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Trends and Impacts of In-Migration in Birendranagar Municipality Surkhet

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Abstract

In-migration in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet, has become a prominent urbanization trend with significant socio-economic implications. This study aims to investigate the patterns, causes, and impacts of in-migration in this rapidly growing area. Using a descriptive research design and quantitative methods, the study employs non-probability, purposive sampling to select participants. Data collection was based on field observations to analyze migration patterns and socio-economic characteristics. Findings indicate that the majority of migrants 56% come from neighboring hilly districts like Dailekh and Salyan while 42% originate from mountain zones such as Mugu, Humla, and Kalikot. Primary push factors include the lack of education (35%), unemployment (19%), unproductive soil (16%), and inadequate healthcare and transportation (16%). Additionally, 17% of migrants were displaced due to the Maoist insurgency in their home regions. The influx of migrants has led to the creation of new settlements, fostering urban growth but also bringing challenges such as environmental degradation and limited social services. Migrants face economic hardship, with 28% reporting financial strain due to low-income jobs and high urban living costs. Social challenges, including cultural differences and integration issues, affect 27% of migrant households. The study highlights the predominance of male migrants with higher educational and occupational status compared to females. It also emphasizes the crucial role of education, employment, and infrastructure in attracting migrants to Birendranagar, Surkhet. The findings underline the need for strategic urban planning and policy interventions to manage migration effectively. Addressing both the causes and consequences of in-migration will ensure sustainable development, improve resource distribution, and foster better integration of migrants into the urban environment.

Keywords
In-migration, Socio-economic impact, Urbanization, Migration trends, Infrastructure, Destination

Introduction

Migration is a fundamental aspect of human mobility, involving the movement of people from one place to another, either temporarily or permanently. Defined by the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2019), migration is the process of changing one's usual place of residence. It is not merely the act of relocating individuals; migration also represents a significant component in altering the population dynamics of both the origin and destination areas. As Khatiwada (2023) states, "Migration is the process of change in usual place of residence, taking place both as internal and international with diverse short-term and long-term outcomes" (p. 35). This movement occurs for various reasons, from fulfilling basic needs to seeking more favorable living conditions.

Migration can happen within regions (internal migration) or between countries (international migration) and is often driven by economic, environmental, social, and political factors. The push and pull theory proposed by Lee (1966) explains how negative conditions at the origin push people to migrate, while favorable conditions at the destination attract them (Castelli, 2018). However, migration is not only about geographical movement; it is also a process of cultural diffusion, social change, and adaptation. The phenomenon of migration is increasingly global, as evidenced by the globalization of migration, where more countries experience migratory movements simultaneously (Castles & Miller, 2009).

Critics of immigration control contend that cross-border migration is primarily influenced through different societal factors like labor market needs, income disparities, and conflicts in origin countries. Additionally, migrant networks, employers, and intermediaries such as recruiters and smugglers help sustain migration by establishing supportive social structures (Massey, 1990; Xiang & Lindquist, 2014; de Haas, 2010b, as cited in De Haas, 2019). It is widely believed that international migration has increased, with migrants traveling longer distances and involving more diverse origins and destinations (Arango, 2000). Scholars describe this as the "globalization of migration," where more countries are simultaneously impacted by migratory movements (Castles & Miller, 2009). However, analyses of global migration data challenge the notion of significant growth in the volume, diversity, and geographic reach of migration (Czaika & de Haas, 2014).

Internal and international are the major classification of migration. The placement of people within the country is known as internal migration and shifting outside the country is known as International migration. It is commonly classified into seasonal, temporary and permanent in nature. Building on earlier studies of internal migration trends (Parish, 1973; Milne, 1993), Fischer (2002) identified a decline in internal migration rates in the United States, one of the world's most mobile nations (Bell et al., 2015). Overlaps exist, as forced migration can occur both domestically and internationally. Economic motives, particularly wage differentials, have long been central to migration studies (Ravenstein, 1885, 1889, as cited in Chowdhury et al., 2023), alongside other factors like family reunification, marriage, education, retirement, environmental changes, and human trafficking.

Migration is also viewed as human capital investment (Chowdhury et al., 2023; Becker, 1962; Sjaastad, 1962) or arising from household contracts (Stark & Bloom, 1985 as cited in Chowdhury et al., 2023). States have historically shaped migration through policies like forced migration, slavery, resettlement, and labor programs (Kritz, 1987; Weiner, 1985). Since the 15th century, with the rise of nation-states in Europe and their global expansion, controlling migration has been a key state function (Zolberg, 1983). In modern times, international migration has drawn significant attention, especially from industrialized nations, which are primary destinations for migrants (UN, 1980). Migration policies have evolved based on national needs and perceptions of migrants. During the transcontinental migration era, nations in the Americas and Antipodes encouraged immigration for development. Post-World War II, industrialized countries welcomed migrants to meet labor shortages. However, by the 1980s, economic stagnation and rising migration pressures from developing nations led these countries to adopt stricter immigration policies.

The regional distribution of population is 7.28 percent, 44.25 percent and 48.47 percent in mountains, hill and terai region respectively. According to this data, pattern of migration from hill to terai seems very high. Historically, the recruitment of Nepali youth by the British East India Company during the Gurkha War

(1814-1816) marks the first record of Nepali migration abroad (Kansakar, 2003). During the First World War, over 200,000 Nepali men were recruited by the British Army (Khatiwada, 2014).

Although Nepal has a long history of international labor migration, detailed and accurate information on the subject remains scarce (Bhandari, 2003). Foreign labor migration has become an integral part of Nepali society, influencing various aspects such as social, economic, cultural, and political spheres (Seddon et al., 2001). Migration has offered alternative livelihood options, with remittances significantly boosting household incomes. In the past decade, the outflow of migrants has greatly transformed Nepal's economic, social, and cultural dynamics. The country has developed into a remittance-dependent economy, ranking as the 23rd largest recipient of remittances relative to GDP (Sah, 2019).

Despite the growing focus on migration, limited research has been conducted on the socio-economic impacts of migration in specific contexts, particularly in developing countries. In the case of Nepal, migration is a longstanding tradition, with people migrating from neighboring countries such as China and India, as well as from within Nepal's own regions. Over the years, Nepal has evolved into a remittance-dependent economy, with labor migration playing a pivotal role in the socio-economic structure of the nation (Sah, 2019). However, there is a scarcity of detailed and accurate information regarding in-migration patterns, particularly in urban centers like Birendranagar.

While the out-migration to foreign countries is well-documented, the causes and socio-economic implications of in-migration to urban areas, especially from neighboring districts like Mugu, Dailekh, and Kalikot, remain underexplored. Negative impacts of demographic imbalance are not explored especially in Karnali provience. Birendranagar, the capital city of Karnali provience is facing the emerging challenge of high population dencity. This study targets to address this gap by analyzing causes, trends, patterns, and socio-economic impacts of in-migration in Birendranagar Municipality, specifically Ward No. 8 in Surkhet. Rapid population growth due to migration has led to significant urbanization, resulting in a range of challenges such as land and environmental issues, increased demand for social services, and altered socio-economic conditions. This study contributes to the understanding of migration dynamics within Nepal and provide valuable insights for local government and policymakers to address the emerging challenges associated with in-migration. In this connection, the research aims to investigate the trends, causes, and socio-economic impacts of in-migration in Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet, with a particular focus on Ward No. 8. It further tries to identify the migration patterns, including the origins and characteristics of migrants, and to examine the socio-economic conditions created by their arrival, such as changes in land use, environmental degradation, and pressure on local infrastructure and social services and to analyze the role of in-migration in driving urbanization, while highlighting the challenges it brings, such as demographic imbalances and increased demand for public services.

Literature Review

Migration studies have significantly evolved over time, exploring various dimensions of population movement. One of the earliest theoretical frameworks on migration, Ravenstein's (1889) "The Law of Migration," proposed that migration volume is inversely related to distance, emphasizing the importance of demographic and economic factors, particularly within Western Europe. The 1994 United Nations Cairo Conference on Population and Development brought attention to internal displacement and international migration, acknowledging that diverse factors such as environmental changes and conflicts drive migration, while recognizing the challenge of defining internally displaced persons. Hans Raj (1996) highlighted economic motivations, such as seeking better living conditions or escaping persecution and dissatisfaction with political and economic systems, as central to migration. Stoker (2000), in a report for the International Labour Organization (ILO), linked migration to labor dynamics, predicting that 21st-century migration would be driven by job losses and income disparities due to economic restructuring and social breakdown. These foundational contributions reveal that migration is a complex phenomenon shaped by different aspects like economic, political, and societal forces.

Internationally, internal migration has been on the decline, particularly in advanced economies. For instance, in the United States, interstate migration intensity dropped by 50% between 1982 and 2015, though

it has recently stabilized (Wolf & Longino, 2005; Cooke, 2011; Foster, 2017; Molloy & Smith, 2019, as cited in Alvarez et al., 2021). Similarly, Canada's interprovincial migration halved between 1972 and 2009 before leveling off (Saunders, 2018), and in Australia, interstate migration fell by 20% from 1981 to 2011 (Bell et al., 2018b). In Italy, migration from southern to northern regions decreased by 50% between the 1970s and 1990s, while long-distance migration has remained steady since the 1980s (Fachin, 2007; Bonifazi et al., 2018). England and Wales also saw a decline in address changes between 1971 and 2011, though long-distance migration remained stable (Alvarez et al., 2021; Champion & Shuttleworth, 2017; Lomax & Stillwell, 2018).

Migration from South Asia is substantial, with significant portions of national populations residing abroad. According to the World Bank (2022), 13.58% of Afghans, 8.27% of Sri Lankans, and 5.93% of Nepalis live outside their home countries. While South Asian migration has traditionally been male-dominated, focusing on labor migration for low- and semi-skilled jobs, recent trends show a diversification in terms of demographics and educational backgrounds (Castles & Miller, 2009; Rajan, 2023). The region is home to 38 million migrants, with countries such as Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan sending 46,000–71,000 workers annually between 2012 and 2017 (World Bank, 2022). Although intra-regional migration within South Asia has declined, with around 10 million migrants in 2017 compared to 13.81 million in the 1990s (Srivastava & Pandey, 2017), the region remains the largest recipient of remittances globally. In 2019, India received $83 billion in remittances, while remittances made up 23.5% of Nepal's GDP, significantly impacting individuals, communities, and economies across the region (Rajan, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

Recent literature provides valuable insights into internal migration trends in South Asia. Rajan and Sumeetha (2020) analyzed internal migration in India, covering 56 chapters, while Bell et al. (2020) studied internal migration across countries like India, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, alongside other studies on Bangladesh (Afroze, 2020), Pakistan (Ishfaq et al., 2019; Naz & Khan, 2021), Afghanistan (Willner-Reid, 2017), and the Maldives (IOM, 2018, as cited in Chowdhury et al., 2023). Migration in developed countries such as North America, The UK, Japan, Ausrralia and South Korea is a growing trend, though it remains relatively small. Migrants in these regions often benefit from higher incomes and better labor rights protections, though access to these opportunities is limited to those with better economic and social standing (Adhikari et al., 2023).

A prominent form of migration is student migration, with the number of Nepali students studying abroad rising dramatically from 26,948 in 2009/10 to 63,259 in 2018/19, with Australia being the primary destination (57.4% of the total in 2018/19) (Adhikari, 2019; IOM, 2019). Additionally, the migration of Nepali nurses to developed countries, particularly the UK, has increased, with approximately 1,000 nurses migrating between 2000 and 2008 (Adhikari, 2013). Migration patterns within Nepal exhibit a clear relationship between social class and destination country. Migrants from poorer backgrounds are more likely to move abroad, especially to India, which remains a primary destination for lower-income groups (CBS, 2012). The lower middle class generally migrates to countries like Malaysia and the Gulf States, while the upper middle and upper classes tend to migrate to developed nations like the USA, Europe, and Australia (Adhikari, 2001; Gurung, 2014). The poorest groups, often lacking the financial resources to migrate, remain within their villages (Adhikari, 2001; CBS, World Bank, DFID, ADB, 2006, as cited in Adhikari et al., 2023).

Ethnic and caste dynamics also influence migration trends, with Brahmins and Newars, generally wealthier, being more likely to migrate compared to Dalits, who are often the most disadvantaged. According to Blitz Media Private Ltd. and Humanity United (2022), Brahmin/Chhetri (35.6%) and Pahadi Janajatis (29.2%) are the largest migrant groups in Nepal, while Dalits and Muslims are underrepresented in migration. Migration from Dalit communities is particularly concentrated in Nepal's far-western and mid-western regions, whereas Pahadi Janajatis primarily migrate from central regions (Blitz & Humanity United, 2022). The migration of wealthier groups like Brahmins and Chhetris is often facilitated by higher income, better education, and social networks established by relatives who have already migrated (Williams et al., 2020).

Internal migration in Nepal has seen significant growth over the years. In 1971, only 3.9% of the population, or 445,128 people, were internal migrants. By 1981, this number had increased by 108.8% to 929,585 (6.2% of the population). By 1991, internal migration had grown to 1,228,356, or 6.6% of the population, representing a 32.1% increase. The trend continued in 2001, with 1,727,350 internal migrants,

accounting for 7.46% of the population, marking a 40.6% increase since 1991 (Shrestha, 2024). Emigration from Nepal has also grown significantly, with 2.7% of the population (402,977 people) migrating to India in 1981. By 1991, this number rose to 3.6% (658,337 people), and by 2001, it increased to 762,181 (25.2% of the population). Emigration figures continued to rise, reaching 1,921,494 in 2011 and 2,190,592 in 2021 (CBS, 2021).

While significant research has been conducted on migration trends in South Asia, particularly focusing on labor migration and remittance flows, there is a gap in understanding how the socio-economic backgrounds of migrants, particularly in Nepal, influence both internal and international migration patterns. Despite studies on caste, class, and ethnicity within migration, a comprehensive examination of the intersectionality between these factors and migration choices, especially in relation to educational migration or migration for professional purposes (e.g., nursing), remains underexplored. Furthermore, internal migration in Nepal has seen substantial growth, but its socio-economic impacts and links to broader regional development processes have not been sufficiently analyzed. The research could fill this gap by exploring the socio-economic determinants and broader implications of migration in Nepal, particularly through the lens of how migration practices align with educational and professional aspirations.

Methodology

The study adopts a descriptive research design, which allows for an in-depth exploration of the migration trends, socio-economic impacts, and the underlying causes of in-migration in Birendranagar Municipality. This design is particularly useful for understanding the complexities of migration in an urbanizing context and analyzing the relationship between migration and urbanization processes. The study is conducted in Birendranagar Municipality, specifically focusing on Ward No. 8. Birendranagar, being the district headquarters of Surkhet, has witnessed rapid urbanization and in-migration due to its economic and social opportunities. Ward No. 8 is chosen as the focal area because it is one of the most affected area by in-migration, experiencing significant demographic changes as more people from neighboring rural districts.

The study employs a non-probability, purposive sampling method for selecting participants. This method is appropriate because the study aims to focus on specific characteristics of the population, such as in-migrants from particular districts. Purposive sampling allows for the intentional selection of participants who meet the criteria of the research, ensuring that the sample is representative of the population under study. The study focuses on a sample of in-migrants residing in Birendranagar Municipality, particularly in Ward No. 8, as this area is experiencing rapid urbanization due to in-migration. The sample size was 300 hundred in-migrant households located in Birendranagar Municipality, Ward No. 8, Surkhet. The sample size is determined by the nature of the study and the availability of participants who meet the inclusion criteria. Participants are selected from diverse socio-economic strata to gain a holistic understanding of the impacts of in-migration.

The primary data collection methods in this study include questionnaire and field observations. These methods were chosen to capture quantitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the migration trends and their socio-economic implications. Descriptive statistical techniques were applied to any numerical data collected, such as the demographic profiles of migrants. This analysis provided an overview of migration trends, including the most common reasons for migration, duration of stay, and socio-economic characteristics. The study adheres to ethical guidelines to ensure the safety and privacy of all participants. The participants were provided with detailed information about the study, its objectives, and their role in the research. The written informed consent was obtained from each participant before data collection began.

Result Analysis and Interpretation

Migration is not only the process of moving people from one place to another. Migration is one of the prominent factor of demographic change. It affects the demographic, sociocultural and economic structure of destination. Considering the fact, here in this article in-migrat population of Birendranagar is taken as the main issue of study.

Age and Sex

Balance of sex, especially male and female; effects on fundamental social processes within a community. They have direct link on social norms, cultural system, community participation, human resource and occupational status of a community. Similarly, age factor is another instrument to understand various social processes.

Table 1

Sample HHs Population Distribution by Age and Sex

Age groups	Fmale	Percentage	Male	Percentage	Total
0-14	140	33.33	120	34.78	260
15-30	110	26.19	80	23.18	190
31-59	160	38.09	130	37.58	290
60+	10	2.38	15	4.34	25
Total	420	100	345	100	765

Source: Field Survey 2024

From the above table we see that 33.33 percent females and 34.78 percent males are found at the age group 0-14. females 26.19 percent and males 23.18 percent are found at the age group of 15-30. Percentages of female at the age group 31-49 is 38.09 and the male is 37.58 percentages. People above than 60 years are less in number, 2.38 percentages female and 4.34 percentages male. It indicates about the percent of female and male in different age group is not equally distributed. The table reflects that the size of female population is greater than male in population in the study area.

Marital Status of Migrant in Migration Period

Marriage is a vital basis of personal and social components of each man and women to fulfill their biological need and to continue gene. People have to face more problems after marriage, in order to solve their problems through easy way they left their origin. The marital status is presented below:

Table 2

Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status at the Time of Migration.

Marital status	No. of respondents	Percentage
Married	682	89
Unmarried	83	11
Total	765	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Above table reflects that 89 percent total individual respondent got married before migration period. Just 11 percent of them were unmarried at the period of migration. From here, we conclude that most of the in-migrants were married during the period of migration and they have to feed and find appropriate settlement to their family.

Religious Composition of Migrants

Our nation is full of diverse culture and more than a dozen religious community are existing for a long period of history. It is taken as the important societal feature of population. Religion plays crucial role not only in believes and thoughts but also on other social institutions too. Due to the ideological difference people have to face contradiction and mismatch. Religious leaders have significant power in the society. Composition of religion at the study area is given below.

Table 3

Distribution of Migrants by Religion

Religion	No. of households	Percentage
Hindu	80	80
Buddhist	15	15
Christian	4	4

Muslim	1	1
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

This table reflects the sample religious composition of study area Birendranagar-8. Hindu is in the dominant position leading 80 percent of migrant population. Buddhists are in second position leading 15 percent, Christian are 4 and Muslim are 1 percentage following formers.

Educational Status of Migrants

Education is taken as the prime indicator for social status of migrants. It provides social status and opportunities for income generation. To become qualified migrated population wants to get good education in urban area. It maintains the high profile, provides job opportunity and employment. Educational status of migrated households in study area is presented below.

Table 4

Educational Status of Migrants by Sex

Educational status	Male	%	Female	%	Total
Literate	10	3.2	20	6.7	30
Primary	75	24.6	95	32.2	170
Secondary	65	21.3	75	25.4	140
S.L.C	55	18.1	60	20.3	115
+2	40	13.1	25	8.4	65
Bachelor	35	11.5	15	5.1	50
Master Degree and above	24	8.0	5	1.7	29
Total	304	100	295	100	599

Source: Field Survey 2024

Above table indicates the academic status of men and women. 3.2 percent male and 6.7 percent female are just literate. The highest percentage of male (24.6) and highest percentage of female (32.2) have got primary education. Status of secondary education is satisfactory where male and female percentage is 21.3 and 25.4 respectively. On the same way 18.1 male and 20.3 percentages of female have passed S.L.C. Male 13.1 and female 8.4 percentage have passed plus two level. Among the in-migrants, male11.5 and female 5.4 percent have passed Bachelor level and rest of them; 8.0 percent male and 1.7 percent female have passed master degree and above. Females are higher than males in number if we see at primary, secondary and SLC level. The figure which is not seen in the table (116female and 50 male) are illiterate. Among the total population 765, 166 people are illiterate which covers 21.70 percentage of total population.

Occupational Status of Migrants

Occupation is a prominent aspect for livelihood. Migrants search for better occupation to promote their economic status and living standard. Occupation influences the lifestyle and culture of migrant population. It also determines the social status and harmony. Occupational status of migrants' is shown in the table below.

Table 5

Occupational Status of Migrants in Origin and Destination

Occupation	Origin		Destination	
	No of HHs	Percent	No. of HHs	Percent
Agriculture	70	70	15	15
Service	20	20	50	50
Business	6	6	25	25
Other	4	4	10	10
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 5 shows the major occupations of migrants. In which agriculture, service and business are major occupations. From the table we can analyze the occupational composition of origin and destination. Most of the households were engaged in agriculture while in origin but most of them are engaged in service at destination. 70 percent households were engaged in agriculture in the origin while 15 percent households only engaged in agriculture at destination. Similarly, 20 percent of households were engaged in service at origin but a large number, 50 percent households are engaged in service at destination. Only 6 percent households were involved in business in origin but 25 percent households are involved in destination. It indicates the changing pattern of occupation from origin to destination.

Occupational Structure of In-Migrants

Changing pattern of occupation is an important consequence of migration. After migrating many people change their occupation. Generally, in Nepal such change in occupation can be marked. Although it is not universal phenomenon. Such type of occupational change is presented in the table below.

Table 6
Change in Occupation of In-Migrants

Occupation	Origin		Destination	
	No of HHs	Percent	No. of HHs	Percent
Agriculture	41	41	8	8
Service	32	32	52	52
Business	19	19	34	34
Other	8	18	6	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

According to the table most of the households were involved in agriculture in origin. Leading with 41 percent agriculture 32 percent engaged in service while in the destination highest percentage of migrants are involved in service 52 percent are in service and just 8 percent of them are involved in agriculture. The trend of changing occupation is clearly shown in the table. 19 Percent of households were involved in business in origin where as 34 percent households are involved in business at destination. 8 percent households were used to migrate for seasonal job in India in origin but at the destination 6 percent households are involved in labor work and foreign employment. The table clearly indicates the changing pattern of occupation from origin to destination.

Facilities of In-Migration in Birendranagar

Most of the people want to migrate to get more facilities in the destination. It is one of the major pull factor in migration. Facilities are important factor for attracting migrants. Facilities provided by the local body and other level of government in Birendranagar are given in the table below.

Table 7
Facilities of in-migration in Birendranagar ward no 8

Facilities	No. of HHs	Percent
Education Facilities	47	47
Employment Facilities	21	21
Health facilities	12	12
Security facilities	11	11
Transportation facilities	9	9
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

The above table shows the facilities which Birendranagar municipality provides to the public. In other word these facilities are the major influencing factors which attracted those people to shift in the study area. According to the data 47percent of households are benefitted by better education, 21 percent households are engaged in employment and business opportunities. Academic, industries, government and non -government

services are the major areas of their employment. 11 percent households are benefited by good health facility and 11 percent households are benefited by the security service and 9 percent of them are benefited by easy transportation facility.

Trend of in-migration

Simply the trend of in migration is not same in Nepalese migration history. Just like that it is not quite common in Birendranagar municipality too. If we go back to the history of in migration in Birendranagar, we reach up to five decades ago. Before 203O BS almost land in study area was used for cultivation. In-migration in Birendranagar rapidly increased after 2033 BS right after the eradication of Maleria, according to the former Pradhanpanch of Birendranagar. The different time period of in migration trend of the study area is given below.

Table 8
Trend of In-migration in Different Period

Period in BS	No. of HHs	Percent
Before 2060	18	18
2061-2065	30	30
2066-2070	18	18
2071-2075	8	8
2075-2080	26	26
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

According to the above table, 18 percent of households had migrated before 2060. That was the period of Maoist insurgency in Nepal (2052-2062). Similarly, 30 percent households had migrated in the period of 2061-2065. It shows the largest number of households were migrated due to the fear of conflict as well as search of peace and for safe settlement. In the period of 2066-2070, 18 percent households migrated likewise in 2071-2075, 8 percent households migrated and in 2075-2080, 26 percent of people migrated from the origin place for better life. The percentage of migrants also increased (26 percent) at that period too because of the transformation of nation (federal system) by which much more people left their origin and shifted to Birendranagar, the capital city of Karnali Province in the search of modern facilities and better opportunities.

Pattern of In-Migration

In the search of easy and quality life people generally shift from rural to urban area. They can get many more facilities like, better education, health, transportation and job opportunity to income generation. As per the easiness of geographical condition people move from mountain to hill and hill to terai. The fact is shown in the table below.

Table 9
Distribution of Migrants by their place of origin

Place	No. of HHs	Percent
Mountain	42	42
Hill	56	56
Terai	2	2
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Above table expose that among the sample households of in-migrants 42 percent are migrated from mountain zone like Mugu, Humla, Jumla Kalikot, Dolpa Bajura etc. The origin of 56 percent migrants is hilly zone like Dailekh, Jajarkot, Salyan, Achham etc. And nominal percentages of migrants are from terai region like Banke, Bardia and Kailali .

Migrant's View and Their Suggestion to Others

Migrants view may be a measurement to find the trend of in migration in indirect way. Below table shows the view and level of satisfactory towards destination.

Table 10
Migrants View Towards Current Place (Destination)

Migrants	No. of HHs	Percent
Very good	49	49
Satisfactory	28	28
No satisfactory	23	23
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Above table shows that near about half: 49 percent households have positive response towards current place because of the urban facility. 28 percent households are satisfied in this location of residence and 23 percent of them are not satisfy in this new area due to the crowd, pollution and insufficient water.

Causes of In-Migration

Different factors play the vital role as determining factors of migration like economic, demographic, social, cultural, psychological, political, religious and so on. There are five major determining factors in migration. They are demographic factors, socio-cultural factors, economic factors, psychological factors and political factors. Insufficient food and facilities, lack of infrastructure and unavailability of employment are the prime causes of migration It can be summarized in the framework of *pull-push* factors of migration.

Push Factors of Migration

Leaving the origin (birth place) is not easy task. People not only leave the land but also the relatives, friends, community, childhood memories and so on. A lot of causes compel them to leave the birth place. The migratory movements are deliberately occurred due to such causes. The major push factors of migration are presented in the table below.

Table 11
Major Push Factors in the place of origin

Push Factors	No. of HHs	Percent
Lack of education facilities	35	35
Lack of employment opportunities	19	19
Low productivity	13	13
Due to conflict and fear	17	17
Lack of transportation and health facility	16	16
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 11 shows that the major push factors, which compel the migrants to leave their origin place. Among the total migrant's households 35 percent migrated because of the unavailability of education facility. 19 percent of the households left due to the unemployment problem. Similarly16 percent of them migrated due to the unproductive soil and 16 percent left the origin due to the lack of transportation and health care facilities. Finally, 17 percent of the migrated families left the place of origin due to the Maoist insurgency and fearful condition of the village. From the data we can conclude that the main push factor of in-migration was lack of the good schools and campuses to educate their children. Unavailability of employment opportunity was the another reason of migration, they left their origin in the search of employment for income generation. Similarly conflict and the fearful condition of the origin area , lack of hospitals, unproductive agricultural land, difficult topography and the lack of road access were the other reasons of in-migration.

Pull Factors

Just like the push factors pull factors also play the vital role in migration. Pull factors encourage the people to migrate in the particular area. Better facilities and security are the attraction of destination. The major pull factors which attracted migrants in the study area are listed in the table below.

Table 12

Major Pull Factors at Destination

Pull Factors	No. of HHs	Percent
Education facility	33	33
Employment/ Business facility	22	22
Better transport facility	13	13
Security	12	12
Fertile land	7	7
Availability of modern facility	5	5
Better health and sanitation	4	4
Presence of relative	4	4
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 12 shows the major pull factors in Birendranagar for the migrants. Which attracted people from the different parts of the country. Out of 100 households, 33 percent families were attracted for better education. So education is the main pull factor of destination. Availability of better government and private schools, colleges and Mid-West university are the center of education in Birendranagar municipality. Employment and business opportunities are the another pull factors; 22 percent families were attracted from it in the destination. Birendranagar is the capital city of Karnali Province so the migrants can get the employment opportunity in different sectors of private and government offices as well as the factories and industries. In the same way 13 percent households were attracted from better roads and transportation facilities. Birendranagar is connected with roads and air transportation facilities. Similarly, 12 percent of households are attracted with security and 7 percent households are attracted with fertile land of destination. 5 percent of them are attracted by modern facilities, 4 percent of them by the hospitals and health sanitation facilities and same percent of the households are called by their relatives who were already settled at the destination.

Problems of In-migrants in Birendranagar Municipality

Various difficulties faced by the migrants in new location (Birendranagar) is shown on the table below.

Table 13

Problems of In-migrants in Birendranagar Municipality

Problem/ Difficulties	No. of HHs	Percent
Religious/ Cultural	29	29
Economic	28	28
Social	27	27
Other	16	16
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2024

Above table shows about the problems faced by the migrants in new settlement area. According the table 29 percent of the total in –migrants are mainly disturbed on religious or cultural factors. This problem is one of the universal problem of migrants. Migrants have to face a lot of cultural defects in new community. According to the respondents they are facing challenges in public place and religious /cultural places because of different language, dress up, goods etc. 28 percent households are in economic crisis due to their low income job and expensive urban life. They have to spent in education, health, transportation, food, clothing, electricity, water and many more sectors of urban facilities. Among the in –migrants total 27 percent are

facing social problems. They are feeling poor in social activities. Sometimes they are treated as strangers in the community. Old aged and adults are facing mal- adjustment. Remaining 16 percent of the households are facing other kinds of problems like; pollution, noise, discrimination, narrow space, ideological disputes etc. They represent diverse occupation, casts, religion, language, culture and topography. Day by day it is being more challenging to adjust and create harmony in hybrid culture.

Discussion

The findings align with migration theories, including the push-pull framework, which explains the dual dynamics of unfavorable conditions at the origin and attractive opportunities at the destination. This framework is evident in the major causes and impacts observed in the study. This finding spurred numerous studies on the causes of this decline and renewed interest in early theories, including Zelinsky's (1971) mobility transition hypothesis, which predicted reduced internal migration in advanced societies (Champion et al., 2018; Cooke et al., 2018; Alvarez et al., 2021).

The demographic analysis shows that most migrants are economically active individuals, with a higher proportion of married males participating in migration compared to their female counterparts. This trend aligns with the gendered nature of labor migration, where males often migrate to seek better economic opportunities. Seasonal migration is prevalent in Nepal, often occurring during periods of reduced farm activity (Gill, 2001). While poverty acts as a significant push factor, migration also demands a minimum economic threshold. Households below this critical income level lack the resources to migrate, as even low-cost destinations like India require expenses such as travel, communication, and initial support networks. Studies in the early 2000s and late 1990s found that the poorest 20% of Nepalese households were unable to migrate abroad, including to India (CBS, World Bank, DFID, & ADB, 2006; Adhikari, 2001, as cited in Adhikari et al., 2023). This phenomenon is particularly evident in Province 2, the poorest region of Nepal, with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.51 in 2020 (NPC, 2020). However, the presence of a notable number of females in educational attainment up to secondary and SLC levels highlights a shift toward improving gender parity in access to education among migrants. The concentration of migrants from neighboring hill and mountain districts, including Mugu, Dailekh, and Kalikot, reflects a rural-to-urban migration pattern driven by regional disparities in infrastructure and opportunities.

The temporal analysis of migration trends indicates surges during specific periods, such as political instability or significant infrastructure development, further supporting the hypothesis that migration decisions are influenced by broader socio-political and economic contexts. The study identifies profound socio-economic changes in both origin and destination areas. Push factors also work differently for different groups of people. Role of poverty as a push factor and its inability to move people for migration when it (poverty) is critically high as discussed above is also revealed in another study (Shrestha, 2017).

At the destination, the shift in occupational structures—from agriculture to services and business—demonstrates the transformative role of urban centers like Birendranagar. This change not only improves individual livelihoods but also contributes to urban economic diversification. However, it also highlights challenges, such as the decline of agricultural practices and increased pressure on urban infrastructure. The reliance on education, employment, and transportation facilities as primary pull factors underscores the role of urban amenities in shaping migration flows. The growing preference for education among migrant households reflects a long-term investment in human capital, which could have positive intergenerational effects. However, disparities in access to these facilities and the resulting competition could exacerbate inequality among migrants and local populations.

Migrants face multiple challenges, including cultural adjustments, economic hardships, and social integration issues. The data indicates that cultural adaptation remains a significant barrier, with migrants struggling to maintain indigenous practices while assimilating into the urban setting. This highlights the need for fostering inclusive policies that celebrate cultural diversity while facilitating integration. Economic challenges, including limited job security and rising living costs, reflect the vulnerability of many migrant households. Policymakers need to address these issues by promoting inclusive urban development and creating sustainable livelihood opportunities for all residents. Additionally, the environmental and social

pressures caused by rapid urbanization in Birendranagar call for improved urban planning and governance. Migration from Nepal has been a continuous and evolving process, shaped by economic and societal changes. As the country develops, work-related migration has expanded in complexity, reflecting global trends where no single theory fully explains migration patterns (Castles & Miller, 2009). Recent research highlights the role of aspirations and migrant agency, emphasizing that migrants take incremental steps based on their capabilities and changing goals during the development process (de Haas, 2021). For instance, Nepali migrants often move to affordable yet less desirable Gulf countries as an initial step, which later facilitates migration to more aspirational destinations (Valenta, 2022).

The findings reinforce the role of in-migration in accelerating urbanization in Birendranagar Municipality. While this urban growth presents opportunities for regional development, it also raises concerns about sustainable resource management and equitable service delivery. Strategic urban policies should aim to balance development while mitigating the negative consequences of rapid population growth. International migration is sustained through theories like network and social capital theory, both of which are relevant to Nepal's migration patterns. Network theory suggests that migration continues as migrants establish connections between origin and destination countries, facilitating migration for others through kinship, friendship, and community ties (Boyd, 1989). Social capital theory complements this by emphasizing how migrants' networks enhance access to resources, reduce migration costs and risks, and encourage further migration. Studies in Nepal show that migration outcomes—such as increased financial capital, children's education, and migration-specific knowledge—strengthen social capital, creating pathways for others to migrate (Thieme & Wyss, 2005; Wyss, 2004). Additionally, ethnicity influences migration destinations and occupations, as shown by research on Nepali migration to India (Williams et al., 2020).

The study emphasizes the importance of addressing the push factors, such as unavailability of education, work/job opportunity and transportation in the origin regions to reduce excessive rural-to-urban migration. Simultaneously, enhancing urban infrastructure and social services at the destination is crucial to support the growing migrant population. Integrating migrants into local decision-making processes could also help address their concerns and foster a sense of belonging.

Conclusion

Maximum migrated families are led by the males of the house where females are the house-makers. Literate ethnic groups like Brahmins, Chhetris and Magars have migrated from different parts of the country during their economically active phase of life. Maximum people have transformed their jobs from agriculture to other ones like business and service. The most crucial factors to help people uplift their standard are education and employment. Job opportunities, infrastructural development, facilities of education, health and security have brought them to the destination. Likewise, they have been influenced by their former neighbors and relatives to migrate from their place of origin.

Major finding of this study concludes that, the main purpose of migration of people is to fulfill their basic requirements. Opportunities for the quality life, search bright future of their children through quality education, productive land, transportation, health and sanitation facilities and safe life are seen as the major attraction of the destination. On the other hands unproductive soil, poor economic condition, lack of educational institutions, fear of conflict, hospitals, transportation facilities, lesser economic opportunities are the main pushing factors of emigration. In the new residential areas of migrants, difference of culture, social change, acculturation as well as assimilation are observed. The negative aspects for the new residential area (destination) could be dissimilar religious beliefs, lack of respect for traditional norms and values, negative influence of social leaders etc. But the positive insight is that, the immigrated place is a destination of gathering of people of different social and cultural background along with their diverse education, philosophies, experience, economic backgrounds which could help the socially backward societies become better.

The process of migration carries a long history and there is no control in stopping it but the shifting culture of migration from rural areas to urban areas, hilly and mountain areas to plain areas as well as from

Terai region to urban areas could be minimized through promoting education, bringing betterment in development infrastructures and providing people with better economic opportunities in their origin place.

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