

Returnee Youth Student Migrants in Nepal

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Abstract- Youth student migration is rapidly growing in the recent years in Nepal. Every year thousands of students leave the country to pursue their higher education to the different developed countries across the world. However, they undergo through the financial, social, cultural and personal challenges during their educational journey in the international universities and colleges. Despite these adversities, few of them return to Nepal with experiences and some achievements. Additionally, this study outlines the returnee youth students and their achievement after completion of study abroad. Considering the youth trend of study abroad, this study addresses the research question: how do the Nepali students narrate their stories of their achievement and outcome of study abroad?

For this, I employed narrative inquiry assuming that the stories of student mobility and its outcome challenge the educational and employment aspirations of youth in Nepal. I used the Lee's theory of migration where the push and pull factors are mainly concerned in the student migration trend. Hence, this research has illuminated leaving trend of the young talent from the developing countries and it showed the success story of young talent who came after their higher education from the developed countries.

Key words; Returnee student migrants, Youth talents, mobility, achievement, developing countries etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Context

The university students who are living and enrolled in the student visa outside their countries are called the student migration. In this context, Guruz (2008) defines that student migration is the trend where students pursue their higher study in an global international institution. In the recent decades, thousands of foreign students have been going to the abroad for their higher education. It has been becoming the growing trend in the developing countries like Nepal because thousands of foreign students were in the international universities to pursue their higher education. In this context, Ghimire (2016) who calculates that the number of going abroad student is triggered which increased from 11,912 in 2011/12 to 33,000 students obtained the No Objection Certificate (NOC) in 2015/16. Thus, they spend millions of dollars on their tuition fees in the international institutions. They move out of their country for the purpose of study however, settles down after the completion of their study. The scholar, Costello (2015) noted that study abroad is an academic experience where students physically leave their home

countries to engage in college study, part time job and cultural interaction after they reach abroad.

Students' migration is getting popular these days particularly from the developing countries such as Nepal, India, Bhutan etc. in comparison to the developed countries such as the USA, the UK, and Australia. The developed countries have attracted the international students since they are ranked as the best universities globally. The job opportunities and getting the quality education are the significant factors to motivate the international youth migration (Human Development Report, 2009). Furthermore, the student migration is an activity where migrant students will have an economic, as well as legal difficulty abroad (Batista-Pinto, 2010). However, the increasing demand of the quality higher education of the international degree has become the central point in attracting the international students.

The migrant student always faces the economic problem as they need to pay the large sum of the money to the international universities. Despite being that, the international students leave their home countries with the hope of getting skills, knowledge, and other valuable resources which can be useful to them after returning their home country. Some of them are able to stay and work after the completion of their studies (Rosenzweig, 2008). They have an opportunity to work after the completion of their study. It may provide an opportunity to garner the international work experiences to the international students. They also can earn money during their post-study work period abroad. But most of the students migrant return home soon after they have achieved their goals abroad (Ammassari, 2004). They earned their degree which enables them to gain the knowledge and skills. They moreover become self dependent improved professional skills and intercultural competencies after having the international degree.

II. METHODOLOGY

I adopted the qualitative approach in order to conduct this research. In this regard, I applied a qualitative approach where we assumed the reality about student migration and their situation after their return from the study abroad is multiple and subjective as argued by Castellan (2010). In this context, I applied the naturalist and subjectivity strategies and explored reality through participant's views, their own background, and experiences (Creswell, 2003). In order to conduct this research, I employed narrative inquiry assuming that the stories of student mobility and its outcome challenge the educational and employment aspirations of youth in Nepal. I took their interview to disclose behavior, interest, and actions in a natural setting (Stake, 2005). I took participants namely Ujjwal, Rojina, Samir and Rajat who were

already went abroad and returned after their completion of their degree abroad.

Thus, personal interview was a suitable method for me to explore the in-depth information to conduct this research. I found that interview was in-depth along with observation. I designed the interview theme to gain the context, content, and process of the student migration and the situation of the returnee students. In the beginning, I requested my research participants through a telephone conversation and explained a brief overview of the purpose of the research. In addition, before an interview, I established rapport, build trust, requested permission to record the conversation (notes were taken as back-up) and start an interview with the permission. As soon as I returned from fieldwork, I transcribed the interviews in the same order that we conducted (Peräkylä, 1997). For this, I reviewed all our notes immediately after each interview.

III. MY PARTICIPANTS;

Ujjwal

Ujjwal, master degree holder from the UK, succeed to establish his own higher secondary school, teaching in his own institution. He was born in Umlabari, Morang, Nepal and belongs to the middle class family.

Rojina

Rojina, UK graduate in Bio-chemistry has established herself as a science teacher in the reputed school at Kathmandu. She also established her in school in Kathmandu. .

Samir

Samir, UK graduate in business administrative has been running his own management company for some years in Kathmandu.

Rajat

Rajat, returned to Nepal from the Australia, has completed his MBA, started his own Hotel and restaurant in Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal.

IV. EDUCATION MIGRATION IS BRAIN DRAIN OR BRAIN GAIN

Educational migrant has both the positive and negative aspect. There are two distinct groups defining the educational migration. Some scholars define that brain drain as the movement of skilled and educated individuals from one country to another in search for a better job, improved career prospects and therefore an overall better life (Omet & Saif, 2008). Straubhaar (2000) stress that the effects of the mobility of the highly skilled can create even larger negative effects to the origin of the country where the country of production is losing both it's minds' and human capital to other nations. In the same context, Kone & Özden, (2017) explain that high skilled migrants come from every corner of the world, especially from poorer, smaller, and isolated economies, and move to larger, wealthier, English-speaking OECD countries. Even, it can be found that the highly educated immigrants from the developing countries are involved into low-skilled occupations

abroad that may result brain waste (Kone & Ozden, 2017 cited in Mattoo, Neagu, and Özden, 2008). Similarly, brain drain" designates the international transfer of resources in the form of human capital, i.e. the migration of relatively highly educated individuals from developing to developed countries (Beine et al, 2001). However, the brain drain reduces economic growth through the depletion of a source country's human capital assets and additionally through unrecompensed investments in education.

Similarly, the other perspective, brain gain, where highly skilled people are themselves established academically and financially in the developed country, thus, they can contribute to the home countries (Candan & Hunger, 2013). In the same way, McGill (2013) states that the academic mobility of highly-skilled individual has brought the broad phenomenon of youth students departing their country of origin and gaining a higher level of skill from abroad. The knowledge and skills can also be passed through the mobility of academic staff and students because of the globalization of education. The highly educated and skilled international students are the sources of the both the academic and investment in the home countries (World Bank, 2015). The international degree provides opportunities with different effect whereby their home country could take advantage of the embodied knowledge (Mayer, 1996 as Cited in Mugimu, 2010). The young talent students from the developing countries are attracted towards the economic opportunities and quality of education of the developed countries in the world. Return migrants may also be beneficial to their home country as they bring with them not only financial savings, but also a set of newly acquired productive skills (either through formal schooling or on-the job learning) that positively contribute to a country's stock of human capital (Batista, Lacuesta and Vicente, 2007).

Hence, it can be defined that student migration has become the key concern of both the economic and social development because of its quality education and its recognized degree. However, the move to pursue their higher education abroad, they trained and equipped with the knowledge and skills abroad. It is good news to hear that they return to their home country after getting international degree and key skills from study abroad. They can independently settle down themselves in their country of origin. Moreover, the internationalization of education benefits a lot to the domestic students and teachers by promoting the practical international degree and cultures from foreign students who can broaden their knowledge and perspectives when learning abroad.

V. ABROAD EXPERIENCE OF RETURNEE STUDENT

Study abroad has brought more valuable experiences in their life. It has been observed that most of the returnee student has become professionally successful in the origin country. My participant, Ujjwal Upprety, who works in Dikshya Secondary School, Koteshwer, Kathmandu, , as a Program Co-coordinator. He shared that *During my student period in the UK, I had to both study and work in the UK during student visa. I also had earned some money during the post study work period. I also had both the UK graduate degree as well as sums of money for my coming future.*

According to Ujjawal , he studied really hard to achieve the higher grades in the UK, thus, he worked even harder to find a

good job. He experienced different types of job that also taught me a lot. He used to work for 12 hours a day in the restaurant even though the students were allowed to work only 20 hours a week in order to support their tuition fees. He even used to fall asleep in the class room due to the long work hours in the restaurant. The hard working caused his back pain which became a problem for his study. Somehow, Ujjwal completed his degree and applied for the post study work visa for another two years. He worked hard for two years of post-study work period and earned some money for his future. However, the job was difficult for him. Finally, after the completion of post study work visa, he came back to Nepal and bought some partial share of the school I met him. Then, he started teaching in this school as a regular fulltime teacher. In the same way, Rojina shared that;

I explored her new career after I graduated from the UK. I really learnt more practical lesson in the university along with the useful job experiences.

According to Rojina, she had explored new career options and she was also impressed by other people and interested in learning new things about new cultures from other countries. She was also excited about the great experiences as she had learned many things that have had a large impact on her life. She believed that this will help her in the long term both personally and professionally. The highly skill students are key for formation of human resources for the country of origin (Brown, 2002). She argued that the outstanding education which was provided with the best lecturers and the ultimate education package from the UK universities had really impressed her. At the same time, the university provided her endless means to apply that acquired knowledge in real life through placements, work experience and voluntary work.

In the same way, Lowell (2002) defines that when emigrants maintain ties to their home country through backward connections, then, human and financial networks spillover to the source country that often yield significant benefits to the source country. Similarly, Samir shared that;

I had improved my English language along with the interpersonal skill abroad. I had more English friends during my student life where I used to speak in English language. Besides learning at class, I used to speak in working places abroad. Samir experienced that he had improved his spoken English skills because he had used English language both in the class and the work. Similarly, Birkin et al. (2014) state that abroad experience is the transferrable skills that have value in a wide range of jobs, including foreign language acquisition, communication and interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, self-directed learning, community-building, and contributing to social cohesion(p.9). He moreover had learnt interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, foreign language acquisition, lifelong academic and the practical self-directing learning from the university during his student period abroad.

In the same way, Rajat shared his experiences; *I became self-dependent and determined person after completing my education abroad. I got an opportunity to experience things I had never done before in my life which made me more experienced and self-dependent in my life.*

According to him, he has also talked about the benefits of abroad going students as he outlined such as academic achievement and commitment, developed the professional carried

development, return on huge investment which he really had experienced in her life. He himself realized that the abroad study context emerges as a powerful context for the enhancement of self-efficacy beliefs and perceptions (Cubillos & Ilvento, 2013). The degree and experiences can be used to settle down own business in the origin of the country. He again shared that;

I was connected with the diverse culture and language. I moreover became independent after I graduated abroad.

In addition, he believed that in order to connect with the international friends, it can be beneficial to create public network which is very useful in the upcoming future. In the same way, he also realized that studying abroad really brings him out his independent nature. Thus, it is indeed true that students who study abroad become explorers of their new nation and really discover the curiosity and excitement that they harbor. He also accepted that being in a new place by him which was an overwhelming time, and it tested his ability to adapt to diverse situations while being able to solve financial, study and job-related problems.

They believed that they had gained better transnational competence meaning language, cultural and technical skills than the other people (Hawkins & Cummings, 2000). They thought that it is their biggest advantages of going abroad for study. It is an opportunity to meet new lifelong friends from different backgrounds.

Ujjwal, who completed his graduation from the United Kingdom, felt lucky to have international degree as well as got the UK work experiences. He graduated and got 2 years of work study visa to stay there. He is really happy to share his experiences to me during our second meeting. *He said:*

I was lucky to say that I had completed my graduate degree from the United Kingdom. I also learnt practical knowledge through the use of ICT in the course of getting his graduate degree. During studying abroad period, he had opportunities to attend school and live with students from different countries in the world. This gave him the opportunity to be familiar and create lasting relationships with fellow students. Hence, he had explored new career and he was also impressed by other international friends and interested about learning new things about new cultures from other countries. Similarly, Hunger (2002) states that if those students got knowledge and skills from abroad and return to their home country or through creating transnational networks, they can play a significant role in the development processes in the developing countries.

Rojina, who completed her graduate degree from the UK has also benefited students to create lots of opportunity to discover while acknowledging the world and understanding of a different culture from her friends all over the world. Moreover, she developed the valuable personal attributes such are self-direction or self-authorship (King, Baxter & Magolda, 2005). She shared that; *The outstanding education which is provided me with the best lecturers and the ultimate education package from the UK universities had really impressed me.* At the same time the university provided him endless means to apply that acquired knowledge in real life through placements, work experience and voluntary work. She further said:

I became hardworking, self dependent and open minded after returning from the UK.

Thus, she realized that the independence and open-mindedness are powered by the experience of studying abroad (Hadis, 2005). She explained that he worked for 12 hours a day in a restaurant even though the students were allowed to work only for 20 hours in a week in order to support his tuition fees. She even used to fall asleep in the class room due to the long hours work in the restaurant. Thus, she is now able to do some business indecently and came back to Nepal and bought some partial share in a school.

VI. STUDENT EMPOWER THEMSELVES WITH ACHIEVED CAPITALS

Study abroad empowers young students to become self confident after they return from international universities. They gain practical education as well as the work experience which will make them more mature in their life. In the same way, Ujjwal share that;

Although I came from the eastern part of Nepal, I became confident and self dependent after my UK education. I struggled to pursue my higher education in Nepal and completed my master degree and returned to Nepal, which will empower me confident and self dependent According to Ujjwal, he was originally from Urlabari, Morang, which is located in the eastern Nepal. He completed his schooling from Urlabari and completed his college education from Kathmandu. He believes that higher education can bring changes to his life. That is why he started planning the journey to the UK for his further study. Meanwhile, it was easy to enter the UK in the student visa category because he had a good academic record and good knowledge of English language. Thus, he got the UK student visa in 2010 and got enrolment in master's degree in creative writing. Youth empowerment is to build young people's skills and capacity so they feel like they are able to influence the social and political systems that affect their lives (Raffle & Leach, 2015). After getting his degree, he has become self confident and depended in his own. He feels proud of him due to his abroad degree and work experiences. Similarly, Rojina shared that; *I got international degree and the work experience which helps me to enrich professional carrier after returning to Nepal.*

Young students expect independency, freedom, getting quality and useful academic degree and the job after their graduation from higher education abroad (Horkai, 2008). Rojina experienced that the international degree are valuable in her life. She settled in her home country after getting an international degree. In addition, she also believed the benefits of abroad going students to be; academic achievement and commitment, developing the professional career, return on huge investment which she had experienced in her life. She became a self-dependent and a determined person after completing her education abroad. She had an opportunity to experience things she had never done before in her life which made her more experienced and self-dependent in her life. She again shared that; *I really became self-dependent and confident. I learned new skills and methods using modern technology from abroad. I am now confident at my job to share my knowledge to my students and friends.*

Youth have the power to influence the country for its betterment. Youth empowerment inspires to achieve the skills and ability to bring the changes into their lives and of other people.

Hence, youth empowerment encourages bringing the changes within the people and the nation. Similarly, Ledford, Lucas, Dairaghi and Ravelli (2013) discussed the result of the youth empowerment as the young people become clear of their mission of the organization and improve a great deal to bring success to the organization. The higher education can assist to empower the young people of the nation. In this context Gillies (2015) states that people with university or career-oriented education qualifications have better prospects for employment than young people who leave school before they have completed high school. Hence, it can be said that student mobility has become the key concern of both the economic and social development because of its quality education and its recognized degree. Youth have opportunities to learn, interact, and demonstrate their talent abroad. Besides, youth can have opportunities to work along with their study. They gain practical knowledge during their student life. In the same way, Gautam (2017) stated that youth mobility has always been destined to live and struggle to urban areas both for education and job opportunities. Due to the improvement of their career, youth are motivated to leave the country for their higher education abroad. It is also indeed true that the skills that they have been equipped are really useful for the development of the individual career. It is indeed true that Education plays vital role to produce a more responsive intellectual workforce who can challenge this changing societies (Seltzer, 1996).

They used to work hard during their student life. Their hard work really taught them to become hardworking and devoted towards their duty. In this context Gillies (2015) states that people with university or career-oriented education qualifications have better prospects for employment than young people who leave school before they have completed high school. In the same way, study abroad experiences which had an impact upon their lives after the return due to the practical education abroad. Therefore, study abroad always empowers the youth to become independent in their life.

VII. STUDENT MIGRATION IS BRAIN GRAIN NOT BRAIN DRAIN

Due to the departure of the young talent students to the foreign land, the country has not only lost the talented youths but also the huge investment. As we all know that Youths are the pillar of the nation to build the country. Hence, this study also shows the possible "brain drain" situation of the country due to the student mobility towards the developed countries. However, this paper claims that most of participants had gained more valuable experiences along with the international degree, thus, they are to enhance their professional carrier after they returned to their origin of the country, The study abroad will definitely provide the quality education as well as the international work experiences to those who have gone there to pursue their higher education abroad. Once they are being qualified, they can lead the country to change economic, education and political situation of the country.

Therefore, study abroad is more likely towards the brain grain instead of brain drain situation. Similarly, Samir shared that; *I used to present more presentation in the class room, so that, I am now confident to speak in front of the public.* He has built up the confident to speak in front of the public. He learnt speaking skills along with confident in his carrier. He has become the director of

the management company in Nepal now. He is the leader of the company in origin of the country now due to the skills and knowledge he has gained from the study abroad. Ritzen and Marconi (2010) state that the trends of studying abroad represent one of the important sources of high-skilled migration. The skills and knowledge can enrich those youth to become the leaders of the nations. Similarly, youths play vital role to bring their changes from the dependence to independence and interdependence in their life. They leave their home country for their higher education. They struggle to achieve international degrees and get better job in and beyond the country.

Therefore, they change their life from the dependence to independence. In the same way, Rajat shat that; *after I completed my study abroad, I felt more secured and confident in my life. I moreover started speaking English fluently which also established me as the successful businessman.* He said that study abroad create lots of opportunities to discover them while acknowledging the world and an understanding of a different culture from his friends from all over the world. In addition, they improved inter-personal development skills and knowledge of international culture which are the key skills to learn from the study abroad. They feel more secured and found confident in their life after returning home country. Most of the participants are found self confident and determined after returning to their home country. It is also observed that having international University degree and returned with an international work experiences made them achieving the professional skills and knowledges for their carrier. They were able to achieve the success establishing himself as an entrepreneur in his homeland.

VIII. CONCLUSION

Study abroad is the global phenomenon. Although, there is loss of human capital for the developing countries, the returnee students are able to garner the self confident in their carrier in the home countries. The student leaves their home countries by paying high amount of money in order to get the quality education from the developing countries. The developing countries are losing their human capital due the lack of the quality education, and the better economic opportunities in their home countries. The developed countries are attracting the students from the developing countries due to their recognized degree, attractive salary on the part time job and well equipped universities. Hence, the international students are able to make their better carrier after their graduation abroad. They not only became self confident but also financially sounds after they return to their home countries. The returnee students are examples of being successful after having skills and knowledge abroad. Similarly, having self confident,, inter-personal development skills and knowledge, open mindedness, better communication skills and knowing other's cultures are key to develop their carrier after abroad degree to the international students.

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