

REPORT ON THE STATUS OF NEPALI MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE KEY DESTINATION COUNTRIES

2019

PROSPECT OF EARNING
AND WORKING ENVIRONMENT



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Status of Nepali Migrant Workers in the Destination Countries: Prospects of Earning and Working Environment

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Designed by:

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FOREWORD

Every day around one thousand Nepali youths go to the international labor market to seek employment opportunities. The issuance of labor permits for about 3.5 million workers to 153 countries during 2008/09-2016/17 expose how huge the number of Nepali workers have gone to foreign countries seeking employment opportunities. These facts are not just a mere number. These numbers associate with several other issues of Nepali migrant workers such how they reach to these destination countries, what their earnings perspective are, how their working condition is and so on. Considering these issues, with the financial support of The Asia Foundation (TAF) under the Sunaulo Mauka project, Bikas Udhyami (BU) has conducted research with Nepali migrant workers via an online and infield survey during February 2018 to January 2019.

The study entitled ‘Status of Nepali Migrant Workers in the Destination Countries: Prospects of Earnings and Working Environment’ delves into the major issues related to Nepali migrant workers. The findings of the study, on the one hand, reflects the current status of migrant workers in the destination countries, and on the other hand, it provides essential information to prospective migrant workers to make an informed decision while choosing jobs and destination countries. Similarly, salary information helps to develop the required skills and abilities to have more earnings. Moreover, the findings also help the government of Nepal to assess how effective are the migrants’ related policies and programs related to ensuring qualitative job opportunities and securing migrant’s rights in the destination countries.

We take this opportunity to thank Tulasi Ram Nepal, team leader of the study, and research associates Hikmat Adhikari, Bipin Sinjali, Mahima Paudel and Sweta Tandukar for their enduring efforts to prepare this report. Similarly, the active participation of Nepali migrant workers during the surveys has invaluablely helped bring off the study with insightful findings. We hope this study will help policymakers and relevant stakeholders to formulate migrant-friendly policy and programs in the days to come.

Tirza Theunissen
Co-founder,
Bikas Udhyami

Santosh Gartaula
Chief Executive Officer,
Bikas Udhyami

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Though several studies have been carried out on the issues of Nepali Migrant workers, understanding their situation with their own perception and experience have rarely been done in Nepal. This study explores several key issues directly related to the migration process, earning determiners, work-place environment, and other pressing issues Nepali migrant workers in the destination countries. I believe that these findings will provide crucial information to prospective migrant workers to get better and secure employment opportunities. Similarly, it greatly helps policymakers to come up with migrant-friendly policies and programs.

I take this opportunity to thank Bikas Udhami for taking the lead to initiate this study and working to safeguard and to provide much-needed information to Nepali migrant workers/prospective Nepali migrant workers. I appreciate enduring support and encouragement from Tirza Theunissen, the co-founder of Bikas Udhyami, and Santosh Gartaula, CEO at Bikas Udhyami which helped us tremendously to bring out this report. Similarly, I would like to extend my special thanks to The Asia Foundation for providing financial support and for guiding the research team throughout the research process.

This report is the outcome of the joint effort. I appreciate the hard work and devotion that my team members Bipin Sinjali, Hikmat Adhikari, Mahima Paudel, and Sweta Tandukar have put during the study. Similarly, I am thankful to Lokmai Subedi, Subuna Basnet, Anusa Thapa, and Gyanendra Neupane for providing feedback and suggestions at the time of the study. I wholeheartedly thanks to the currently working and prospective Nepali migrant workers who have come to participate and provided much-needed information during the survey. In the absence of their support, we would not be able to bring this study out in this form.

Research Lead

Tulasi Ram Nepal

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ABBREVIATION

ATM	Automated Teller Machine
BU	Bikas Udhyami
CTEVT	Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
DoFE	Department of Foreign Employment
EPS	Employment Permit System
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Countries
ILO	International Labour Organization
MoLESS	Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
TAF	The Asia Foundation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) of Nepal has issued a total of 3,554,683 labor permits over the period of 2008/09-2016/17 to 153 countries. And about 86 percent of total work permit alone were issued to Malaysia and GCC countries. Similarly, over the same period, about 45 thousand workers received work permits through the Employment Permit System (EPS) to work in South Korea (Government of Nepal, 2017). Over time, several institutional, legal, and operational frameworks of the Government of Nepal have been established to facilitate and regulate the migration process, and to ensure workers' rights in the destination countries.

In this framework, Bikas Udhyami (BU) has undertaken the study entitled 'Status of Nepali Migrant Workers in the Destination Countries: Prospects of Earnings and Working Environment, which took place during February 15, 2018 to January 15, 2019, with the support of The Asia Foundation (TAF) under the Sunaulo Mauka project. The study consisted of an online and in-person survey with Nepali migrant workers currently working in the destination countries to get information about their migration process, earnings perspectives, working environment, and financial behavior. The study uses descriptive measures: the measure of central tendencies and dispersion as a statistical tool to make an analysis of information. Since the study's objective focuses primarily on an understanding of the worker's situation, it refrains from using statistical modeling, and advanced statistical tools and technique.

The study is based on 1028 direct responses from the Nepali migrant workers currently working in the key destinations countries. It analyses the monthly earnings of migrants in terms of the their skill level, education, choice of the destination country, work experience, working situation in terms of working hours, overtime working, and accommodation facilities. Also, we explore the migration process of the worker from Nepal to acquire preliminary information, the cost of migration, taking orientation training and so on, and financial behavior of the workers in the destination countries.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. Lists out major job-types that Nepali migrant workers are taking up in the 8 different countries and highlights the comparative monthly wage-earning scenarios in terms of choice of country, skill level, and educational attainment.
2. Assesses the effectiveness of the government's migrant related initiative such as Free Visa, Free Ticket, including the usefulness of orientation training, and the effectiveness of publishing job-demand in the national newspaper.
3. Evaluates worker's perspective regarding the migration process, which they had to go through in Nepal to go for a foreign job.
4. Tries to find out the financial behaviors of the migrant workers in the destination countries and explain how grievances of the workers are being handled in the destination countries.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Process of migrating from Nepal

The majority of Nepali migrant workers get preliminary information about the demand for foreign jobs from foreign employment agencies/ agency's agents.

- About 50 percent (except South Korea) workers get preliminary information from foreign employment agencies/ agency's agents, followed by family and relatives (18%), friends (14%), and personal acquaintance (11%).
- The vast majority of workers reported that they get prior information from their recruiting agencies in Nepal about earnings, working hours, and other obligations a worker has to fulfill in the destination countries. Overall, about 89 percent of workers got prior information from such recruitment agencies.
- A large proportion of less-educated migrant workers are compelled to do other works in the destination countries than the work they were supposed to do.
- Majority of workers reported that the orientation training was fruitful to ease their migration process. Out of them, about 37 and 48 percent of workers reported that the training was very helpful and a little helpful respectively. Only a small percentage of migrant workers (14.7 percent) responded that such training was not useful.
- An average expenditure that a worker had to incur for getting a visa, air ticket, insurance, medical, and work permit stands at about 100 thousand Nepali rupees. Such expenditure ranges from Rs. 0 to Rs 550,000. The median expenditure (Rs 1000,000) indicates a significantly large amount of money the workers have to spend to get foreign employment.

Work Types, Salary/Wage, Benefits and Other Facilities Available In the Destination Countries

- Chef, Accountant, Foreman, Supervisor, Cook, Mechanic, Salesperson, Driver, General Technician, and Storekeeper are found to be the highest-earning jobs among Nepali workers in the destination countries.
- Approximately 8 percent of Nepali migrant workers work in the areas of unskilled jobs. Around a two-thirds majority (64%) of workers work on semi-skilled work, and one in four workers works in skilled types of work.
- Nepali migrant workers earn an average monthly earning of about 48 thousand Nepali rupees in the destination countries. The range of monthly earning falls within 19 thousand to 257 thousand rupees. Similarly, the median earnings remain about 39 thousand rupees.
- The educational attainment of migrant workers largely affects their monthly earning prospects in the destination countries. The higher the educational attainment of workers, the higher will be their earning prospects.
- The work experience on a particular job, significantly increases the workers monthly earning prospects. In each country, an experienced migrant worker earns much higher than a less experienced worker does. However, in the case of South Korea, experience does not matter when it comes to affecting the monthly earning perspective.
- The skill level of the migrant worker largely affects the earning perspective. A skilled worker earns much more than an unskilled and semi-skilled worker does in any of the surveyed countries. A skilled worker earns in between 72 thousand to 188 thousand rupees in the destination countries. Similarly, the workers in the professional category earn the highest average salary (Rs 115,204) followed by the technician and associate professional (Rs 85,966), clerical support worker (Rs 53,465); plant and machine operator and assembles (Rs. 52,837), service and sales workers (Rs. 49,991); craft and related trade worker (41,677), and elementary occupation (Rs. 37,569).
- Workers with skills matching current jobs earn more than a worker whose skills do not match with their current job. The average monthly earnings of the workers with matching skills earn around 4 thousand more than the workers whose skills do not match their job.

- The workers reported that those who got skills training in Nepal and went to destination countries have earned significantly higher monthly average earnings (Rs. 53586) than those who did not receive such training (Rs. 45739) in Nepal.

Working Condition in Destination Countries

- Nepali migrant workers work a minimum of 7 hours a day to a maximum of 18 hours a day in the destination countries.
- In the case of Malaysia, the overtime work is 3.8 hours, which is the highest among all destination countries. For other countries, it remains about 3 hours. Despite working longer hours, the monthly earning is fairly low for Malaysia.
- In Gulf countries and Malaysia, the Kafala system is found to be widely practiced. Besides South Korea, every other destination countries have practiced the Kafala system. About 90 percent of workers in Malaysia, Bahrain, and Oman stated that it is being practiced. Almost 80 percent in UAE and Kuwait, and about 65 and 55 percent in Saudi Arabia and Qatar respectively practice this system.
- More than two-thirds of workers in the destination countries receive accommodation facilities. About 56 percent of workers get both lodging and food facilities, while 6 percent of workers get food facilities, only and 11 percent of workers get lodging facilities.
- The majority of workers lodge complaints when there is an issue with their contract or working conditions at Nepali Embassies at first. However, the workers are not satisfied with embassies' handling of grievances.

Financial Practices of Migrant Workers

- About 94 percent of workers receive their salary/wage each month. Only a small segment of workers receives salary/wages once in two to six months. In South Korea and UAE, all the workers get salary every month.
- Eighty-seven percent of workers reported that they receive salary/wages in their bank account or ATM.
- Money transfer companies are the dominant means of sending workers' income to the home country. About 84 percent of workers send earnings through these companies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study suggest, largely, that Nepali migrant workers in the destination countries earn reasonably high average monthly earnings. Moreover, the worker's educational background, skill acquirement, choice of the destination country, and work experience play a vital role to differentiate such earnings. However, the process of migration is riddled with a higher cost of migration and dependency of the workers on unreliable sources for getting preliminary information about jobs.

Policy Related Recommendation

- The government of Nepal has to effectively monitor orientation-training providers, and ensure that these training providers train workers according to their requirements.
- The cost of migration is already exorbitant. Therefore, the government of Nepal should work on reducing the cost of migration, effectively upholding the provision of Free Visa Free Ticket.
- The skillset of workers has significantly proved to be a better way to increase earnings. Therefore, the government of Nepal and other related stakeholders need to start working with programs and policies, which ultimately enhance workers' skill levels.
- How far the Kafala system is desirable from the perspective of workers' safety and security the government of Nepal has to carry out a detailed study about the pros and cons of the Kafala System in the destination countries.

- Whether the Nepali embassies in the destination countries address migrants grievances promptly and seriously should be assessed objectively.
- The government of Nepal has to give special attention to less-educated workers during their migration process and their staying in the destination countries.

Workers Related Recommendation

Prospective Nepali migrant workers have to learn and enhance skill level to increase their earnings perspective in the destination countries.

I INTRODUCTION

Context of the Study

The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) of Nepal has issued a total of 3,554,683 labor permits over the period of 2008/09-2016/17 to 153 countries. And about 86 percent of total work permit alone were issued to Malaysia and GCC countries. Similarly, over the same period, about 45 thousand workers received work permits through the Employment Permit System (EPS) to work in South Korea (Government of Nepal, 2017). Over time, several institutional, legal, and operational frameworks of the Government of Nepal have been established to facilitate, to regulate the migration process, and to ensure workers' rights in the destination countries.

About 74 percent of the labor permits issued by the Government in 2014/15 were for unskilled labor, while 25 percent was for semi-skilled and 1 percent for skilled workers (Government of Nepal M. o., 2015). These classifications have been based on job types mentioned in the demand letter, which is a type of document that provides job descriptions of workers and their remuneration. The credibility of demand letters is always dubious. Fake demand letters for foreign jobs prevail in Nepal, hiding the actual job that a prospective migrant worker has to take up and the earnings from such job (Bandita Sijapati, 2015). Therefore, the statistics on worker's supply, based on skill categories, remains questionable. Since the skill level of workers is often associated with their earning perspective and working conditions, the dearth of actual information regarding this issue may lead to wrong policy choices and undesirable policy implications.

The information on age, educational background, skill levels, occupation, ethnic background of Nepali migrant workers provides insight to develop migrant-friendly policies and institutional frameworks. Information on these areas help the government to determine basic (minimum) monthly earning to set up skill providing institutions and to start targeted programs among many others. However, the government of Nepal has not yet been able to generate information on these key characteristics of the migrant workers' working condition, and financial behavior of Nepali migrant workers (Government of Nepal M. o., 2017). The paucity of these crucial information challenges the effective implementation of laws, policies, and plan including 'Free Visa and Free Ticket policy and Orientation training. Furthermore (Pratik Adhikary, 2011) highlight that Nepali migrant workers are besieged with several types of risks, including anxiety, depression, tuberculosis, eye injury, cardiac arrest, suicidal attempts, and poor working and living condition in the Middle East countries. But, unavailability of actual information on these issues has been impairing the governments' and other stakeholders' quick and much-needed response to get migrant workers out of these plights.

The major driving factors for mass Nepali migration are to get rid of poverty and escape unemployment. Similarly, the low salary at home is also a major reason behind international migration from Nepal (Sintov, 2017). In other words, prospective migrant workers seek better employment opportunities along with a high earning perspective in the destination countries while they decide to go for foreign jobs. In order to find out how much they can earn in the destination countries, they have to rely on the information that DoFE approves in the demand letter. Since there is a practice of getting the approval of fake demand letter with fake information, if a demand letter does provide actual information, it certainly affects the expectation of high earnings in the destination countries.

These issues and problems call for a study which explores a realistic picture of how much Nepali migrant workers can earn in the destination countries, what their working conditions are in the destinations, how effective the sanctioned migration process in Nepal is, and so on. Therefore, in an attempt to delve into these problems and to find out actual scenario in the destination countries, Bikas Udhyami (BU) has undertaken this study, which took place during February 15, 2018 to January 15, 2019, with the support of The Asia Foundation (TAF) under the Sunaulo Mauka project. The study consisted of an online and in-person survey with Nepali migrant workers currently working in the destination countries to get information about their

migration process, earnings perspectives, working environment, and financial behavior. The study uses descriptive measures: the measure of central tendencies and dispersion as a statistical tool to make an analysis of information. Since the study's objective focuses primarily on an understanding of the worker's situation, it refrains from using statistical modeling, and advanced statistical tools and technique.

Objectives of the Study

1. Lists out major job-types that Nepali migrant workers taking up in the 8 different countries and highlights comparative monthly wage-earning scenarios in terms of choice of country, skill level and educational attainment.
2. Assesses the effectiveness of the government's migrant related initiative such as Free Visa, Free Ticket, including usefulness of orientation training, and effectiveness of publishing job-demand in the national newspaper.
3. Evaluates worker's perspectives regarding the migration process which they had to go thorough in Nepal to go for a foreign job.
4. Exposes financial behaviors of the migrant workers in the destination countries and explains how grievances of the workers are being handled in the destination countries.

Limitations of the Study

1. The surveys do not necessarily capture all the job types that Nepali migrant workers have been carrying out in the destination countries. As we do not have control over respondents, who filled out the online survey forms, it is difficult to select respondents so that we could capture all the job types. The case is similar to an in-field survey.
2. The analysis depends on self-reported information of migrant workers. Since the respondents were either able to fill in the online questionnaire or it was conducted at the labor village where most come to renew their work permit, the results of this study should be understood cautiously.

Structure of the Report

This report is organized in eight sections. The first section of the report highlights the rationale of conducting the study. The second section describes the methodology with sampling frames, data collection method and data analysis technique. Similarly, in the section third, we present the major characteristics of Nepali migrant worker in the destination countries. In section fourth, we illustrate several components of migration process. In section fifth, we explain salary earnings of Nepali migrant workers in terms of job types, skill level, and educational attainment and so on. In section sixth, we analyze the working condition of migrant working in destination countries. The section seventh discusses about the financial behavior of the migrant workers. Similarly, in the section eight, we present major findings of the report and its conclusion.

II METHODOLOGY

The methodology describes about the target population, sampling frame, sampling strategies, and analytical techniques along with various dimensions of data collection tools and questionnaires.

Definition of Key Terms

During the study, we use the classification provided by CTEVT, and the Government of Nepal, published in Nepal Gazette, to classify jobs according to skill level of the workers. This classification is as follows:

Unskilled jobs: Those nature of jobs that can be performed without having prior experience or knowledge about the jobs and the offered remuneration is also relatively lower.

Semi-Skilled jobs: Those types of jobs that require some level of prior experience or knowledge but individuals are not capable enough to perform without the supervision or guidelines of seniors. Moreover, the offered remuneration for such jobs is more than that received by average unskilled jobholders.

Skilled Jobs: Those types of jobs that need sufficient level of prior experience or knowledge and individuals are capable enough to independently perform without the guidelines of seniors. Moreover, the offered remuneration is also more than that received by average unskilled jobholders.

Migrant worker: A Nepali worker who is currently working in foreign country to earn money.

Prospective Migrant worker: A Nepali worker who is planning to go foreign country for work.

Data and Data Collection Method

The study uses primary data only. We collected data on job-types, skill levels, education levels, and experiences levels of Nepali migrant worker. Moreover, we also collected data on working hours, overtime work, insurance, accommodation available to them, and financial behavior. We collected primary data thorough an online and infield surveys using structured questionnaires.

Method of Data Collection: We conducted an online and in-person survey to collect primary data. The online survey is conducted to collect first-hand data from migrant workers, who are currently working in the eight different countries. The online survey's questionnaires are introduced to migrant workers in these countries through Facebook, Google, and Shuvayatra App². Similarly, to collect data from migrant workers who are in holiday in Nepal, we conducted a field survey through a similar structured questionnaire in different parts of Kathmandu Valley including the premises of the Labor Village.³

Questionnaires: During the study, we use two different sets of questionnaires based on the nature of our respondents: A questionnaire for workers who are currently working abroad and a questionnaire for workers who are in their vacation in Nepal or who are going to destination countries for the first time from Nepal. The online survey questionnaire comprises of altogether 32 questions. The questionnaire includes questions about job types, skills, education background, salary or wage, labor security schemes, and so on. Similarly, the questionnaire for the infield survey includes about 40 questions, which relate to job types, destination countries, and salary ranges for the particular job type that they are involved in. Moreover, it also contains questions about skills, and education levels of the migrant workers, and the cost they had to incur during the migration process. Both questionnaires include almost similar questions. The purpose of asking similar questions was to collect similar data from Nepali migrant workers working in destination countries or the ones during vacation in Nepal from their job abroad. Additionally, a few questions were designed to record the information from first-time-abroad-going workers, especially about their prospective job, salary, cost of migration, skill acquirement.

SAMPLING PROCESS

Selection of Countries and Target Population

The GCC countries, Malaysia, and South Korea host millions of Nepali migrant workers. However, there is no actual data available on how many Nepali migrant workers are working in these countries since the Government of Nepal has no data on returnee migrant workers. The Government of Nepal only has information about the outflow of workers from Nepal, and this data again does not include the out-flux of the workers, going to India for work. It poses a problem while determining sample size to carry out credible research and have represented characteristics of all Nepali migration workers. Given this context, we have calculated the approximate numbers of Nepali migrant workers, who are currently working in those eight countries, based on the total numbers of work-permits that the government of Nepal has granted for the fiscal years 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17. We estimated that Nepali migrant workers approximately stay for about 3 years in a destination country once their work-permit is issued to a migrant worker and return to their home country, at least for renewing work permits. It allows us to presume that the total issuance of work-permits is equivalent to the total number of Nepali migrant workers working in a particular country. Based on these assumptions, we approximate that about 1.42 million Nepali migrant workers are currently working in those eight countries. It makes our target population of about 1.42 million. Every unit of the target population can take part in this survey.

Table 1: Work Permit Issued During 2014/15-2016/17 from DoFE

Name	Total work-permits (2014/15-2016-17)
Malaysia	477,956
Qatar	382,280
Saudi Arabia	323,651
UAE	161,457
Kuwait	39,070
Republic of Korea	14,715
Bahrain	11,496
Oman	8,794
Total	1,419,419

Source: Department of Foreign Employments, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Nepal

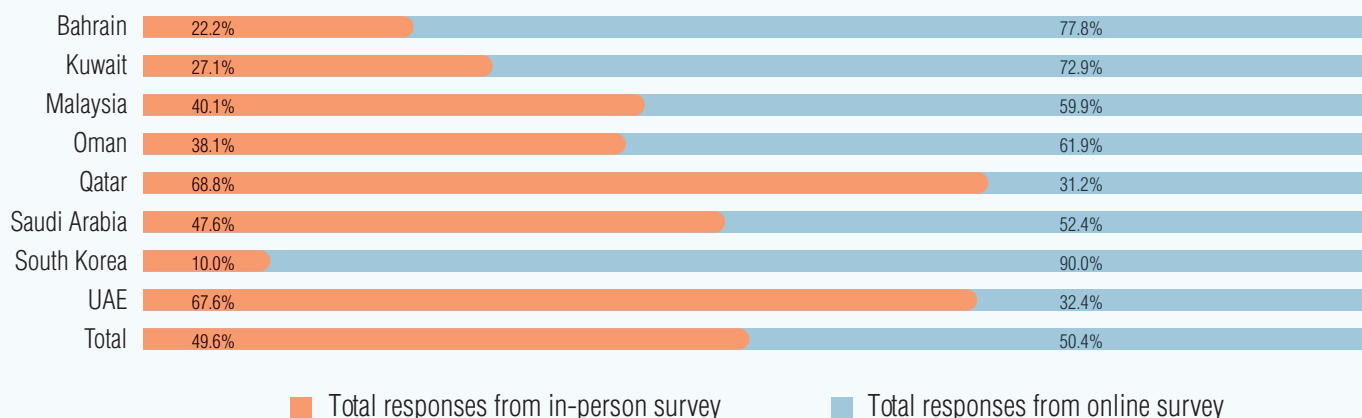
Sampling Method

We send the questionnaire through the online Shuvayatra and Facebook platform to reach out to Nepali migrants currently working in the selected countries and workers had to fill in the questionnaire themselves. Similarly, to collect data from the in-field survey, the enumerators met migrant workers, who were on holiday in Nepal, in-person. Whoever came to renew their work-permit or get a new-work permit at the labor village were the respondents of the in-field survey. Moreover, after collecting data from the worker, we merged the data obtained from both the online and in-field survey.

Sample Size and Total Responses

As we used a non-probability sampling technique to select sample size, we allocated our sampling unit in such a way that at the end of the survey we would have samples representing eight countries. The diagram below shows the total response from both online and in-person surveys. We received 50.4% from online, and 49.6% from in-person response of 1,028 responses.

Figure 1: Sample Distribution According to the Nature of Survey



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Out of the total respondents, 921 were currently working in the destination countries, and 107 were workers who were going abroad first time for a job.

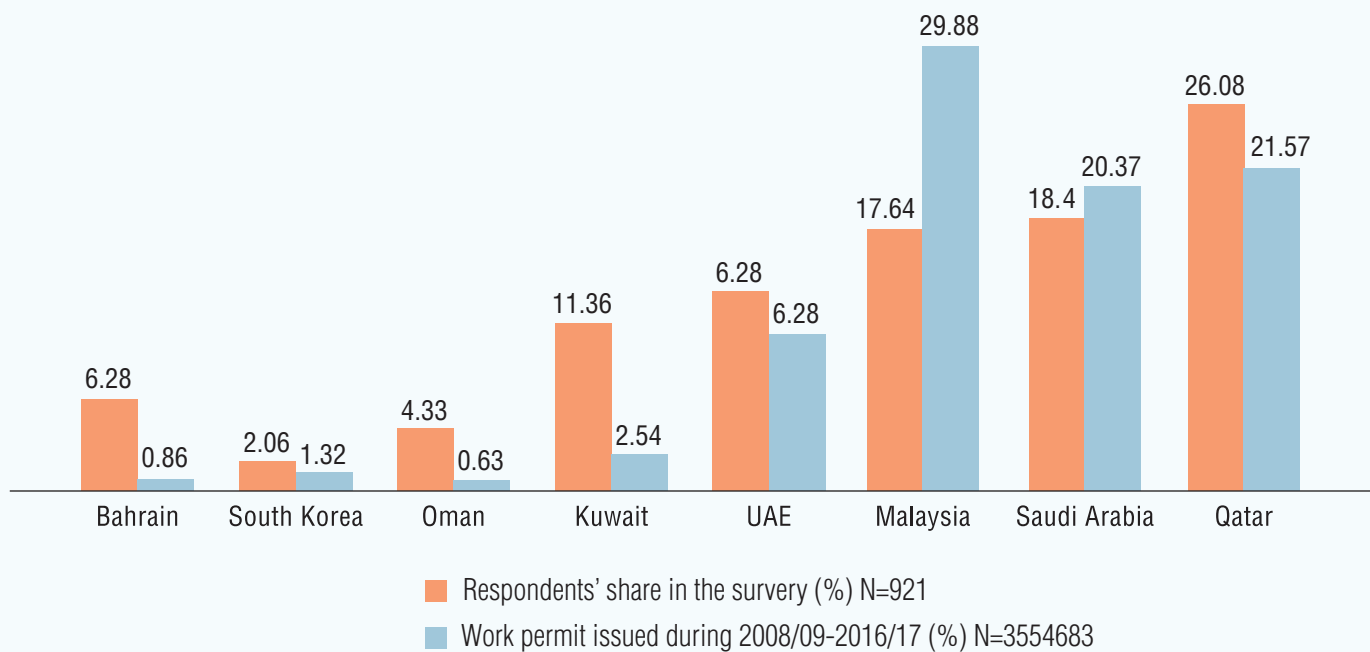
Table 2: Country-wise Sample Distribution

Country-wise sample distribution	Currently working abroad	Going abroad first time	Total
Malaysia	58	5	63
Qatar	19	1	20
Saudi Arabia	40	2	42
UAE	105	13	118
Kuwait	125	23	148
Republic of Korea	163	19	182
Bahrain	170	19	189
Oman	241	25	266
Total	921	107	1,028

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Figure 2 shows that the proportion of survey respondents, who currently work in destination countries, to a greater extent, represents the worker's distribution based on the issuance of work permits during 2008/09-2016/17. During 2008/09-2016/17, the DoFE issued about 3.5 million work permits to Nepali workers to work in 153 different countries.

Figure 2: Comparison of Sample with Work Permit Issued During 2008/09 to 2016/17

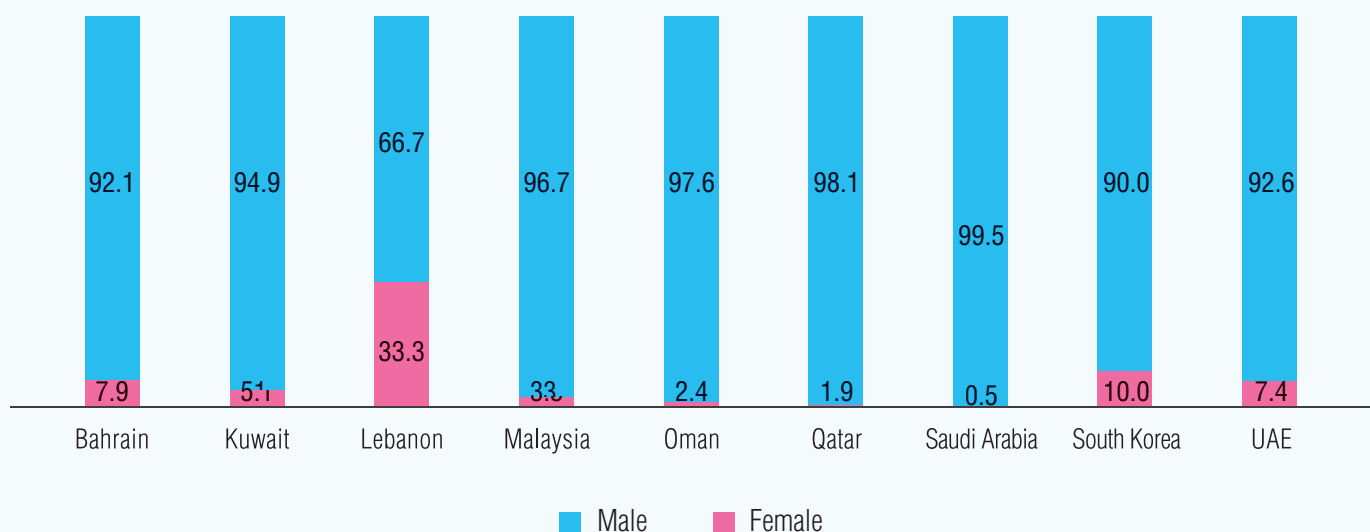


Source: Online & in-field survey 2018, and Department of Foreign Employments, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, Nepal

The size of responses provides us with the information to derive logical inferences on key parameters that the survey is looking for study.

Similarly, the share of the female migrant workers in the international labor market is 4.38 percent in the total work permits (3,554,683), issued over the past nine years. The total female responses in the survey also account for about 4 percent. Since few responses of female migrant workers for each country may not be an appropriate method to make any sort of statistical calculation and to draw a reliable conclusion, we did not distinguish between sexes at the time of analyzing data. Therefore, all responses were taken on a sex-neutral basis.

Figure 3: Sample Distribution based on Worker's Sex



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Method of Estimating Parameters

Due to the nature of the data available and the objective of the study, we use descriptive statistics to understand several characteristics of migrant workers. The study exploits frequency distribution, the measure of central tendency—mean and median, and measure of dispersion as the statistical tool to analyses the data. Mean, Median, Standard Deviation are used for analyzing ratio variable, while frequency distribution to categorical variables. Similarly, we shed light on various parameters inherently related to the possible earnings of Nepali migrant workers in eight countries according to job-types, skills and education level, experience, and working conditions. While estimating parameters, the responses obtained from first-time going migrant workers will be incorporated at the time of determining the characteristics and the migration process of migrant workers. Their responses are not included to estimate other parameters. We have used arithmetic mean to calculate monthly earnings and cost of migration. Besides, we use the average exchange rate of each country for 2017 available in Nepal Rastra Bank's website to convert salary information, reported in foreign currencies into Nepali Rupees.

III MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF NEPALI MIGRANT WORKERS

Age of the Migrant Workers

The average age of the surveyed workers is about 31 years. Similarly, the age of the lower 50 percent of the workers is about 30 years. The average and median age of the worker is low in Malaysia and South Korea compared to other countries. Moreover, a minimum and a maximum age of migrant workers fall in the range of 18 and 56 years respectively (Table 4). The dominance of youth workers in foreign employment, as indicated in table 4, shows a growing tendency of Nepali youths to go abroad for employment.

Table 3: Distribution of Samples According to Worker's Age

Age Distribution	Total Response	Min	Max	Average	Median	SD
Bahrain	60	21	49	31.4	30	5.8
Kuwait	114	22	48	31.1	30	5.4
Malaysia	165	18	44	29.0	28	5.3
Oman	36	23	45	33.6	33	4.8
Qatar	226	20	56	30.6	29	7.1
Saudi Arabia	161	20	49	30.7	30	6.0
South Korea	19	22	29	29.0	28	5.2
UAE	124	21	53	31.6	30	6.7
Total	905	18	56	30.7	30	6.2

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Female participation in the International Labor Market

The survey shows that the share of Nepali female workers in the GCC countries, Malaysia and South Korea is about 4 percent. In South Korea, 1 in 10 Nepali migrant workers are women, which is the highest proportion in comparison with other countries. In other countries, the female share is significantly lower in comparison with the male workers (Bahrain 7.9%, UAE 7.4%, Kuwait 5.1% and so on). The proportion of the female respondents in this survey is quite similar to the female's ratio in the total work permits issued during 2008/09-2016/17

Table 4: Ratio Between Male and Female Migrant Workers

Ratio between male and female	Female	Male
Bahrain	7.9	92.1
Kuwait	5.1	94.6
Malaysia	3.3	96.7
Oman	2.4	97.6
Qatar	1.9	98.1
Saudi Arabia	0.5	99.5
South Korea	10.0	90.0
UAE	7.4	92.6
Total	3.7	96.3

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Educational Background of migrant workers

The educational background of the survey participants appeared to be on an average grade 10. The lowest average grade of the respondents is grade 9 for Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. However, the educational background of workers in South Korea seems to be higher than the educational background of workers in other countries. Since the survey has been conducted through a digital platform and with the workers who opted to renew their work permit, the actual educational background of the worker could be lower than the study suggested.

Table 5: Educational Attainment of the Workers

Education status of respondents	Average grade	SD
Bahrain	11	2
Kuwait	10	4
Lebanon	10	0
Malaysia	9	4
Oman	9	3
Qatar	9	3
Saudi Arabia	9	3
South Korea	13*	3
UAE	10	3
Average grade	10	3

**Above grade 12, Source: Online& in-field survey, 2018*

IV MIGRATION PROCESS OF WORKERS FROM NEPAL

In this section, we discuss the sources of preliminary information on in-demand jobs and prior-information given to workers before joining assigned jobs and their migration costs. These components play a vital role when it comes to making the migration process safer and reliable. At the same time, these also reflect how effective is the implementation of the government's policies and programs to facilitate the migration process.

Sources of Preliminary Information

The survey result shows that foreign employment agencies/ agency's agents are the most used source of preliminary information for migrant workers on the in-demand jobs for foreign employment across all the destination countries except South Korea. About 50 percent (except South Korea) respondents reported that they get preliminary information from foreign employment agencies/ agency's agents, followed by family and relatives,(18%) friends (14%), and personal acquaintance (11%). However, only a small segment of migrant workers (6.5%) get preliminary information from newspapers and the internet. On the contrary to these figures, in the case of South Korea, 1 in 2 respondents get prior information from the newspaper and the internet. Table no. 8 indicates that the attainment of education of migrant workers could have played a major role in obtaining preliminary information.

The Foreign Employment Act 2064 has a mandatory provision for publishing an advertisement in a daily newspaper of national circulation regarding salary earnings, cost of processing, required qualifications, insurance provisions, working hours, and accommodation facilities (Foreign Employment Act, 2064). However, the results from the workers' responses suggest that this provision has nothing to do with providing preliminary information on the approved demand to prospective migrant workers.

Table 6: Sources of Getting Preliminary Information

Row labels	Bahrain N=63	Kuwait N=116	Malaysia N=178	Oman N=41	Qatar N=246	Saudi Arabia N=179	South Korea N=20	UAE N=139	N=982
Family & relatives	11.1	8.3	11.2	17.1	27.6	15.1	5.0	25.2	17.8
Friends	12.7	11.2	12.9	7.3	18.3	14.5	10.0	15.8	14.4
Manpower company/ Agents	49.2	51.7	58.4	41.5	43.9	54.2	5.0	38.8	48.1
Newspaper/ Internet	12.7	10.3	2.8	9.8	3.3	2.8	45.0	9.4	6.5
Personal contact	12.7	18.1	13.5	24.4	6.1	11.7	5.0	8.6	11.4
Radio/ Television	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.4	0.6	0.0	0.7	0.5
Others	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.1	30.0	1.4	1.3

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

The result further indicates that a prospective migrant worker rely on informal channels such as friends, family or acquaintances rather than authorized or licensed agencies to get preliminary information on foreign jobs. These sources are similar to the findings from other studies. Due to the access and interaction with the intermediary agents, the respondents might have trusted the agents more than other formal mechanisms set up by the government.

Providing Prior-information Before Departing for The Selected Jobs

The overwhelming majority of workers reported that they get prior information from their recruiting agencies in Nepal about salary, working hours, and obligations, a worker has to fulfill in the destination countries. Overall, about 89 percent of workers got prior information from the recruitment agencies. Compared to other destination countries, the workers in Oman and Kuwait rely less on recruitment agencies to get this information.

Table 7: Getting Prior Information from Recruitment Agency

Row Labels	Total Response	Yes (%)
Bahrain	63	82.5
Kuwait	116	81.0
Malaysia	179	87.2
Oman	41	80.5
Qatar	246	94.7
Saudi Arabia	179	88.3
South Korea	20	90.0
UAE	139	93.5
Average grade	983	88.9

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

The higher the percentage of workers who do not get prior information on the chosen jobs are less educated workers (Table 8). It indicates that they have to depend on the information that recruitment agencies provide them. This situation has implications for migrant workers. It could increase the vulnerability when they have to change the job profile to a new one as mentioned in the contract paper. The percentage of workers facing this issue is 38 percent among the illiterate and 39 percent among the primary education group.

Table 8: Education Attainment and Getting Prior Information from Recruitment Agency

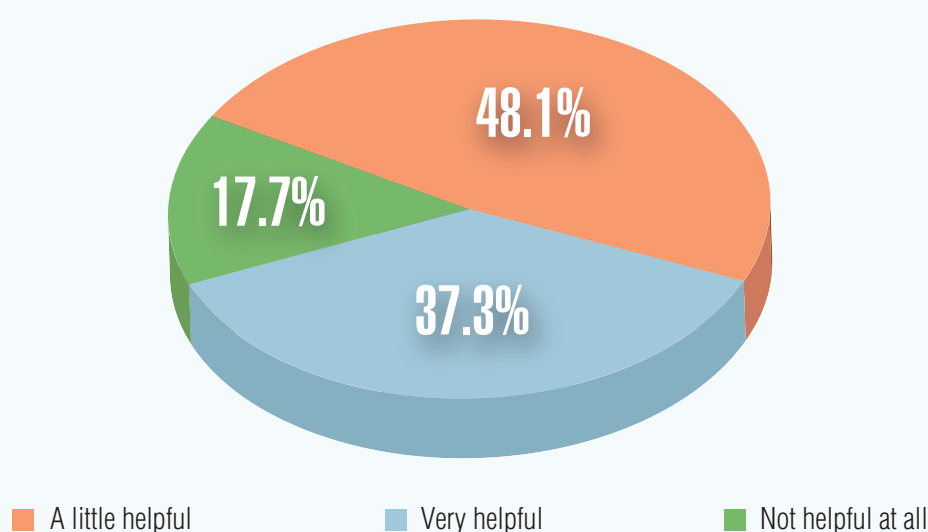
Education and Prior information	No	Yes
Above higher secondary education	5.0	95.0
Illiterate	37.5	62.5
Higher secondary education	18.2	81.8
Lower secondary education	25.0	75.0
Primary education	39.1	60.9
Secondary education	22.9	77.1
Grand total	21.0	79.0

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Orientation Training and Its Usefulness

The Foreign Employment Act of 2016 has introduced mandatory orientation training to migrant workers. It is provided them before they leave for foreign employment. During the survey, we asked them how useful orientation training was. Only a small number of migrant workers (14.7 percent) did not see the usefulness of such training. The majority of workers reported that the training was fruitful to ease their migration process. About 37 percent of workers reported that training was very helpful. Similarly, 48 percent of workers responded with a little help because of this training. The result indicates that the orientation training could help migrant workers to make their migration journey safer and qualitative. It also suggests that there is a scope for improving the quality of the orientation-training program.

Figure 4: Usefulness of Orientation Trainings



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Cost of Migration

We calculated the average expenditure that a worker had to incur to get a visa, air ticket, insurance, medical, and work permit. The result shows that on average every migrant worker has to pay about 100 thousand Nepali rupees in this process. The expenditure lies between Rs. 0 to Rs 550,000. The median expenditure (Rs 100,000) also indicates a significantly large amount of money has to be spent to get foreign employment. This result is a clear indication of the government's failure to reduce the cost of migration despite the government's Free Visa and Free Ticket policies for Malaysia and Gulf countries. It's also interesting to note that the cost of migration has increased by almost two folds compared to the expenditure that the CTEVT study suggested in 2014. These discussions hint the migration process as being costly, and vulnerable to less-educated workers despite the government efforts to make it safe and qualitative.

Table 9: Cost of Migration

Total Expenditure on Migrating Process (Going Second time and have maximum 3 years of experience for same work)	N	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD
Total expenses (Rupees)	329	0	550,000	100,000	103,202	55,724

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

V JOBS, SALARY/WAGE, AND OTHER BENEFIT IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRY

Major 10 Jobs and Monthly Earnings

The survey identified about 125 job types that Nepali workers are working abroad. Out of these, the top 10 job-types have been listed below. The list shows that semi-skill jobs are predominantly popular among Nepali workers.

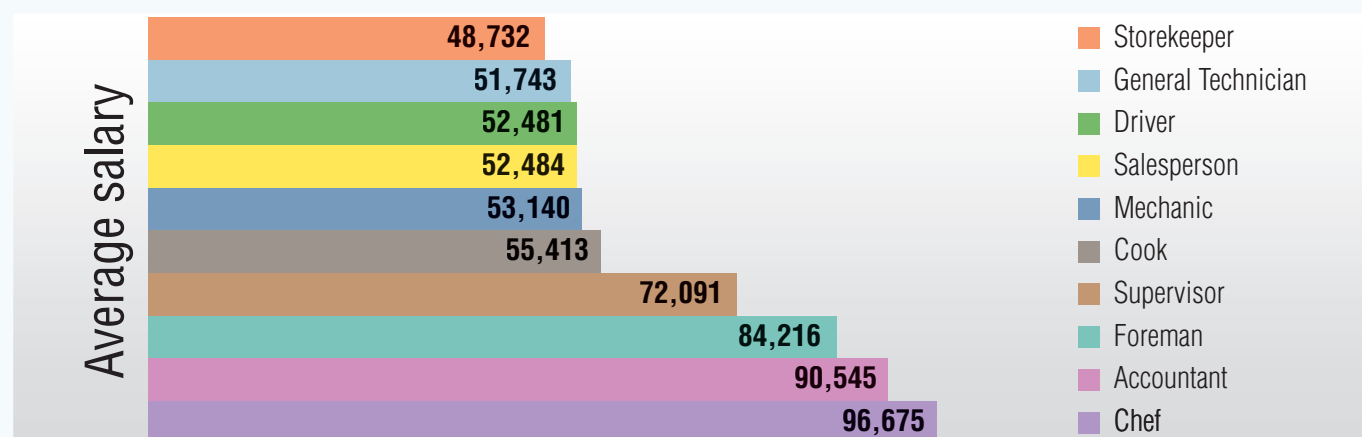
Table 10: Top 10 Major Jobs

Top 10 work-types		
Security Guard	Salesperson	Carpenter
General Worker/ Factory Worker/ Cleaner	Storekeeper	Scaffolding
Driver	Waiter	
Cook	Electrician	

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Similarly, we have also identified the major 10 highest-earning jobs of Nepali migrant workers taken up. These jobs have been identified based on the responses of at least five workers. The diagram shows Chef is the highest-earning job with a salary of about Rs 100 thousand monthly, followed by Accountant, Foreman, Supervisor, Cook, Mechanic, Salesperson, Driver, General Technician, and Storekeeper respectively. The earnings of current migrants help to choose suitable job-types for prospective migrant workers

Figure 5: Average Earnings from Top 10 Jobs (In Rupees)



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

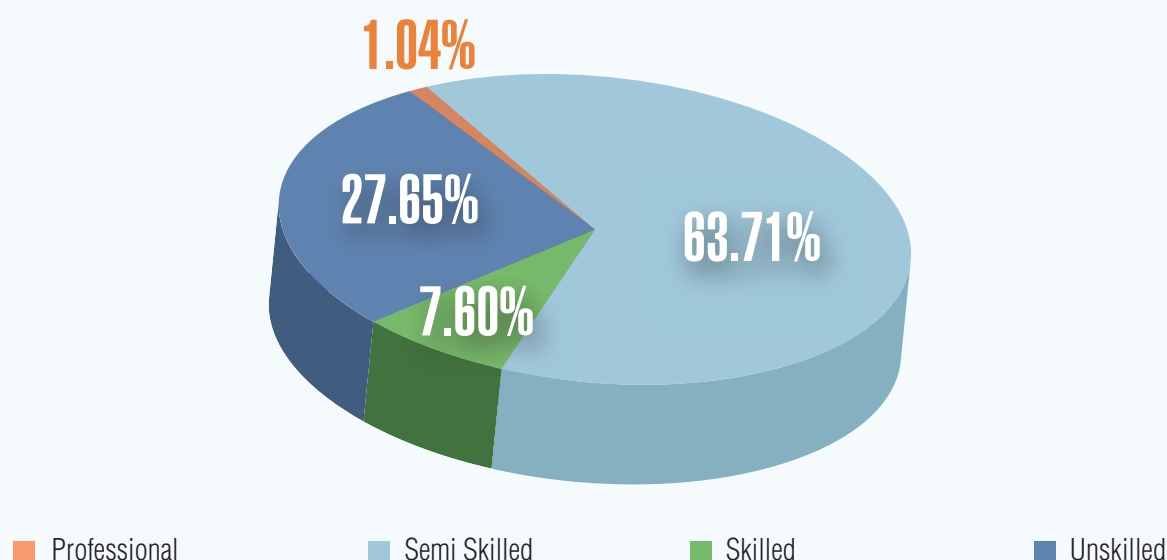
Skill Level of Migrant Workers

Similarly, the survey shows that only about 8 percent of Nepali migrant workers have taken up the unskilled type of jobs. And about two-third (64%) of workers work on semi-skilled jobs, followed by one in four workers work in skilled types of jobs. However, this finding does not match the government's data on the skill level of Nepali migrant workers. The government of Nepal issued about 74 percent of work permits to the unskilled category of workers, 24 percent to semi-skilled, and 1 percent to the skilled category in 2014/15 (Government of Nepal, 2015). On the contrary to the government statistics, the findings are close to the CTEVT's study. After analyzing about 3295 advertisements of foreign jobs published in national dailies, CTEVT finds that the

advertisements were published for 17 percent of unskilled jobs, 29 percent of semi-skilled jobs, 49 percent of skilled jobs, and 4 percent of professional categories (CTEVT, 2014).

With the large share of semi-skilled and skilled workers, we can understand a gradual shift in the nature of the job of Nepali workers is taking up in the international job market. Since workers' higher skill level is associated with higher earnings, less vulnerability, and dignified living in the destination countries, the more investment in skill development to prospective migrant workers is desirable. It could increase earning prospects and assure the broader security of migrant workers in the destination countries.

Figure 6: Skill level of Migrant Workers



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Country-wise Monthly Wage/Salary

Nepali workers in the destination countries earn an average of about 48 thousand Nepali rupees (Table 11). The range of monthly earnings lies between 19 thousand to 257 thousand rupees. Similarly, workers' median earnings remain about 39 thousand rupees. Comparing country-wise average salary, the workers in South Korea earn almost 4 times higher (Rs 160,191) than the earnings in other countries. The workers in Malaysia earn the lowest (Rs 31687).

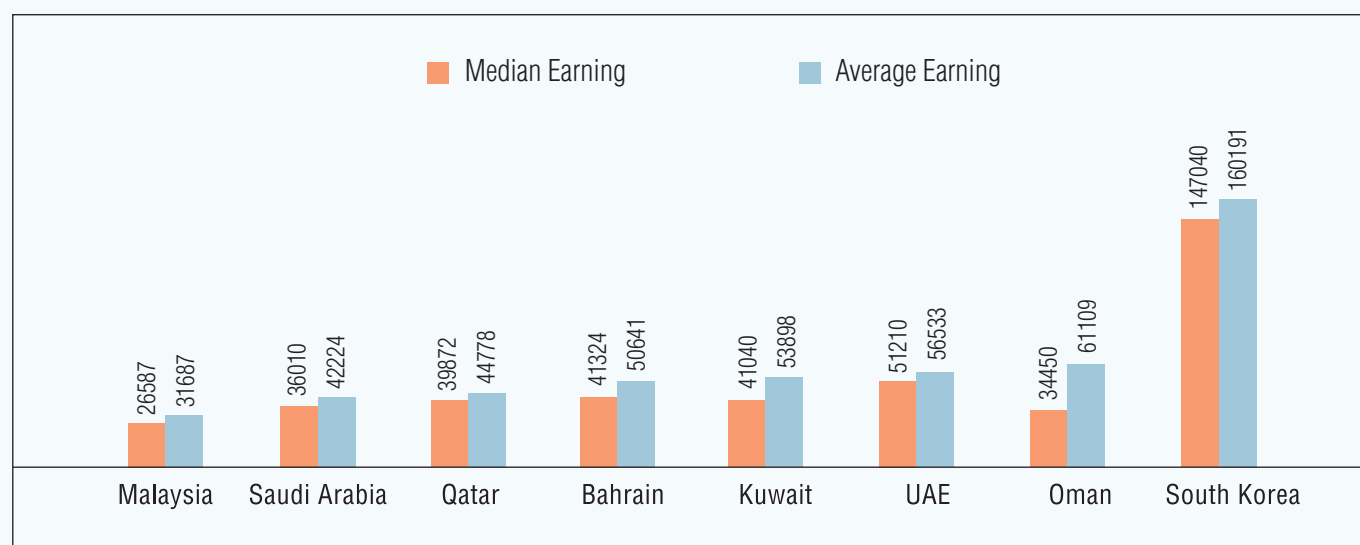
Table 11: Country-wise Monthly Earning (In Rupees)

Age Distribution	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD	N
Bahrain	22,039	123,971	41,324	50,641	25,515	56
Kuwait	20,520	128,592	41,040	53,898	27,059	92
Malaysia	19,336	120,850	26,587	31,687	12,306	153
Oman	21,200	238,500	34,450	61,109	46,611	40
Qatar	19,936	142,400	39,872	44,778	21,418	229
Saudi Arabia	22,160	110,800	36,010	42,224	18,589	159
South Korea	128,660	257,320	147,040	160,191	33,717	18
UAE	22,760	199,150	51,210	56,533	24,724	119
Total	19,336	257,320	39,330	48,113	29,542	866

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Similarly, the diagram shows that workers in South Korea earn the highest average monthly earnings (147,040), followed by Oman (61,109), UAE (56,533), Kuwait (53,898), Bahrain (50,641), Qatar (44,778), Saudi Arabia (42,224), and Malaysia (31,687). However, the median earnings of migrant workers in every country are comparatively low to average earnings. This information compels us to understand the average salary cautiously because the earnings of the bottom 50 percent of workers are significantly lower than the average earnings of the top 50 percent. CTEVT's study finds that the average monthly earnings of workers were about Rs 38,000; a minimum and maximum salary was about Rs 10,000 and 190,000 respectively. The finding of an average earning in this survey appears to be about 10 thousand rupees more compared to the findings of CTEVT. It indicates a gradual improvement of the earning prospective of Nepali migrant workers in the destination countries.

Figure 7: Difference Between Mean and Median Earnings (In Rupees)

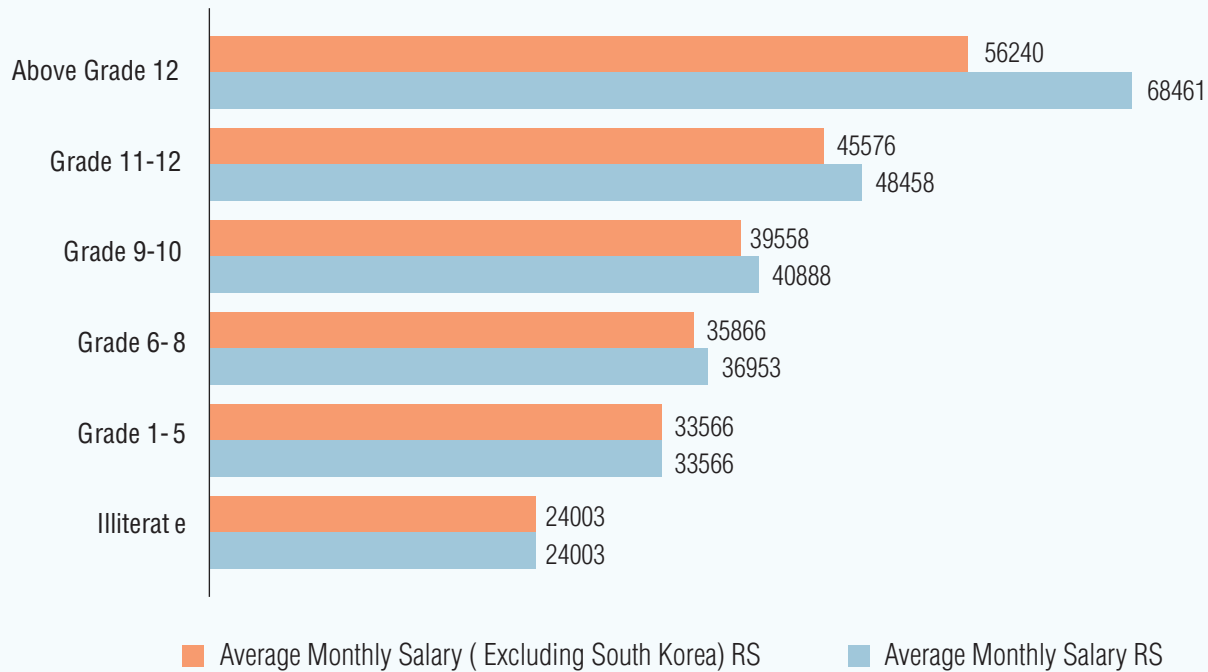


Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Education and Average Monthly Earnings

The educational attainment of the migrant workers largely affects the monthly earning perspective in the destination countries (Figure 9). The higher educational grades workers have, the higher-earning prospective workers will have. The diagram shows an average income of those who have educational attainment above grade 12 of about 68 thousand, and 56 thousand rupees, excluding South Korea. Similarly, the average monthly earning of illiterate migrant workers remains significantly lower compared to the educated workers. Uneducated Nepali migrant workers earn about 24 thousand rupees. The result suggests prospective migrants should take up more formal education to increase monthly earning prospects in the destination countries.

Figure 8: Education and Average Monthly Earnings (In Rupees)



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

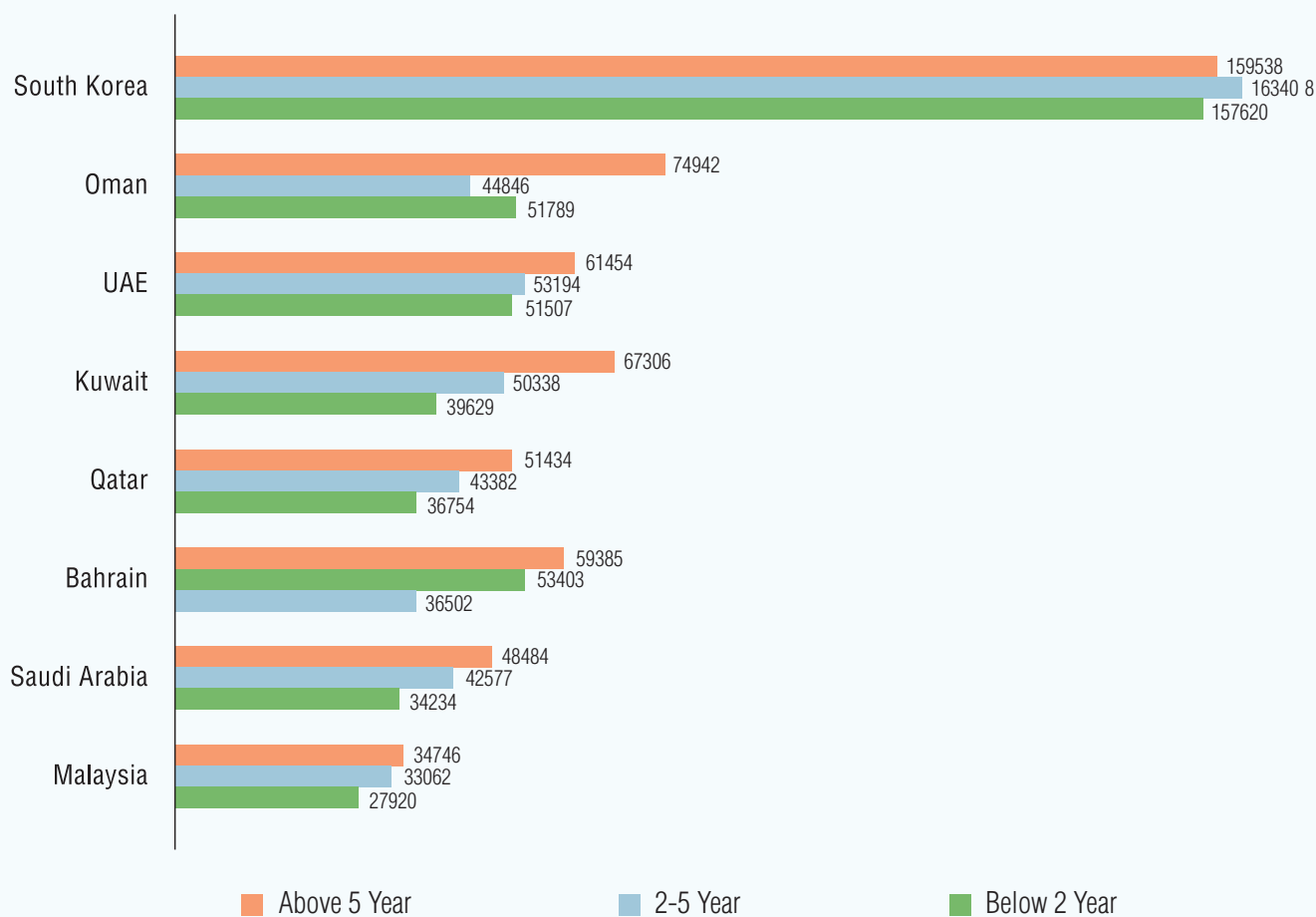
Work Experience and Earning Perspective

In the study, we find that the work experience significantly increases the prospect of migrant's earnings. In every country we studied, an experienced migrant worker gets much higher income in comparison with the less experienced one.

However, in the case of South Korea, experience does not matter when it comes to determining the monthly income. Except for South Korea, the monthly earnings in other countries increase with having more years of work experience. The study also demonstrates that the earnings of experienced workers of a country may not necessarily equal to the earnings of others. For example, the average monthly income of an experienced worker in South Korea is significantly higher than the earnings of other countries' workers.

After South Korea, the earnings of an experienced worker in Oman is much higher than the earnings in other countries. In the case of Malaysia, the earning of an experienced worker is more or less equivalent to the earning of the less experienced worker in other destination countries. From these findings, we can infer that the more years of experience workers have, the more they can earn monthly, but the amount they earn may vary from country to country.

Figure 9: Monthly Earning According to Work Experience (In Rupees)



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

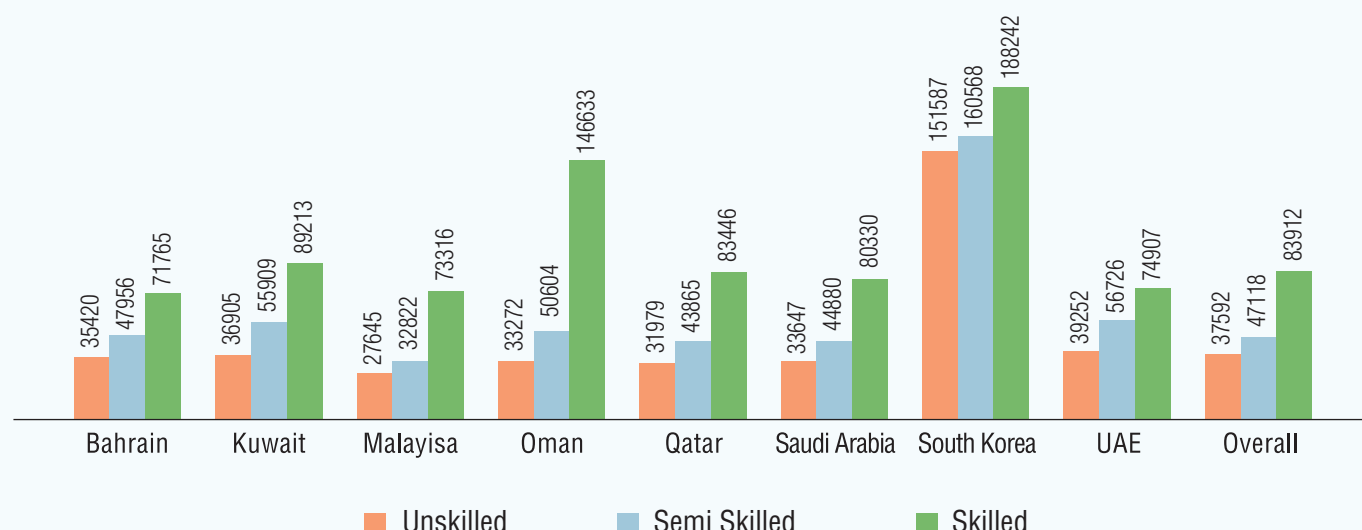
Skill Level and Monthly Earnings of the Migrant Workers

The government of Nepal has set basic (minimum) monthly salary earnings to Nepali workers according to their skill levels. A higher basic-salary has been set to higher-skilled workers, and lowers to less skilled one. The study also arrived at the same conclusion that the skill level of the migrant worker largely affects the earning prospects. A skilled worker earns a much higher salary than an unskilled worker in any of the surveyed countries.

The average salary of skilled workers in South Korea is the highest compared to the salary in other countries followed by Oman, and the lowest is in Bahrain. However, even the monthly average earnings of low skilled workers in South Korea stands higher than skilled workers in other countries.

On an average, the skilled workers earn somewhere between 72 to 188 thousand rupees monthly in the destination countries. Similarly, in the category of semi-skilled workers, the workers in South Korea earn more than any other country. The average monthly earnings of low skilled workers demonstrate a low one in every destination countries. In general, the study shows that skilled workers earn a higher salary/wage followed by semi-skilled and unskilled workers in each destination country. The result explicitly indicates that providing preliminary effective skills enhancing program to prospective workers further increases the opportunity of earning more in the destination countries.

Figure 10: Monthly Earnings According to Skill Level (In Rupees)

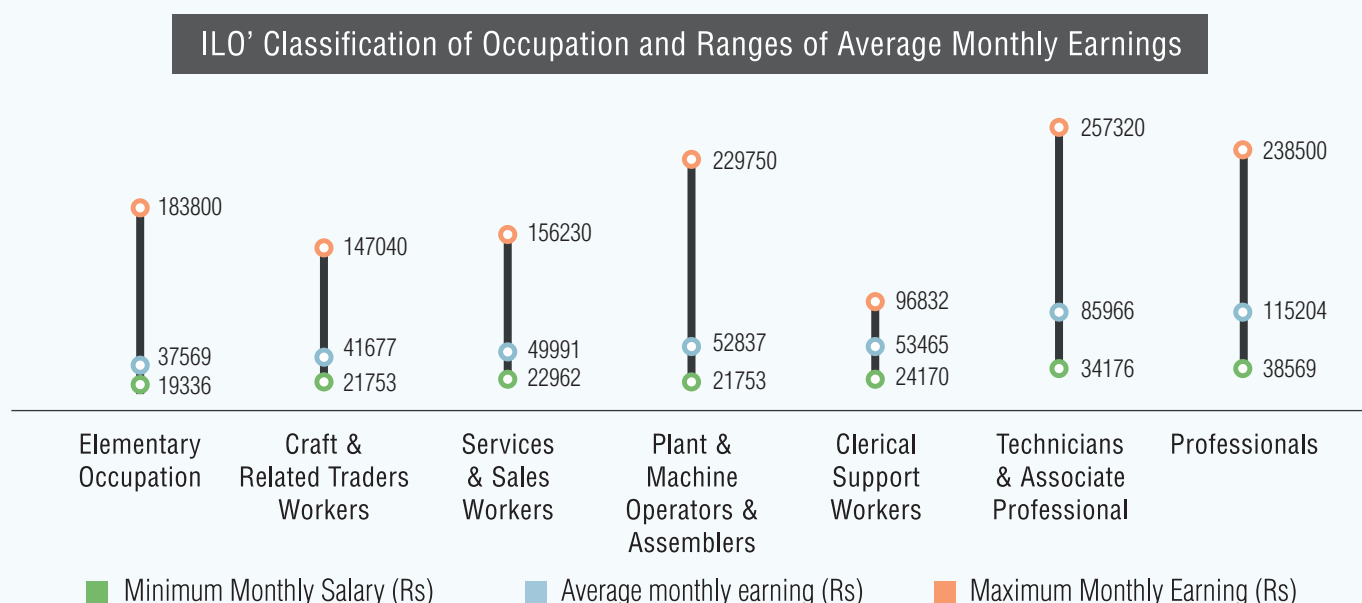


Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

ILO's Classification of Job and Corresponding Salary/Information

In this study, we try to disaggregate salary/wage information for as many categories as possible. This helps to analyze salary information from various perspectives hoping it helps policymakers to understand salary information of Nepali workers better. Here, we took into account the International Labor Organization's (ILOs) occupation classification to disaggregate salary information. The salary information, according to this classification, suggests that workers in the professional category earn the highest average earnings (Rs 115,204) followed by the technician and associate professional (Rs 85,966), clerical support worker (Rs 53,465); plant and machine operator and assembles (Rs. 52,837), service and sales workers (Rs. 49,991); craft and related trade worker (41,677), and elementary occupation (Rs. 37,569).

Figure 11: Average Earning According to ILO's Occupation Classification (In Rupees)



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Skills Matched With Currently Working Jobs

We asked workers whether their acquired skills were similar to the work they were doing in destination countries, and the effect it had on earnings. The result shows that workers' whose learned skills matched with their current jobs earned more than workers whose skills did not match with their current work. The average monthly earnings of workers with matching skills are about 4 thousand rupees higher than those of workers with no skills match. This finding suggests that it is desirable for a worker to find a job that matches their current skillset so that they can earn more salary/wages in the destination countries.

Table 12: Skill Matched with Current Job and Earnings (In Rupees)

Skill matched with currently working job and montly salary earing (Rupees)	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
No	152	21,753	142,400	46,927	21,543
Yes	101	21,753	199,150	50,318	26,884

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Skill Training and Earning Perspectives

Similarly, workers reported that those who received skills training in Nepal and went to destination countries have earned a significantly higher monthly average income (Rs.53586 than those who did not receive such training (Rs. 45739). The impression of this finding is that it is better for the workers to get skill related training before going abroad. Taking training increases the likelihood of earning more salary/wage in the destination countries.

Table 13: Relationship Between Taking Skill's Trainings and Monthly Earnings (In Rupees)

Got skill trainings in Nepal and average earning (Rupees)	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
No	229	19,336	142,400	45,739	20,772
Yes	131	21,753	229,750	53,586	30,757

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

VI WORK ENVIRONMENT OF MIGRANT WORKERS IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRIES

The survey tries to investigate the working condition of migrant workers in the destination countries in terms of working hours, overtime work, kafala system, accommodation status, and grievance handling.

The Working Hour in the Destination Countries

Nepali migrant workers work a minimum of 7 hours to a maximum of 18 hours in these destination countries (Table 14). The working hours include over-time work that a worker has to carry out for additional hours. Among the destination countries, the workers in Malaysia have the highest average working hours (11.3), followed by South Korea (10.6), Kuwait (10.5), Saudi Arabia (10.4), Bahrain (10.3), Qatar (10.3), UAE (10.1) and Oman (9.8).

Table 14 : Average Working Hours in Destination Countries

Average working hours	Per day working hour	Min working hour	Max working hours	Average working hour	SD working hours
Bahrain	58	8.0	15.0	10.3	1.7
Kuwait	100	8.0	18.0	10.5	2.6
Malaysia	158	8.0	18.0	11.3	1.6
Oman	40	8.0	13.0	9.8	1.6
Qatar	235	8.0	16.0	10.3	1.8
Saudi Arabia	164	7.0	18.0	10.4	2.1
South Korea	19	8.0	13.0	10.6	1.5
UAE	122	8.0	16.0	10.1	1.7
Total	899	7.0	18.0	10.5	1.9

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

The study also explores the average overtime working hours of Nepali workers. In the case of Malaysia, the overtime work is 3.8 hours, which is the highest among other destination countries. For other countries, it remains about 3 hours.

Table: 15 Average Overtime Working Hours

Overtime work hour	Hours of overtime work	Average of hours of overtime work
Bahrain	27	3.2
Kuwait	53	3.4
Malaysia	111	3.8
Oman	11	2.7
Qatar	145	3.2
Saudi Arabia	82	3.5
South Korea	15	3.4
UAE	67	2.9
Grand Total	511	3.4

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

The salary and working hour data reveals that despite working longer hours, the monthly earning is fairly low in Malaysia. This result calls for a detailed study of why a worker in Malaysia has to work longer hours and earn comparatively low. Looking into over-time work, based on ILO's occupational classification, the table shows that the average overtime work hours for a technician and associated professionals is the lowest one, and it is the highest for elementary occupations. It suggests that unskilled workers have to spend more time in the workstation than the workers of other occupational categories.

Table 16: Occupation-wise Working Hours

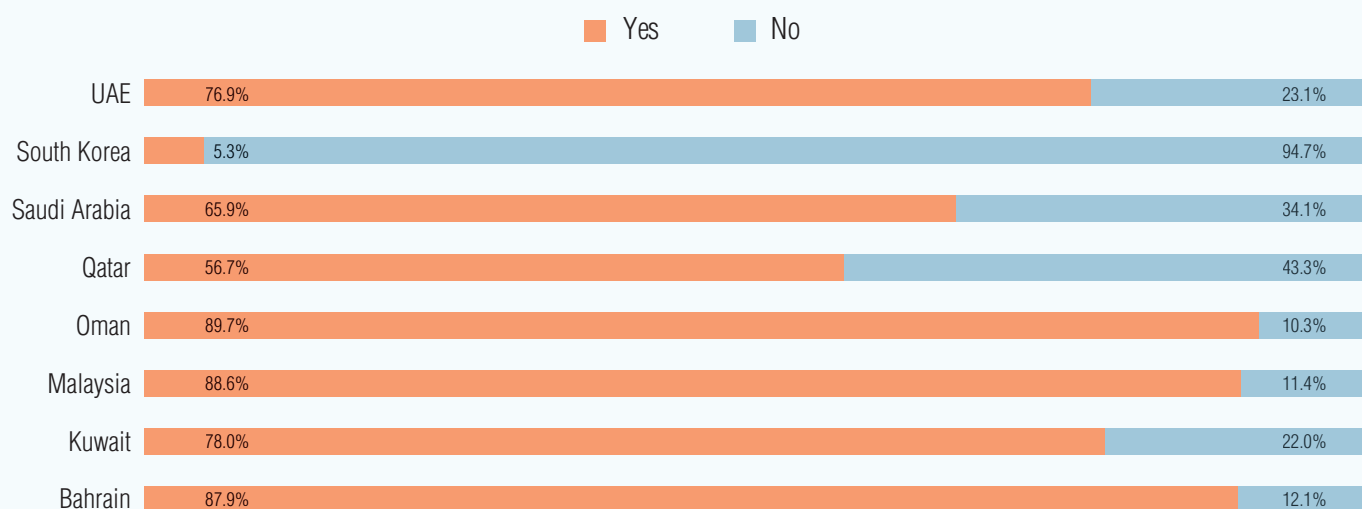
Occupation wise work hours	Hours of overtime work	Average of hours of overtime work
Clerical support workers	8	3.1
Craft support workers	108	3.1
Elementary occupation	142	3.6
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	70	3.3
Services and sales workers	159	3.5
Technicians and associate professionals	21	2.6
Grand total	508	3.4

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Practice of Kafala System

The study finds that about 90 percent of surveyed workers in Malaysia, Bahrain, and Oman reported that their passports have been taken away from their employers. And about 80 percent of workers in the UAE and Kuwait, and about 65 and 55 percent for Saudi Arabia, and Qatar respectively reported the same. These findings show the workers' inability to make their own decisions regarding their work in these destination countries. Similarly, it also indicates a fragile workers' human rights situation forcing them to work against their will.

Figure 12: Kafala System in the Destination Country (In Percentage)



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Accommodation and Food Availability

More than two-thirds of workers in the destination countries receive accommodation facilities. About 56 percent of workers get both lodging and food facilities, while 6 percent of workers get food facilities only and 11 percent of workers get lodging facilities only. Country-wise comparison shows that the lowest proportion of workers in Malaysia have both food and lodging facilities. About 50 percent of workers in Malaysia do not have any kind of lodging and food facility. Among the countries, the proportion of workers with these facilities is higher in Qatar (68.5) followed by Bahrain, South Korea, Kuwait, Oman, and UAE.

Table 17: Food and Accommodation Availability (In Percentage)

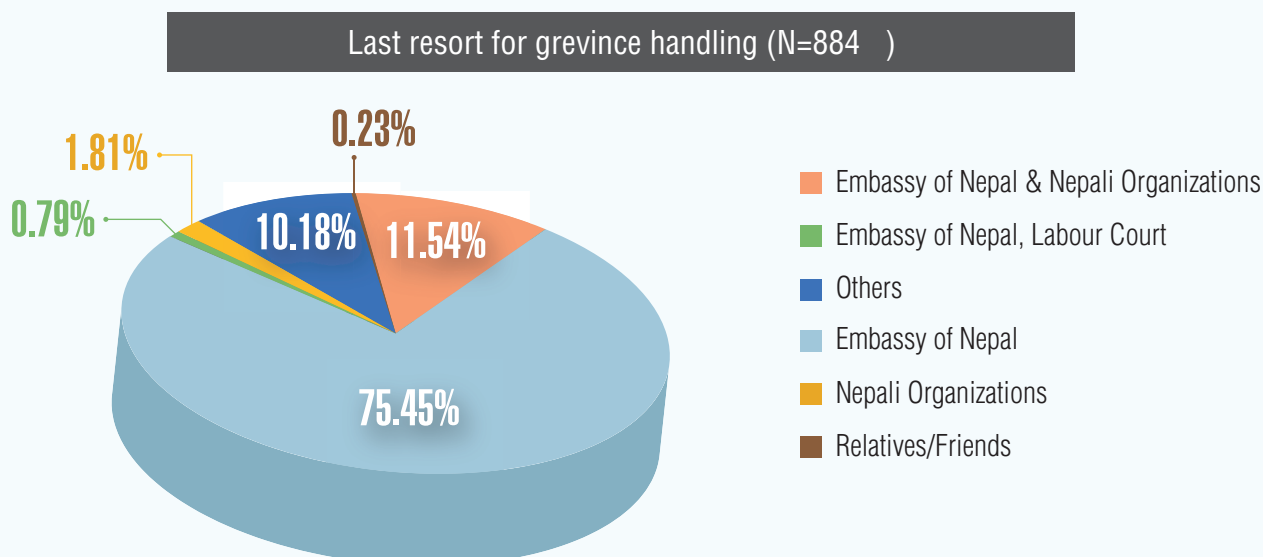
Average working hours	N	Food and lodge provided	No availability of food & accomodation	Only food provided	Only lodge provided
Bahrain	57	68.4	26.3	0.0	5.3
Kuwait	102	60.8	31.4	2.0	5.9
Malaysia	156	36.5	49.4	3.2	10.9
Oman	37	59.5	24.3	0.0	16.2
Qatar	235	68.5	12.3	8.5	10.6
Saudi Arabia	165	53.9	26.1	8.5	11.5
South Korea	18	66.7	27.8	5.6	0.0
UAE	117	58.1	17.1	9.4	15.4
Total	887	57.5	25.9	6.0	10.6

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Grievance handling in the Destination Countries

The survey tries to identify the types of institutions/organizations where the migrant workers approach and lodge complaints regarding their contract and work circumstances. The majority of workers lodge complaints first at Nepali Embassies. One way or another, about 90 percent of surveyed workers reported that they would register grievances if anything crops up during their work contract in Nepali Embassies. However, many workers express their dissatisfaction over the services Nepali embassies offer when it comes to handling workers' grievances. They informed that the staffs of the embassies are not supportive to address migrant workers' complaints. These responses indicate the need for enhancement of embassies' institutional capacity to be able to provide the much-needed service on behalf of Nepali workers.

Figure 13: Complaint Registering in Destination Countries (In Percentage)



Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

VII FINANCIAL PRACTICE OF THE WORKERS IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRIES

In this section, we discuss intervals of salary-receipt, modes of receiving a salary, and means of sending salary to Nepal. These indicators, by and large, reflects how far the workers have engaged in safe and formal financial behavior.

Interval of receiving The Salary

About 94 percent of workers receive a salary /wage each month (Table 18). Only a small segment of workers receive salary/wage once in two to six months. In South Korea and UAE, all the workers receive a salary every month. Similarly, about 12 percent of workers get salary/age once in two to six months in Bahrain.

Table 18: Interval of Receiving Salary (In Percentage)

Salary receiving interval (%)	Each month	Once in two to six months	Total response
Bahrain	87.9	12.1	58
Kuwait	98.1	1.9	103
Malaysia	95.6	4.4	159
Oman	95.0	5.0	40
Qatar	93.7	6.3	239
Saudi Arabia	89.1	10.9	165
South Korea	100.0	0.0	19
UAE	100.0	0.0	121
Total	94.4	5.6	904

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Means of Receiving Salary

In addition, the study shows that 87 percent of workers reported that they receive salary/wage in their account or ATM (Table 19). Among the countries, about 95 percent of workers in UAE and South Korea receive salary/wages through a bank account or ATM, while workers in Saudi Arabia have the lowest proportion (76.1%), who receives salary/wage through a bank account or ATM.

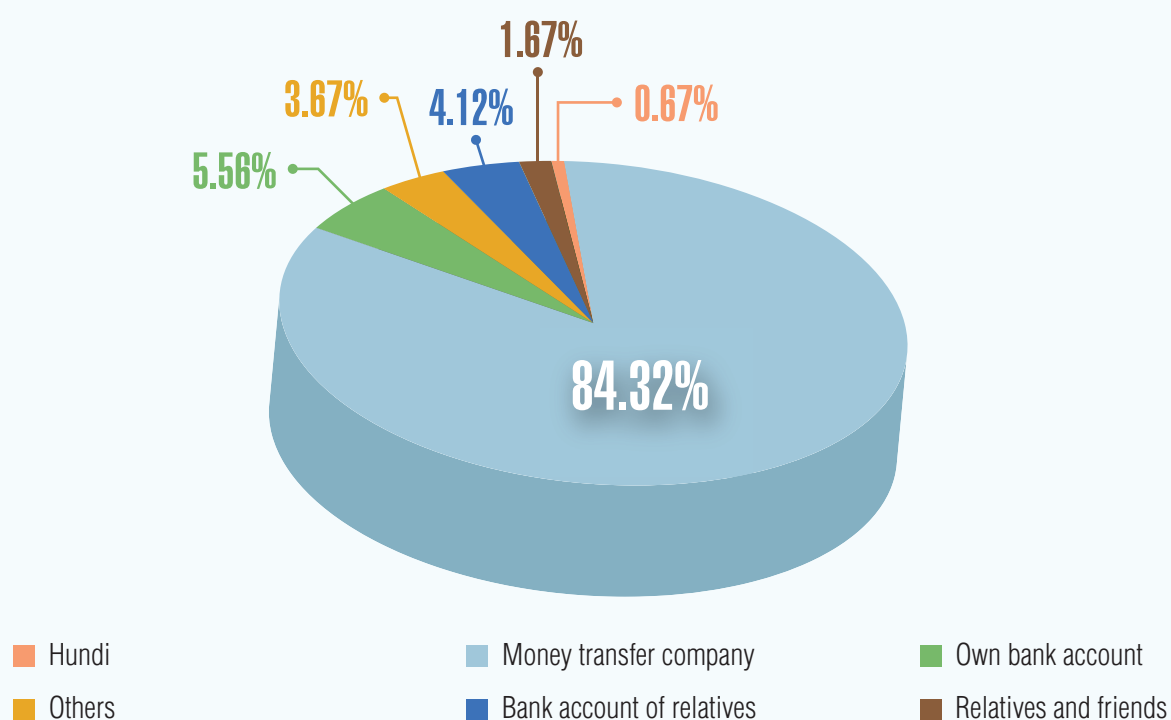
Table 19: Modes of Receiving Salary (%)

Salary/wage receives through (%)	Worker's bank account/ATM	In cash	Total response
Bahrain	77.6	22.4	58
Kuwait	88.9	11.1	99
Malaysia	81.6	18.4	158
Oman	90.0	10.0	40
Qatar	94.8	5.2	232
Saudi Arabia	76.1	23.9	163
South Korea	94.7	5.3	19
UAE	94.3	5.7	122
Total	87.0	13.0	891

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

Means of Sending Remittance to Home Country

The survey shows a growing trend of sending the remittance through money transfer companies, followed by their own bank account, and relatives. Transfer companies account for about 84 percent of total respondents, which indicates the popularity of these companies in the destination countries to send back workers' income.

Figure 14: Means of Sending Income to Home Country (In Percentage)

Source: Online & in-field survey, 2018

VIII SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study was carried out to understand the migration process, monthly earnings, working conditions, and financial behavior of Nepali migrant workers currently working in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, and South Korea. An online and in-field survey was conducted to collect the workers' reported salary and other data. During the survey, we received 1028 responses from these countries. Similarly, to analyze data, we used descriptive statistics—percentage distribution, mean, median, and standard deviation. These analyses examine monthly earnings, in terms of the workers' skill level, education, choice of the destination country, and work experience, the working situation in terms of working hours, overtime work, and accommodation facilities. In addition, we delve into the migration process of workers from Nepal in terms of the source of getting preliminary information, the cost of migration, taking orientation training, and so on, and the financial behavior of the workers in the destination countries.

MAIN FINDINGS

Process of Migrating from Nepal

The majority of Nepali migrant workers get preliminary information about the demand for foreign jobs from foreign employment agencies/ agency's agents.

- About 50 percent (except South Korea) workers get preliminary information from foreign employment agencies/ agency's agents, followed by family and relatives (18%), friends (14%), and personal acquaintance (11%).
- The majority of workers reported that they get prior information from their recruiting agencies in Nepal about earnings, working hours, and other obligations a worker has to fulfill in the destination countries. Overall, about 89 percent of workers got prior information from such recruitment agencies.
- A large proportion of less-educated migrant workers are compelled to do other work in the destination countries than the work they were supposed to do.
- A vast majority of workers reported that the orientation training was fruitful to ease their migration process. Out of them, about 37 and 48 percent of workers reported that the training was very helpful and a little helpful respectively. Only a small percentage of migrant workers (14.7 percent) responded that such training was not useful.
- An average expenditure that a worker had to incur for getting a visa, air ticket, insurance, medical, and work permit stands at about 100 thousand Nepali rupees. Such expenditure ranges from Rs. 0 to Rs 550,000. The median expenditure (Rs 1000,000) indicates a significantly large amount of money the workers have to spend to get foreign employment.

Work Types, Salary/Wage, Benefits and Other Facilities Available In the Destination Countries

- Chef, Accountant, Foreman, Supervisor, Cook, Mechanic, Salesperson, Driver, General Technician, and Storekeeper are found to be the highest-earning jobs Nepali workers perform in the destination countries.
- About 8 percent of Nepali migrant workers work in the areas of unskilled jobs. Around a two-thirds majority (64%) of workers work on semi-skilled work, and one in four workers works in skilled types of work.
- Nepali migrant workers earn an average monthly earning of about 48 thousand Nepali rupees in the destination countries. The range of monthly earning falls within 19 thousand to 257 thousand rupees. Similarly, the median earnings remain about 39 thousand rupees.
- The educational attainment of migrant workers largely affects their monthly earning prospects in the destination countries. The higher the educational attainment of workers, the higher will be their earnings prospects.

- The work experience on a particular job of the workers significantly increases their monthly earning prospects. In each country, an experienced migrant worker earns much higher than a less experienced worker does. However, in the case of South Korea, experience does not matter when it comes to affecting the monthly earning perspective.
- The skill level of the migrant worker largely affects the earning perspective. A skilled worker earns much more than an unskilled and semi-skilled worker does in any of the surveyed countries. A skilled worker earns between 72 thousand to 188 thousand rupees in the destination countries. Similarly, the workers in the professional category earn the highest average salary (Rs 115,204) followed by the technician and associate professional (Rs 85,966), clerical support worker (Rs 53,465); plant and machine operator and assembles (Rs. 52,837), service and sales workers (Rs. 49,991); craft and related trade worker (41,677), and elementary occupation (Rs. 37,569).
- Workers with skills matching current jobs earn more than that of a worker whose skills do not match with their current job. The average monthly earnings of the workers with matching skills are about 4 thousand greater than those of workers whose skills do not match their job.
- The workers reported that those who got skills training in Nepal and went to destination countries have earned significantly higher monthly average earnings (Rs. 53586) than those who did not receive such training (Rs. 45739) in Nepal.

Working Condition in Destination Countries

- Nepali migrant workers work a minimum of 7 hours to a maximum of 18 hours in the destination countries.
- In the case of Malaysia, the overtime work is 3.8 hours, which is the highest among destination countries. For other countries, it remains about 3 hours. Despite working longer hours, the monthly earning is fairly low for Malaysia.
- In Gulf countries and Malaysia, the Kafala system is found to be widely practiced. Besides South Korea, every other destination countries have practiced the Kafala system. About 90 percent of workers in Malaysia, Bahrain, and Oman stated that it is being practiced, and about 80 percent in UAE and Kuwait, and about 65 and 55 percent in Saudi Arabia and Qatar respectively.
- More than two-thirds of workers in the destination countries receive accommodation facilities. About 56 percent of workers get both lodging and food facilities, while 6 percent of workers get food facilities only and 11 percent of workers get lodging facilities only.
- The majority of workers lodge complaints when there is an issue with their contract or working conditions at Nepali Embassies at first. However, the workers are not satisfied with embassies' handling of grievances.

Financial Practices of Migrant Workers

- About 94 percent of workers receive their salary /wage each month. Only a small segment of workers receives salary/wages once in two to six months. In South Korea and UAE, all the workers get salary every month.
- Eighty-seven percent of workers reported that they receive salary/wages in their bank account or ATM.
- Money transfer companies are the dominant means of sending workers' income to the home country. About 84 percent of workers send earnings thorough of these companies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study suggest, largely, that Nepali migrant workers in the destination countries earn reasonably high average monthly earnings. Moreover, the worker's educational background, skill acquirement, choice of the destination country, and work experience plays a vital role to differentiate such earnings. However, the process of migration is riddled with a higher cost of migration and dependency of the workers on unreliable sources for getting preliminary information about jobs.

Policy Related Recommendation

- The government of Nepal has to effectively monitor orientation-training providers, and ensure that these training providers train workers according to their requirements.
- The cost of migration is already exorbitant. Therefore, the government of Nepal has to work to reduce the cost of migration, effectively upholding the provision of Free Visa Free Ticket.
- The skillset of workers has significantly proved to be a better way to increase earnings. Therefore, the government of Nepal and other related stakeholders has to start working with programs and policies, which ultimately enhance workers' skill levels.
- How far the Kafala system is desirable from the perspective of workers' safety and security the government of Nepal has to carry out a detailed study about the pros and cons of the Kafala System in the destination countries.
- Whether Nepali embassies in the destination countries address migrants' grievances promptly and seriously or not should be assessed objectively.
- The government of Nepal has to give special attention to less-educated workers during their migration process and their staying in the destination countries.

Workers Related Recommendation

Prospective Nepali migrant workers have to learn and enhance skill level to increase in earnings perspective in the destination countries.

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