experience stated the lowest possible level of happiness ($M = 3.93, SD = 0.42$), indicating that initial settlement years may engage challenges that affect overall well-being. Those with 5–10 years of experience exhibited reasonably better happiness ($M = 4.32, SD = 0.79$), whereas individuals with more than 10 years of experience stated the greatest levels of pleasure ($M = 4.78, SD = 0.47$). The overall mean across all groups was also reasonably high ($M = 4.43, SD = 0.68$). These findings imply that cheerfulness tends to expand with expanding settlement, emphasizing the positive role of adaptation, stability, and integration in shaping well-being over time. The analysis indicates the following:

$F(2, 28) = 4.085, p = .028$

Since $p < .05$, the test indicates a statistically significant difference in happiness levels across the three experience groups. This means that experience has a noticeable impact on pleasure.

Multiple Comparisons: Table 7 shows multiple comparisons of happiness levels across different durations of residence.

Table 7: Multiple comparisons

Years of Living Experience		Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Up to 5 years of living experience	5 to 10 years of living experience	-.38974	.30529	.212	-1.0151	.2356
Up to 5 years of living experience	Above 10 years of living experience	-.85000*	.30928	.010	-1.4835	-.2165
5 to 10 years of living experience	Above 10 years of living experience	-.46026	.24762	.074	-.9675	.0470

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Dependent Variable: Level of Happiness

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The post hoc comparison brings out further explanation on the differences of happiness based on the levels of living experience. Those who had over 10 years of experience indicated a much higher level of happiness (mean difference = -0.85, $p = .010$) as compared to those with less than 5 years of experience, which indicated that long-term involvement in the USA might lead to higher levels of satisfaction and stability. The difference between the respondents with less than 5 years experience and those with 5-10 years experience was less and not significant (mean difference = -0.39, $p = .212$), which means that early- and middle-level experience of living are relatively similar in terms of happiness. Moreover, the comparison of 5-10 years group and more than 10 years old revealed that there was a slight difference between the two groups (mean difference = -0.46), which nearly, but not significantly, reached the significance ($p = .074$), indicating the tendency towards increased happiness with longer dwellings. To a great extent, the findings suggest that the cheerfulness is more likely to increase as the amount of time spent in the USA grows, and it becomes more apparent that the long-term residents, who show more adaptation, stability, and a sense of belonging, tend to be more cheerful.

Feeling about being recognized in the local community: Figure 5 illustrates Nepalese people living in the USA and their perception on level of adjustment in US society.

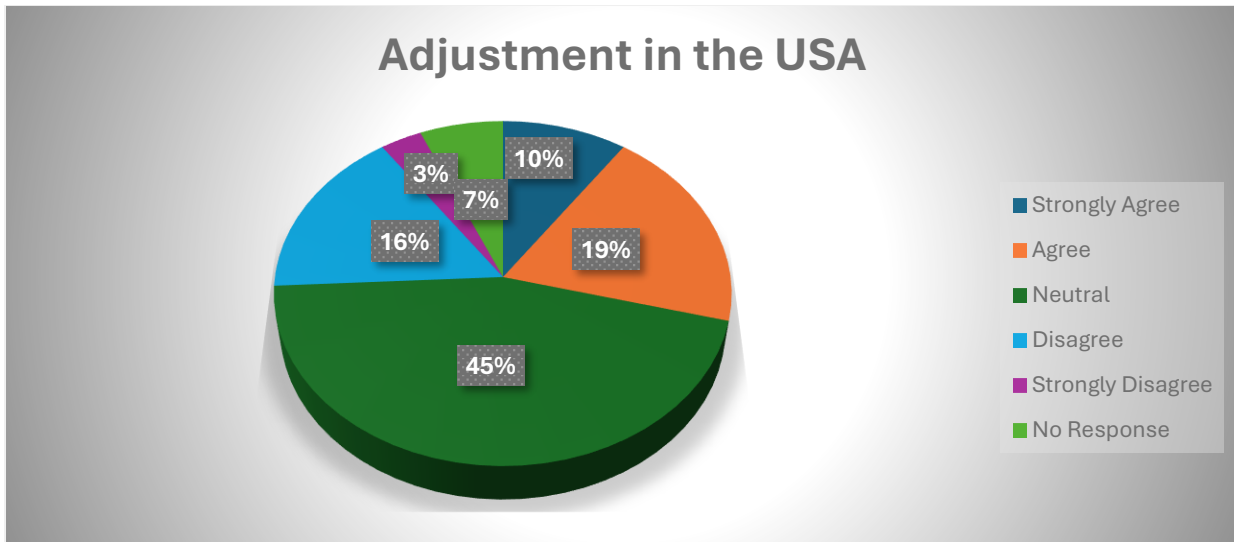


Figure 5: Adjustment in the USA

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The statistics of the adjustment in the U.S. reveal a composite trend of the experience among the respondents. Nearly half of the respondents (45.2) remained neutral meaning that they were ambivalent or mixed regarding their process of adjustment. Only about 29 percent expressed encouraging adjustment, 9.7 percent greatly agreed and 19.4 percent agreed that they had adapted well. Conversely 19.4% expressed an obstacle since 16.1% disagreed and 3.2% strongly disagreed with the statement. Only a few individuals (6.5) were not responding. On the whole, although some part of respondents demonstrated successful adaptation, the significant proportion of neutrality and also significant percentage of disagree orientation that adjustment in the USA is not the same experience, shows the complexity and individuality of migration and settling experiences.

Level of Income: Table 8 demonstrates the monthly incomes of Nepalese living in the USA, classified by different income levels.

Table 8: Monthly Earnings of Nepalese Living in the USA

Earning range in USD	No of Respondents	Percentage
1500-4000	10	32.258
4100-7000	13	41.935
7100-10,000	4	12.903
10,100-13000	2	6.451
No response	2	6.451

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The information about monthly income levels of Nepalese people residing in the USA indicate high dispersion within the income groups which exposes differences in economic status of the population. The large percentage (41.9) of the size of the respondents (USD 4,100 to USD 7,000) indicate that a significant number of the respondents fall within a relatively stable income range. About one-third (32.3%) are within USD 1,500-4,000 bracket, which means that there is a significant segment earning lower likely on the entry levels or part-time job. The

smaller fraction, 12.9%, has an income between USD 7,100-10,000, though the only 6.5% reported higher income of USD 10,100-13,000 indicating that minority persons have access to higher income. Besides this, 6.5 percent of the respondents did not disclose the level of income they earned. Generally, the data show that the Nepalese migrants are located in the middle-income classes, and somewhat lower on the upper class, suggesting both chances and differences in the economic integration in the USA.

Perception of Sadness: Table 9 shows the respondents' perceptions of sadness resultant from partition from their family and place of origin.

Table 9: Perception of Sadness due to Being Far Away from Their Family and Birthplace

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	5	16.13%
Agree	8	25.81%
Neutral	10	32.26%
Disagree	4	12.90%
Strongly disagree	3	9.67%
Absent	1	3.23%

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The results reveal that there is a diverse expression of sentiments in the respondents in relation to sadness over being away their place of birth. Although 16.13% strongly agree and 25.81% agree, almost 42% of the respondents, this is what identifies that a significant part of them have emotional attachment and a sense of loss associated with their place of origin. However, the majority, 32.26%, remained indifferent, recommending that a significant number of people do not strongly identify with this feeling or reject it, it is likely that it considers the possibility of adaptability or ambivalence. However, almost 22.6% (12.90% disagree and 9.67% strongly disagree) expressed that they had not experienced sadness in this sense, possibly due to successful adjustment to their present situation or alternative coping strategies. A low percentage (3.23) failed to give an answer. In general, the results suggest that although sadness caused by detachment to the place of birth are widespread, there is a notable difference in emotions and they are explained by personal resilience, surroundings, and emotional affiliations to the homeland.

Discussion

The results of this research can be discussed as significant findings about the real life of Nepalese immigrants, their happiness, and socioeconomic adaptations in the USA. On the whole, the findings indicate that although hundreds of Nepalese migrants manifest moderate or high levels of happiness, their experiences still depend on a complicated combination of age, period of stay, income, and cultural adaptation.

The rate of happiness was identified to differ considerably in different demographic factors. The younger migrants, especially those below 40 years of age are more likely to report average happiness and older respondents were associated with a relatively higher and more consistent levels of satisfaction. It is possible that this disparity can be explained by experience in life,

financial stability, and more effective integration into society with the course of time. These results are in agreement with the fact that happiness is directly linked with stability, maturity, and socioeconomic security ([Veenhoven, 1991](#); [Tella & MacCulloch, 2006](#)). On the same note, years of lifetime in the USA are a significant determinant of happiness. Respondents who had been in the settlement phase (up to five years) were more prone to report less happiness, and this is because of the difficulty in cultural acclimatization, professional setup, and family separation. However, the migrants who had resided in the USA over the period of ten years were the happiest, which indicates that the long-term settlement led to the development of stability, belonging, and increased sense of accomplishment. These findings reinforce the perception that the happier one is the more they are adapted and integrated into the community ([Diener et al., 2003](#); [Ye et al., 2014](#)).

Adaptation to the American society, however, turned out to be a subtle process. Nearly half of the respondents were neutral when they talked about their adjustment experiences, which means that they had mixed feelings or they still struggled with integration. Almost one-third of them indicated that they were positively adjusted, but a considerable number of participants indicated that migration is not traditionally a homogenous process. The lack of cultural similarity, the emotional distance between relatives, and the barriers of the system could be the reasons why not every person feels as accepted or integrated. This also resonates with previous reasons that cultural values and emotions have a high influence on subjective well-being and can generate varying degrees of satisfaction in different settings ([Clark et al., 2007](#); [Hatton & Willims, 2005](#)).

The economic well-being also justifies why a migrant experience can be multi-faceted. Majority of the respondents fell in the middle income levels with 41.9% earning USD 4,100-7,000 and 32.3% earning USD 1,500-4,000. This distribution implies that although a significant portion of Nepalese immigrants achieve economic permanence, a large portion has economic vulnerability, either because of part-time employment or because of employment in low-wage sectors. A limited bit explained high gain (more than USD 10,000), which means that as few as possible can achieve access to the income levels higher. Since happiness was also identified to be linked with employment opportunities and income, economic integration inconsistencies are still a decisive parameter that defines well-being ([Graham, 2005](#)).

The results emphasize that a significant proportion of participants (42) feel sadness and emotional attachment to the place of their birth as it points to the strong sense of belonging to their origin. Moreover, the considerably large percentage of neutral (32.26) and opposing answers (22.6) reverberates the variation in coping strategies and adjustability of people living outside their homes.

Altogether, according to the analysis, it is revealed that happiness among Nepalese people living in the USA is not an outcome of residing in a developed nation but is linked closely to age, period of residence, income, and cultural affiliation. Migration is a chance to learn and achieve professional development, better living conditions, yet it also has certain challenges, including lack of the family, cultural adaptation and unequal opportunities to economic growth. This set of results highlights the necessity to strengthen the support of new migrants, introduce

inclusive policies, and foster cultural exchange in order to make sure that the process of adaptation not only guarantees financial security but also helps grow long-term happiness and well-being (Polgreen & Simpson, 2010; Aryal et al., 2024).

Conclusion

This paper emphasizes that a delicate balance in social, cultural and monetary conditions accounts as the determinant of the happiness and adaptation of Nepal immigrants in the USA. According to the results, although the majority of the respondents report moderate or high levels of happiness, their well-being is not homogenous. The younger migrants and the those who have fewer years of settlement tend to be going through the initial pangs of adapting such as there are cultural barriers, financial insecurities, and that the family members are distant. On the contrary, older age and long-term residents are found to be stronger and more balanced in terms of happiness, with a focus on the positive implications of time, adaptation, and assimilation. Economic implications also indicate a concentration of migrants in the economic groups with middle income levels, which presents both opportunities of permanency as well as limited opportunities of upward mobility. Most importantly, the research highlights that happiness does not obviously come about by being in a developed country but seems to come about through deeper assimilation and economic autonomy as well as cultural identification. These impressions highlight why systems of constant help, comprehensive policies, and strong community networks are needed to support the process of adaptation of new immigrants. Finally, the promotion of conducive conditions where Nepalese migrants can socialize, economize and emotionally will not only help to enhance the well-being of individuals but also strengthen the contribution of individuals to the host nation and Nepal in terms of knowledge, skills and remittances.

Recommendations

- Enhance support systems among new immigrants - Introduce community-based programs, cultural orientation, and easy access to counseling services to assist new members to overcome cultural barriers, financial pressures and emotional issues in their initial settlement period.
- Development of economic integration and progression- promote enterprise that provides skill improvement, professional networking and business augmentation opportunities such that Nepalese migrants can transition beyond the middle-income segments and achieve larger economic stability.
- Create cultural affiliation and social networks - Strengthen cultural exchange, socialization and diaspora linkage platforms to affirm identity, sense of belonging and emotional health in addition to ensuring good transnational relationship with Nepal.

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