

**A Study on the Causes of Brain Drain Among Undergraduate Students of
Biratnagar**

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Department of Conflict, Peace and Development Studies (DCPDS),
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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents

Mr. Kul Prasad Khatiwada

and

Mrs. Kamala Khatiwada

*who have given me invaluable educational opportunities and have been my support system
throughout this entire journey.*

Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis entitled **A Study on the Causes of Brain Drain Among Undergraduate Students of Biratnagar** is my own work and it contains no materials previously published or submitted anywhere else. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind or any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

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Pradip Khatiwada

September, 2023

Letter of Recommendation

This thesis entitled **A Study on Causes of Brain Drain among Undergraduate Students of Biratnagar** has been prepared by Mr. Pradip Khatiwada (Cohort 2018-2020) under my supervision and guidance for the partial fulfillment of the requirements of Master of Arts in Conflict, Peace and Development Studies. Hence, I recommend this thesis to the Evaluation Committee for the final evaluation and approval.



Pitambar Bhandari
Supervisor

04 September 2023



त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय
मानविकी तथा सामाजिक शास्त्र सङ्काय
दृढ, शान्ति र विकास अध्ययन विभाग



Tribhuvan University
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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled **A Study on Causes of Brain Drain among Undergraduate Students of Biratnagar** submitted to the Department of Conflict, Peace and Development Studies (DCPDS), Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu by Mr. Pradip Khatiwada (Cohort 2018-2020) has been approved by the undersigned members of the Evaluation Committee.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BE	Bachelor of Engineering
BSc	Bachelor of Science
BSW	Bachelor in Social Work
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
DAO	District Administrative Office
DC	Developed Countries
EDV	Electronic Diversity Visa
EU	European Union
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GK	General Knowledge
HSM	High Skill Migration
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
KII	Key Informant Interview
KU	Kathmandu University
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MEAN	Middle East and North Africa
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MSW	Master in Social Work
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NOC	No Objection Certificate
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PSC	Public Service Commission
PU	Purbanchal University
STHC	Scientific and Technological Human Capital
TRA	Theory of Reasoned Action
TU	Tribhuvan University
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USA United States of America

Abstract

This study delves into the intricate dynamics of brain drain among undergraduate university students in Biratnagar Metropolitan City, Nepal, focusing on its causes and implications. Guided by specific objectives, it seeks to identify primary factors propelling students' inclination toward overseas migration and to elucidate the push and pull forces shaping their decisions. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study employs purposive sampling for semi-structured interviews and key Informant Interviews (KII) to gather qualitative data. Findings are analyzed through data analysis and thematic categorization, yielding insights into the motivations for pursuing education and careers abroad. The study's significance lies in its potential to inform policy and practice, offering a nuanced understanding of the brain drain phenomenon in the context of Biratnagar. By addressing the root causes of migration aspirations, this research contributes to ongoing discussions on retaining skilled human resources and promoting national growth.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background

Brain drain is a term used for the significant emigration of educated and skilled individuals. A brain drain can result from turmoil within a nation, from there being better professional opportunities in other countries or from people seeking a better standard of living. In addition to occurring geographically, brain drain may occur at the organizational or industrial levels when workers perceive better pay, benefits or upward mobility within another company or industry.

The term "brain drain" was coined by the Royal Society to describe the emigration of "scientists and technologists" to North America from post-war Europe (Royal Society, n.d.). Another source indicates that this term was first used in the United Kingdom to describe the influx of Indian scientists and engineers. There are also other relevant phrases, "brain circulation" and "brain waste". Although the term originally referred to technology workers leaving a nation, the meaning has broadened into "the departure of educated or professional people from one country, economic sector, or field for another, usually for better pay or living conditions".

The process by which a nation loses its best educated and talented people to other nations through migration is known as "brain drain." In other terms, it refers to a scenario when many educated and competent individuals leave their own nation in search of better living and working conditions elsewhere. The reason this tendency is viewed as problematic is that the most talented and capable people leave the country and boost the economies of other nations. The loss of the academic and technical labor force due to the movement of human capital to more hospitable geographic, economic, or professional situations is known as brain drain (Martin & Abella, 2014). The shifts often take place from underdeveloped to developed nations or regions. The reasons for brain drain might vary depending on the nation that is suffering from it.

Human capital flight, commonly referred to as "brain drain," can happen on several levels. Geographic brain drain is the exodus of highly educated people from one nation or region to another. Organizational brain drain refers to the migration of competent personnel in large numbers leaving a firm, frequently because these employees perceive

instability or a lack of opportunity inside the organization or believe they can more easily achieve their professional goals at another company (Ratha, 2012).

In an effort to improve the quality and accessibility of higher education, the government of Nepal has played a significant role in the development of institutions of higher learning in several regions of the country during the past few decades. The curriculum, academic policies, and administrative practices in higher education have all been improved in similar ways. To improve Nepal's higher education system, however, there is still considerable work to be done. In actuality, TU, the main higher education provider, is struggling with a variety of problems, including politicization, a lack of high-quality instruction, and a shortage of funding (Mathema, 2007). Furthermore, Mathema contends that the most significant barriers to advancement in higher education and the implementation of educational reform in higher education in Nepal are political instability and frequent government interference. Gaulee (2014) adds that one of the main problems with the higher education system in Nepal is unwarranted political influence and intervention in higher education.

Many young people in Nepal are now looking outside of the country's higher education institutions to better realize their intellectual potential and to establish the best social and economic prospects for their careers as a result of the country's inadequate educational system. Gaulee (2014) went on to say that a number of issues, including a lack of quality assurance and success, a shortage of trained labor, and political unrest in the nation, have contributed to the poor quality of higher education. In contrast, wealthy nations provide top-notch higher education and improved employment prospects following graduation. As a result, each year a large number of graduates—including those in agriculture and veterinary—move from Nepal to industrialized nations in search of high-quality education (Katel & Sapkota, 2018). As a result, the number of students migrating to advanced economies like the USA, Australia, Europe, etc. has been increasing yearly. For instance, the number of Nepalese students enrolled in American schools and institutions increased by 14.3% in 2018 compared to 2017 (US Embassy, Nepal). According to Katel and Sapkota (2018), brain drain resulted from the fact that the majority of students left Nepal after graduating. The brain drain has increased in Nepal during the past two decades and has appeared to continue.

The idea of 'brain drain' first came into existence at the turn of the 20th century as people from all over the world—especially those from Europe—started to emigrate to far-off locations in quest of better opportunities and a higher quality of life. Academics unanimously agree that the premise of brain drain is the same, notwithstanding considerable changes. Brain drain is the transnational emigration of highly qualified people from developing nations, primarily to North America (Glavan, 2008). 'Brain drain', in its simplest form, is the process by which the best-skilled individuals from one economy go to live and work in another economy in an effort to raise their standard of life (Brassington, 2012). According to Sahay (2009), it also describes the emigration of highly educated people and professionals from poor countries to industrialized and developed nations. The drain effect refers to the loss of trained professionals that occurs after emigration, whereas the brain effect refers to the return of human capital, skill, technology, and advanced education to the home country. When referring to Nepal, the term "brain drain" describes the movement of (semi)skilled people out of Nepal to other nations in search of greater possibilities and well-being in their lives.

This study primarily aims to assess the causes of brain drain among undergraduate students who are residing within Biratnagar Metropolitan City.

1.2 Statement of Problem

Brain drain, the emigration of highly trained or qualified people, is one of the growing problems in the context of developing countries like Nepal. As the conscious, capable, potential and educated population of the country is migrating toward the developed country in search of better employment, lifestyle and future; the native country (Nepal) is suffering from the lack of skilled human resources needed for the work of development. In the context of Nepal, the migration of qualified and trained personnel begins when the students migrate to a country with a better educational facility and finally end up as a citizen of that country, where some hold a white-collar job while other section manually lives up to fulfil their livelihood.

Due to such migration from the qualified personnel, the native country of that particular person gets under the loss of qualified and skilled human resources. Lack of basic facilities to lead prosperous lives as responsible citizens of the nation, the country faces the problem of brain drain. Brain drain has emerged as a trend of pursuing better lifestyles in prosperous nations like the United States of America or Canada and many more. Brain

drain, as defined in a theory of Economics, is a situation where a country loses its best workers. This definition regarding the workers is still quite relevant in the context of Nepal.

The problem of the brain drain is growing with each passing day in Nepal due to the lack of a better working platform for skilled and educated people. Such problems often led to the movement of talented workers or personnel to a foreign land. By addressing the problems regarding the lack of working areas in various sectors, the ratio of personnel movement can be reduced.

1.3 Research Questions

The study aims to understand different causes of brain drain among undergraduate students of different universities residing within Biratnagar Metropolitan City. In this regard, the research attempts to answer the following research questions:

- What are the primary causes of the brain drain among undergraduate students studying at universities in Biratnagar, who are thinking of migrating abroad?
- What are the main motivations driving those undergraduate students from Biratnagar Metropolitan City to seek educational and career opportunities abroad?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the research is centered on understanding the causes of brain drain among undergraduate students studying at different universities in Biratnagar. However, the research carries the following specific objectives:

- To identify the primary factors contributing to the brain drain among undergraduate students studying at universities in Biratnagar Metropolitan City who are considering migration to foreign countries.
- To find out the key push and pull factors influencing the decision of undergraduate students studying at universities in Biratnagar Metropolitan City to pursue educational and career opportunities abroad, thus contributing to brain drain.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The research study entitled “A Study on the Causes of Brain Drain Among Undergraduate Students of Biratnagar” will assist in the proper understanding of the real and authentic reasons why youths with immense potential and capability fly abroad. The results from this study may be beneficial to students and instructors in effective learning in their studies about the positives and negatives of brain drain and its context in Nepal. It will serve as a future reference for researchers. Further, it may promote the significance of living and working in one’s native country.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

To conduct and validate this research various dynamics of migration are taken into consideration which have a significant impact on the brain drain. The categorization of the study is guided by different concepts. Various factors influence the motivation to stay or immigrate, including political development, social justice, economic development, and educational/scientific conditions. Political development is generally affected by democracy, corruption, and effective policymaking, while social justice is influenced by discrimination and income inequality. Economic development and welfare play a role in motivating individuals to stay, while educational and scientific conditions are determined by factors such as research and development budget, policymaker effectiveness, and knowledge creation. These factors interact to shape individuals' decisions to stay or migrate, with impacts on both source and host countries.

Brain drain, which is known as the immigration of highly skilled people to another country temporarily or forever, is such a multidimensional phenomenon that should be taken into consideration as interdisciplinary. A good understanding of the phenomenon is critical for policymakers to mitigate the severe effects of the problem. The below-listed framework shows different subsections of concepts used for this research study, to capture the structure of the phenomenon in order to achieve a better understanding of the fight or flight issue (Martin & Abella, 2014).

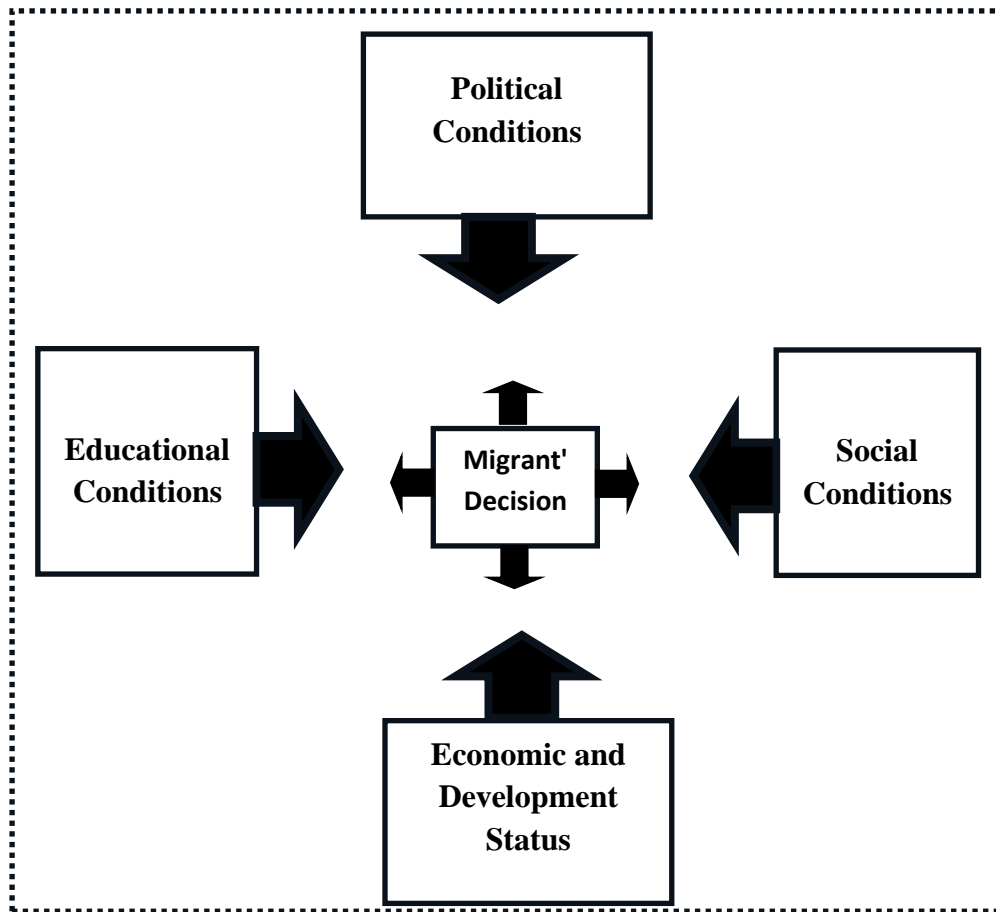


Figure: Conceptual Framework as developed and modified by the researcher from Azad et. al., 2010

The model's political, social, economic, educational, and scientific subsections are illustrated in the parts that follow. As you shall see, these subsections are not distinct from one another, and their components are interconnected; yet, the model is depicted separately for two reasons. A second reason is that the model describes the conceptual framework that was used to develop it (Azad et al., 2010). The first reason is that the model's goal is to offer a better understanding of causes, both push and pull variables impacting brain drain.

1.7 Organization of the Chapter

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter gives some background information on the subjects of brain drain and then discusses the objectives, conceptual framework and significance of the study. The second chapter reviews literature that is found relevant to the topic. The third chapter highlights the research methodology used. The fourth chapter discusses the findings and analysis. The fifth which is the last chapter gives an overview of the findings and ends with a conclusion.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

2.1 Brain Drain: Conceptual Descriptions

The concept of a "Brain Drain" implies that the benefits and drawbacks of international migration are not evenly distributed. The majority of the losses appear to be borne by the source nations, which they believe have not yet received appropriate compensation for the net contributions their residents have made to the receiving countries. There is substantial debate regarding the phrase "Brain Drain," and some academics, including David Hart (2006), prefer to use the term "High Skill Migration" instead. Hart defined high-skill migration (HSM) as the emigration of individuals with advanced levels of education and ability who, if they remained, might considerably contribute to the growth of the nation (Grubel and Scott, 1977). However, issues occur when we attempt to distinguish between high-skill migration and other migration types, such as general migration or low-skill migration. In terms of who should be regarded as highly skilled, there is no international norm that can be applied to every nation. The truth is that not all migrants cause a comparable amount of human capital to be lost. The sole distinction between HSM or "Brain Drain" and general migration—and a rather arbitrary one at that—is that in the latter case, human capital, talent, and expertise follow the migrant (Grubel and Scott, 1977).

In addition, individuals who leave are more likely to be members of the middle class and professionals; they frequently work in the fields of education, medicine, science, engineering, and academia, as well as professors and political reformers (Dugger, 2005). The higher wages that highly skilled migrant workers earn in the source nation help to distinguish them from less skilled migrant labour. As I previously mentioned, the source nations require these knowledgeable, professional personnel in order to advance. The working classes in these nations invest time, effort, and money in training these individuals, who then move and are left to fend for themselves, according to the most extreme interpretation of the thesis (Dugger, 2005). This makes it clear that some people's freedom to travel and enjoy financial security comes at the price of their countrymen's freedom from hunger, homelessness, poverty, and avoidable diseases.

Smaller, less developed and poorer countries are most likely to experience this flight of human capital. For example, many of the highly skilled Migrants going to the U.S. are not

from countries affiliated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). According to the National Science Foundation, approximately 70% of the U.S. science and engineering workforce are from non-OEDC developing countries. The countries in the global North that benefit the most from the “Brain Drain” do not have a problem acknowledging that it exists, but they do very little to correct it.

The "Brain Drain" is a problem that affects developed and emerging nations alike. Because they must increasingly compete with migrants for jobs, skilled people in many developed nations are starting to feel threatened by the massive amounts of skilled labor force entering their country (Kapur & McHale, 2005). In fact, it might be argued that they have cause for concern since, as already mentioned, industrialized nations are moving toward immigration regulations that deliberately seek to attract and recruit a workforce with better levels of education and competence. Additionally, a large number of bright students leave their home countries to pursue their education in these industrialized nations, assimilating into the people and way of life there while also finding jobs (Kapur & McHale, 2005).

The British Royal Society initially used the phrase "brain drain" to describe the emigration of scientists and technicians from the UK and Canada to the US in the 1950s and 1960s. It is viewed as the international transfer of human capital as it mostly pertains to the movement of people with relatively high levels of education from developing to developed nations (Chimneya, 2015). A significant number of highly educated and competent individuals left their home nations throughout the 20th century in quest of better economic and social prospects elsewhere. The phrase "brain drain" was first used to describe the exodus of highly qualified professionals from developing nations in the 1960s (Carrington & Detragiache, 1999). The term "brain drain" refers to people leaving their current jobs in search of greater income, better quality of life, access to cutting-edge technology, and more stable political environments in other parts of the world. A necessary component of globalization, the movement of highly qualified employees from developing countries to industrialized countries has both advantages and disadvantages. Everywhere in the world, there is a demand for professionals with education and training. However, affluent nations draw people from less developed regions due to their higher pay, greater living standards, access to cutting-edge technology, and more stable political environments. Due to its effects on the health systems in poorer nations, this is a global issue that is receiving increasing attention (Bimal & Kaur, 2016). Professionals in Nepal

are migrating, studying, and working overseas in large numbers because they have a strong desire to do so. A new generation of Nepalese professionals and students has recently chosen bachelor's degree education (high school education, too), as a means of emigrating to the West and achieving their modern objectives (Adhikari, 2010). Although Nepal produces a lot of human resources, when it comes to employment, they are underpaid and required to work laboriously, frequently including dangerous behaviors without recompense, which demotivates them. Unlike other developing countries, the "brain drain" of professionals has been identified as a major economic concern in Nepal. The brain drain of Nepalese professionals and graduates being ready for the job market is increasing day by day and the shortage of such workforce is and can be the burning issue in Nepal's socio-economic stature (Adhikari, 2010). Therefore, the researcher aims to study different factors intended to brain drain among the undergraduate students studying at purposively sampled universities of Biratnagar, Nepal, who are about to graduate and have just graduated.

2.2 The Theories Concern to International Migration

The two main scientific hypotheses that underlie this study are supported by the types of reasons for international migration. It complies with the prerequisites for academic discipline and is consistent with the scientific method.

First, according to Fishbein and Ajzen's (1975) theory of reasoned action, people's decisions to stay or leave the social environment depend on whether they find it to be satisfactory or frustrating. This theory goes further in explaining how our attitudes and subjective norms influence or produce our behavior. The second is Lewin's (1947) "Change Theory," which explains how people in different cultures experience pain and decide to leave their "home" (or "source") nation in order to live within new cultural and geographical borders.

The underpinning for this study's investigation into the factors behind the brain drain is the change theory developed by Kurt Lewin in 1947. An important addition to the field of social science is made by Lewin's theory. It asserts that two variables might affect the situation: negative influence (push factors) and positive influence (pull factors), which direct and control movement in the direction of a migrating abroad.

2.2.1 The Theory of Reasoned Action

The link between attitude and other factors is explained by the theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). The idea of attitude relates to actions that are consistently positive or negative. According to Theory of Reasoned Actions, beliefs are a person's positive or negative assessment of an item, and belief is what the individual has in relation to that thing. The theory also provided examples of behavioral intentions to carry out different behaviors. Our attitudes and our subjective norms are two components that form or cause our behavioral intentions, and TRA enhances and explains these intentions (Ajzen et al., 1980).

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen (1977), is a psychological framework used to understand and predict human behavior, including the decision-making process related to brain drain, which refers to the emigration of highly skilled or educated individuals from one country to another. TRA suggests that an individual's intention to emigrate is shaped by their attitude toward emigration, influenced by factors like perceived economic opportunities and quality of life, as well as subjective norms reflecting social pressures from family, friends, and societal expectations. These intentions play a pivotal role in predicting whether individuals will actually leave their home country or not (Ajzen, 2011). TRA should be considered alongside external factors like economic conditions, political stability, educational opportunities, and government policies to provide a more comprehensive understanding of brain drain.

Additionally, Baruch et al. (2007) contended that views about leaving or remaining in one's nation are influenced by the cultural environment's influence on individual behavior. In order to help international students make decisions, Baruch implemented the Fishbein and Ajzen methodology. Each of these factors is subject to the push-pull dynamics at play (for instance, a match in values with the host nation will be a pull factor for remaining, but the legal system that makes it difficult for foreigners to obtain work permits will be a push component).

In terms of forecasting behavior, the theory of Reasoned Actions includes some restrictions and expansions. The premise that the behavior is under voluntary control is the theory's biggest flaw. For instance, Sheppard et al. (1988) disagreed with the idea but made certain allowances for particular circumstances. Goals vs. behavior, the choice

between alternatives, and intents versus estimations are three of the theory's three primary limiting factors that the authors underlined in their review of its potential.

2.2.2 The change theory

Lewin (1947) developed the change theory, and the conflict between satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the social context is what led to the examination of behavioral intention. According to Lewin's theory, there are two components that might affect a situation: forces (push factors) and aiding (pull factors) that encourage and direct movement in the direction of a goal. According to Miller (1967), people's involvement depends on how much their wants and the perceived pain or comfort in the social context that affects decision-making agree or disagree with one another.

By the so-called push and pull variables, the theory explains how individuals move from their native (source) nation to other geographic and cultural borders. The terms "carrot" and "stick" are used in policy to describe the push and pull that are two sides of the same coin (Enderwick et al., 2011). According to Lewin's (1947) original theory, pull factors—that is, 'unfreezing' from a previous situation and then refreezing into some new behavior or reality—are typically the rationale behind and provide the fundamental causes which explain the motivation to change and a decision to move—and are typically the foundation for push factors. As a result, a nation-state that wants to stop its brain drain must think about creating a strategy that targets and tackles the push forces in particular.

The main and fundamental explanation for why individuals make decisions in response to issues is provided by Lewin's theory on push factors (Baruch, 1995). This reaction then results in a new behavior. Similarly, push factors that influence decision-making exist in the local context and drive professionals to travel overseas, according to research by Kim et al. (2011). On the other hand, the host nation has pull factors that draw in brilliant individuals. According to Kim et al. (2011), both personal traits and the nation of origin have a big impact on whether an immigrant decides to stay in the host country or go back home.

"The underlying idea of the push and pull model is the decomposition of an individual's choice of travel destination in two forces," Lam and Hsu (2006) said in reference to the push and pull model of brain drain. They contend that the first force is the internal pressure of the person's home nation (of origin), which impacts their motivation to join

the movement. The second aspect is a pull factor, which affects a person's mindset due to the destination's perceived allure. These variables, therefore, influenced people's views, behavioral intentions, and decisions to move in search of a better life.

The thesis was contested by some writers who felt that it neglected certain other, more significant variables including political power, racial and religious strife, culture, as well as democratic principles that depend on global migration. For instance, Burnes (2004) analyzed and reevaluated Lewin's writings; the main criticisms levelled at him were that his theory of organizational stability and change was, at best, no longer relevant and, at worst, "wildly inappropriate," and that his method of change is only appropriate for isolated and incremental change circumstances. Additionally, he disregarded politics and power and used a top-down, management-driven strategy for transformation.

Several groups of push factors may be distinguished from an overview of the contributing push elements. The quality of children's education and training, pay and compensation concerns, employment chances for women, lifestyle, cost of living, and other relevant variables are all epitomized by professional career prospects.

Unquestionably, Lewin had a significant influence on the subject of change, and his contributions to modern organizational and societal change are well known (Burnes, 2004). However, numerous significant elements that underpin the migration of educated individuals throughout the world, such as the socio-political environment, political climate, immigration policy, and democracy, are ignored in critical discussions of Lewin's field theory.

2.3 Brain Drain in the Globalized World

Today's world is becoming more and more globalized, with rapid increases in information, commerce, and financial flows as well as the emergence of the idea of "talent mobility" (Friesen, 2014). A significant disparity in the cultural, economic, and political spheres has been made clear by globalization. Globalization has significantly expanded the phenomena of brain drain, and many professionals have moved from Asia and Africa to developed nations (Goldin et al., 2012).

A very obvious and logical portrayal of the "brain drain" phenomena from poor to wealthy nations is produced by globalization's flattening of the world and its lack of creativity (Docquier and Rapoport, 2012). 'Brain drain' is not a new phenomenon, but

globalization has accelerated the movement of so many specialists from underdeveloped to developed countries.

Many academics, elites, and brilliant individuals are searching for employment chances to advance their careers and broaden their knowledge and expertise. Political, economic, and social situations have been highlighted as the key causes of the phenomena in a number of studies (Boon and Ahenkan, 2012; Pan, 2011; Torbat, 2002), while other research have focused on the impact of globalization and technical aspects (Bhagwati, 2011; Elliott and Weedon, 2011). Politicians and policymakers in developing nations are now concerned about a persistent "brain drain" as their intellectual capital migrates there (Vargas-Silva, 2012).

Globalization has increased competition for elites, entrepreneurs, and brilliant individuals in recent years. For policymakers in both wealthy and poor nations, globalization has also brought new possibilities, risks, and problems (Schiller and Park, 2014). According to Docquier and Rapoport (2012), globalization can have an influence on professional mobility as well as lead to greater inequality across nations. Decentralization is also more and more accepting of financial liberalization initiatives in the international system (Mitra et al., 2011). 'Brain drain' is influenced by elements including the global market's competition for talented immigrants and needs from outside (Sahay, 2014).

Additionally, according to research from Estonia, the European Union's economic integration, growing global rivalry, and stagnant or declining demographics all have an effect on the "brain drain" from tiny nations. For instance, Vietnam demonstrates how international collaboration and competency support higher education and strengthen local human resources for global competence (Reddy, 2012). Another research by Portes and Böröcz (1989) examined the relationship between brain drain and Nation-State and came to the conclusion that although Nation-State is relevant in the globe, the brain drain process is not significantly influenced by it.

2.4 Reflection on the Trend of Student Migration

Now that the world is becoming more networked, student migration occurs mostly (Masud, 2020) thanks to the information supplied by their peers and networks of international migrants (Davis et al., 2002). Sharma (2009) claims that it is a result of a lack of options for further education, peer pressure from the family's prior history of

migration, and the economic situation in emerging nations. Similar to this, the majority of programs include experiential learning that emphasizes pragmatic education, new language learning, and effective learning activities in a varied cultural milieu (Pechak & Thompson, 2009). They discovered details on the employment prospects, superior living conditions, and other amenities offered by the sorts of students who have already lived abroad and are likely to draw students from poor nations. Similar to the above, Aresia et al. (2018) found that students were drawn to higher education overseas for a variety of reasons, including potential for career views, self-development and personal growth, sociability and leisure, and cross-cultural curiosity. Levie (2007) went so far as to say that the uncertain political climate and the high unemployment rate among university graduates in the home country may be the main driving forces behind student migration from poor countries to wealthy nations. Studies, on the other hand, have also shown that some privately financed colleges provide international degree programs for which they must pay a significant price for the level of education. However, given the dearth of employment possibilities in their country of origin, they could be less inclined to continue their studies there and more likely to be persuaded to emigrate. In a similar vein, Sharma (2015) said that Nepalese students are dissatisfied with the country's traditional educational institutions, lack of employment possibilities, and political unrest. So, students are initially pressured to travel for their studies overseas before being progressively introduced to business and employment.

According to reports, factors that influence student migration include concerns about a good education, a successful life, stereotyped ideologies, financial assistance, becoming independent, etc. However, there may be several other subjectively unrelated factors that are pertinent and worth investigating.

2.5 Motivation towards Student Migration

As literary works, foreign universities create a highly internationalized university system that elevates them to a top destination for students from across the world. Sharma (2015) echoes this sentiment when he notes that higher education overseas provides students with options for employment in addition to high-quality degree programs. When students complete the required classes and disciplines, these colleges are even praised for preserving the quality of education among students (Brooks, 2018). While discussing the reasons why students choose to study abroad, Brooks added that these reasons are crucial

for helping students achieve their goals and objectives as well as for sharing information in groups. From a related perspective, Hübner (2003) highlighted that higher education is an intellectual setting where students develop or acquire information that can satisfy their own and their parent's expectations, find employment, expand collaboration, and establish connections with one another.

Despite the country's abundance of public and private colleges and other higher education institutions, student migration is on the rise right now. This may be due to a combination of factors, including international competitiveness, measures supported by policy texts, and a desire to participate fully in the global higher education market (Slaughter & Cantwell, 2012). Similarly, Parajuli and Wagley (2010) talked about Nepal's higher education system's ineffective administration, which might hurt the country's reputation as a competitive school among students. As a result, students demonstrate a willingness to pay higher tuition costs for their degrees, which can be up to three times more than those paid to native students in the best host countries, such as the USA and the UK (Lall, 2008). The aforementioned arguments demonstrate that, despite the high costs, students from impoverished nations like Nepal are drawn to degrees earned abroad.

Apart from the catalysts at home, another potential factor in the exodus of students to rich nations is the acceptance of higher education as a genuine component of globalization (Qiang, 2003). Similarly, Aguinis et al. (2013) emphasized that financial incentives might also play a key role in motivating students because they would have the opportunity to work part-time in addition to their education. Additionally, a major problem in pursuing higher education overseas has been the availability of communication tools. Due to the socialization of the international language, which is valuable in the global labor market, many young people have been drawn to foreign nations (Varghese, 2007). According to King and Ruiz-Gelices (2003), it is commonly acknowledged that higher education may boost career chances if it can have an international component, which may involve travel, employment abroad, and knowledge of various cultures and languages. In addition to this, Ghimire (2016) noted that the most significant drivers for international students are impacted by both internal (personal attributes, monetary circumstances, and social norms) and external (culture, language, and people) factors. According to Suter and Jandl (2006), student migration from developing nations due to the aforementioned reasons has ultimately resulted in the arrival of high-skilled immigrants in developed nations, with some even complaining that the outflow may jeopardize the socioeconomic development

of the country of origin. However, the full extent of how these incentives function as environmental phenomena is still not known. Additionally, the study's tendency to describe the experiences of student migrants from various sociocultural backgrounds might help expose the contextual barriers to keeping young people in their native countries.

2.6 Student Mobility and Their Excitements

In general, factors that influence student mobility include good education, affluence, stereotyped ideologies, financial security, the ability to support oneself, and a host of other factors that are not necessarily personal to an individual. Sharma (2015) noted that Nepalese students are dissatisfied with the country's traditional educational institutions, lack of employment possibilities, and political unrest when examining how Nepalese students are encouraged to study overseas. Nepal has a large number of publicly and privately sponsored higher education institutions. A total of over 382,000 students are enrolled regularly in Nepal's institutions, including Tribhuvan University (TU), Kathmandu University (KU), and Purbanchal University (PU), as well as more than 1000 associated campuses, according to the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology (MOEST, 2017). However, despite the fact that these institutions are meant to support the development of knowledge through good research techniques, these accomplishments are still lacking among Nepalese higher education graduates (MOE, 2010). Although the level of education offered by these institutions in the nation is sometimes disputed, it is generally agreed that developed nations are where one may find a high standard of living and a degree that is respected. Even the truism that they are initially pressured to travel overseas for their studies before becoming increasingly involved in business and employment is repeated. Finding out how students who are studying at home learn about the underlying opportunities in other nations that encourage their mobility as international students might be seen as being significant at this point.

2.7 Pull factors that influence Brain drain

The "brain gain" or "brain hunting" refers to the succession of governmental measures needed to have a host nation ready to absorb elites, businesspeople, inventors, and bright individuals. The USA tops the list of "brain gain" in the current era of globalization and competitiveness, and getting a visa is crucial to this process (Ikubolajeh Logan and Thomas, 2012). The problem of migration affects not only those moving from

underdeveloped to developed nations but also those leaving developed regions like the EU, Japan, Russia, and so on. Additionally, young scientists and researchers from Europe who choose to pursue professions move frequently to the US (Valentino et al., 2013). Talented individuals in the USA benefit from flexible policies, an open economy, favorable labour laws, an educational system, international competitiveness, and enticing immigration laws (Boeri et al., 2012).

According to Musumba et al. (2011), US institutions' decisions to admit students to technology- and science-focused programs and to finance overseas students are further contributing reasons to the brain drain. Agrawal et al. (2011) found that domestic knowledge facilitation and research skills have a reasonably large and favorable influence in brain drain repatriation. The promotion of "brain gain" and the reversal of "brain drain" can both be aided by attention to social sciences and humanities research (Reddy et al., 2011). Better career prospects and cultural links have been noted in other Indian studies as the reasons why second-generation Indians who worked in the USA returned home (Jain, 2012).

According to research conducted in Iran (Mossayeb and Shirazi, 2006), the chance for higher education is at least as strong a draw for immigrants to the United States. On the other hand, a study of East Asian nations (such as China, India, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Thailand) revealed that economic growth and policy changes had significantly improved the local supply of education at all levels and helped stop the "brain drain" (Lemke, 2012). In accordance with a further study by Pan (2011) conducted in China, it is suggested that three strategies should be used to combat expatriates: a proactive diplomatic approach to international educational relations; strategic reliance on foreign higher education resources; and a decentralized economic mechanism to raise human capital with foreign training. According to Gupta and Tyagi (2012), brain drain does have an impact on India's growth, with the most significant contributions being in the areas of technology transfer, remittances, entrepreneurship, charity, and social networking.

2.7.1 Immigration Policy

Many people throughout the world have long seen the United States as the most alluring location for the global brain drain. Other industrialized nations have recently created methods and sound immigration laws for luring in "international talent" (Chen et al.,

2011). However, nations that have historically experienced a brain drain are beginning to adopt strategies to compete for a mobile and worldwide professional class as well as to recruit professionals who are native to their own country but have previously been a part of the local brain drain (Vargas-Silva, 2012).

According to the majority of earlier research (Beine et al., 2001; Baruch et al., 2007), US immigration policy is a significant draw factor for drawing in brilliant individuals. Research by Beine et al. (2001) of 37 developing nations found that the immigration policies of rich nations, notably the USA, were successful in luring brilliant individuals to emigrate. On the other hand, responsibilities and restrictions on the movement of skilled labor internationally as well as human capital have been partially paid by human capital outflow. Additionally, a number of recent studies have demonstrated that the highly skilled worker who departs the nation is directly impacted by the immigration policy in the host country (MDMLü et al., 2012; Docquier et al., 2012; Legomsky, 2011). In addition, according to Mazzarol and Soutar (2002), the reputation of the host nation will probably continue to play a major role in determining study destinations.

Immigration law may also have a role in the push or pull situation. Human capital is subject to two aspects of immigration policy, according to Docquier et al. (2012): selectivity and restriction. They contend that immigration laws can operate as both push and pull forces influencing professional mobility.

Better-educated persons may deal with immigration policy restrictions better, according to a modified version of the theoretical model of Brücker and Defoort (2006) produced by Belot and Hatton in 2012. The model covers the two main causes of inequality and poverty in emerging nations as well as the industrial world's higher wages and immigration regulations. In 25 OECD nations, they examined immigrants from 80 source countries. They discovered that poverty and culture are two factors that have an impact on migration.

In an effort to stop the "brain drain," numerous nations have implemented immigration regulations in recent years. In this era of globalization, the US has been in the forefront. The nation's capacity to draw PhD applicants from both Europe and underdeveloped nations (Boeri et al., 2012).

2.7.2 Democratic Values/Transparency

Clearly, open societies have an edge in luring talent from throughout the world. Thus, it will be simpler to stop the global brain drain as more non-Western nations arise, modernize, and open up. According to (Popper, 1945), the key factor in a democracy is not who holds the reins of power but rather how simple it is to overthrow the current administration and enact change. Between the less democratic and the industrialized democratic worlds, there appears to be a significant divide. Talented individuals respect human rights above anything else (Bang and Mitra, 2011). The importance of political stability and democratic procedures as a driving force for professionals is also noted in research on the brain drain from African nations (Benedict and Ukpere, 2012).

The many bright individuals who are the target of the brain drain also value democratic traditions, transparency in governance, and the legitimacy of a government and its many institutions (Smolentseva, 2011). The types of substantial political, social, and cultural transition observed, for example, in the Arab Spring, reveal probable developments which may also entail reverse brain outflow in nations that have experienced a brain drain. Political institutions, democracy, and urbanization are among the strategies that serve to lessen the issue. Sending and receiving courtiers are important functions of a democracy (Karimi, 2013).

Evidence suggests that in a developing democracy, significant sums of private and governmental funds are spent on overseas education, supporting democracy at home (Spilimbergo, 2007). Education is non-systematic in democratic countries. Most tertiary educated individuals, especially in the developing world, may benefit greatly from democratic principles and political engagement that take place in universities. There is currently no conclusive link between funding allocated to universities and research activities and political, intellectual, and democratic freedoms (Solimano, 2002).

The most recent democratic movements—the Arab Spring—in North Africa and the Middle East in 2011 and the process of regime change toward democracy may be a sign that the 'brain drain' from MENA nations will eventually slow and even reverse itself (Fathallah, 2011).

As a result, there is a widening divide between the industrialized, democratic world and the rising mobility of talent throughout the world. In this area of human rights, democratic

norms, openness in government, and a regime's legitimacy can all be key factors in reversing the brain drain and brain circulation phenomena.

2.8 Push factors that influence Brain drain

Talented individuals' inclinations to stay in the country or leave it are influenced by a range of circumstances. The 'push' and 'pull' variables that contribute to 'brain drain' may be categorized into two large groupings. The push and pull dynamics that influence international migration across political boundaries are clearly and directly related to the change theory, which was created by Lewin in 1951 (Baruch, 1995). The key push-pull forces that might cause a "brain drain" in the global system include political, economic, cultural, demographic, and technical (Bhagwati, 2011).

According to Harvey (2012), social, political, and economic issues, all have an influence on the decision of brilliant individuals to remain in their native countries. On the other hand, the host nation's draw factors include appealing employment prospects or lifestyle advantages. According to Baldwin (1970), "brain drain" describes the transnational migration of skilled labor, such as scientists, physicians, and engineers. According to Davenport (2004), the word also alludes to the spread of skilled human capital, notably STHC (scientific and technological human capital). Gradually, the term "brain drain" has come to refer to the emigration of highly trained workers or human capital from underdeveloped nations to wealthier ones (Croix and Docquier, 2012). Briefly put, "brain drain" refers to the legal and frequent transfer of bright persons from developing to wealthy nations (Falade-Obalade, 2012; Khamene, 2011).

2.8.1 The Key Policy Push Factors Linked to Brain Drain

'Brain drain' in source nations can be prevented and reduced in part by government action. Numerous recent research stress how some regulations in developing nations have a bad impact on the choices of brilliant individuals to remain or go abroad. According to Docquier et al. (2007), the 'brain drain' issue is on the rise due to a number of variables, including poor levels of development, high levels of political instability, and religious and ethnic polarization. The authors pointed out that some measures, including increasing education and enhancing the political environment at home, may serve to lessen the brain drain. Additionally, additional studies have recognized and underscored the importance of the political environment in emerging nations as a contributor to the brain drain. (Gibson,

2011; Wei, 2011) These writers came to the conclusion that elements like political instability, revolutions, poverty, religious persecution, human rights, and freedom lead to skilled individuals migrating to developing nations.

2.8.2 Socio-cultural Dimensions

Migration decisions are frequently influenced by cultural and religious considerations (Huntington et al., 2011; Tillard, 2011). Many bright professionals in emerging nations choose Western culture and norms over native social and cultural systems, even if just partially and not entirely. This widens the cultural divide between emerging and industrialized nations. The secular plurality of Western countries may fall within this category (Morady, 2011). A review of earlier studies and related literature reveals that there are some significant sociocultural divides in areas like ideological perspectives, shared values, and social networks, as well as in areas like gender, public health, and family ties and social networks. These divides act as a driving force for talented individuals to relocate abroad.

People from minority sects or religions are especially vulnerable to this cultural influence, as seen by immigration from various Middle Eastern nations. Talented individuals are less likely to go to some Middle Eastern countries where there are several religions because of discrepancies in their values and beliefs. Coptic Christians are migrating in great numbers, for instance, to Egypt (Jeynes, 2012).

According to Lotfalian (2009), Mossayeb and Shirazi (2006), and Sobhe (1982), the Cultural Revolution in Iran (1980–1983) had a tremendous influence on the educational system, especially among the many outstanding individuals who were subject to purification, ideological cleaning, and retirement. For the secular students and instructors who resisted the redesign of Iran's new educational system in accordance with Islamic ideas and beliefs, the writers underlined the ideological criteria and identified new policy ramifications. A massive campaign of repression against all opposing elements got under way. He comes to the conclusion that many bright individuals moved to the West, especially the US, as a result of the difficulty.

According to a similar study (Chaichian, 2011), the relationship between politics and mainstream religion might widen the ideological divide. The brain drain phenomenon has also been significantly impacted by gaps in views between sociocultural factors and

authority, as well as by a mix of formal religion and politics in society (Chaichian, 2011). The major reasons for bright people to migrate, in the eyes of the Iranian government, were negative attitudes against Western-educated individuals in the academic realm and the reformation of the education policy (Torbat, 2002). As opposed to this, officials in rich nations' promises of freedom (such as in the political and religious spheres) have an impact on people's decisions to leave their home countries for work (Bang and Mitra, 2011).

A comparable illustration is the situation of Sri Lanka, which demonstrates how the cultural differences between the home country and the regulatory environment affect the beliefs and behaviors of immigrant entrepreneurs. This has significantly contributed to the steady rise in "brain drain" (Azmat and Zutshi, 2012). In contrast, because of the homogeneity of culture in Iran, returning expatriates experience culture shock. In other words, cultural policy has an impact on society's overall culture (Chaichian, 2011). On the other hand, immigrants occasionally choose to relocate to a similar culture (Carr et al., 2005), as acculturation in the host nations can be challenging and expatriate specialists cannot adjust to the new culture. For instance, foreign Taiwanese students in the USA struggle to fit into Western culture (Yu-Wen, 2005).

Family relationships, social networks, and socialization processes are only a few examples of social and cultural elements that may have a significant influence. Students transferring from one culture to another experience cultural difficulties as a result of socio-cultural elements, which are vital in the integration processes (Osland et al., 2000). Professionals left Malaysia as a result of several draw forces from developed nations. Better benefits, a better work environment, a higher likelihood of finding a job, better educational chances, family influence, and a fulfilling social and cultural life are just a few examples (Jauhar and Yusoff, 2011). It was shown in the instance of Turkish student immigrants that family connections and immigration law interplay in the home and host nations. Other elements that affected the choice of whether to stay in Canada to work or go home were the opinions of influential community members and governmental bodies, relationships with loved ones, and lifestyle choices (Nisbett, 2011).

In research conducted in New Zealand as a host country, Soon (2012) discovered that elements including family support, time spent abroad, job experience, and the difficulty and focus of the studies affected and contributed to international students' decision to

return home. On the other side, students were persuaded to remain in the host nation by their impressions of their home country, which included those of the working environment, possibilities to put their abilities to use, the lifestyle, and their family ties. For instance, the government of Singapore launched a mission to try to entice bright individuals to revert by making them think of home food (Duffy and Ashley, 2012).

The relationship between individuals and global movements, as well as the demographic shift, will have two effects, claims Fargues (2011). First and foremost, family ties are the primary motivator for bright individuals to relocate overseas. Second, these individuals enhanced their knowledge and abilities while simultaneously saving money and finding employment. He contends that getting married is more essential than accumulating money and gaining experience for immigrants living in their host nation. In contrast, incoming an unprecedented and largely unanticipated demographic change and 16 declining birth rate result in a lack of a driving force and increased ageing in developed countries, forcing nations to rely on immigrants, particularly qualified professionals who address societal and global economic needs (Kotkin and Ozuna, 2012). According to other research, a person's personal qualities from their place of origin significantly influence whether they choose to remain in the host nation or go back home (Kim et al., 2011).

Although one of the demographic data is the population migration rate in any given nation, from the standpoint of growth that is related to educated individuals migrating, this is only one of the demographic data. The need for bright individuals is quite strong in advanced nations due to the educational and technological differences between the developing and developed worlds (Sahay, 2014). The disparity in educational levels between the home nation and the host country has been the subject of another research. For instance, after reshaping the previous educational system in Iran, the Cultural Revolution had a huge impact on it, and many gifted individuals left the country (Mossayeb and Shirazi, 2006; Sobhe, 1982).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that factors such as research capabilities and equity in higher education policy have a substantial impact on decisions about migration or return. For instance, the government of Taiwan created a research park and offered financial and tax incentives to Taiwanese living overseas to return, and as a result, the nation now has the largest technological sector in East Asia (Marcus Noland et al., 2008). According to a study conducted in Iran (Zohreh et al., 2011), establishing a research

university inside the country's higher education system and fostering a collaborative atmosphere between university researchers and research leaders will benefit both academics and lessen the 'brain drain' phenomena.

The Iranian government made an effort to reform the educational system's prior ideas and goals after the revolution, but the new Islamic government shuttered all colleges and higher education facilities in April 1980 in order to carry out a cultural revolution. The Iranian educational system, as well as language planning and policy, underwent a significant transformation as a result of the Islamic Revolution, and the direction of language policy and practice was decided by the political authorities. Before beginning their academic studies in their chosen disciplines, students at Shiraz University, for instance, had to complete a two-month intensive English course (Khajavi and Abbasian, 2011). The authors draw the conclusion that attempts to eliminate Arabic linguistic characteristics from Persian were attempted throughout the Pahlavis era (1925–1979), but that these efforts were ineffective. In contrast, Arabic received special attention from policymakers following the Islamic revolution and was promoted as the primary foreign language in the nation in an effort to support religious traditions.

The availability of possibilities for women in underdeveloped nations is also impacted by gender discrimination (Bang and Mitra, 2011). Additionally, according to some research, a national education program might aid in halting the emigration of competent individuals. Increased public education spending and uncooperative policy, according to research by Egger et al. (2012), resulted in a high-skilled brain drain. High-skilled employees, however, will be drawn to bilateral coordination, fiscal competitiveness, and policy coordination.

The gender disparity between LDCs and DCs, along with the education and job prospects for women, are relevant factors frequently mentioned in connection with the flight of workers (Knop et al., 2012). It follows that the poor or even deteriorating conditions for women in nations like Iran have a strong push effect on migrant families and women in particular (Hakimzadeh, 2006). Similar studies have indicated that the 'brain drain' of women from poor nations is impacted by the gender gap and discrimination in access to opportunities (Bang and Mitra, 2011). The research covers the gender disparity in earnings, culture, and education as well as gender bias in access to economic opportunities and gender differences in economic results.

Another research (Chaichian, 2011) came to the conclusion that the main push factors impacting the Iranian brain drain were a lack of social, political, and religious freedom in Iran. On the other hand, according to Mossayeb and Shirazi (2006), the possibility of education was at least as significant a draw for immigration to the United States. All surveys conducted prior to 1975, however, revealed an excess of Iranian scientists migrating to the United States in the 1970s (Joorabchi, 1973). Additionally, other research showed that the 'brain drain' was not an issue for the Iranian government prior to the Islamic revolution (Torbat, 2002).

Additionally, family visas prevent female immigrants from working legally, thus they are less dependent on immigration policy than male immigrants are (Bang and Mitra, 2011). Talented women may be impacted by identity, social support, life stage, host country culture, and prejudice against women, according to a study conducted in the Netherlands (Van den Bergh and Du Plessis, 2012). Therefore, immigration laws in developed nations encourage the immigration of educated women (Bertoli and Brücker, 2011). For equal possibilities in society, many outstanding women emigrated from their home countries, notably to Western countries.

Another research by Parekh (2009) in the context of fostering a global culture of science in the Pacific region reveals that a number of nations (such as China, India, and South Korea) are starting to implement new cultural policies in the field and bridge cultural divides. He contends that certain material and cultural prerequisites, which are important in emerging nations, are necessary for a worldwide cultural strategy of science. The primary social connections, such as social contact with friends and family, a familiar social and cultural environment, and cultural communication, which provide people with psychological satisfaction, are what determine return intention, according to a study on overseas Chinese talent in Japan (the second country after the US to be the host land) (Xue, 2012).

The conventional higher education policy in Iran was altered during the Cultural Revolution (1980–1983), as previously indicated, and many professors and instructors who adhered to Marxism, Liberalism, and other ideologies other than Islam were fired (Jahanbegloo, 2013). Numerous new political and ideological standards and regulations were created as a result and implemented in the educational system. Due to the new scenario created by the new perspective, brilliant individuals were affected and moved

abroad. As a result, we saw some conflicts in the universities between students and policymakers.

According to field study, the "top-down" approach to education policy has detrimental effects on bright individuals, particularly with regard to the ideological, political, and unequal standards for financial aid for higher education and research. Talented individuals became the focus of attention thanks to political activity freedom at universities in developed countries, contemporary standards, and research funds at top levels of facilities for the finest potential. A major factor in the migration of bright women is their protection from discrimination in Western countries.

As a result, in terms of sociocultural factors, there are significant inequalities between developing and industrialized nations in terms of global talent mobility. Human differences in ideas and values, gender discrimination, higher education policy, and education and technical skills, which are related to global talent mobility, are the primary areas where the scope is lacking.

2.8.3 Political Dimensions

Political differences between LDCs and DCs have been the subject of several studies, and these differences play a larger role in determining the number of brilliant individuals who choose to relocate to developing nations. There are some significant gaps in the political arena, according to a study of earlier research and associated literature. According to Fakhrutdinova et al. (2014), Gibson (2011), Lotfalian (2009), Musumba et al. (2011), and others, the main gaps in the conditions are inequality, political instability, religious persecution, revolution, level of academic freedom, ideological cleansing, non-realistic policy, and corruption that is linked to global talent mobility.

International migration was the subject of a recent historical debate by Goldin et al. (2012). The surge in the integration process, according to the authors, was caused by political shifts that swept through Berlin, the Soviet Union, China, and the majority of the African and Latin American nations. Globally, the immigrant population has doubled over the past 25 years, and this trend is predicted to remain for the next 50. As a result, during the nineteenth century, immigration policy was influenced by political concerns related to culture, security, language, and race. However, the battle for a greener future and the political climate are the pushing and pulling elements that led to a migration wave

into receiving countries and raised concerns about a brain drain from the countries of origin.

Giannoccolo (2009) asserts that a country's political environment affects mobility fundamentally and affects the incidence of brain drain. He contends that equality and stability are the two key political institution-level elements that have both a good and a negative impact on the educational intention to immigrate. Numerous academic works have claimed that the political structure in the countries where the professionals are migrating is the primary reason for the "brain drain," which has caused experts to leave. More publications (Fakhrutdinova et al., 2014; Torbat, 2002) have underlined that brilliant people's migration surged between 1990 and 2000, mostly as a result of Iran's political unrest.

Additionally, professional migration may be impacted by the unfavorable political environment in developing nations as well as political unpredictability, religious persecution, and revolutions (Docquier et al., 2007; Musumba et al., 2011). According to research conducted across African nations, professional migration was impacted by push forces. Talented individuals have migrated due to factors like higher education inequality, a lack of educational infrastructure at home, terrorist attacks, coups, dictatorial military regimes, civil wars, ethnic tensions, and political instability brought on by egotistical and greedy politicians (Benedict and Ukpere, 2012). The expertise was drawn to politics, on the other hand, by the policy choices made by possible host nations about matters of freedom, immigration standards, business regulations, and taxation. (Carr et al., 2005).

Numerous "brain drain" studies have documented how the political environment affects the number of smart people who leave emerging nations. For the advantage of developed nations, these regions provide academics and professionals (Commander et al., 2004). A favorable or inconducive political environment has significant effects on both the incidence of brain drain and the mobility of professionals, according to 20 (Gibson, 2011). He contends that many people's decisions to immigrate are influenced by this. Political contexts thus have an influence on the occurrence in the originating nations.

Solimano (2002) examined the relationship between political regimes that impacted talent migratory flows and global brain drain mobility. He contends that authoritarian regimes that repress civil rights and restrict academic freedom are associated with an increase in

the exodus of scientists and intellectuals. The political disparities are further discussed by Solimano, who comes to the following conclusion:

Better employment and educational prospects in industrialized nations are pulling reasons for the exodus of human capital, but domestic political and economic pressures are pushing factors as well. It appears that there is no direct correlation between funding for universities and research activities and political, intellectual, and democratic freedoms. (Solimano, 2002)

The political environment's importance in the process of brain drain is best exemplified by the case of Iran. Numerous studies indicate that the political unrest in Iran between 1990 and 2000 led to a sharp rise in the number of brilliant professionals leaving the country (Hakimzadeh, 2006). Accordingly, political unrest, economic instability, religious intolerance, and even revolutions, can serve as a major driving force in underdeveloped nations (Musumba et al., 2011).

The instability gap was found as a push factor in a study of the 'brain drain' from African nations. Such movements of people were brought about by terrorist attacks, political uprisings, authoritarian and/or military regimes, civil wars, ethnic conflicts, and overall political instability brought about by egotistical and greedy politicians (Benedict and Ukpere, 2012). Talented individuals are drawn to nations with more hospitable political environments because they can move more easily and are driven by associated variables including political freedom, immigration requirements, business climates, and taxation regimes (Carr et al., 2005).

Contrarily, reducing the brain drain has a good impact on political freedom and stability while also helping to stop the exodus of citizens (Bang and Mitra, 2011a; Beine et al., 2008b; Wei, 2011). According to research conducted in Algeria, the degree of freedom in the Muslim world affects people's welfare. According to these findings, the Muslim world has become a difficult environment for individuals to peacefully live, work, and invest (Tiliouine and Meziane, 2012). According to other research (Bang and Mitra, 2011; Huang, 1988), social-political issues can significantly affect the "brain drain" in some locations, despite the importance of economic forces in such areas.

In order to give free access to its findings and contribute to global discussions on development policy, the Development Findings Group conducted a study in other nations.

According to Gibson's (2011) study, many nations have significant policy gaps (non-realistic policies) that have an impact on migration. Political instability with low levels of democracy and human capital constitutes the second problem. They contend that open borders and political hurdles exist all across the world, contributing to both brain gain and brain drain.

Comparing the two major political ideologies of the Islamic Republic of Iran reveals that, during the past sixteen years, reformism, more liberal ideologies, and Islamic precepts have gained political sway. The beliefs and practices of the rule were questioned by reformists who believed that institutionalized religious dominance was inappropriate. The opponents of the reformists were the Islamic principles that controlled the administration and the parliament during the second phase. They backed the supreme authorities and favored maintaining the guardianship system. According to Karimi and Garaati (2013), neither political strategy accepted any responsibility for the brain drain. Additionally, from the 1970s to the present, a variety of political forces have held sway, first from a standpoint that was secularist in nature and most recently from one that is dominated by Islamic ideas and ideals. Both arguments contend that despite being unpleasant, gifted people do not significantly contribute to the nation's sustainable growth.

In addition, politicians in developing nations frequently bemoan the fact that they spend thousands of dollars training students just to see them leave the country and work for a certain length of time instead of in their own country. For instance, the example of Ghana demonstrates how unrealistic policies, poor planning, and a lack of change in the conventional institutions were the push factors that caused the "brain drain" (Nyarko, 2011).

According to several research, the political disparity between LDCs and DCs contributes to the emigration of bright individuals. For instance, Giannoccolo (2009) pointed out that the political environment affects the rate of "brain drain" as well. He contends that the political system has two key components—equality and stability—that might have an impact on students' intentions to migrate both favorably and unfavorably. The political and economic structures in the nation and the world are also out of balance. Therefore, political stability helps increase expatriate expertise returning to the originating nation and decrease the "brain drain." Political unrest, on the other hand, affects both the decline in the reverse brain and the growing numbers of "brain drain."

Furthermore, research by Mitra et al. (2011) demonstrates how institutional characteristics like the legitimacy of the government, the openness of government processes, democracy, and the safety of civil society play key roles in and impact talent mobility. The study showed that increased stability lessened the 'brain drain'. On the other hand, more professional transfer occurs when the institutional quality of the nation of origin is higher (Bang and Mitra, 2011).

Political debates, critical discussions, and intellectual impacts on the nation's political atmosphere and the war have been ongoing for years. International migration is one of the effects that resulted from the interaction between political power and talented individuals. Finding the appropriate personnel appears to be a challenge. Since democracy and human rights are not exogenous variables, they are both important issues for many countries (Roudgar, 2012).

As a result, there are significant differences between emerging and established nations in terms of talent mobility, particularly in terms of political environments. Political instability, academic independence, ideological purging, unrealistic policy, and unrealistic policy related to global talent mobility are the main factors that are lacking.

2.8.4 Economic Dimensions

A list of the driving forces can highlight various significant economic differences. There are several significant differences between LDCs and DCs, including the salary gap, living standards, workforce policies, financial inequalities, employment prospects, and social justice levels, which encourage talent movement.

The fundamental driver of migration, according to neoclassical economic theory, is the pay differential between two regions, therefore immigrants often move from low-income to higher-income areas. Talented individuals migrate for a variety of reasons, including better pay and career prospects, which policymakers must take into consideration (De la Croix and Docquier, 2010). The level of living in both the sending and receiving nations, as well as the effectiveness of the teaching and research environments, are three key draw factors for brilliant individuals (Baruch et al., 2007). Students may go internationally to rich nations, particularly the USA, due to financial considerations, educational program reputation and quality, marketing and communication, and a rising economy (Lemke, 2012).

For instance, as Kim (1998) noted, scientists and engineers are significantly impacted by the disparity in technology policy between wealthy and poor countries. He contends that a lot of specialists go to industrialized nations in quest of acceptable, well-paying careers with superior facilities for research and development. In addition, a lack of respect for intellectual property rights in some nations contributes to the departure of many researchers (Kuhn and McAusland, 2009). Similar to this, many professionals leave their jobs because they believe there aren't enough job possibilities available in general, and frequently because there isn't a fair and acceptable commitment to quality and transparency (Beine et al., 2001). Therefore, to help bring about a good shift, it may be necessary to make changes to the policies governing education and employment (Verkhohlyad and McLean, 2012).

Reviewing the majority of earlier research on brain drain reveals that economic gap issues, notably financial inequalities and employment prospects, are what drive immigration. Rich possibilities (Agrawal et al., 2011; Mullan, 2005; Patel, 2003; Stark et al., 1997) and superior quality of life (Beine et al., 2008a; Hooper, 2008; Toole et al., 2010) are a few of the draw factors in developed countries. Therefore, it is important to focus on creating and executing sensible economic and educational changes in developing nations that can affect the repatriation of knowledge (Verkhohlyad and McLean, 2012). In contrast to how small and less developed nations are often weakened significantly, migration outflow may assist big populations and middle-income countries if managed and used appropriately, as (Tavakol, 2012) points out.

Career prospects, the state of the economy, and the social environment also have an impact on talented people's decision-making when choosing a place for a better quality of life (Bhargava and Docquier, 2008; Esu and Inyang, 2011; Sherman and Sage, 2011). According to research conducted in Malaysia, the push factors include a lack of advancement chances, a lack of employee engagement, professional discontent, the quality of one's work environment, job opportunities that are scarce, a lack of autonomy, exposure to other cultures, and a lack of fulfilling social and cultural experiences (Jauhar and Yusoff, 2011).

For instance, the case of Pakistan in the context of medical graduates demonstrates that the economic gaps, such as job opportunities, financial circumstances, and the hope for a better future, are key pull factors behind the "brain drain" that influences the intention to

return or stay in the host countries (Imran et al., 2011). Research from the Pacific Islands, however, shows that economic expansion is a motivating factor for returning expatriates from China, India, and Taiwan. The single-child policy has a push factor to come back in China, nonetheless (Baruch et al., 2007).

According to Ajzen (2011), goals and behaviors at work have a significant impact on productivity. The demanding higher education policies and practices of the government and institutions are also correlated with the degree of social equity among societies (Carpentier and Unterhalter, 2011). The other causes of career change are not related to social fairness or inequality (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2001).

Additionally, the economic difference is the major cause pushing doctors and professors to migrate, but in the case of Iran, political issues played a large part in the movement of outstanding individuals (Moghissi, 2013). Policies that separate education from research are also driving forces for migration. Ineffectiveness and poor management have a significant effect on brain drain. As a result, many gifted individuals have moved to developed countries in search of better living and a promising future (Abedin, 2011). Even the former president of Iran stated that poor management exacerbated the country's "brain drain" (Zden et al., 2011).

The causes of "brain drain" are highlighted in a 2011 report by Bruce A. The GDP (per capita), population, and level of education all had a beneficial impact on the rate of expertise migration. For instance, the government's policy in the Philippines' brain drain is based on the fact that the remittances that people residing overseas send account for a sizable portion of their GDP and have therefore kept the country's economy afloat. The present government's policies on remittances sent abroad by expatriates for a high GDP rate deter returns (Valle, 2011). Additionally, in the Pacific region, the GDP of the sending country was the key element that significantly influenced the number of foreign students from various countries, including China, Japan, South Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam, who study in the United States.

The workforce policy gap between the US and developing nations is another significant characteristic, and it has grown to be a significant determinant of immigration (Chen et al., 2011). On the other hand, among African doctors, the transformation has been pushed by low pay, few career opportunities, and unfavorable working circumstances (Luboga et al., 2011). In contrast, research conducted in New Zealand found that the push factors of

instability, antagonism, quantifiable concerns, broad agreement, and lack of proportionality had an impact on scientists and technical personnel (Davenport, 2004).

In developing nations, public policy actively contributes to brain outflow, and there is undoubtedly a chance that the inhabitants left behind in their home countries may benefit from the brain drain. As opposed to this, the process of expatriate return or "brain circulation" will bring direct investment to the nations of origin, facilitate technological transfers, and usher in the necessary institutional transformation that can aid in development and progress (Egger et al., 2012).

As a result, there are significant economic differences between affluent and poor nations in relation to global talent mobility. The key gaps in this area include pay differences between two places, labor rules related to technology, and merit-based hiring practices.

2.9 Brain Drain and Higher Education in Nepal

The government of Nepal has spearheaded the creation of higher education institutions in various parts of the nation during the past few decades in an effort to increase the quality and accessibility of higher education. Similar attempts have been undertaken to enhance the higher education curriculum, academic policies, and procedures. However much work still has to be done to raise the standard of higher education in Nepal. Tribhuvan University, the primary higher education institution, is, in reality, dealing with a number of issues, including but not limited to a lack of high-quality instruction, politicization, and insufficient budget (Mathema, 2007). Furthermore, Mathema contends that the most significant barriers to advancement in higher education and the implementation of educational reform in higher education in Nepal are political instability and frequent government interference. One of the main problems with Nepal's higher education system, according to Gaulee (2014) is unwarranted political influence in higher education.

Many young people in Nepal are now looking outside of the country's higher education institutions to better fulfil their intellectual potential and to establish the greatest social and economic prospects for their careers as a result of the country's inadequate educational system. Gaulee (2014) went on to say that a number of issues, including a lack of quality assurance and success, a shortage of trained labor, and political unrest in the nation, have contributed to the poor quality of higher education. In contrast, wealthy

nations provide top-notch higher education and improved employment prospects following graduation. As a result, each year a large number of graduates—including those in agricultural and veterinary—move from Nepal to industrialized nations in search of high-quality education (Katel & Sapkota, 2018). As a result, the number of students moving to industrialized nations like the United States of America, Australia, Europe, etc. has been increasing yearly. For instance, the number of Nepalese students enrolled in American schools and institutions grew by 14.3% in 2018 compared to 2017 (US Embassy, Nepal). According to Katel and Sapkota (2018), brain drain resulted from the fact that the majority of students left Nepal after graduating. The brain drain has increased in Nepal during the past two decades and has appeared to continue.

The idea of brain drain first came into existence around the turn of the 20th century when individuals from all over the world—especially those from EU—started to emigrate to far-off locations in quest of better opportunities and a higher quality of life. Despite significant changes, academics all agree on the same concept of brain drain. Brain drain is the transnational movement of highly trained persons ², particularly to North America, from underdeveloped nations (Glavan, 2008). Brain drain, in its simplest form, is the process by which the best-skilled individuals from one economy go to live and work in another economy in an effort to raise their standard of life (Brassington, 2012). According to Sahay (2009), it also describes the exodus of highly educated people and professionals from poor countries to industrialized nations. The drain effect refers to the loss of trained professionals that occurs after emigration, whereas the brain effect refers to the return of human capital, skill, technology, and advanced education to the home nation. When referring to Nepal, the term "brain drain" describes the movement of (semi)skilled people out of Nepal to other nations in search of greater possibilities and well-being in their life.

According to Beine et al. (2001), the brain and drain are two diametrically opposed effects: a draining effect and a brain effect. According to several studies, brain drain has detrimental consequences on both the economy and higher education in the originating nation (Ha, Yi, J. & Zhang, 2016; Lee, 1976; McKenzie, 2006; Sefa Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2002). The negative effects of brain drain are felt equally in higher education's teaching, research, and graduation quality (Shumba & Mawere, 2012). While other research (Beine, Docquier, & Rapoport, 2008; Carman, 2011; Haupt, Krieger, & Lange, 2010; Miyagiwa, 1991; Mountford, 1997; Romero, 2013; Sahay, 2009) have argued that brain drain benefits the originating nation. According to Miyagiwa (1991), brain drain, for instance,

might improve the education and economic levels of the nations where emigrants are from. The brain drain provides new transitional resources in the home country that encourage economic growth, especially higher education (Mok & Han, 2016), and has favorable consequences on both the home nation and the foreign country (Sahay, 2009).

Prior research on brain drain has mostly concentrated on the economic side of both the source countries and the destination countries. The impacts of brain drain on the nation's higher education systems have only been the subject of a small number of research. According to Katel and Sapkota (2018), brain drain is a huge problem in Nepal's higher education system, especially in the agricultural and veterinary fields, and has resulted in a significant loss of investment. It appears that no research has looked at the impacts of brain drain in Nepal's higher education. This research set out to look at the impact of brain drain on Nepal's higher education system. Lack of employment and educational prospects, political unrest, and lower earnings were the primary causes of the brain drain. The brain drain seeking higher education in Nepal has more adverse repercussions than favorable ones. It is in the best interest of the nation to make the most of brain-drain individuals' knowledge and ability for the country's economic growth and enhancement of the higher education system in Nepal, notwithstanding additional negative repercussions. For the long-term success of the country, the Nepali government does make an effort to slow down, if not completely stop, the pace of brain drain.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methods employed to accomplish the study's stated objectives. A research method aids in systematizing the research problem-solving process. The methodology applied for studying the causes of brain drain among undergraduate students of Biratnagar is described, along with the research model, sample procedure, and data collecting and analytic methodologies employed. This chapter describes the data-collection process and the methodology used by the researcher to analyze the available data. This study focuses more on a qualitative approach and also employs a descriptive component based on logical and analytical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The research follows the descriptive research design as it intends to know the causes of brain drain among undergraduate students of Biratnagar.

A research design is a comprehensive strategy outlining the steps to take in order to gather and analyze the necessary data. The study is conducted to analyze the sources of brain drain among Nepalese youths who are currently studying at different universities as undergraduates within Biratnagar Metropolitan City. So, this research work will be fruitful for other researchers who want to analyze different dimensions of issues related to brain drain and its effects. It describes the perception of the undergraduate-level university students of Biratnagar Metropolitan City about what they have to express on this particular research topic.

3.2 Universe and Sampling

The participants for this study were selected using the purposive sampling method. This is a type of sampling in which the researcher uses his judgments about which respondents to choose and picks only those regarded to be the best for the study (Kenneth, 1978). For the study, altogether 40 respondents were selected for semi-structured interviews from Biratnagar. 22 were males and 18 were females. Respondents were from MMAMC, PUSSET, PU Management Campus, Degree Campus, Birat Medical College, Birat Nursing Home, Koshi Campus and District Administrative Office, Morang, Kangaroo

Consultancy Biratnagar. Respondents were interviewed to understand their understanding of the brain drain status of Nepal, the major causes and effects of brain drain and the motivations (push and pull factors) that drive them to fly abroad.

3.3 Nature of Data

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data needed for the study was collected by reviewing the available related literature like books, journals, reports, articles, publications, news, and so on. Primary data on the other hand was gathered in the field utilizing a variety of different methods. The study is based on qualitative data so, data is gathered by semi-structured interviews, and Key Informant Interviews (KII). To ensure the reliability and validity of the information and data gathered, several techniques were employed. First of all, attempts were to cross-check any information gathered from a person by asking some questions to the respondent twice. Similarly, several knowledgeable persons because of their experiences and age were used as key informants.

3.4 Tools and Techniques of Data Collection

The study used a qualitative method approach; hence qualitative data were collected. The data were collected through the following primary and secondary data collection techniques.

3.4.1 Semi-Structure Interview (SSI)

Following the qualitative approach, the primary data was collected through SSI with the undergraduate-level university students of Biratnagar Metropolitan, residing currently within Biratnagar. The questionnaire was aligned with the objective of the study.

3.4.2 Key Informant Interviews (KII)

KII was done with the Representative from Puset, MMAMC, Degree Campus, NSU Morang Chapter, an Australian Migrant Agent cum visa counsellor of Biratnagar-based Higher Education and migration consultancy, and a Section Officer of the Passport Unit of District Administration Office, Biratnagar, Morang. These KII were considered as an etic approach to data collection and interpretations.

3.4.3 Observation

A detailed observation was conducted regarding the social impacts on the respondents. The researcher observes the activities on day-to-day issues which pushed respondents to pursue employment and higher studies abroad, during the field visit. The researcher used the participant observation method in natural conditions.

3.5 Processing and Analyzing of Data

The qualitative analysis method was used to process and generate the result. Particularly, a researcher made use of narrative data analysis. For qualitative data, the notes of the interview and observation were prepared. Further, to manage and analyze the data properly and to maintain the coherent flow of ideas, the interviews and observations were recorded. Therefore, these notes and audio were translated into English and thematically categorized based on keywords such as brain drain, migration, push and pull factors etc. The main points obtained for the qualitative study were extracted and summarized. The summarized data are grouped according to similarities and presented tabulated, as necessary.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

The researcher has tried his best to avoid ethical sensitivity and biases during the field study and the research report writing. The respondents were informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended use of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any are involved. The respondents were free to keep their identity anonymous and were free from coercion. The researcher followed the ‘Do No Harm’ and ‘Conflict Sensitivity’ approaches to avoid ethical issues. Moreover, the researcher has highly considered ensuring the integrity and quality of scientific research.

3.7 Limitations

The study is limited to the study area. The undergraduate students residing in other areas of the country could have varying understandings, access and abilities and therefore cannot be generalized into one single finding.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Findings and Analysis

This chapter provides the overall findings and analysis of the thesis, which targeted to assessing sources of brain drain among undergraduate Students, in view of its prospects and challenges. Data was generated through key informant interviews and observations with 40 respondents and 7 KIIs of different personal and professional natures.

4.1 Study Area

Biratnagar, positioned as a thriving metropolitan city near the border of India, holds the distinct honor of being the capital of Province No.1 within Nepal. Renowned for its strategic location and economic vitality, the city serves as a nexus of various socio-economic activities, including its robust educational endeavours. Biratnagar's commitment to fostering academic excellence is evident through its array of educational institutions, which have garnered prominence as esteemed bastions of Nepal's educational landscape. Notably, the researcher's selection of institutions such as Mahendra Morang Adarsha Multiple Campus (MMAMC), Purbanchal University School of Engineering and Technology (PUSET), Purbanchal University Management Campus, Degree Campus, Birat Medical College, Birat Nursing Home and Koshi Campus underscores their integral role in the study.

The geographic reach of this study encompasses a diverse range of wards within Biratnagar, specifically respondents belonging to Ward Numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, and 16. Expanding from Budhiganga Gaupalika to the North, Katahari Gaunpalika to the East, Sunsari district to the West, and reaching the border with India to the South, Biratnagar's geographic breadth encapsulates a dynamic blend of locales. This varied coverage includes a spectrum of linguistic backgrounds and caste affiliations, spanning Brahmin, Chettri, Tharu, Yadav, Awasti, Mandal, Gurung, Magar, and more. These intricate demographic dimensions interweave to shape the cultural fabric of the study area, contributing a multi-dimensional context against which the phenomenon of brain drain among university students is probed.

4.2 Respondents Profile

There were a total number of 40 respondents and none of them were persons with disability. Among the respondents, 16 were residents of Ward No. 5, 6, and 7 whereas the remaining respondents were from the other wards as mentioned above. It included undergraduate-level university students from different educational streams such as engineering, management, social science, and nursing. The age group of the primary respondents ranged from 20 to 28. Out of 40 respondents, 32 were actual ongoing university students while the other remaining 8 had completed their final year examination and had been waiting for the test results or just graduated. All the respondents had a general understanding of brain drain and everyone was aware of its causes and effects. 8 of them had never heard the term 'brain drain', however, they had a general conceptual understanding.

The total number of 7 key informants from different backgrounds were part of this study to understand the status of brain drain, its progression and its probable causes. Among 7 key informants included the Representative from Puset, MMAMC, Degree Campus, NSU Morang Chapter, an Australian Migrant Agent cum visa counsellor of Biratnagar-based migration consultancy, and a Section Officer of the Passport Unit of District Administration Office, Biratnagar, Morang.

4.3 Current Status of Brain Drain

Nepal has a problem with a lack of work chances, which is why young people in Nepal are prepared to leave the country in quest of better career prospects, personal development opportunities, luxurious accommodations, globalization and the pursuit of cutting-edge technology. The main reason people leave poor nations like Nepal is unemployment. A government immigration report suggests that in 2022, the net migration rate increased by 19.72% from 2021 to be at 4.353 per 1,000 people.

The majority of migrants agree that there is a significant salary gap between Nepal and other countries for the same job. There is a significant wage difference between someone with a specific degree of education working in Nepal and someone with the same education working elsewhere. While both spend about the same time and money on their higher education, neither have the same earnings, employment possibilities, or level of

life. It is evident that individuals start to compare and then want to earn at a similar level. The mismatch between education and salary also leads to brain drain in the end.

When competent human resources leave their native nation because they think their human capital is valued and because they anticipate greater returns, this is known as brain drain. Given the sharp rise in foreign employment in Nepal over the past ten years and the number of students obtaining NOCs (no objection certificates) from the Ministry of Education, a change in policy for improvement appears to be urgently needed. The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology is now giving over 1,200 NOCs every day to Nepali students for study abroad following the Covid disaster and the reopening of borders.

There is no denying that the remittance flow has helped every family's economy at home and decreased poverty. According to figures from the previous year, remittances account for more than a quarter of Nepal's GDP. Despite these benefits of remittances, if the government does not take proactive steps to stop the brain drain, the nation would lose qualified competent human resources in the country's crucial sectors, including business, research, technology, education, and the health care system. The goal of Nepal's 15th five-year plan (FY 2020–FY 2024) is to realize the country's national policies for quick, sustained, and employment-focused economic growth. The question is whether the nation can advance in the allotted period with only minimally skilled people and resources.

Number of Students Going Abroad and Receiving No Objection Certificate (NOC) in Different Years Year:

Year	Number of Students Receiving NOC
2011/12	11,912
2012/13	16,504
2013/14	28,126
2014/15	29,380
2015/16	30,758
2016/17	50,659
2017/18	58,758
2018/19	56,259

2019/20	4,094
2020/21	27,978
2021/22	1,14,134
2022/23	1,17,563

Source: Ministry of Education, Scholarship Department, 2022/23

In these few years (table above) the number of Nepalese students studying abroad has increased because studying in Nepal has also become more expensive and abroad education ideas have been largely pushed by consulting agencies here in Nepal.

4.4 Role of Consultancy in Brain Drain of University Students

The emergence of a Consulting agency (popularly known as Consultancy) in the major urban cities of Nepal has spread the ideas of abroad study, immigration and brain drain. According to a report by the District Administrative Office (DAO), Biratnagar, Morang, the number of Consultancy in Biratnagar alone is 29 (till January 2023), which was 9 till 2018. This rise was caused by to COVID pandemic where students and skilled professionals started looking for different avenues of career prospects and to fulfill this demand consultancies came into place. Those consultancies that already have full-fledged commercial success in Kathmandu are found to be opening up branches in cities like Biratnagar. According to one of the respondents, she went to the consultancy in Biratnagar to understand the procedure to be admitted for IELTS preparation classes for her sister and when she talked to the guidance counsellor and migration agent of the consultancy, she was so intrigued and started researching on abroad study on her own. She is currently waiting for her visa for Australia, which she lodged a month ago.

Besides this Consultancies in Biratnagar have successfully convinced and assisted university students to migrate abroad. Their promotional activities via advertisements in newspapers and social media, presentations in colleges, displays on hoarding boards, organizing educational fairs, and conducting regular seminars by inviting representatives from the educational institution and such, have been massive success and played a huge role in creating a vibrant environment for the students aspiring for migrating abroad.

4.5 Status of Brain drain in Biratnagar

A decade ago, Biratnagar stood as one of the cities that saw a significant exodus of students towards Kathmandu and other educational centers, seeking enhanced educational opportunities upon completing their secondary education. However, the educational landscape has undergone a profound transformation since then, as highlighted by Rajesh Karki, the president of Higher Institution and Secondary Schools' Education, Nepal (HISSAN), Morang. Karki asserts that Biratnagar has evolved into an education hub in its own right. This assertion gains further credence when one considers the proliferation of quality-oriented educational institutions that have taken root within Nepal. Many of these institutions consistently secure places within the top ten rankings of schools and colleges nationwide. As secondary education attainment escalates, a parallel surge is observed in the number of students seeking opportunities abroad for more advanced studies.

Corroborating this trend, Ward Number 5 of Biratnagar Metropolitan City, in conjunction with insights from Santosh Neupane, the Ward Chairperson, highlights the escalating demand for ward permissions, which serve as vital documents for students' various needs such as residence proof, Relation Certificate, and Covid Certification. The data underscores a significant surge in the number of students making these requests, serving as a palpable testament to the growing aspiration among youths to explore educational avenues beyond national boundaries. The figures illustrate a remarkable escalation from 45 requests in the fiscal year 2077 B.S. to a noteworthy count of 156 in the subsequent fiscal year, 2078 B.S., in ward Number 5 alone.

4.6 General Findings

Below listed are the general findings obtained during the research study, which provide a general idea about the respondents as well as the causes and consequences of Brain drain among undergraduate-level university students who are currently studying in their final year of a bachelor's degree. This study also includes some recently graduated students who are planning to migrate abroad and are working on the preparation:

1. **Age Variance and Participation:** The distribution of respondents across different age brackets underscores the diverse age composition within the sample. The relatively higher participation rate of individuals aged 20 to 28 years suggests a potential correlation between this age group and the research focus. This age

range might be indicative of a phase where individuals are actively considering various life paths, including migration, further studies, or career choices.

2. **Educational Fields and Stream of Education:** The majority of respondents from the science streams, constituting 52% of the sample, hint at a prevailing academic inclination within the region. This dominance could be attributed to various socio-cultural factors that encourage engagement with subjects related to the humanities. The lower representation from the management faculty (20%) and the humanities (28%) could potentially reflect a disparity in the perceived opportunities or attractiveness of these fields in the local context.
3. **Economic Status and Gender Distribution:** The variation in economic backgrounds among the respondents ranging from lower middle class to financially well-off sustained families, highlights the heterogeneous financial circumstances prevailing in the region. The data's gender distribution suggests that males are more likely to participate in surveys or research, indicating potential gender-based disparities in access to education and information. The noticeable percentage (26%) of respondents unaware of their family's economic status might indicate a lack of financial literacy or awareness among the youth.
4. **Job Relevance to Academic Qualification:** The high proportion (65%) of respondents reporting alignment between their jobs and academic qualifications suggests a degree of match between educational pursuits and subsequent career paths. This finding could be indicative of the emphasis placed on skill development and education within the local workforce. The remaining 35% might signify a potential mismatch between available job opportunities and the qualifications held by the respondents.
5. **Reasons for Migration:** The range of reasons cited for migration, from higher-paying jobs to societal trends and family pressures, underscores the complexity of decision-making regarding international migration. The variety of motivations presented by the respondents signifies the multidimensional nature of migration decisions, which can be influenced by economic prospects, cultural shifts, and familial expectations.

6. **Planned Duration of Stay Abroad:** The distribution of respondents' intended durations of stay abroad reveals distinct aspirations. The relatively high proportion (42%) of respondents planning a five to seven-year stay could indicate a desire to gain both experience and financial stability before potentially returning to their home country. Additionally, the noteworthy percentage (58%) expressing an intent to settle abroad permanently suggests a significant inclination towards long-term migration in pursuit of new opportunities.
7. **Factors Influencing Return to Home Country:** The factors influencing respondents' considerations about returning home encompass a blend of familial, cultural, and individual motives. The desire to reunite with family (48%) points to the enduring importance of familial ties, while the inclination not to set up abroad (37%) might stem from a sense of attachment to the home country's culture and environment, while others were confused about their response regarding the questions. These factors illustrate the dynamic interplay of personal and collective influences on migration decisions.
8. **Sources of Information on Flying Abroad:** The diverse array of sources through which respondents gather information reflects their proactive approach to decision-making. Relying on self-research (64%) emphasizes the role of personal exploration and information-seeking, supported by the continuous guidance of a consulting agency (normally referred to as consultancy). The reliance and societal trend resulting flow of information via friends and family (36%) abroad highlights the significance of social networks and personal connections in shaping migration decisions.
9. **Application for Electronic Diversity Visa (EDV):** Since the trend of EDV is quite popular in Nepal and this practice plays a vital in shaping the mindset of the general population regarding foreign migration and study abroad, the researcher included the concept of EDV to validate previous responses. The fact that over half (72%) of respondents have applied for the Electronic Diversity Visa, at least once in their lifetime, suggests a keen interest in exploring diverse migration

avenues. The proportion that hasn't applied (28%) could reflect factors such as eligibility criteria, awareness, or varying priorities regarding migration.

10. Reasons for Applying for the Electronic Diversity Visa (EDV): The motivations behind EDV applications reflect a blend of societal trends, economic prospects, and individual preferences, an easy medium for migration as such. The prominent role of societal trends (60%) underlines the influence of the wider social milieu on migration decisions. The respondents' diverse motivations emphasize the multi-faceted nature of migration choices.

11. Belief in Future Prospects in Host Country: The majority (64%) of respondents expressing optimism about better future prospects in the host country suggests a prevailing perception of overseas opportunities. Most of the responses were filled with hope and fear of the risk posed by the present socio-political situation. The minority (36%) holding a contrary view highlights the uncertainties and challenges that some individuals associated with establishing themselves in a foreign land.

12. Reasons for Flying Abroad: The motivations behind flying abroad encompass a range of factors, including socio-political instability, limited opportunities, familial pressures, and educational pursuits. The desire for better employment, business and investment opportunities and quality education indicates the aspirational and pragmatic motivations driving youth to seek experiences abroad. The influence of political and societal factors further underscores the complex interplay of internal and external drivers.

4.7 Push and Pull Factors encouraging Brain drain among University Students of Biratnagar

4.7.1 Push Factors

Push factors are those influencing elements of migration that force (immediately or slowly with the passage of time) an individual to migrate from one place to another. In terms of Brain drain, push factors are the unfavorable conditions in the native country

which guide an individual to look for better options in a foreign land. Biratnagar, also host many of those unfavorable condition which plays an important role in pushing university students to opt for international migration. A few of those push factors which were repeatedly emphasized by the respondents are discussed below:

1. Political Instability

Biratnagar, though known as an industrial city, is a city full of political history. Biratnagar, being the home and a political turf of Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, the first democratically elected Prime Minister of Nepal, has always been a fertile ground for emerging as well as established politicians. Leaders like Man Mohan Adhikari, Sailaja Acharya, Bharat Mohan Adhikari and Mahesh Acharya all come from this city. Girija Prasad Koirala, the man who has been elected prime minister the highest number of times in Nepal, and in the world, also hails from Biratnagar. Though the political history of Biratnagar is rich in itself, political stability has always been questionable. The introduction of Federalism has increased the incidents of political strife here in Biratnagar says Riya Acharya (name changed), Final year B.E student of PUSET. She also claims that the delegation of power from the federal structure to the personnel in the province is not merit-based rather it is just to satisfy the cadre of the political parties. Koshi Province is full of riots nowadays as identity-based politics is on the rise. The provincial politics in Koshi is experiencing twin troubles - one relates to the flaring up of ethnic sentiments after the recent naming of the province and the other to the tricky numerical strength of the parties in the assembly. The alliance that runs the federal administration has found it difficult to form a provincial government and the new nomenclature of the province has led to violent protests that saw a demonstrator being killed and hundreds getting injured. This has not just disturbed the political and socio-economic sphere but also the educational and employment sectors of Biratnagar. Romila Khapung (name changed), a recent graduate of BSc. A nurse from Birat Medical College shares her experience regarding her 13 months of work at the same hospital;

I was working as a Nurse at the same hospital where I completed my bachelor's degree. I worked there for almost 13 months. Initial days were full of enthusiasm and good faith, but as time passed by, the motivation to work started sliding down. One of the major causes of that feeling was the constant political disturbance in the administration of the hospital. The grievances of some patients caused due to

certain unfortunate accidents, deaths and such, were always triggered by the actions of political parties to further their interests/agenda, to showcase their existence in society and to gain popularity in the social structure. These actions always caused a disturbing environment in the hospital. The threat was always there. To walk in the streets wearing a hospital uniform was a risky task. These actions have broken down the image of healthcare institutions in Nepal. I don't feel like I belong to this community of lifesavers in our country, which is politically corrupted. Until the political stability of Biratnagar is balanced and taken care of, these kinds of disturbances by political personnel will prevail and force middle-class and dedicated individuals to opt for foreign employment without wasting any more of my youthful energetic time.

Many students have seriously been disturbed by the delay in the results of their final year of bachelor's degree. Due to a delay in the results at one phase of time, the students were so frustrated that those who were thinking of staying in Nepal also decided to fly abroad;

I was thinking of staying back in Nepal after completing my Bachelor of Engineering (B.E. Computer Engineering) degree examination from PUSET and waiting for the result of the 8th semester and final transcript. I also received an internship offer from one of the startups in Kathmandu. I was planning to do an internship for six months, during which I will also receive my bachelor's degree transcript, and after that opt for a professional position as a Backend Developer. However, I had to wait for 19 months to receive my final transcripts. When I started looking at the reason behind this delay, it was due to a political struggle between the student union and the bureaucracy of the university. The incompetent appointment of an individual in the management committee of the university has started this struggle. All this protest every day, vacant management committee, regular dismissal of classes and lockout in the department, have killed nothing but my precious time. Fortunately, after one year of internship, I got to work as a Junior Developer but with a bare minimum salary. I am currently working remotely for that startup here from Biratnagar, which has also provided me enough time to look for different opportunities abroad. I have a job interview scheduled for next week with a Finnish Startup. Hopefully, if I succeed, I will be leaving Nepal before this upcoming Dashain.

2. Lack of Job Opportunity (Low Salary)

The job opportunity issue is such a big problem in Biratnagar. Employment opportunity is also a massive sector here in Biratnagar which guides undergraduate students in Biratnagar,

I am confused about my future. I am in the final year of my BBS degree and will be graduating soon. I have lately realized that I do not want to work in the banking sector. I feel like I am more of a management consulting type of individual. After completing my mandatory 7th-semester internship at an 'A' class commercial bank, I started looking for job opportunities. Unfortunately, there is no such proper well-established management consulting company here at Biratnagar where I can learn in the early phase of my professional career. I do not want to go to Kathmandu. First of all, I do not want to move away from my family and if this consulting idea does not work here, I will move to the USA and try my luck out there. And if I have to migrate from Biratnagar then I will go to the best possible option, why just Kathmandu?

3. Stagnant Quality of Life and Societal Trend

The inflation in the last few years has significantly changed the purchasing capacity of an individual. The change in lifestyle has become very difficult. The idea of buying liabilities has become so expensive even the salary of the working profession has risen up. Also, the societal trend of moving abroad has created a vacuum here. The lack of a youthful friend circle, a friend to spend leisure time and freshen up the mood is becoming rare. One of 40 respondents shared a similar story of him earning a good amount of money, however, dissatisfied due to the lack of a friend circle and people to share his success with, besides family;

I am a graduate of PUSET where I completed my Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering. I am currently working for an American Company remotely from Biratnagar. I used to feel like I was having the best time and enjoying life as it came. But when I see my friends who moved abroad and are working 'odd' (cleaning, waiters, petrol pump assistants etc.), they are having much more fun than I do here. I earn a good amount of money and have well economic life but I don't have a friend

here. All of my good friends have migrated abroad. Also, the amount of salary I earn will never be enough to match the lifestyle my friends are having in Australia.

4. Non - progressive Education System

The education in Nepal, particularly Biratnagar, is not regressive but non – progressive. The majority of the respondents have a similar understanding of the education system. They were either negative about the progression of the education system or sceptical about it. The curriculum still consists of outdated concepts that are not as relevant as they used to be.

Our syllabus still consists of topics like organizational behavior as a major heading, rather it should only be listed as a minor one. The most frustrating thing I find in our education system is the questions they ask in the PSC examinations competitive examinations. I believe I am a good student with a good grasp of academic and subject-wise knowledge. However, this kind of subject-relevant questioning is not prioritized in PSC. I do not understand why it is necessary for me to have a strong GK for me to become a good banker in government organizations. I do not see any relevance in asking GK for the position of Banker, says the 20-year-old BBS final-year student from Purbanchal University Management College.

4.7.2 Pull Factors

Pull factors are those influencing elements of migration that attract (immediately or slowly with the passage of time) an individual to migrate from their native country. In terms of Brain drain, push factors are the favorable conditions in the host country which guide an individual to look for better options in a foreign land. Due to the availability of the above-mentioned push factors, migrants look for different aspects in a foreign land. A few of those push factors which were repeatedly emphasized by the respondents are discussed below:

1. Ample employment opportunities, Job security, High Income

The lack of job opportunities post-graduation has created serious tension among university students who aspire to live in their own locality closer to their families. Even if they get a job, the salary is very low and the issue of job security is very critical. In

informal settings, besides government service, job security is always at risk. To tackle this problem, usually university students migrate to a foreign land. The attraction of secure jobs, respectable income and expertise-oriented employment opportunities is always available in developed countries such as Canada, USA, Australia, Germany and such.

Being a social science graduate, it is very difficult for me to get any decent job, besides teaching, with a decent salary and job security. I am in the final year of my BSW degree. For the last 12 months, I have been planning and preparing to study MSW in Australia. As soon as I am done with my bachelor's degree, I will start working on my application. It is a safe option, also a secure one.

2. Globalization

Globalization is another factor that has significantly impacted the whole generation of youths throughout Nepal. The accessibility of knowledge, ideas, and lifestyle information of any culture, place and adventure of the world has dismantled the idea of living within one boundary throughout this life. The interesting interaction with a final-year BA Mass Communication student from MMAMC has an interesting perspective and avenues to look up to;

I am in the final year of my BA degree and I am very much excited about its completion. Not just because I am done with my bachelor's degree but because I will be eligible for the ERASMUS MUNDUS program. It is a two-year fully funded Master's degree mobility program where, if selected, I will get to study in at least four universities in different countries in Europe, with each semester in one country, on top of that I will also be provided with a monthly allowance and health insurance. It is such an interesting concept. I will get to travel, get educated and also be paid. I think it is possible because of globalization, that a normal BA-studying boy in the corner of the smallest country of the world has access to apply and get educated at the best of the universities in Europe and travel the world thoroughly.

3. Political Stability

In Nepal, particularly Biratnagar, political instability is considered one of the most prevalent push factors leading to the brain drain of university students. Usually, the

students or professionals thinking of migrating abroad take these things into consideration comparing it to the states that they are thinking of flying if certain things don't work out here. They look after the status of personal freedom, political climate, human rights status and investment opportunities of the host country. These elements are all affected by the stability status of the political climate of the country. When talking with one of the BSW graduates, he shares his struggle of registering an NGO in Nepal after his graduation;

After completing my BSW degree, I was enthusiastic enough to co-found an NGO with my MSW graduate brother. We started preparing documents for the registration process. I have heard about the hassle of governmental procedure, though I have never been involved in one. It was one of the most daunting tasks I have ever done. The bootlicking of officials, hours of waiting in line, regular refusal of documents (since we were not ready to pay more money than was written in the NGO registration act) and many such incidents killed my hope of establishing a non-profit here in Nepal. For the approval of the proposal for NGO registration, I stayed in the queue waiting my turn for at least 6 hours on one particular day and finally, when I was in the second of the line, some individuals with political linkages went in front of our line and get his work done in another one hour and the remaining persons were sent back and called for tomorrow as the working hour of the day was over. I was such an optimistic individual but these kinds of experiences have seriously shaped my mindset of leaving Nepal and migrating abroad.

4. Family Future Security

Family future security is an idea that was new to the academics though it was quite popular at the communal level. The stress about the family's future and its security is a very serious issue and it rises up the stress when you are around the age of early twenties. While talking about other issues, most of the respondents were casually sharing their responses but during this topic, the respondents' voice was a little shaky and their facial expression was tense. The nurse from Birat Nursing Hospital (waiting for her final year results) says;

Fortunately, before the completion of my degree, I got a job in this place. I never thought of going abroad. I also rejected a few of the marriage proposals which consisted of moving abroad after the marriage. But now I feel like I regret those

decisions. My baba is in debt of 12 lakhs rupees which he poured into my bachelor's degree. He is about to be retired from his government job as a driver. Also, my mother is suffering from Diabetes and high blood pressure. If anything, serious comes up against her health, I know we will not be affording the medical expenses as the hospitals are very expensive these days. My brother is in high school and wishes to get his bachelor's degree from a university in the USA after his high school education is completed. Nowadays, I am thinking of applying for the UK as the Nepal government is annually sending 3000 nurses to work in the hospitals of the UK under a work visa.

4.8 In-depth Interviews

1. Ram Prasad Pokhrel, Lecturer, Degree Campus

The phenomenon of the brain drain, characterized by the emigration of highly skilled individuals from their home countries, has emerged as a significant concern in developing nations. This migration of educated and experienced individuals to more economically developed nations have far-reaching implications, leaving behind a dearth of expertise and hampering the progress of the home country. In the context of Biratnagar, a prominent urban centre in Nepal, this phenomenon has prompted inquiries into the potential causes that promote the brain drain of its youthful population.

Biratnagar, the metropolitan city in the eastern region of Nepal, stands as a microcosm of the broader national issue of brain drain. This trend is particularly pronounced among the youth cohort, who seek educational and career opportunities beyond the confines of their homeland. The urgency to understand the root causes behind this trend is underscored by compelling statistics. According to the US Embassy in Nepal, the number of Nepalese students enrolling in American schools and institutions increased by 14.3% in 2018 compared to 2017. Moreover, recent data from the Ministry of Education, Nepal, reveals that the number of students leaving the country for higher education has been on a steady rise over the past decade, with significant percentages opting for migration to advanced economies like the United States of America, Australia, and Europe.

The trend of 'brain drain', while impacting various sectors, is particularly pronounced in the realm of medical education and practice. Institutions like Degree Campus, the revered centre of learning and training, experience firsthand the intricate interplay of aspirations, opportunities, and concerns that steer young medical students toward seeking educational

and professional prospects abroad. Conversations with representatives from Degree Campus shed light on the multifaceted motivations that underlie this trend.

You know, sitting here on the Degree Campus, every day I see these young minds filled with hope and ambition. They come in with dreams of becoming professionals, and of making a real difference in the world of Social Science. It's inspiring to witness their passion, and their determination to learn, to grow, to heal. But there's another side to their dreams, a side that often remains unspoken. As they immerse themselves in their studies, they also start thinking about what comes next. About their careers, about their future. And for many, that future seems to lie beyond these familiar walls, beyond the boundaries of our city, our country. I've had countless conversations with these students, each one a unique story of aspirations and challenges. They look around, and they see these grand institutions in foreign lands—places where technology is cutting-edge, facilities are state-of-the-art, and opportunities seem boundless. They're drawn to that, to the idea of learning and practicing in an environment that embraces innovation. But it's not just about the infrastructure, though that's a big part of it. They're also lured by the promise of better career prospects. They want to specialize in fields that aren't widely available here, and they believe that going abroad will open doors to those possibilities. They want to excel, not just for themselves but for their families and their communities. However, there's a shadow of uncertainty that often creeps into our conversations. They express concerns about the stability of our own system, and about the political and economic conditions that can impact their ability to practice effectively. It's heartbreaking to hear their doubts and their worries about the future of the country. And then there's the idea of global recognition. They believe that by obtaining a degree from a renowned foreign institution, they're not only gaining education but also credibility. They want their efforts to be acknowledged on an international level, and they see these degrees as a passport to a world of opportunities. So, you know, it's a complex blend of dreams and concerns that shape their decisions. They're torn between staying here to contribute to their homeland and seeking better prospects

abroad. As an educator, and someone who's been part of their journey, it's both fulfilling and bittersweet to witness this crossroads in their lives. That is the only fortunate thing, what strikes me the most is their unwavering spirit. Regardless of the path they choose, their commitment to society, academia, to making a difference, remains constant. And that's what gives me hope for them and for the future of this system, wherever their paths may lead.

2. Mrs. Archana Neupane Timsina, MMAMC

In the contemporary landscape of social media influence, a discernible trend has emerged wherein an escalating cohort of Nepalese individuals manifest a pronounced inclination to emigrate to nations such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and several others. Concurrently, a noteworthy surge has been observed in the count of Nepali students obtaining official sanction to pursue higher education overseas, a trajectory that continues its upward trajectory unabated. This phenomenon necessitates an exploration into the underlying catalysts steering the departure of Nepali students and the potential consequences incumbent upon the youthful demographic consequent to this obvious departure. Moreover, it kindles worries pertaining to the viable countermeasures that both the broader population and governmental authorities might adopt to confront and mitigate this prevailing inclination.

Upon conducting an inquiry within educational institutions, it becomes evident that a substantial majority of post-12th-grade students express a definitive ambition to pursue education abroad. An empirical analysis of statistics from the calendar year 2022 further underscores this trend, with official governmental records revealing the issuance of an impressive 82,409 No Objection Certificates (NOCs) to students within a concise six-month timeframe. This numerical representation underscores that over this relatively brief interval, a staggering 82,409 students clearly opted to embark on international educational journeys. Intriguingly, when compared against the antecedent year's figures which tallied at 44,843 students, reflective of a compressed half-year duration. To understand this effect at the micro-level, the researcher interviewed, a veteran Professor, working at a reputed institution in Biratnagar;

Walking through the bustling hallways of MMAMC, I've been touched by the stories that unfold within these walls. As an educator, these stories have

become more than just narratives—they are reflections of aspirations, challenges, and the reasons that underlie the phenomenon of brain drain. I like to share a perspective that justifies, in some ways, the choices that our youth make when they seek opportunities abroad. The statistics, while showcasing a rising trend of students leaving our city for foreign education, are more than just numbers. They are the manifestations of dreams that long for a broader horizon, dreams that sometimes find better avenues beyond our borders. While we grapple with the implications of brain drain, it's essential to acknowledge that the choices our students make are not devoid of reasons, and those reasons deserve consideration. Within the context of gender-oriented challenges, there's a compelling argument for brain drain. For young girls who dare to dream beyond traditional roles, the allure of foreign institutions becomes a beacon of hope. It's a chance to break free from the constraints of societal norms, to pursue careers that defy gender boundaries. In a society where certain professions are often deemed more acceptable based on gender, seeking opportunities abroad can be a way of bypassing these limitations. It's a response to occupational discrimination, a way of saying, "I deserve better, and I won't settle for less." The departure of skilled individuals, particularly women, becomes a stand against the confines that would otherwise stifle their potential. Moreover, the desire to pursue quality education and better opportunities is a natural aspiration that transcends boundaries. The allure of foreign institutions often lies in their advanced facilities, innovative approaches, and exposure to a global perspective. This isn't just about leaving one's home; it's about enriching one's knowledge and experience, and ultimately bringing those back to contribute to our community. As I stand here, reflecting on the stories that flow through our school, I can't help but understand the motivations behind brain drain. It's not just about leaving; it's about seeking a future that aligns with personal values, aspirations, and a desire to overcome barriers. While the implications of brain drain are significant, it's essential to view it through the lens of empowerment, courage, and a yearning for growth. As we navigate the challenges posed by brain drain, let's not just focus on the departures, but also on the reasons that fuel them. Let's acknowledge the

bravery of those who choose to break barriers, the audacity of those who refuse to settle, and the hope that one day, these aspirations can be realized within our own city, without the need for migration

3. Sagar Pyakurel, Migration Agent

Over the past decade, the rise of Higher Education and Migration Consulting agencies in Nepal has been remarkable. These agencies have become crucial facilitators for Nepalese students aspiring to study abroad, guiding them through the intricate processes of university selection, visa applications, and standardized test preparation. However, their role in influencing brain drain has sparked intense discussions. While these consultancies have undoubtedly enabled students to access top international institutions, potentially enhancing their skills and global exposure, a UNESCO study in 2022 indicated that Nepal already suffers from an alarming annual net migration rate of skilled individuals, which stands at 14.3 per 1,000 people. The surge in students heading abroad for higher education could further contribute to this brain drain phenomenon. Consequently, the impact of these consultancies on Nepal's brain drain quandary depends on a delicate balance between promoting international opportunities and fostering an environment that encourages the retention of homegrown talent for national development. The brain drain usually starts off with the medium of migration for higher education in a third-world developing country like Nepal, which is justifiable by the actions of consultancies. The conversation with the migration agent from one of the reputed consultancies from Biratnagar clarifies the above ideas;

In the heart of Biratnagar, within the bustling confines of our consultancy, I find myself at the crossroads of dreams and possibilities. As an Australia Visa Counsellor at a Biratnagar branch of Kangaroo Consultancy for Higher Education and Migration Consultancy, I've had the privilege of witnessing the transformative journeys of young minds as they embark on their quest for education and opportunities abroad. Picture this: a young student walks through our door, eyes shimmering with anticipation, a heart pulsating with dreams yet to be realized. It's in these moments that the allure of Australia—its promise of quality education, cultural enrichment, and economic prospects—takes tangible form. I become the conduit between their aspirations and the reality they seek. The tapestry of

motivations that led them to our doorstep is woven with threads of hope and determination. Economic prospects feature prominently. The promise of a higher standard of living, better working conditions, and professional growth beckons them towards foreign shores. Their dreams are laced with visions of forging a better future not only for themselves but also for their families and communities back Home. And then there's education—a beacon that guides their way. The universities of Australia stand tall as bastions of knowledge, known for their world-class programs and research opportunities. Their pursuit of education knows no bounds, driven by the desire to gain insights that transcend geographic limitations. Their hopes soar as they envision a future where their knowledge, acquired on foreign soil, will contribute to the advancement of their homeland. However, this path isn't without its challenges. The labyrinth of visa applications, documentation, and requirements can be daunting. It's here that our consultancy plays a pivotal role, guiding them through the intricacies and uncertainties. We become mentors, offering a steadying hand as they navigate the unknown. As I listen to their stories, I see reflections of the broader narrative of brain drain. These individuals aren't merely leaving; they are embarking on a journey fueled by aspiration and courage. In their decisions, I recognize the intricate interplay of opportunities and challenges that define the larger trend of skilled individuals seeking opportunities abroad. Biratnagar's youth, through their quests for education and growth, mirror the collective heartbeat of a generation yearning to expand its horizons. The consultancy, in its role as a facilitator, contributes to shaping their narratives and transforming dreams into reality. As the stories of these individuals unfold, I am reminded of the transformative power of education, the resilience of the human spirit, and the infinite potential that resides within our youth.

4. Surendra Mandal (name changed), Section Officer

An in-depth examination of migration trends within Nepal reveals a compelling trajectory between the fiscal years 2008/09 and 2021/22. Notably, over this period, a staggering 4.7 million fresh labor approvals were dispensed to aspiring Nepali migrants seeking employment opportunities overseas. This numerical ascent exhibited a consistent upward

trajectory, culminating in a noteworthy zenith during 2013/14, a year that witnessed the issuance of over half a million novel approvals. This empirical analysis underscores a palpable proclivity among Nepali individuals to pursue international work engagements, painting a comprehensive picture of the nation's evolving labor migration landscape. The dataset above does not include those who are migrating abroad for a better future, with a medium of higher education. The statistics on the number of passports made annually may clear this confusion. However below mentioned is the narrative of the section officer of the Government of Nepal, posted at the Passport Unit of the District Administrative Office, Biratnagar, where he shares the regular encounter of assisting youths to fly abroad and the helpless role national bureaucracy is playing in this larger domain of 'brain drain':

Within the bustling corridors of the District Administration Office in Biratnagar, a tale unfolds with each passport application that crosses my desk. As a Section Officer entrusted with the task of processing these documents, I'm not merely a gatekeeper of administrative procedures; I'm a witness to the dreams, aspirations, and complexities that lie behind each application. A young man whose passport application held more than just personal information. It carried the weight of his aspirations, the promise of educational opportunities abroad, and the complexities that come with venturing beyond our borders. Through the lens of his application, I saw a miniature version of the broader narrative of brain drain—a narrative that intersects Biratnagar's societal landscape in profound ways. In my role, I've come to understand that a passport is not just a piece of paper; it's a vessel for dreams. As I processed the applications, I delved into their life motivations—the pursuit of knowledge, the quest for a brighter future, and the desire to contribute to a changing world. These motivations are echoed in the stories of countless others, each driven by a unique blend of hope and determination. Behind the scenes, the administrative processes I navigate, carry the weight of Biratnagar's aspirations. They also mirror the complexities posed by brain drain—a phenomenon that tugs at the fabric of our community. The departure of skilled individuals, particularly the youth, leaves a void that ripples through our educational institutions, healthcare services, and local businesses. It's a challenge that our city grapples with, even as it embraces the broader concept of a globalized world. Yet, in each

application that I process, I also recognize the power of personal agency. Biratnagar's youth are not merely leaving; they are embarking on journeys that embody their belief in growth, their pursuit of knowledge, and their yearning for a future that transcends geographical boundaries. The administrative procedures I facilitate become a bridge between their dreams and the world beyond. An individual's story reflects the struggle between personal aspirations, societal impact, the condition of the state and the increasing pressure to ensure the quality of life for a family. As I continue to process passport applications, I'm reminded that the phenomenon of brain drain is a multifaceted narrative—one that requires us to balance the potential challenges with the undeniable potential for growth. Through my role, I am both a steward of administrative protocols and a witness to the transformative power of individual dreams—a power that, in time, can shape not only the trajectory of our youth but also the narrative of Biratnagar itself, but unfortunately killing out the potential of national population dividend.

4.9 Conclusion

The research findings unveil a multifaceted understanding of the brain drain phenomenon among the young population in Biratnagar, Nepal. This analysis underscores the complex interplay of push and pull factors, which together influence the migration decisions of young individuals.

Push factors, stemming from challenges within the home country, are a critical driver of youth migration. Chief among these is the scarcity of employment opportunities, particularly for undergraduates. High levels of unemployment coupled with low wages and job insecurity create an atmosphere of frustration and uncertainty. This scenario leads many to consider foreign employment as an attractive alternative for achieving economic stability and career advancement. The dearth of quality education opportunities in Nepal also emerges as a significant push factor. Young individuals are drawn to international institutions with the promise of global exposure, advanced facilities, and higher educational standards.

Gender-related challenges further complicate the push factors. Young women, in particular, view migration as a means to escape societal norms and gender discrimination.

Migration offers them the prospect of pursuing careers that defy traditional gender roles and empowers them to achieve personal and professional growth.

In contrast, pull factors in host countries exert a magnetic force on aspiring migrants. Developed nations such as Canada, the USA, Australia, and Germany offer robust employment opportunities, job security, and the allure of high income. The prospect of secure employment and improved financial prospects overseas significantly influences the decision-making process. Additionally, globalization plays a pivotal role, in exposing young individuals to diverse cultures, educational systems, and international experiences. This exposure ignites a desire for global education and a broader worldview.

Political stability is yet another influential pull factor. The stability of the host country's political climate, along with factors such as personal freedom, human rights, and investment opportunities, factors into migration considerations. Political stability is seen as a prerequisite for a secure and prosperous life abroad.

The research further gains depth through insights from key informant interviews. These informants highlight the increasing trend of Nepali students seeking higher education opportunities abroad, driven by economic prospects and the pursuit of a superior education. Migration consulting agencies, which facilitate the migration process for students, are identified as influential actors in shaping migration decisions. These agencies guide students through the complex processes of university selection, visa applications, and standardized test preparation.

Additionally, the research underscores the challenges posed by brain drain within Biratnagar. The departure of skilled individuals, particularly the youth, has repercussions for the local community, affecting educational institutions, healthcare services, and local businesses.

In summary, the research analysis reveals the intricate web of factors that contribute to the brain drain phenomenon among Biratnagar's youth. These factors encompass economic, educational, political, and personal motivations that underpin migration decisions. The narratives provided by key informants and individuals contemplating migration offer valuable insights into the complex nature of migration choices and underscore the need for comprehensive strategies to address the challenges posed by brain drain.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion and Summary

The study was undertaken with the aim of assessing and understanding the causes of the brain drain of undergraduate students of Biratnagar. The findings underscore the various unique forms of push and pull factors of the brain drain effect; however, the study also unveiled the serious implications the brain drain can bring in Biratnagar Metropolitan City. The research study had diverse findings of which analyses have been made accordingly to meet the objectives of the research. The implications of this research extend beyond the area of the research study and can offer practical guidance for understanding brain drain effects and causes in familiar settings.

The results of this study shed insight into the complex interactions between factors that cause brain drain. It was shown that a number of push and pull factors affect undergraduate-level university students' decisions to migrate overseas. Political instability, a lack of employment possibilities and a poor income, a stagnating standard of living and societal trends, a non-progressive education system, and other problems with the home nation were all considered push factors. On the other side, pull factors included a wide range of employment options, job security and a respectable wage, higher living standards, the allure of globalization, opportunities for personal growth, political stability, and the security of one's future family in the foreign land.

The findings also brought attention to the bigger picture of brain drain. As influences impacting migration decisions, factors including political development, socioeconomic circumstances, and educational possibilities were also noted. These elements work together to influence people's decisions on whether to stay in their native country or look for chances overseas.

In summary, the phenomenon of brain drain poses significant challenges for developing countries like Nepal. This study examined the causes of brain drain among undergraduate students in Biratnagar Metropolitan City. The research identified push and pull factors influencing migration decisions and highlighted the broader contextual factors that shape these decisions. The findings have implications for policymakers, educational institutions, and researchers, offering insights into the complexities of brain drain and its implications

for source and host countries. While limitations exist, this study contributes to the understanding of migration dynamics and provides a foundation for further exploration of this critical issue.

5.2 Recommendations

To effectively address the 'brain drain' in Nepal, a multi-faceted approach involving various stakeholders is required. Here are some recommendations that can be implemented to mitigate brain drain:

1. Reform in the education system

To alleviate the 'brain drain' and keep talented workers in Nepal, comprehensive education reforms are essential. Nepal can construct a setting that draws and keeps outstanding students and professionals by improving education standards, upgrading the curriculum, and offering chances for research and development. This entails making investments in trained educators, upgrading facilities, and putting in place efficient teaching strategies. Additionally, improving vocational training programs can close the employment-education gap, resulting in more job possibilities and a stronger national economy. Implementation success depends on cooperation between the government, industry players, and educational institutions.

2. Enhance employment opportunities

The government must place a high priority on job creation, attract foreign investment, and create a variety of businesses in order to guard against the "brain drain" and keep competent professionals in Nepal. A favorable environment for employment creation and economic growth may be created through fostering entrepreneurship, luring foreign investment, and diversifying the economy's sectors. Competitive pay, prospects for career progress, and acknowledgement of expertise are all incentives for experienced individuals to remain. Assuring that Nepali professionals have the skills and knowledge required to contribute to the growth and competitiveness of the nation may be accomplished via collaboration with educational institutions and industry players.

3. Strengthen governance and ensure political stability

Controlling the brain drain and keeping competent professionals in Nepal depends on addressing political instability, corruption, and poor governance. Consensus-building,

sound governance, and the efficient operation of democratic institutions may boost professionals' sense of security and confidence in their jobs. Skilled workers may be retained through enforcing stringent anti-corruption legislation, creating independent organizations, and fostering accountability and openness in public administration. Building trust and a sense of national ownership in the country may also be accomplished by establishing solid policies and involving experts in decision-making.

4. Improve the quality of life and social security:

To stop the brain drain and encourage qualified workers to remain in Nepal, the government must strengthen social security, housing, education, and living circumstances. The provision of high-quality care and the elimination of the need for overseas treatment depends on the availability of healthcare facilities, education, housing, and a supportive social environment. Affordable housing alternatives should be made available through housing legislation, and a culture of innovation, entrepreneurship, and intellectual development may be promoted. Implementing these improvements requires cooperation between the public, business, and civil society sectors.

5. Promote Returnee Initiatives:

Controlling the brain drain and using the knowledge and experience of Nepali professionals depend on the implementation of returnee programs. To entice experts to return to Nepal, these initiatives must provide lucrative employment openings, research funding, and tax breaks. Returnees are assisted in overcoming obstacles and making a positive contribution to Nepal's development through reintegration support services such as language instruction, cultural orientation, and networking activities. The success of these programs may be guaranteed by interacting with specialists overseas and creating a welcoming environment.

This concludes the research study on the causes of brain drain among undergraduate students in Biratnagar.

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Annex I

Questionnaire

1. Would you kindly provide us with a brief introduction of yourself, describing your background and any relevant experiences you may have with migration, higher education abroad, and brain drain?
2. How would you describe the term "brain drain" in light of the information provided in the introductory remarks regarding the topic and importance of this study?
3. What, in the context of developing nations like Nepal, do you believe to be the main causes of brain drain?
4. Can you go into further detail on the causes and impacts of brain drain on the country of origin, particularly in terms of development and human resources?
5. What, in your opinion, are the main factors that influence university students in Biratnagar Metropolitan City to consider moving overseas for their education and professional opportunities?
6. Could you talk about the immediate and underlying considerations that the students consider while deciding to leave their nation of origin?
7. What do you believe are the primary factors pushing young people from Biratnagar Metropolitan City to look for job and educational opportunities abroad?
8. In your experience, what role does the quality of higher education and career prospects play in their decision-making process?
9. Have you come across or spoken with college students who are thinking about moving overseas for their education and employment opportunities? If so, could you share any insights into their thought processes and considerations?
10. Can you provide examples of specific stories or experiences you've come across that highlight the push and pull factors influencing the decision to pursue education and work abroad?
11. Based on your understanding, what strategies or measures do you believe could be effective in addressing the issue of brain drain among university students from Biratnagar Metropolitan City?

12. Are there any initiatives or policies that you think could help retain talented individuals within Nepal while also offering them desirable opportunities for growth?
13. In your view, how do you foresee the trends of brain drain evolving in the coming years, particularly in the context of Nepal?
14. What steps, if any, do you think should be taken to balance the aspirations of young individuals seeking better opportunities abroad with the development needs of their home country?
15. Is there any additional insight or perspective you would like to share on the topic of brain drain among university students from Biratnagar Metropolitan City?
16. I appreciate your time and insightful comments. Would you be available for additional communication if any clarifications or follow-up inquiries were required?

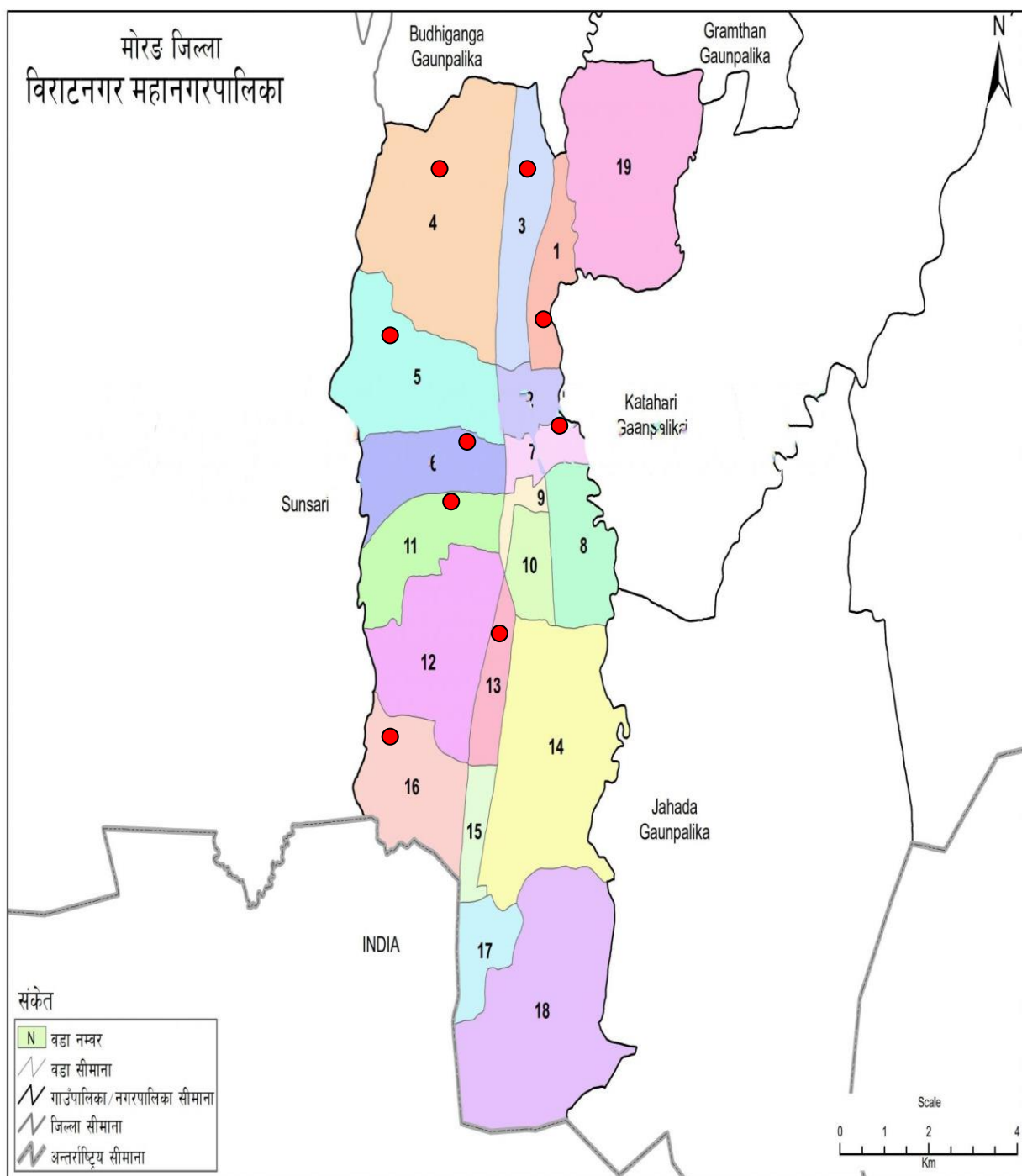
Annex II

List of Key Informants

- Mr. Ram Prasad Pyakurel, Lecturer, Degree Campus
- Prof. Dr. Pramod Kumar Jha, Professor, Economics, Degree Campus
- Mrs. Archana Neupane Timisina, Lecturer, MMAMC
- Prof. Dr. Pawan Kumar Jha, PUSET
- Mr. Saroj Pokhrel, President of Nepal Student Union, Morang Chapter
- Mr. Sagar Pyakurel, Kangaroo Consultancy, Biratnagar Branch
- Surendra Mandal (pseudonym), Section Officer, DAO Morang

Annex III

Map of Biratnagar Metropolitan City



स्रोत: स्थलरूप नक्सा (स्केल १:२५,०००/१:५०,०००), नापी विभाग र जनगणना २०६८, केन्द्रिय तथ्यांक विभाग
तयार पार्ने: गाउँपालिका, नगरपालिका तथा विशेष, संरक्षित वा स्वायत्त क्षेत्रको संख्या तथा सीमाना निर्धारण आयोग

Projection System: MUTM, Spheroid - Everest 1830
LLRC, 2016



Study Area