

HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM RELATED BRAIN DRAIN FROM
NEPAL: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

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A Dissertation

Submitted to
School of Education

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy in Educational Leadership

Kathmandu University
Dhulikhel, Nepal

January 2025

AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Purna Dangol* for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in Educational Leadership* presented on *24 January 2025* entitled *Hospitality and Tourism Related Brain Drain from Nepal: A Narrative Inquiry*.

APPROVED BY

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Asst. Prof. Shree Krishna Wagle, PhD

Dissertation Supervisor

The issue of brain drain is one of the threats faced by developing countries like Nepal. With the situation in mind, this dissertation explores the phenomenon of brain drain within Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector, focusing on the migration of skilled professionals abroad. The study aims to explore the reasons behind this trend, its implications for Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry, and the strategies that stakeholders can adopt to address the issue.

I applied narrative inquiry as a methodology to document and analyze the experiences of five educational leaders who have been involved in BHM Colleges with education, as well as supporting internships and consulting with their students. Through in-depth interviews and open-ended questions, I captured their stories, motivations, and challenges, as well as their perspectives on opportunities available locally and internationally.

The research draws on theoretical frameworks, including the Push-Pull Migration Theory, Human Capital Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory, to examine the reasons and impact of contributing to brain drain. These frameworks provided a lens to critically assess the socioeconomic and professional motivations of individuals in the industry.

Key insights reveal that limited career growth, inadequate remuneration, and lack of recognition in Nepal's hospitality sector are significant drivers of migration. The hospitality and tourism sectors are unequal and different in terms of local opportunities and those offered in international markets. Despite the challenges, the

study underscores the potential for reforms within the sector to retain talent and skilled human resources by fostering better working conditions, competitive pay, and opportunities for professional development.

This study provides valuable insights, such as creating job and income opportunities and focusing on the values of hospitality and tourism education and industry in the context of Nepal. These insights will help stakeholders like policymakers, educators, researchers, entrepreneurs, and civil society address the issue of brain drain and strengthen Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry for human resources.

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24 January 2025

Purna Dangol,
Degree Candidate

शोध सार

शैक्षिक नेतृत्व तथा व्यवस्थापनमा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर डिग्रीको लागि पूर्ण डंगोलको शोध प्रबन्धको शीर्षक " नेपालबाट अतिथिसेवा र पर्यटनसम्बन्धी प्रतिभा पलायन: एक संकथन" ११ माघ २०८१ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो।

.....
उप. प्रा. श्रीकृष्ण वाग्ले, पीएचडी
शोध निर्देशक

यो शोध प्रबंध नेपालबाट अतिथिसेवा र पर्यटनसम्बन्धी प्रतिभा पलायन घटनाको अध्ययन हो, दक्ष जनशक्तीहरूको विदेश पलायनमा केन्द्रित छ। यस अध्ययनको उद्देश्य यो प्रवृत्तिको कारणहरू पत्ता लगाउनु, यसले नेपालको आतिथ्य तथा पर्यटन उद्योगमा पारेको प्रभावको विश्लेषण गर्नु, र सरोकारवालाहरूले अपनाउन सक्ने रणनीतिहरूको पहिचान गर्नु हो।

मैले पाँच जना शैक्षिक अगुवाहरूका अनुभवहरूलाई अभिलेख र विश्लेषण गर्नका लागि एक संकथन विधिलाई अपनाएको छु, जसले वि.एच.एम. कलेजमा अध्यापन तथा विद्यार्थीहरूलाई इन्टर्नसिप र परामर्शमार्फत सहयोग गरेका थिए। गहन अन्तरवार्ता र खुला प्रश्नहरूको माध्यमबाट, मैले उनीहरूका कथाहरू, प्रेरणाहरू, चुनौतीहरू, साथै स्थानीय र अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय अवसरहरूबारे उनीहरूको दृष्टिकोणलाई संकलन गरेको छु।

यस अनुसन्धानले पुश-पुल माइग्रेसन थ्योरी, ह्युमन क्यापिटल थ्योरी र ट्रान्सफर्मेसन लिडरसिप थ्योरीलगायत जस्ता सैद्धान्तिक ढाँचाहरूको प्रयोग गरी प्रतिभा पलायनमा योगदान गर्ने कारण र प्रभावको विश्लेषण गरेको छ। यी ढाँचाहरूले व्यक्तिहरूका सामाजिकआर्थिक र पेशागत प्रेरणाहरूलाई आलोचनात्मक रूपमा मूल्यांकन गर्न सघाएका छन्।

प्रमुख निष्कर्षहरूले सीमित करियर प्रगति, अपुरो पारिश्रमिक, र नेपालको आतिथ्य क्षेत्रमा पर्याप्त मान्यता नपाउनु प्रवासी बन्ने प्रमुख कारणहरू देखाएको छ। आतिथ्य तथा पर्यटन क्षेत्रहरूमा स्थानीय अवसरहरू र अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय बजारहरूबीच ठूलो असमानता देखिन्छ। यद्यपि चुनौतीहरू बावजुद, यस अध्ययनले जनशक्ति तथा दक्ष जनशक्ति जोगाउन सुधारहरू सम्भव रहेको र राम्रो कार्य वातावरण, प्रतिस्पर्धी पारिश्रमिक, तथा पेशागत विकासका अवसरहरू प्रवर्द्धन गरेर समाधान सम्भव हुने कुरा औल्याएको छ।

यस अध्ययनले नेपालको सन्दर्भमा रोजगारी र आयका अवसरहरू सिर्जना गर्ने र आतिथ्य र पर्यटन शिक्षा र उद्योगको मूल्यहरूमा ध्यान केन्द्रित गर्ने जस्ता बहुमूल्य अन्तर्दृष्टिहरू प्रदान गर्दछ। यी अन्तर्दृष्टिहरू नीति निर्माताहरू, शिक्षकहरू, अनुसन्धानकर्ताहरू, र उद्यमीहरू र नागरिक समाज जस्ता

सरोकारवालाहरूले प्रतिभा पलायन मुद्दालाई सम्बोधन गर्न र मानव संसाधनको लागि नेपालको आतिथ्य र पर्यटन-उद्योगलाई सुदृढ पार्न प्रयोग गर्नेछन्।

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पूर्ण डंगोल,
उपाधि उम्मेदवार

११ माघ २०८१

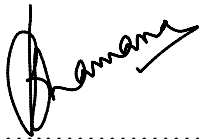
This dissertation, entitled *Hospitality and Tourism Related Brain Drain from Nepal: A Narrative Inquiry*, presented by *Purna Dangol* on 24 January 2025.

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I understand that my dissertation report will be part of the enduring section of literature in the Kathmandu University Library. My signature below authorizes the dissertation to be released to any reader for academic purposes.

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24 January 2025

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work and that it has not been submitted for the candidature of any other academic degree to any other university.

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24 January 2025

Purna Dangol

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DEDICATION

This dissertation honors all hospitality and tourism industry workers who, despite difficult circumstances, have relentlessly supported Nepal's economic development by promoting the country's stunning natural surroundings and rich cultural legacy. It also highlights the urgent problem of brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector and pays tribute to individuals who have pursued opportunities elsewhere, bringing their experience to international markets. It is also devoted to educators and legislators who work to establish an atmosphere that attracts and maintains talent and encourages the next generation to seek employment in their home country.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the process of carrying out this research work, I am indirectly and directly supported and guided by several dignitaries, personalities and sources. First and foremost, personally and professionally, I am grateful to my dissertation supervisor, Asst. Prof. Shree Krishan Wagle, as well as Assoc. Prof. Shesha Kanta Pangen, PhD, Head of Department, continually guided me from the start to the end of my research journey. I am forever indebted to their vigorous encouragement, recurrently checking, and providing me constructive feedback, mentoring, and support to shape the survey via virtual meetings in Google Meet, phone calls, and face-to-face meetings.

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD, Dean, Prof. Mahesh Nath Parajuli, PhD, Prof. Dhanapati Subedi, PhD, and Associate Dean KUSOED for encouragement and invaluable academic support. By the same tone, I am thankful to Prof. Mana Prasad Wagley, PhD, Asst. Prof. Rebat Kumar Dhakal, PhD, and Asst. Prof. Siddhartha Dhungana, PhD for their facilitation, advice, and constructive feedback.

I feel much motivated to successfully and timely completion of the dissertation work by their inspiring and encouraging words. In the same vein, I am equally grateful to Asst. Prof. Basu Prasad Subedi, PhD, for his guidance during each semester, which enabled me to understand the world of research, especially qualitative research design. My sincere thanks go to Prof. Lava Dev Awasthi, PhD, Chet Nath Panta, PhD and all the mentors and faculties of KUSOED for their encouragement, motivation and advice in the initial days of the research study.

I am thankful to Mr. Raju Maharjan and Mr. Ganesh Khatiwada and all the administrative staff of the KUSOED for their administrative support throughout my study and librarians for providing me with the required books and research materials.

Special thanks go to all colleges and affiliated universities for providing me with ethical approval to complete this study. Likewise, my sincere thanks go to all the study participants for their valuable time and saturated information through sharing their experiences. Without their information, this dissertation was not possible to complete.

I thank all my colleagues for their companionship, insights, and suggestions during formal and informal talks. Finally, I extend my deep gratitude to my

grandparents, parents, wife, son, daughter, and entire family members for their love and blessings during my life journey. Without their encouragement, support and motivation, I would not be able to reach this point of achievement.

Purna Dangol

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ABBREVIATIONS

AOA	Articles of Association
BHM	Bachelor's in Hotel Management
DOFE	Department of Foreign Employment
DOI	Department of Industry
DOE	District of Education
GON	Government of Nepal
HR	Human Resources
ILO	International Labor Organization
KU	Kathmandu University
KUSOED	Kathmandu University School of Education
TU	Tribhuvan University
MHHM	Master of Hotel and Hospitality Management
MICE	Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions
M Phil	Masters in Philosophy
NATHM	Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management
HAN	Hotel Association of Nepal
HM	Hospitality Management
MOCTCA	Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
MOE	Ministry of Education
NITC	Nepal Information Technology Center
NPR	Nepali Rupees
PAN	Permanent Account Number
PR	Public Relations
RQ	Research Questions
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter overviews the scopes of tourism and hospitality education from the traditional to the modern period in the local context as well as internationally. Similarly, it deals with the major reasons, i.e., "pulling" and "pushing" reasons for brain drain and skill drain to developed countries and presents the qualitative data of regulating bodies about skilled human resources migrating abroad. Likewise, it discusses the negative and positive consequences as well as reasons and impacts of migrating human resources nationwide and also deals with how the migration of skilled human resources can be controlled. Also, the agenda is followed by highlighting the research statement, purpose of study, research questions, and rationale for and delimitation of the present study.

Scene Setting

I have accumulated over 15 years of experience in the hospitality and tourism industry. I hold various positions, such as front office receptionist, front office supervisor, guest relations executive, front office host, international hostel manager, in-house trainer, food and beverage instructor, and hotel management lecturer. These roles have spanned multiple establishments, both in my home country and abroad. During this time, I have encountered numerous challenges, particularly those stemming from a lack of skilled and knowledgeable human resources in the hospitality and tourism sector.

Here, I wish to share my experiences as a hospitality and tourism education student and professional. Many Bachelor of Hotel Management (BHM) graduates aspire to undertake internships abroad during their final semester in countries such as China, the UAE (Dubai), Qatar, Cyprus, Australia, and the USA. However, after completing their internships, very few students return to their home country to contribute to the local hospitality and tourism industry. Instead, they often choose to remain abroad despite facing significant challenges during their internships. This situation exacerbates the shortage of skilled and knowledgeable professionals in the hospitality sector within Nepal.

During my tenure in the United Arab Emirates (Dubai) in 2014, I witnessed a specific incident involving a BHM female student from a reputed hospitality college

in Nepal. She had traveled to Dubai for an internship in the hospitality and tourism industry after completing her final semester. Typically, interns are rotated through all operational departments, including front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, and kitchen/production, within a year. However, in her case, she was assigned exclusively to the housekeeping department and was compelled to train there for the entire duration of her internship. Despite her grievances being ignored, she was eventually promoted and recruited as a housekeeping supervisor at the same hotel. She continues to work in Dubai to this day. This case is representative of the experiences faced by many hospitality and tourism graduates from Nepal.

I have encountered numerous similar incidents during my career in the hospitality and tourism sector. After completing my master's degree in Hospitality and Hotel Management, I had the opportunity to work as a Hostel Manager for a reputed hospitality organization in Nepal. My responsibilities included overseeing operational activities and welcoming international guests at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu. On numerous occasions, I observed skilled, semi-skilled, and educated individuals leaving Nepal with mixed emotions, hope for a better future, and sorrow at leaving their homeland.

Study Context of Brain Drain

The hospitality and tourism sector holds immense potential for Nepal, as it generates employment and foreign exchange, both of which significantly contribute to the country's economic growth (Netto, 2009). However, despite its promise, the ground reality often differs starkly from the optimistic data. While many budding entrepreneurs venture into the hospitality sector with enthusiasm, the actual outcomes frequently fall short of expectations. This disconnect dampens the positive momentum and exacerbates issues like brain drain and frustration among educated youth.

According to Bastola (2020), Nepal is one of the leading nations in terms of labor migration, with over 6 million migrants leaving annually. Contributing factors include fragile sociopolitical systems, persistent political instability, and weak economic performance, which are often worsened by conflicts, natural disasters, adverse environmental conditions, and other challenges.

One of Nepal's most pressing issues is the phenomenon of brain drain, the emigration of skilled workers to other countries. This is particularly prevalent in industries like tourism and hospitality. Long-standing structural issues, such as political instability, inadequate infrastructure, and limited opportunities for

professional growth, have driven many skilled professionals to seek better prospects abroad (Adhikari & Ghimire, 2017). This exodus has created a talent gap in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector, a vital contributor to the nation's economy, hindering its growth and global competitiveness. In this support, Sharma (2020) highlighted that the allure of better economic opportunities and career advancement in international markets, especially in Gulf countries, Europe, and Australia, further fuel this trend.

The brain drain has significant socioeconomic implications for both individuals and the nation. While migrants often enjoy higher incomes and improved living standards abroad, Nepal loses valuable human capital that could drive innovation and growth in key economic sectors (, 2018). Although remittances from migrant workers play a critical role in Nepal's economy and contribute substantially to GDP, this reliance masks the deeper issue of workforce depletion (Mishra, 2019).

In the hospitality and tourism industry, this workforce depletion is particularly concerning. Maintaining cultural authenticity and delivering high-quality services are essential for the sector's success but are becoming increasingly difficult due to a lack of skilled and properly trained professionals. Supporting the discourse, Faini (2003) stated that the situation mirrors the concept of "human capital flight," where individuals educated domestically or abroad choose not to return to their home country, instead seeking better opportunities and higher salaries elsewhere.

This phenomenon reflects broader global labor dynamics, where domestic sociopolitical factors and international market demands shape migration patterns. To address the long-term socioeconomic consequences of brain drain while maximizing its economic benefits, Nepal must strike a careful balance (Poudel & Upreti, 2021). Literature suggests that by implementing legislative reforms to improve domestic working conditions, creating opportunities for skill development, and fostering talent retention, Nepal can mitigate the adverse effects of brain drain and strengthen its hospitality and tourism industry to compete on a global scale.

Statement of the Problem

Nepal experiences a significant outflow of its youth population each year, with approximately 250,000 adolescents migrating abroad in pursuit of better living standards, higher earnings, and access to superior education systems (Prakash, 2018). Supporting the discourse, Gaulee (2014) highlights that the low quality of higher education in Nepal stems from several factors, including inadequate success and quality assurance mechanisms, a shortage of trained labor, and persistent political

instability. In contrast, developed nations offer high-quality education paired with promising career opportunities, making them attractive destinations for Nepalese students.

The trend of Nepalese students migrating to industrialized countries such as the United States, Australia, and European nations has been steadily increasing. For instance, the U.S. Embassy in Nepal reported a rise in the number of Nepalese students enrolled in American institutions and universities compared to previous years. According to the Ministry of Education's No Objection Certificate (NOC) Section, 82,409 certificates were issued to students planning to study abroad between January 1 and July 4, 2022, nearly double the 45,843 certificates issued throughout 2021. Among these, 59,748 students opted for Australia, followed by Japan (9,435), the United States (2,419), the United Kingdom (1,722), Russia (446), and Thailand (122). Additionally, hundreds of students migrate to India annually without requiring an NOC. This increasing migration of young, skilled, and knowledgeable graduates from Nepal has led to several adverse effects. The country faces reduced economic growth, diminished opportunities for innovation, a shortage of trained professionals, and declining quality in higher education. The brain drain phenomenon poses a significant challenge to Nepal's development, particularly in sectors like hospitality and tourism, which rely heavily on skilled human resources.

Though there have been some studies concerning the brain-drain of university graduates in Nepal (Mainali, 2019), the review of related literature suggests that the brain-drain scenario of graduates from the tourism and hospitality sectors is hardly explored. Given these circumstances, it is crucial to explore the brain-drain scenario of graduates in the hospitality and tourism industry. This research aims to explore the causes, consequences, and potential solutions to address the migration of hospitality and tourism graduates from Nepal.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of Nepali educational leaders in the hospitality and tourism industries regarding the reasons for and consequences of brain drain on hospitality and tourism graduates from Nepal.

Research Questions

1. How do the educational leaders in the hospitality and tourism sectors narrate their experiences in response to the reasons behind the brain drain of hospitality and tourism graduates from Nepal?

2. What consequences have they experienced from the brain drain of graduates within the hospitality and tourism education sector in Nepal?

Rationale of the Study

Nepal can gain a significant advantage from the tourism sector by producing foreign exchange and expanding job possibilities, both of which support the country's overall economic growth. It contributes significantly to the GDP but also supports and strengthens local communities by offering sustainable livelihood options (World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC], 2021).

Skilled human resources may not be retained in their home country due to major factors that attract them to developed countries. Several factors contribute to brain drain, particularly in developing countries like Nepal. Economic instability, lack of professional autonomy, limited career growth opportunities, political instability, and the charm of better living standards abroad are key drivers pushing skilled individuals to seek opportunities in developed nations (Bhattarai, 2020). This situation arises due to poorly designed monitoring and evaluation systems of regulatory bodies and legal provisions. Consequently, the tourism and hospitality industry faces significant problems and challenges due to a lack of skilled and knowledgeable human resources in the market. Moreover, poorly designed and implemented regulatory frameworks, coupled with ineffective monitoring and evaluation systems, exacerbate this issue by failing to retain talent within the country (Adhikari & Shrestha, 2019). As a result, the tourism and hospitality sectors, which heavily rely on skilled labor for quality service delivery, face a shortage of competent professionals, hindering their growth and competitiveness.

The study undoubtedly sheds light on the issue of brain drain, and the current research will be crucial in providing future scholars with a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. Shrestha (2021) argues that the brain drain has been a choice for the learners of hospitality and tourism education, either for their higher degree or for their job opportunities. In this sense, the concern of educational leaders in such a trend of brain drain needs a serious study and provides better insights to policymakers and education leaders for revisiting the hospitality and tourism education system. Similarly, this study is essential in our context because its findings may help governance address and intervene in challenges related to brain drain and potential future problems. The outcomes of this research contribute to the development of

strategies aimed at retaining skilled professionals and fostering sustainable growth in Nepal's tourism sector.

Delimitation of the Study

I have delimited my study, focusing on exploring the reasons and consequences of the brain drain of skilled graduates from tourism and hospitality education. Meanings are made only from the experiential narratives shared by the educational leaders in the hospitality and tourism sectors. The study is limited to the narratives shared by educational leaders of tourism and hospitality institutions around Kathmandu Valley who have more than a decade of experience concerning the problems and challenges related to skilled human resources in the hospitality industry of Nepal. The educational leaders refer to the educators who have been playing the roles of administrative leaders who envision the hospitality and tourism educational practices for their institution and also act as teacher leaders who transfer the academic contents to the students in the classroom setting.

Essence of Chapter

This chapter began with the introduction of the research topic through an anecdote of mine and my professional experiences in the hospitality and tourism sector. Based on that, I presented the rationale of my study. This chapter also contained the statement of problems as well as the purpose of the study. Along with these, the research questions were stated, followed by a delimitation of the study. The following chapter deals with a review of related literature.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes an overview of the research on brain drain concerns in the tourism and hospitality industry, including both local and worldwide contexts. The literature review encompasses recent and relevant studies, followed by highlighting the thematic review, theoretical referent, policy review, empirical review, research gap, theoretical framework, and contribution of the present study.

Thematic Review

This Thematic Review explores literature concerning the major themes of this study. The themes include brain drain and hospitality and tourism education education in Nepal. The themes are discussed in different headings below.

Brain Drain

In general, “Brain drain” is the movement of qualified human resources from one own nation to another developed nation for better pay, getting higher academic degrees and standardized lifestyles, high ambition, lack of job satisfaction, the opportunity for career development and unsatisfactory remuneration were the causative factors for migration in the developing country like Nepal (Mainali, 2019). It refers to the movement of highly skilled and educated individuals from one nation to another in quest of financially and professionally rewarding opportunities. There is a dearth of experienced professionals in the nation, and trained professionals are migrating, which is known as brain drain. The brain drain is being caused by a decline in the skilled population in Nepal as more people migrate abroad in quest of better opportunities and a higher quality of life (Bhattarai, 2020).

The term "brain gain" or "brain hunting" refers to the set of legislative measures needed to get a host nation ready to welcome innovators, entrepreneurs, elites, and highly qualified individuals. The USA is at the top of the list for "brain gain" in the era of globalization and competitiveness, and the US Diversity Visa plays a big part in this process (Ikubolajeh Logan & Thomas, 2012). The phenomenon is not only happening from developing to developed countries, but also from advanced regions to the US, like Europe, Japan, Russia, etc. For example, young scientists and researchers' mobility from Europe to the US for choosing to pursue careers (Bosch, 2003). For educated individuals, the USA's flexible policy, open labour and economy,

robust educational system, international competitiveness, and immigration laws are all appealing (Boeri et al., 2012)

North America has, many attractions, particularly for highly qualified people/educated who choose to migrate. Immigration policy and political institutions in North America affect expertise for international movement (Chen et al., 2011). Moreover, immigration policy is constantly looking for better ways to attract the most talented individuals to fill the labor market due to lower costs for products and services (Vargas-Silva, 2012). In contrast, immigration policy has negative effects on reversing the 'brain drain' in developing countries. However, a number of nations have implemented immigration laws in recent years to attract skilled workers in the context of reversing the 'brain drain', but the US has been leading the race in the age of globalization. In this regard, Boeri et al. (2012) highlighted that brain drain appears to be a way for the nation to draw highly competent immigrants from Europe in addition to PhD candidates from developing nations.

Nepal's Hospitality and Tourism Education

A dynamic phenomenon, tourism encourages broader socioeconomic and environmental changes in the area it visits (Liu & Wall, 2006; Stone & Nyaupane, 2016). In today's globalized world, tourism has developed into a sophisticated and intricate industry that offers advantages beyond the generation of low-skilled jobs (Baum, 2015)

In Nepal, tourism is a significant business that is seen as a vehicle for economic development, particularly in rural areas that rely on parks and other protected areas. Although the nation's natural and cultural endowments are valuable assets that support and expand tourism, a significant obstacle continues to be the shortage of highly qualified human resources. People must be adequately prepared to assume leadership roles and make decisions, as well as to start their businesses in both the public and commercial sectors. As more institutions get involved in degree programs and training, the field of tourism and hospitality management education is emerging and becoming more significant (Shrestha, 2017).

In hospitality and tourism management, education uses four categories: availability, affordability, accessibility, and accountability. The educational curriculum, skill set, and work opportunities for human resource development were investigated using thematic analysis. Thapa and Panta (2019) argue that formal education, training, and capacity-building programs were only offered by a tiny

number of highly selective higher education institutions spread over a limited number of cities, each with its own enrollment quota. Additionally, private organizations provided the majority of programmers, which restricted the accessibility and affordability of the position for impoverished and marginalized people, especially in rural areas. There was no national framework in place for curriculum standardization, accreditation, or quality assessment.

In such a situation, collaboration between the national government, the travel and tourism sector, and academic institutions for curriculum and training modifications could support the development and fortification of human resources required to satisfy Nepal's tourism development objectives.

Nepal is a low-development country in South Asia and a well-known mountain tourism destination. Nepal has a comparative advantage because of the magnificent Himalayan Mountains, an abundance of wild plants and animals, a diverse culture, friendly people, and its location between two quickly developing neighbouring countries (China and India) (Baral et al., 2017). Protected areas are the major tourism destinations in the country, as 71% of international tourists visit one of its national parks and wildlife reserves (Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation [MoCTCA], 2016).

However, because foreign visitors were first permitted admission into the nation in the early 1960s, Nepal's history of tourism is very brief. The tourism industry has expanded for several decades. Still, in recent years, there has been a noticeable decline in visitor numbers and stagnation due to political unrest and an armed domestic insurgency that has lasted for ten years (Bhattarai et al., 2005). Despite having a wealth of natural resources, Nepal ranks 103rd among 136 countries on the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (World Economic Forum, 2017).

With the founding of Tribhuvan University in 1959, higher education was introduced in Nepal. Prior to 1990, the only university in the nation was located in Kathmandu, the capital city. However, it now offers more access through associated colleges spread across the country (Asian Development Bank, 2015).

Most of the nation's students pursuing higher education are enrolled in various colleges. Most of them are either part of Tribhuvan University, the oldest and largest university in the nation, or are on branch campuses. The aggregate number of students enrolled in public universities and related institutions is about.

The United Nations Development Program/International Labor Organization provided technical assistance for the establishment of the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM) in 1972, marking the start of a planned effort for human resource development in the hospitality and tourism industry. The focus was initially on imparting training in trade and managerial skills. However, in 1999, formal education was added, with a 3-year bachelor's program in hotel management.

In 2003, additional choices were introduced, including an undergraduate program in travel and tourist management. Tribhuvan University was the affiliation for both the tourism and hotel management programs. At the moment, four significant universities offer degree programs in tourism and hospitality management.

Travel, tourism, and hotel and hospitality management are all covered in the bachelor's and master's degree programs. All universities typically offer degree programs in tourism and hospitality administration under the Faculty of Administration (Business Administration). Higher education in tourism and hospitality management is having difficulty striking a balance between meeting the demands of the industry for professional and academic human resources.

Migration of Educated People

Migration is the idea of relocating a person from their place of residence to another area, either domestically or internationally, for a set period and for a variety of reasons. "An umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common law understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons," is how the International Organization for Migration (2022) defines migrants.

A migrant is defined in the census as a person who moves either from their place of birth to another area or keeps on moving stepwise or circularly by changing his or her residence more or less frequently by being either seasonal, temporary, semi-permanent or permanent migrant depending upon the duration of migration and reasons for migration within a defined geographic area.

Migration is a common phenomenon in Nepal, both domestically and internationally. Traditionally, most of the migration took place within the country's borders, with some people going to India and Tibet. Nepal's entry into the global economy has since re-defined these historical trends, and now, Nepal's can be found spread across the globe. Labor migration to the Gulf states and Malaysia has seen

significant growth over the years and now accounts for an increasingly larger share of Nepal's international migration, while immigration into Nepal continues to be mostly from India, a fact facilitated by the open border between the two countries. The impact of these movements is evident in the country's shifting demographics as well as in changes taking place in the socio-economic arena (Acharya, 2012). But despite the long history of active migration in Nepal, systematic studies of the phenomenon are quite recent and, as yet, still very few and far between. With the recent nationwide surveys, primarily the Nepal Living Standards Survey 2010/11, the National Census 2011, and the Nepal Migration Survey 2009, covering significant grounds on migration, unavailability of data is no longer a significant barrier to understanding migration trends in the country.

Theoretical Referent

I went through a number of theories in this study process. Everett Lee's Theory of Migration provides a theoretical linkage to narrate tourism and hospitality education principles and educational leaders. Also, the human capital transformational leadership theory emphasizes the reasons for or associated issues associated with the brain drain of skilled graduates in the hospitality and tourism education sector.

Everett Lee's Theory of migration (The Push and Pull Theory)

Various factors influence the preferences of talented people in the country as to whether they prefer to stay or move overseas. Everett Lee has conceptualized the factors associated with the decision to migrate and the process of migration into the following four categories: (1) Factors associated with the area of origin (Push). (2) Factors associated with the area of destination (Pull). (3) Intervening obstacles; and (4) Personal factors. The factors contribute to the 'brain drain' and can be combined under two wide groups: 'push' and 'pull' factors. Lee (1966) created the theory of Push and Pull, which has a direct and obvious relationship to the push and pull processes that drive transnational migration across political boundaries (Baruch, 1995). The main push-pull factors that contribute to brain drain include political, economic, cultural, demographic, and technological factors in the global system (Bhagwati, 2011). In contrast, Intervening obstacles also have to be overcome before migration finally takes place. These include distance and transportation. Technological advances, however, have lessened their importance in modern times. Finally, the personal factors are of the utmost importance because, instead of the actual factors associated with the place of origin and/or destination, the individual's

perception of these factors is found to influence the actual act of migration. According to (Harvey, 2012), the political, economic, and social conditions have an impact on educated people's migration into their home country and are driving them to leave. However, in the host nation, pull factors may be things like exciting career prospects or lifestyle goals. Similarly, developing nations with comparatively low levels of education are particularly concerned about brain drain or the exodus of highly qualified persons to other areas with an abundance of human capital, as this means they are losing their most skilled labor force.

Everett Lee's Push and Pull Theory of migration provides a robust framework for analyzing the factors driving brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector. The theory categorizes migration dynamics into "push factors," which compel individuals to leave their home country, and "pull factors," which attract them to foreign destinations (Lee, 1966). This theoretical lens is particularly relevant to understanding the systemic issues in Nepal that push skilled professionals out, such as limited career development opportunities, low wages, political instability, and inadequate infrastructure in the hospitality and tourism sector. Simultaneously, the theory enables us to examine the allure of developed nations, where higher salaries, advanced training facilities, and stable socio-economic conditions serve as substantial pull factors (Adhikari & Ghimire, 2017). By applying this framework, the study can comprehensively assess the interplay of these forces, providing a nuanced understanding of the migration phenomenon.

Moreover, the Push and Pull Theory is well-suited for a narrative inquiry approach, as it helps contextualize individual migration stories within broader socio-economic and political structures. For example, narratives of professionals in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry often work as a push factor, like dissatisfaction with domestic working conditions and lack of recognition, alongside pull factors like the promise of global exposure and career advancement in international markets (Sharma, 2020). By aligning these personal accounts with Lee's theory, the study can systematically explore how structural imbalances and individual aspirations contribute to brain drain. This alignment deepens not only theoretical insights but also informs practical strategies to address the push factors and enhance the retention of skilled professionals within Nepal's critical hospitality and tourism sector.

The Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory is an economic theory that suggests that investing in people through education and training can lead to economic growth, increased productivity, and reduced poverty (Schultz, 1961). The theory is based on the idea that human capital, or the knowledge, skills, and experience that employees bring to a company, is a key factor in economic success. The theory suggests that society gets financial benefits when people are equipped with the tools to improve their health, quality of life, and productivity.

The theory was first proposed in the 1960s by Nobel Prize-winning economist Theodore Schultz (Schultz, 1961). However, the idea of investing in people can be traced back to the 18th-century Scottish economist Adam Smith (Smith, 1776). American economist Greg Becker is also considered a pioneer of the theory, as his work linked human labor and production. Human capital theory is based on the idea that people act in rational ways and that economic activities are separate from social activities.

The Human Capital Theory is a valuable framework for analyzing the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector, as it emphasizes the economic value of skills, knowledge, and experience possessed by individuals (Becker, 1964). According to this theory, people invest in their education and skill development to increase their productivity and earning potential. However, when the returns on these investments are perceived as inadequate within their home country, they seek opportunities elsewhere. In Nepal, the hospitality and tourism industry suffers from systemic issues such as low wages, lack of career growth opportunities, and inadequate professional training infrastructure, which drive skilled workers to migrate. Human Capital Theory helps explain this migration as a rational decision by individuals seeking to maximize their potential and secure better economic outcomes in countries that offer higher remuneration, advanced professional development, and stability (Thapa & Shrestha, 2021).

This theory also offers insights into the broader socio-economic impacts of brain drain, emphasizing the loss of high-value human capital for Nepal. In the context of hospitality and tourism, where service quality and cultural representation are critical, the departure of skilled professionals weakens the industry's global competitiveness and its potential to attract international tourists. At the same time, the theory highlights the potential benefits of migration, such as the accumulation of

knowledge and skills abroad, which, if leveraged through policies encouraging return migration or knowledge sharing, can enhance Nepal's human capital pool (Poudel & Upreti, 2021). By applying Human Capital Theory, the study aims to explore the motivations of skilled professionals, assess the costs and benefits of their migration, and provide actionable recommendations for retaining talent and fostering sustainable growth in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector.

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory, introduced by James MacGregor Burns (Burns, 1978) and further developed by Bernard Bass (Bass, 1985), focuses on leaders who inspire and motivate followers to exceed expectations and achieve higher levels of performance. This theory emphasizes four key components: idealized influence (leaders act as role models and earn trust), inspirational motivation (leaders articulate a compelling vision), intellectual stimulation (leaders encourage innovation and creativity), and individualized consideration (leaders provide personalized support and mentorship). Transformational leaders aim to create meaningful change by fostering a strong sense of purpose, collaboration, and commitment, making it particularly effective in addressing challenges such as employee retention and motivation.

The Transformational Leadership Theory is a fitting framework for exploring the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector, as it emphasizes the role of inspiring and visionary leadership in motivating individuals, fostering organizational commitment, and addressing systemic challenges (Bass, 1985). One of the key drivers of brain drain is often dissatisfaction with leadership in domestic organizations, where a lack of mentorship, limited opportunities for personal and professional growth, and a failure to create a motivating work environment push skilled professionals to seek opportunities abroad (Sharma & Thapa, 2020). The theory suggests that transformational leaders can mitigate these push factors by cultivating an organizational culture that values talent and innovation. Applying this theory to the study allows an exploration of how leadership practices in Nepalese organizations might influence decisions to stay or migrate, thereby offering actionable insights to improve talent retention.

Moreover, Transformational Leadership Theory provides a lens for understanding how effective leaders can act as catalysts for systemic change in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector. Leaders who demonstrate charisma, vision,

and a strong commitment to employee development can address structural issues, such as inadequate training programs, poor wages, and limited career advancement opportunities, which contribute to brain drain (Adhikari & Ghimire, 2017). By applying this theory, the study can identify leadership styles and strategies that inspire loyalty and reduce the appeal of foreign job markets. Additionally, the theory highlights the potential of transformational leaders to influence policy and advocate for sectoral reforms, ultimately enhancing the attractiveness of the domestic hospitality and tourism industry. This approach not only informs leadership development but also aligns with broader goals of fostering sustainable growth and reversing the adverse impacts of the brain drain in Nepal.

Policy Review

Nepal has yet to develop a robust and standardized education system comparable to international standards. Consequently, a significant number of highly skilled professionals are attracted to migrate to developed countries. This migration has led to two major negative effects: the loss of trained human resources and the absence of expertise in various professions. The declining quality of Nepal's education system has further motivated skilled individuals to seek opportunities abroad.

The International Labor Organization's Nepal Country Office (2017) highlighted a lack of policy-related data regarding migration. Each year, an increasing number of Nepali laborers leave their homes in search of jobs abroad. According to official data, 527,814 men and women, though the number of women is negligible, migrated for work during the fiscal year 2013/14, marking a 16.4% increase compared to the previous fiscal year. However, this data excludes individuals who migrated illegally through India or with the assistance of intermediaries.

The Department of Foreign Employment (DoFE) (2022) reports that approximately 1,750 Nepalis leave the country daily in search of employment abroad. In the fiscal year 2016/17, 639,167 prospective migrant workers departed for various countries, an increase from 418,713 in the preceding fiscal year 2015/16. Similarly, in the fiscal year 2018/19, a total of 236,211 labor permits were issued, with 91.3% granted to males and 8.7% to females.

Pandey and Panta (2020) noted that Nepal's economic condition deteriorated significantly following the earthquake of 2072 BS, which became a major driver of increased human resource migration. According to the Labor Department of Nepal,

approximately 4.4 million Nepalese workers have migrated abroad due to a lack of job opportunities in the country. Additionally, a substantial number of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) graduates pursue advanced degrees in industrialized nations such as the United States, Europe, Korea, China, and Japan, with many choosing to settle there permanently.

Strong policies, effective planning, and consistent implementation are essential to addressing the brain drain of human resources. Government policies play a critical role in either mitigating or exacerbating the brain drain phenomenon. Recent studies indicate that certain policies in developing countries have negatively influenced the decision-making of educated individuals, prompting them to seek opportunities overseas.

According to Docquier et al. (2007), several factors contribute to the growing brain drain phenomenon, including low levels of development, political instability, and racial and religious divisions. These challenges have made addressing brain drain a priority for governments and societies in many developing nations. The loss of skilled workers poses a significant threat to economic and human resource development. Addressing this issue requires implementing comprehensive policy initiatives that tackle the root causes of migration. Shrestha (2020) mentions that a combined effort of hotel entrepreneurs, hospitality industry leaders, government agencies, and other stakeholders should be forthcoming in thrashing out durable solutions to overcome HR-related challenges. This will be useful for policymakers as well as hotel managers to devise policies and practices that could ensure the successful management of the hospitality industry as a whole.

Nepal faces significant challenges in developing an education system that meets international standards. This inadequacy has contributed to the migration of skilled professionals, resulting in a loss of expertise and a shortage of skilled manpower in various professions. To address brain drain effectively, the government must implement strong policies that create job opportunities, improve the quality of education, and resolve political and social instability. Such policy initiatives are essential to reducing migration, retaining skilled human resources, and ensuring sustainable development for Nepal.

Empirical Review

The concerns of labor mobility in the context of a globalized world have been studied by pointing out the realities of brain drain. Rahimi and Weisi. (2018) claimed

that skilled individuals can now freely and easily relocate between countries in the interconnected global village that globalization has produced. According to Dragolea and Cotîrlea (2011), this phenomenon of highly qualified workers being drawn to and relocating to locations that provide the best working prospects is a typical occurrence in a globalized environment. Developing nations are primarily impacted by labor mobility due to their incapacity to keep highly qualified and experienced human resources inside their borders (Joppe, 2012). These studies have given me insights into looking at brain drain as a regular process in today's context and its impact on developing nations like Nepal.

Similarly, The USA, Britain, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian states are the top travel destinations among tourism students, according to Dragolea and Cotîrlea's (2011) research of Romania. The vast studies concluded that culture and family can play an essential role in educating people's movement (Tillard, 2011). Similarly, The Sri Lankan example demonstrates how the culture and laws of the home country shape the attitudes and behaviors of immigrant entrepreneurs and contribute significantly to the ever-increasing "brain drain" (Azmat & Zutshi, 2012). This literature has given me insights into the brain drain in the hospitality and tourism industry and the educational leaders' viewpoint in the context of Nepal.

The demographic shift brought about by people's international mobility will have two effects, claims Fargues (2011). First, the primary driving force behind bright people's decision to relocate overseas was family ties. Second, these people found jobs not only to save money but also to improve their knowledge and skills. However, a study on Chinese talent abroad in Japan (the second most popular host country after the United States) reveals that the main factor influencing people's intention to return is social connections. These include social contact with friends and family, a comfortable social and cultural environment, and cultural communication, all of which provide psychological satisfaction and are advantages of being in one's home country (Xue, 2012). By looking at these studies, I am promoted to focus on the consequences of brain drain during the academic internship.

The research studies in the context of Nepal have also shown multiple concerns in hospitality education and industry. According to Shrestha et al. (2007), higher education in Nepal did not pick up speed until the 1950s, when democracy was established. The emphasis on Ideas over practical knowledge in the Nepalese

educational system is said to be detrimental to students' performance in the workforce, which is one of the reasons why people are fleeing the nation (Phuyal, 2018). As a result, there are insufficient chances in Nepal for individuals to both earn livelihoods and help their communities, which is wasting the number of people abandoning remittances, the most potential area of human skill (Chen et al., 2017). The studies suggested that an adequate Nepalese education system causes decisions regarding the labor migration of skilled human resources. It made me think about how leadership could play a role in changing the dimension of such brain drain.

The trend of brain drain started in higher education, in a different field. When the study started to find out, the No Objection Certificate was issued by the foreign ministry on the recommendation of the Ministry of Education (Rijal, 2023). So, qualified and skilled human resources cannot be retained by the Nepalese hotel industry. Many of them have opted to go to foreign countries for jobs because of high employment or high opportunities. Shrestha (2021) claimed that the most important challenge of human resource management in the Nepalese hotel industry is that there is a lack of skilled human resources. There is a mismatch between what students learn in their curriculum in colleges/universities and what employers expect from them at their work.

To sum up, the studies focus mainly on the impact of globalization, sociocultural influences, different factors like age, interest and income, and political systems like the democratic system and its influences. The literature claimed that globalization has facilitated the mobility of skilled individuals across borders, creating a "global village" where highly qualified workers are drawn to countries offering better opportunities. This trend significantly impacts developing nations as they struggle to retain experienced professionals. Cultural and familial factors also play critical roles in influencing migration decisions. Studies highlight that family ties and cultural familiarity often drive individuals to relocate and shape their behaviors in host countries. Finally, the loss of skilled labor in developing nations underscores the need for improved policies, better educational systems, and stronger socioeconomic incentives to mitigate brain drain and retain talent.

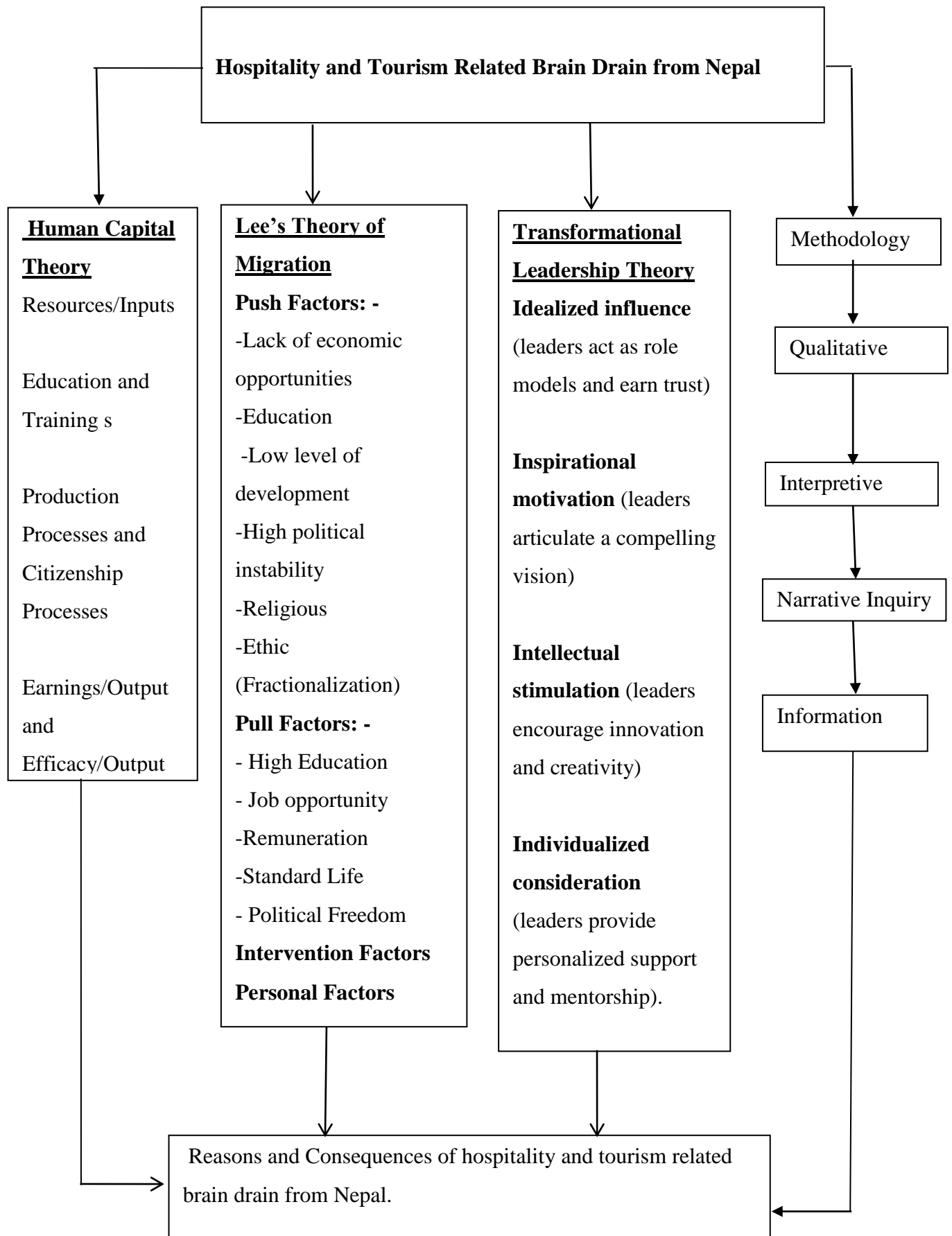
Research Gap

I reviewed many qualitative and quantitative studies designed from international and national journals related to tourism and hospitality literature. The chosen literature has given the right track and given in-depth knowledge.

Accordingly, it has provided information about human resources ambition, opportunities, challenges, and factors of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their profession in their home country as well as in developed countries. At the same time, it has given information about the lack of Evidence-based practice in tourism and hospitality and the pulling and pushing factors of brain drain in developed countries, which may be essential information for this study.

The gaps identified during the review process related to brain drain through the internship process and the lack of emphasis on institutional policies governing such internships. Most studies focus on skilled human resources who have already migrated abroad to countries like the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and Gulf nations, either for work or educational purposes. However, there is a lack of research conducted within Nepal, particularly regarding human resources engaged in the private sector. Issues such as bias, political interference during the recruitment process, and the need for a paradigm shift in the industry remain under-explored. Similarly, many studies have relied on survey methods rather than conducting face-to-face interviews, which could provide deeper insights. From the above discourse, I found that the field of brain drain in hospitality and tourism education, specifically, the phenomenon of graduates who go abroad for internships and do not return to their home country, along with the absence of proper institutional policies for such internships, remains entirely new and unexplored.

Conceptual Framework



Those theories, Lee's Theory of Migration (The Push and Pull Theory) and The Human Capital Theory and The Transformational Leadership Theory, are highly linked with each other. These theories have positive characteristics of individual and common components. Each theory initiates facing difficult situations or crises. The factors contribute to the 'brain drain' and can be combined under two wide groups: 'push' and 'pull' factors, which I mention in Theoretical Guidelines. The major push-pull factors can contribute to the 'brain drain', which includes political, economic, cultural, demographic and technological in the global system (Bhagwati, 2011). According to Harvey (2012), political, economic, and social issues have an impact on educated people's migration into their home (source) country and are driving them to leave. However, pull factors in the host nation include things like attractive career prospects or reasons related to lifestyle as well through stories and lived experiences, I can explore how employees and students perceive the leadership styles in the hospitality and tourism sector and whether transformational leadership practices have influenced their decision to stay or leave.

The theoretical framework linking Lee's Push-Pull Theory, Human Capital Theory, and Transformational Leadership Theory highlights interconnected factors driving brain drain. Push factors, such as political instability, economic challenges, cultural issues, and technological limitations in source countries, contrast with pull factors in host nations, like better career opportunities and improved. These dynamics emphasize the influence of leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership, in shaping individuals' decisions to stay or leave. However, a gap exists in understanding how leadership practices, especially in sectors like hospitality and tourism, impact migration decisions, as explored through personal experiences and perceptions. This underscores the need for further exploration of leadership's role in mitigating brain drain.

Essence of Chapter

In this chapter, I defined the contextual situation of brain drain migrating in the tourism and hospitality education sector and empirical review, which was experienced by tourism and hospitality leaders around the globe based on national and international literature. I presented the literature, which was reviewed based on the first and second research questions. Likewise, I discussed the global policy. Mostly, I focused on national policy regarding brain drain and migration. Similarly, I defined

three theories, i.e., Lee's Push and Pull theory, The Human Capital Theory, and The Transformational Leadership Theory, which were also presented in the theoretical framework. Then, I was able to find the research gap through a review of the previous studies carried out at different locations.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I introduced the methodology that was utilized in the study to collect, analyze, and draw conclusions from the data. Additionally, the research paradigm, research design, research method, participants, and selection procedures were addressed. Furthermore, instrumentation for data collection, including the research's quality standards and ethical aspects, are discussed. The prime data for this study was the lived experiences of the participants toward brain drain in tourism and hospitality education. I ascertained the narratives and associated issues of brain drain from educational leaders of hospitality and tourism institutions.

Philosophical Consideration

The philosophical considerations come along with how we view the world, how we generate knowledge, and what we value. Therefore, the three assumptions can be used as philosophical considerations: Ontological, Epistemological, and Axiological assumptions. Here, I discussed these three considerations relating to my study.

Ontological Assumption

The philosophical route of ontology refers to the theory of reality, instructing researchers to take standpoints as their reality. It is the branch of science that is. Individual consciousness can either influence or be outside of reality (Cohen et al., 2000), which is defined as (Creswell, 2012) the study of the nature of being and existence. It focuses on nature, investigates the existence of nature and finds the reality. I was guided by the assumption of reality that possesses multiple truths. During the course of this research study, I enhanced and motivated my research participants to explore alternative solutions to brain drain in tourism and hospitality education. Various methods were used to get experience from the participants and understand the perception and practices of factors of brain drain in concerned institutions. Thus, in this study, there are multiple types of experiences among participants.

Motivated by (Creswell et al., 2007) viewpoint, my research adopts a narrative inquiry technique to the problem of the brain drain of graduates in the Nepali hospitality and tourism education sector. Because narrative inquiry enables the

examination of individuals' varied experiences and perspectives, it is in harmony with ontological foundations. I urged participants to consider and investigate different approaches to addressing the issues of brain drain skilled graduates at their institutions by interacting with these stories.

Epistemological Consideration

Epistemology deals with the process of gaining knowledge. Al-Saadi (2014) stated that a perspective on the world and how to address the "nature" of knowledge is known as epistemology. Epistemological considerations are concerned with the nature and scope of knowledge and whether acquiring it is possible. In this study, I aimed to understand educational leaders' knowledge and perspectives on the reasons and impact of brain drain in hospitality and tourism education within their institutions and the industry.

The epistemological approach in this research aligns with qualitative methods that prioritize gathering rich, in-depth narratives from participants. These narratives provide valuable insights into their experiences, challenges, and strategies for addressing brain drain. This perspective assumes that participants' knowledge and understanding are valid and essential for constructing a nuanced understanding of the issue.

Axiological Assumption

Axiology deals with the value of knowledge (Sultana, 2020), which means that a researcher has an inside as well as an outside perspective of situations, which deals with how people value something. According to my long experience in the tourism and hospitality sector, those experiences may be reflected in this study, but I did not disclose my emotional expressions and feelings about the participant's experiences in this study. The meeting with the participants in the field and open interviews provided valuable understanding to me through their experiences. I was able to construct stories about their narratives and issues in tourism and hospitality regarding brain drain. Still, I disclosed my knowledge in this study. Narrative inquiry allows for the co-construction of knowledge. Participants' stories are valued as primary data, reflecting the complexity of human experiences. As a researcher, I bridge these personal narratives with broader socio-economic and cultural contexts, offering a comprehensive view of the brain drain issue. By grounding research in axiological premises, I have demonstrated an ethical and reflective approach to understanding the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector. This

alignment of values, participant narratives, and professional experience ensures the study's findings are meaningful and actionable.

Interpretivism as a Research Paradigm

According to Morgan (2007), a research paradigm is a research model where researchers have common views of nature and conduct research with knowledge, principles and hypotheses. The paradigm shows the way of understanding the reality of the world, and researchers recognized it. It provided me with worldviews under which I could analyze my issue. The interpretivism paradigm guided me to explore the narratives of Nepali educational leaders on the impacts of brain drain in the tourism industries in Nepal.

A research paradigm is a framework that provides an understanding of the nature and purpose of research and offers insights to researchers on how it is conducted (Creswell, 2014). In this support, Willis (2007) stated that a research paradigm is a framework that guides the outlooks, actions, and processes of a research study, which researchers can adopt. From the above discussion, I understood Interpretivism as a philosophy that holds the belief that human beings socially construct reality and knowledge. It alludes to the idea that the human mind learns about the external world through social constructs. It aims to achieve an understanding of observable phenomena through the interpretation of the study.

Interpretivists focus on rationally uncovering the meaning of results and demonstrating how these meanings combine to produce observable outcomes. The researcher believes that access to reality is possible through social constructs such as verbal communication, perception, and shared meanings. According to Levy (2006), an interpretivist believes that a person, with the help of knowledge and exploration, can understand their surrounding environment. Therefore, the researcher strives to understand the problem and explore it within a specific context.

I collected the experiences of educational leaders regarding brain drain in the tourism and hospitality education sector. I interacted with them to clarify their perspectives and realities. This paradigm enabled me to explore and uncover the meanings participants attributed to their practices and experiences regarding the reasons and impacts of brain drain among students in hospitality and tourism education and the industry.

Interpretivism facilitated my use of interviews, observations, and group discussions with educational leaders. I centralized the participants' views about their

experiences with brain drain in the tourism and hospitality education sector and industry. These views were documented in written form and audio recordings for interpretation and analysis.

Research Design

Research design is a sketch that guides researchers in deciding what, who, and how to conduct the research. The study title or issue selection was largely based on theories and personal and professional experiences. Haydon and van der Riet (2017, p. 388) recognized eight types of qualitative research design: case study method, clinical research, ethnography design, grounded theory, historical process, narrative inquiry, participatory action research and social phenomenology. Besides that, a qualitative research narrative study design was used to narrate and associate issues of brain drain in the tourism and hospitality education sector.

A qualitative research style called narrative inquiry seeks to comprehend people's cultures, emotions, feelings, experiences, and much more. The information gained through narrative inquiry with individuals helped in constructing stories that are scripts, texts, and visual images (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Narrative inquiry follows different methods to collect information from study participants, such as field notes, interviews, journals, letters, storytelling, and many more (Butina, 2015). Narrative inquiry is an approach that focuses on the collection of information based on the stories of participants (Wells, 2011). Webster and Metrova (2007) stated that narrative inquiry provides an abundant framework for researchers to examine human experience in the world depicted through stories. Thus, narrative inquiry helped me inquire and understand the narrate and associated issues of brain drain in tourism and hospitality education. Clandinin (2006) stated that narrative inquiry is a reasonable method for interpreting texts or visual data that have been presented in narration or story form.

The narrative inquiry helps to understand the participant's story and their personal experience. I collected the information using ideas from narrative inquiry strategies and the process for information collection, data management, interpretation, and presentation. Typically, narrative inquiry studies a single person by gathering data and creating meaning from the participant's story (Creswell et al., 2007).

Research Site and Participants

Participant selection is a process of choosing a few people from a bigger group to become the base for approximating or predicting the existence of a piece of

information that may be unknown, as well as about the situation or outcome regarding the bigger group. Creswell (2012) also suggested that a single individual who is the subject of the research can serve as a single participant in the study. Similarly, it is not possible to use a large population in a narrative inquiry that includes an in-depth study of each participant. In this study, participants refer to five from different tourism and hospitality institutions from Kathmandu Valley. My preference of selection of the participants was those who have more than ten years of experience in BHM colleges and are affiliated with different universities that handle and liaison the students for jobs, internships and career counseling for higher study nationally and internationally from their respected institutions and facing the impact or problem of skilled human resources in hospitality and tourism industry and their institutions as well. Here is a brief profile of each participant.

Amani (Research Participant 1)

Amani is 48, an old female educational leader, and a dedicated professional with ten years of extensive experience in the education sector, particularly at Angels' Education Foundation. Currently serving as the Associate Director of the foundation, She oversees a diverse range of responsibilities. Notably, she leads the Bachelor in Hospitality Management (BHM) program affiliated with one of the recognized universities in Nepal, contributing significantly as the program head. She also plays an integral role as a member of the Hospitality Management Committee at the University and has contributed to curriculum development for the "Bachelor in Professional Hospitality" program. Recently, she has been involved in designing the course structure for a "Diploma in Hospitality Management" program under CTEVT and actively participates as a proxy secretary for the Executive Committee of the PATA Nepal Chapter.

Over her six-year journey at Angles Education Foundation, she has played a pivotal role in various academic initiatives. From revamping the A-Level Program by collaborating with stakeholders to ensuring its alignment with Cambridge's International standards to spearheading research-based projects for +2 students aimed at qualitative education improvement, she has demonstrated exceptional leadership. Her contribution to the BHTM program, particularly during its challenging phase, underscores her commitment to driving innovation and quality in hospitality education. Her hands-on approach to addressing student needs, managing faculty

development programs, and organizing internship placements reflects her deep engagement in fostering student growth and program excellence.

Santi (Research Participant 2)

Santi is a 44-year-old female educational leader with 14 years of professional experience in the education sector. Since she started an educational institution named the Academy of Kitchen Arts, which is affiliated with Abroad University, in November 2010 as a Founder Director, she has played a critical role in building and expanding her institution, which initially had only five staff members. Over the years, her responsibilities have grown significantly to include student admissions, course counseling, and overseeing the accounting department. She has been deeply involved in the Bachelor in Hospitality Management (BHM) program from its inception, managing student admissions, account reviews, and credit transfers for students continuing their education abroad. Since 2017, she has personally supervised all legal processes, documentation, and interactions with the Education Ministry and embassies to facilitate international study opportunities.

Her dedication extends to overseeing internship programs for BHM students in their 7th and 8th semesters, providing them with opportunities to gain hands-on experience in countries such as Canada, the USA, Australia, and Japan. She also supports students seeking master's programs abroad by establishing partnerships with international universities and personally visiting these institutions when required. Beyond her academic and administrative responsibilities, she has taken on roles such as reception management and customer handling, demonstrating her versatility and commitment. Her holistic approach ensures that students receive comprehensive support, enabling them to thrive academically and professionally in the field of hospitality.

Pratyush (Research Participant 3)

Pratyush is a 45-year-old male educational leader who is a dedicated education professional with over two decades of experience in the academic and training sectors. His journey began during his final semester of undergraduate studies, and since then, he has made significant contributions to the field. Over the past 17 years, he has been actively involved with one of the best Tourism and Hotel Management colleges, which is affiliated with one of the recognized Universities of Nepal, where he currently serves as a Senior Training Officer, a position achieved over years of dedication and progressive growth. His involvement spans 19 years at the bachelor

level and includes contributions to +2 education, making his expertise well-rounded and impactful.

In his current role, he also serves as the Program Coordinator for the Bachelor in Hotel Management (BHM), a position he has held for the past five years. He oversees program development, student engagement, and the coordination of training initiatives, ensuring a high standard of education in the hospitality field. His commitment to fostering academic excellence and professional training has been instrumental in shaping the next generation of hospitality professionals, reflecting his deep dedication to the sector.

Rabi (Research Participant 4)

Rabi is a 41-year-old male educational leader full of experience as an academic professional with 16 years of dedication to the education sector. His career began in 2008, and since joining Kathmandu College in June 2010, he has been deeply involved in teaching at the high school, bachelor's, and master's levels. His extensive teaching and administrative experience have equipped him with a profound understanding of academic development and program management, making him an indispensable member of the KC team.

Currently serving as the Program Director at KC, which is affiliated with one of the best university universities in Nepal. He oversees the Bachelor in Hotel Management (BHM) program along with other academic initiatives. Over the years, he has progressed through various roles, including faculty member, exam controller, and Head of Department, before assuming his current leadership position. His key responsibility lies in strengthening the hotel management department and ensuring the delivery of high-quality education. With a clear vision and commitment to academic excellence, he is continuing to shape and enhance the standards of hospitality education at KC.

Arun (Research Participant 5)

Arun is a 58-year-old male educational leader with a remarkable career spanning 40 years and has dedicated 36 of those years to shaping the education sector. Beginning with forty years in the hospitality and tourism industry, he was transitioned to academia, bringing a wealth of practical experience to his role. Currently, he serves as a faculty member and consultant at Future College, which is affiliated with one of the best Universities in Nepal, where he has been a pivotal figure since the inception of its Hotel Management course. His longstanding commitment reflects his passion

for education and his drive to empower students with both theoretical and practical knowledge.

In his dual roles, he actively engages in both teaching and strategic decision-making. As a faculty member, he imparts knowledge, nurturing future professionals with expertise and guidance. As a consultant, he plays a critical role in designing course structures aligned with the curriculum, integrating extracurricular activities, and strategies effective classroom management. Additionally, he oversees the allocation of teaching responsibilities, ensuring that the most capable instructors handle subjects. His contributions to Future College underline his dedication to academic excellence and his vision for a dynamic and impactful learning environment in the institution.

Information Collection and Data Analysis Methods

Narrative information was collected using face-to-face interviews, observing, and recording videos to capture participants' emotions, attitudes, voice tone, gestures, facial expressions, and more (Butina, 2015). I aimed to collect information through a single interview or, if necessary, multiple meetings with participants. The face-to-face interviews were conducted based on the research questions, with additional probing questions formulated on the spot as needed. Similarly, I sought to explore their experiences in depth and used observation as a tool for data collection in my research study.

The information collection process began after receiving approval for the research proposal from the Research Committee of the Kathmandu University School of Education. Data collection was conducted in selected institutions and organizations after obtaining permission from those organizations. Verbal and written informed consent were obtained from the five selected participants.

Information was gathered during leisure, break times, or rest periods. The schedule for collecting information from participants each day was determined based on the fulfillment of the study's objectives. Participants were interviewed in separate locations to maintain their privacy. After completing each narrative interview, the information was reviewed for relevance to the topic, vital and essential keywords, and expressions of feelings to ensure completeness and accuracy before proceeding to the next participant. Once the data collection process was complete, the information was coded for analysis.

Interpretation and Meaning-Making

One of the most essential parts of research is systematically presenting data. Data processing, analysis and meaning-making were the vital parts of every qualitative research. This process serves as proof of finding. I used qualitative data analysis techniques, which consist of transcribing the collected data, then coding, and finally, cauterization of themes,

The process of segmenting and categorizing text to create broad themes and descriptions in the data is called coding (Creswell, 2020). Once I performed coding on the data, I converted the codes into categories and generated themes. To develop strong themes, I revisited the transcripts, re-listened to the audio recordings, and reviewed my notes and journal entries prepared during the interviews.

I then interpreted the meaning of the themes with the support of relevant theories, literature, and my perspectives, which enriched and deepened the discussion. This process continued until the data reached saturation. After interpreting the collected data, I developed the findings of the study and concluded the meaning-making process.

Quality Standards of the Study

In the field of research, educational research is of high quality. All researchers have a responsibility to maintain quality in their work to ensure accurate and truthful findings. The researcher must conduct the research in a realistic and natural setting so that both the readers and participants receive valid and authentic information. I was aware of the need to enhance the quality of my research study throughout the process of writing, conducting interviews, observing, holding group discussions, collecting data, interpreting, and presenting findings.

Trustworthiness, credibility, dependability, and confirm-ability are the main factors of validity (Shenton, 2004). Credibility refers to the truth value of the inquiry (Creswell, 2012). I spent a significant amount of time collecting data and studying related information. I remained in the field until the data reached saturation and used member checking to examine and analyze the qualitative data.

The credibility of the study was maintained by investing adequate time with participants to collect information. I built trust by conducting preliminary visits to the research sites and holding multiple meetings with participants as needed. Peer debriefing was undertaken to ensure the study design and analysis were sound. Participants were free to leave the study at any time or ask questions regarding the

study. Additionally, I critically analyzed their emotions, tone of voice, feelings, and other non-verbal cues. Each participant was given a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality, and the report and interpretation of the study were written in simple, reader-friendly language with a thick description. Confirmability was achieved by having experts review the study.

I listened carefully to understand each person's story or personal experiences. I also used the three-dimensional space narrative inquiry described by Haydon & van der Riet (2017), which includes temporality (past, present, and future), sociality (the interactive behavior between the participant and researcher), and spatiality (how the environment and institution influence the narration of the story). These three dimensions provided structure to the narrative in the researcher's analysis.

Temporality

My resources revealed that every individual participant had experienced such incidents and enacted them differently. Human life is based on time. It has a threefold temporal structure of past, future, and present. Every individual experiences different incidents over a lifelong period and practices different behaviors (Cunliffe et al., 2004). Thus, I allowed expressing how their past experiences might be affected by present and future phenomena. Through prolonged engagement in the field while conducting interviews with participants, I gained empirical knowledge of hospitality and tourism-related brain drain in the context of Nepal.

Sociality

In my understanding, sociality and interaction maintain the relationship between participant and inquirer. Clandinin et al. (2007) suggested that sociality directs the participants' attention, thoughts, emotions, and moral responses to the researcher. While telling and listening to the narratives of participants in the field, I was concerned about the participants' personal, social and cultural values. I got informal permission to interview them as I was unsure whether they were ready to meet. Then, as I proceeded to interview during their one-hour break time, I managed the interview at their convenience. Green and Thorogood (2013) addressed that the association between humans and their social environment is highly influenced by narrative inquiry while face-to-face interviewing with participants. Initially, I built rapport with the participants, which made for a smooth conversation. After that, I was carefully interacting with the participants. I observed their gestures, intense listening to the voice, tone and pace.

Spatiality

While interviewing the participants, I chose a quiet place where the participants felt at ease to express their stories. If there was a disturbance of any kind, it could affect the flow of their narration. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) also suggested that spatiality or place/ physical space is significant in influencing the story and how participants tell it. Adams et al. (2016, p. 3) came to realize that “the homes of the participants were considered their natural habitat”. Thus, I also sought a comfort zone or place (maybe their working place) to interview according to a participant's wish.

Every participant was permitted to tell a continuous story, which is frequently presented as old memories. Past experiences also influence the perspective of the present and the future. In this way, participants' personal, social, and cultural values are considered while telling and listening to narratives. I maintained privacy while interviewing cause situations or places might have interfered with delivering their story.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the capacity to consider and analyze one's own ideas, presumptions, and behaviors and how they affect other people or circumstances. Investigating brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourist sector necessitates critical reflexivity, which recognizes how preconceptions and individual experiences influence the research process. Since I've seen friends and relatives depart for better possibilities elsewhere, I understand how emotionally invested I am in the subject and how it relates to structural issues like political unpredictability and restricted opportunities for advancement (Smith, 2015). As a member of the Nepali community, I used my cultural knowledge in conjunction with outside frameworks to strike a balance between objectivity and bias (Jones, 2020). This study sheds light on the transformative power of investigating the socioeconomic aspects of brain drain and provides guidance for possible tactics to retain talent and promote development in Nepal.

Ethical Consideration

To maintain ethical responsibilities, I introduced myself and shared the purpose of my visit with the research participants. I took consent from the research participants for the interview, photographs, and audio recording. The names of the people and places involved during the research process have been changed. The

conversations and interactions were interpreted with reflections and an understanding of the context. I ensured that I maintained their dignity, privacy and safety. I paid full respect to the dignity and worth of all my participants. I was assured that I would protect and promote the rights and interests of the participants (Jensen, 2013).

Therefore, respecting and adhering to ethical values in my study has become my “breath” of the study. When I entered into the personal zone of my participants, I was kept in high consideration of the following issues in my mind.

Informed Consent

The participants, who were the true owners and possessors of the collected narratives, value them highly because they may have obtained them through a variety of channels, such as research, transmission, experiments, and life experiences. Therefore, I took consent and permission to use their narratives as data for my research. I informed my participants about this study and its significance in clarifying the research's purpose and procedure. I promised not to use collected opinions for any other purpose except this research project.

Confidentiality/No Harm

As recommended by (Barrett & Stauffer, 2009), the potential of narrative inquiry to establish a connection that gives participants the security required to be genuinely open in sharing their experiences. I informed with professional and cultural sensitivity. I ensured my participants-maintained confidentiality and privacy and did not harm their social, economic, physical, or emotional aspects. I considered ‘not harm’ (human right) beneficence. I was prepared to assign pseudonyms to the participants to protect their privacy, obtain informed consent, and not disclose the participants' identities, places, and ethical practices. Because of the subjectivity and intrusive nature of qualitative research, ethical concern incorporates the confidentiality of the participants (Saldaña, 2015). Moreover, I addressed ethical issues during the research period.

Honesty

I generated narratives of experiences and stories by adopting the principle of trustworthiness. I sincerely tried to remain honest while transcribing, translating and interpreting the participants' narratives. Finally, and importantly, I strictly followed ethics of care, justice and ethics of honesty, respect, confidentiality and other ethical considerations as required by the research guidelines of Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED).

Essence of Chapter

In this chapter, I dealt with the methodology adopted in this study. It started with the philosophical foundation wherein ontology, epistemology and axiology were discussed. Likewise, I presented and justified my choice of interpretive paradigm and narrative inquiry as my research method. An in-depth explanation of the research site, participant selection, and the process of information collection was given. Similarly, I clearly mentioned the credibility of the study by using temporality, sociality, spatiality and reflexivity methods. In addition, the quality standards adopted, along with the ethical considerations, are discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

PRIMARY REASONS FOR BRAIN DRAIN IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM EDUCATION SECTOR

Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the rich field narratives shared by participants, shedding light on the central research question: How do the experiences and narratives of educational leaders within the tourism and hospitality education field in Nepal elucidate the reasons behind the brain drain in the industry? Through in-depth stories and reflections, the chapter captures the diverse perspectives of participants, bringing forward their insights into the challenges, motivations, and structural factors influencing brain drain in this sector. The narratives are organized into five distinct themes and eleven sub-themes, each reflecting a unique dimension of the participants' experiences and viewpoints. These themes provide a structured framework for understanding the complexities and nuances that contribute to the brain drain within hospitality and tourism education in Nepal. Each theme highlights specific aspects of the participants' accounts, from personal challenges and institutional barriers to broader societal and economic factors. In the later part of the chapter, these narratives are explored through theoretical lenses to draw out deeper meanings and implications. This theoretical discussion seeks to contextualize the participants' experiences within the broader scholarly discourse, offering insights that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the brain drain phenomenon in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector.

Lack of Institutional Priority and Clarity

Participants highlighted that one significant reason for the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is the lack of institutional priority and clarity. They expressed concerns about the limited emphasis on long-term strategic planning and the absence of clear policies within educational institutions and industry organizations, which they believe contribute to a challenging work environment and limited career growth opportunities. This lack of support often leads skilled professionals to seek opportunities abroad where the industry is better structured and more valued. To provide a deeper understanding, I have portrayed their stories under three distinct sub-headings below, each capturing a different facet of the institutional

issues they face and how these impacts their career choices in the tourism and hospitality field.

Institutional Objectives for Hospitality Management Education

Amani understood hospitality management education as a crossroads. *I say it as a cross-road because when I started this journey 6 years ago, the Tourism Industry was not receptive at all and didn't want to collaborate with academics.* The statement reflects a sense of frustration and challenges encountered in the early stages of the journey in tourism education. Referring to it as a 'crossroad' suggests a pivotal moment where they had to make a difficult decision: whether to continue striving for collaboration between academia and the tourism industry or to take a different path. The participant highlighted

I have experienced a lot of reasons for not attracting stakeholders to the education sector. Among many, a lack of openness and receptivity within the tourism sector, indicating that industry stakeholders were not interested in partnering with educational institutions at the time.

This resistance could imply a disconnect between academia and industry, where the tourism sector may have undervalued the role of educational input and research in its development. It also aligns with the global context of hospitality education. Rundshagen and Gronau. (2022) points out that in the German tourism educational context, there is a lack of stakeholder support and a lack of resources, which creates a tourism education gap within the industry with inadequate research in the field.

Also, these narrative sheds light on one of the systemic barriers contributing to the brain drain in Nepal's tourism and hospitality industry. When educational leaders and institutions struggle to establish meaningful connections with the industry, students and professionals may feel discouraged about their future prospects, ultimately seeking opportunities elsewhere where collaboration and innovation are more supported. Santi, however, takes it as a natural process, and she said:

Umm, yes, in my experience, we should continuously learn new things in this sector. So, for that, some people prefer to go abroad in search of knowledge, opportunities, education, and jobs. It doesn't always mean to highlight the issue of brain drain.

The above sharing of Santi shows that there is no concern about the local industry connecting in hospitality education as it could capture the global market.

However, there is a question about the local alignment between hospitality education and accessibility to its local industry. Experts like Dredge et al. (2012) discuss the importance of such alignment and mention that collaborative dialogue and shared understanding between education providers and the hospitality industry are essential for better educational experiences to foster students' learning.

Pratyush also mentioned similar experiences by highlighting how education providers have concerns about the BHM program at his institution, which is to market to students. Although the program has been offered since 2056 B.S., it lacks a deep-rooted history and has been positioned as an 'open course,' meaning it appears accessible and versatile. Also, the participants pointed out some faults in the way they do marketing of the hospitality programs-

The academic course was started in his institution. While talking about this course, it doesn't have a very large history; rather, it has always been an open course. Personally, I see the problem in the way we do marketing. The course of BHM's marketing done by colleges is in such a manner that this course opens the door for great opportunities in foreign markets. See, we are adding fuel to the fire in the mind of youth, and if you desire to go outside, this course will aid you in fulfilling your goal.

He basically raised the issue of the marketing strategy used by colleges. The institute employs marketing that often emphasizes the program's ability to prepare students for opportunities abroad, which inadvertently encourages students to see the course as a pathway to leaving Nepal. By promoting the idea that BHM opens doors to international careers, colleges may unintentionally contribute to the brain drain in Nepal's tourism and hospitality industry. This messaging plants the idea in young people's minds that success in this field is best achieved by working overseas, reinforcing the desire to migrate rather than build a career within the country. Rabi added such a trend as confusion behind students' interest in studying abroad studies:

While looking at our past, students who wished to make a career in the hospitality sector didn't have opportunities to study in Nepal, so they went to India to get their degrees. Today, we have many. I don't know what attracted them there.

In this regard, Arun shared that the university's prime focus is *enrollment of a greater number of students than quality. And it is natural. When students don't see quality here, they move.*

The focus of universities on increasing enrollment rather than maintaining high-quality education might be a factor. Even more, their voices refer to the fact that educational institutes have functioned as educational consultants who define global mobility and/or migration as livelihood strategies for middle-class people and migration infrastructural as irreplaceable services (Theime, 2017). When students perceive that local programs lack quality, they are naturally drawn to opportunities abroad, where they believe they will receive a better education and training. This situation underscores the need for a stronger emphasis on educational quality in Nepal's hospitality programs to retain students who might otherwise leave the country.

Course Orientation for Hotel Management Scopes in Nepal

In educational settings, institution course orientation for hospitality and tourism management does not have ample scope in the country. Amani orientated their students regarding hospitality and tourism graduates as tourism entrepreneurs.

We have been focusing on entrepreneurship. Since we are inside a business school, a few advantages have been possible to derive from programs like BBA, BBS, BHM, etc. I think we should focus on career counseling for youth as suggested by an ex-Education Minister. The initiation in itself was remarkable because, at present, information is overloaded and confuses the youth about which path will be most advantageous to them.

It shows that young people are inundated with information in today's society; the initiation you mention is noteworthy. The global economy faces significant medium and long-term challenges. Low-income economies will have to integrate more than two billion young adults into the global economy, while rich countries will have to boost economic productivity to maintain current standards of living as their populations age (Ács et al., 2016). The difficulty is in sorting through this deluge of data and determining which decisions will actually contribute to their long-term career and personal development. Rabi also claimed that institutions play a significant role in encouraging students to go abroad. He further highlighted:

Institutions motivate our students to stay in Nepal and become entrepreneurs. For the purpose of actively developing Entrepreneurship in students, his institution encouraged out-of-valley students to go back to their district and start a business from the locality, even in the small range possible at present. If the same student chooses to go abroad to pursue the same course at first,

the 4-year course will be completed on time, and they have the opportunity to work to pay their tuition fee themselves, reducing the burden on parents. So, any rational mind will find studying abroad more advantageous.

So, we can say that like-minded students cannot be retained in our country. For this reason, if a student decides to study abroad for the same course, they can complete the four-year program on time. Additionally, they have the opportunity to work part-time while studying, which can help cover their tuition fees. This reduces the financial burden on their parents. The idea that employment is on the rise and negatively impacts academic achievement is widely held. However, research on particular institutions or student populations is usually used to support this claim. (Ford et al., 1995). Therefore, studying abroad presents several advantages and is a practical choice for many students.

Santi explained that graduates should start their own businesses in their hometown as per their capacity and learning experiences:

We motivate students to research their origin place and foreign nation experience received during their Internship to figure out something peculiar and, based on it, start their own business as much as possible. Personally, I encouraged my students to explore both their hometowns and the insights they gained during internships abroad.

By identifying unique aspects from these experiences, they can leverage this knowledge to start their own businesses, creating something innovative and tailored to what they learned. It particularly focuses on getting ready for the internship, looks for indications of ties to previous classroom instruction, investigates whether the internship helped the students gain new skills, and, lastly, looks for connections between academic theories and their real-world application in the workplace world. (Stansbie et al., 2016).

Pratyush highlighted:

When talking about Nepal, we don't need to work rigorously in making artificial deserts/gardens to increase tourist attraction because we have so many areas if developed in addition to natural beauty to mesmerize the tourists.

He basically conveys the idea that Nepal can attract tourists without the need to construct man-made gardens or deserts. This is due to the nation's abundant natural beauty and unexplored regions, which, with the right development, may enthrall

tourists. To put it another way, Nepal doesn't need to build new structures to draw tourists. Its natural beauties, landscapes, and cultural legacy are enough as well as Arun also mentioned:

Nepal has immense possibilities in this sector. We are aware of 4A, 5A components of Tourism. Nepal has those factors of attraction also but Nepal lacks in providing easy accessibility, accommodation, amenities etc. Natural beauty for attraction in Nepal is sound.

So, our country, Nepal, has vast potential in the tourism sector. While the country possesses the key elements of tourism, such as the 4A (Attractions, Accessibility, Amenities, and Accommodation) and 5A (the same four plus Activities), it faces challenges in certain areas. Although Nepal's natural beauty is a strong attraction, it struggles with providing easy accessibility, sufficient accommodation, and necessary amenities for tourists. Improving these aspects could significantly enhance the tourism experience and help realize Nepal's full potential as a top tourist destination. It shows that tourism is regarded as a useful instrument for fostering development. However, the precise type of tourism and development required may vary depending on the destination (Chan & Bhatta, 2013). However, due to proper course orientation for hospitality management scope in Nepal, skilled and semi-skilled human resources are drained from our Nepalese hospitality market and are now abroad.

Nature of Course: Specialization or Generalization

A course that focuses on specialization is designed to provide in-depth knowledge and advanced expertise in a specific field, subject, or discipline. Such courses typically cater to individuals who already have foundational knowledge and are looking to gain mastery or refine their skills for professional or academic purposes. Specialized courses aim to develop advanced skills and expertise in a narrow field, equipping learners to solve complex, domain-specific challenges (Smith, 2024). At the same time, a course focusing on generalization provides broad foundational knowledge that spans multiple disciplines or covers basic concepts across a wide area of study. These courses aim to equip learners with versatile skills applicable to diverse contexts, encouraging adaptability and interdisciplinary understanding. Generalized education promotes intellectual breadth, enabling learners to connect ideas across disciplines and develop transferable skills (Jones & Comfort,

2020). In this regard, Amani points out that our academic pattern is totally unrealistic today:

The current problem we are facing is inadequate specialized human resources. Most of us have general and basic knowledge on different topics, lacking expert-level in-depth knowledge. Nevertheless, providing the specialization knowledge at the bachelor level is also a very unrealistic approach. So, at the bachelor level, students are introduced to the topic and general concept so that they can have a clear idea of the field and their interest level in that specific area.

Santi also mentioned the same issues. *We also further discuss their plan for further studies, interested areas for specializing in the future, etc. I, in person, take a class of a student highlighting the fact to start their journey from Nepal.*

To retain the Hospitality and Tourism Students in Nepal, they try to conduct motivation and career planning for their graduates in their institution. In addition to discussing the general concepts in their current studies, we also talk with students about their future plans, including which areas they are interested in specializing in and how they envision continuing their education. I encourage my students to start their academic and professional journey in Nepal. I emphasize the importance of gaining foundational knowledge and experience locally, as it provides valuable insights and opportunities. This approach can help them build a strong base before potentially pursuing further specialization or higher education abroad, allowing them to contribute to the development of their own country in the long run. Today, the Hospitality and Tourism graduates are generalized rather than specialized, which makes the positive effect of tourism specialization on growth contingent on the level of economic development as well as the financial system. Consistent with the law of diminishing returns, whereas that for countries with a developed financial system, at exponential levels of tourism specialization, its effect on growth turns negative the current issue is the lack of specialized human resources, as most people have general knowledge rather than expert level expertise (De Vita, & Kyaw, 2017). Providing specialized knowledge at the bachelor's level is unrealistic. Instead, bachelor's programs introduce students to various topics and general concepts, helping them gain a clear understanding of the field and assess their interest in specific areas.

Pratyush highlighted that we felt very proud as lecturers when our graduates are in internships and doing jobs in reputed star hotels and resorts in our home country and abroad,

But suppose you consider another angle when looking at this matter. In that case, students passing out from here and going abroad to make their career have outperformed themselves and received the employee of the month title time and again. In those times, the satisfaction and pride we feel for being able to facilitate our students with proper and qualitative education is priceless.

At such a time, the graduates are not fully specialized and perfect for the respective designation in each department during the internship period. Rabi stated;

To the students desiring further study at a foreign university, a letter specifying the matter of such delay needs to be submitted. Colleges give such letters during recommendation letters. The outcome of such delay affects the time frame associated with visionary parents. Faculty members can help create an environment for delivering education as per the calendar. In comparison to the past, this area has gradually improved.

Parents are apprehensive about their students' career paths in the future, and if they wish to pursue further studies at foreign universities, it is often necessary to submit a letter explaining any delays in their academic progress. Colleges typically provide this type of letter as part of the recommendation process. Such delays can impact the timeline that parents, especially those with long-term plans for their children's education, have envisioned. The consequences of these delays can sometimes cause concern or frustration. As faculty members, we play a key role in creating an environment that ensures students receive their education according to the established academic calendar. By maintaining a structured and timely delivery of lessons and coursework, we can help minimize delays and ensure students stay on track for their future goals. Compared to the past, improvements have been made in this area, with institutions becoming more efficient in managing academic schedules and minimizing disruptions. This helps provide a smoother path for students, aligning their academic progress with their future plans. Arun shared;

In my opinion, there is a strong need for specialized programs in areas such as Resort Management, Casino Management, Human Resource Management,

and other fields. By the time students complete their courses, they should have acquired expert-level knowledge in their chosen area.

Specialization ensures that students are not only familiar with basic concepts but are well-equipped with in-depth understanding and practical skills that are essential for success in these industries. This focused approach will help produce professionals who can contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of their respective fields. He further mentions;

My opinion is that we need to specialize in resort management, casino management, human resource management, and many others. At least when we come to the end of the course, there must be an expert level of knowledge. It teaches about many sectors, such as restaurants, bakeries etc. However, it's like a jack of all masters of none. No particular specialization knowledge is given, but sectors like resort management vary tremendously from one another.

Brandon-Jones et al. (2016) mention that assessing the impact of both firm scales within what could be expected to be a relatively homogeneous group of professional service operations, specialization and individual-level characteristics showed significant variation. This suggested that the relative degree of interaction may depend on the degree of expertise, with the more generalist firms in our sample complementing their limited expert status with high levels of interaction and the super specialists spending less time with guests. So, due to the unrealistic approach to hospitality and tourism education in Nepal, the pass-out graduates are only jacks of all but masters of none, which means that they are not specialized. In our hospitality management, we should hire specialized human resources from abroad in India, as our generalized graduates are flying abroad in the market as a brain drain from their home country.

Educators' Roles in Future Direction

Participants highlighted that one significant reason for the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is Educators' roles in the future direction. They expressed concerns about the limited emphasis on long-term strategic planning and the absence of clear motivation within Educator' and Hotel management Entrepreneurship, which they believe contribute to a challenging work environment and limited career growth opportunities. This lack of support often leads skilled

professionals to seek opportunities abroad where the industry is better structured and more valued.

To provide a deeper understanding, I have portrayed their stories under two distinct sub-headings below, each capturing a different facet of the motivation issues they face and how these impacts their career choices in the tourism and hospitality field.

Educators for Connecting Market

Amani explained that we guide and teach our graduates to think as future managers, leaders and community developers.

We provide practical study and handsome learning experience, confidence building and prepare our students for their journey in the business of hospitality or how to operate such business, problems adhered on this sector, make them aware of all sorts of legal, financial, human resources issues, behavioral psychology, internal policies etc. We teach them to think like managers and community development factors.

In this regard, she points out a sense of providing a well-rounded, practical education that equips me to handle business operations, navigate industry-specific challenges, understand key issues like legal, financial, and HR matters, and think strategically as future leaders. In order to produce a better future, leaders in hospitality and tourism education have concentrated on improving student's learning capacities and instructors' efficacy as teachers (Kim & Jeong, 2018). The focus on community development also suggests an ethical and socially responsible approach to business management. Santi claimed;

When we established this college in 2010, we had a saying "Be Skilled, Be Employed". We had a vision to provide skills that help in employment, whether the location of the job is within Nepal or abroad. We are seriously contributing in the internship program of BHM. On student's 7th and 8th semester,s we give counselling class to guide students regarding internships, whether to do it in foreign countries or within Nepal because we have good opportunities in Nepal's Tourism and Hotel sector as well. We also further discuss their plan for further studies, interested areas for specializing in the future etc. I, in person, take a class of a student highlighting the fact to start their journey from Nepal. As a result, after 2014, many students have been retained and have worked in Nepal. She further mentions that "Be Skilled, Be

Employed" reflects a dual focus on developing practical, job-ready skills and preparing students for employment opportunities both within Nepal and abroad. It highlights the college's commitment to bridging the skills gap in the hospitality industry by providing education that is relevant to the current needs of the job market. By focusing on hands-on training, career readiness, and adaptability, the college empowers students to enter a competitive global workforce and pursue successful careers, whether locally or internationally. Similarly, Rabi showed confusion regarding his students in his institution by stating,

it is also not against it. We just advise our students, after learning and growing, to come back and start their own business here no matter how difficult it is because they have to create opportunities with their own hands for themselves and the coming generation. No matter how much we try to convince them, the outburst of political instability made people lose hope of having a secure future in Nepal. Nevertheless, we motivate our students to stay in Nepal and become entrepreneurs. For the purpose of actively developing Entrepreneurship in students, our institution has encouraged out-of-valley students to go back to their district and start a business from the locality, even in the small range possible in the present. We also have to promote the BHM program as a means to secure life by going abroad. In counseling time, the students desiring to go outside were never encouraged to stay and help during this struggling time in Nepal.

In this regard, he added that it is a problematic, nuanced approach to counseling students about their future career paths, particularly regarding the option of going abroad versus staying in Nepal to contribute to its development. The statement is about a complex, two-sided view of career choices for students in Nepal. While the BHM program is marketed as a safe way for students to find work abroad, many students are now going to great lengths to stand out from other graduates. They are paying more attention to their university status, participating in a variety of extracurricular activities, and pursuing postgraduate degrees. They have also focused on the strategies of Asian students in particular and highlighted the significance of studying abroad as an additional tactic in this quest for distinction. This can offer job prospects and financial stability. (Brooks et al., 2012). This reflects the college's awareness of Nepal's struggles and its desire for students to play a role in the country's

development. The message suggests that, while seeking opportunities abroad can be a good option for personal security, there is also a need for young professionals to stay and help rebuild Nepal's economy and industries, including hospitality. Due to these reasons, past graduates are also attracted to engage and settle in the abroad market.

Educators' Motivation for Hospitality Management Entrepreneurship

Amani stated that *We have been focusing on Entrepreneurship. Since we are inside a business school, a few advantages have been possible to derive from programs like BBA, BBS, and BHM.* She pointed out how being part of a business school with programs like BBA, BBS, and BHM provides students with a diverse set of advantages that support their entrepreneurial aspirations. These programs equip students with essential business knowledge, technical skills, and practical experience across various fields, whether in general management, finance, or the hospitality industry. The interdisciplinary approach fosters well-rounded entrepreneurs who can think critically, manage operations, handle finances, and adapt to changing market conditions. Entrepreneurial policymakers should create incentive programs that guarantee colleges offer entrepreneurship education across a range of degrees in order to increase the impact of entrepreneurship education. Additionally, teachers want to establish a helpful and productive learning environment to help students (Zhang & Chen, 2024). In essence, the combination of entrepreneurship focuses and the resources available through a business school environment gives students a strong foundation to start and grow their own businesses successfully.

In this regard, Santi highlighted

We have changed the learning pedagogy to develop and transform our graduates into successful hospitality management managers, leaders, and entrepreneurs in both national and international hospitality markets. We have also created a new "learning pedagogy. In this, we have PAL consultation, where a minimum of 8–10 people form a learner's group. In that group, combined studies, idea sharing, and research take place on a weekly basis, similar to a workshop. Discussions cover topics such as the essentials of sustainability in the industry, how colleges can help students attain these skills, how to run a business in Nepal, and how to become self-employed rather than waiting for the nation to provide suitable opportunities.

Adding to this, she further shared:

I consistently motivate our students to become entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals. For that, we conduct free training time and again on how to form qualitative networks/connections, enhance our own skills and thinking like business persons, and acquire the knowledge required for setting up a business, etc.

Continuing the discourse, the last participant shared her experiences:

Recently, one of my students from 2nd batch wanted to go to Australia. At present, he has opened his own company, "Nachos," and nationwide, he has increased his network for supplying Nachos. I am so proud that I was able to give him a platform. Furthermore, we conducted an orientation program to create awareness among students and flow information regarding his entrepreneurship.

Similarly, Rabi shared:

The intention behind this purpose is that the successful entrepreneur under this scheme can share the strategic plan struggle story with juniors and guide them and inspire them to believe that it is possible to become successful in Nepal as well. We have used this seed money to open a canteen business inside our college premises as an example to our students because action speaks louder than words.

In the above sharing, he highlighted that the goal of this initiative is to inspire students by having successful entrepreneurs share their strategic plans and stories of struggle, showing that success is achievable in Nepal. As a practical example, the college has used seed money to open a canteen business on its premises, demonstrating that "action speaks louder than words." This hands-on approach allows students to learn through real-life entrepreneurial experience. Pratyush stated:

Nepal is blessed with heavenly natural beauty. We have heard, read and written in essays since small. Nevertheless, when we go out and visit places, we can clearly realize the truth in the statement. In Nepal, we don't need to work rigorously to make artificial deserts/gardens to increase tourist attraction because we have so many areas to develop in addition to natural beauty to mesmerize tourists. Our fantastic weather, climatic conditions, climatic and cultural diversity have not been promoted appropriately. In my personal opinion, tourism is the only way to bring growth and development to Nepal.

In the above sharing, he revealed that in Nepal, there's no need to artificially create attractions like deserts or gardens to draw tourists, as the country already has abundant natural beauty and diverse cultural and climatic conditions. These unique aspects have not been adequately promoted. The knowledge and abilities of human resources determine a country's future economic growth rate and ability to create jobs, and the tourism and hospitality sectors continue to face a severe lack of training experienced people. Promoted (Dixit & Mawroh, 2019). In my view, tourism is the key to driving growth and development in Nepal. There is no alternative to development in our country except through the hospitality and tourism Industry for economic sound, so this situation underscores the need for a stronger motivation for Hospitality management Entrepreneurship to our pass-out graduates in Nepal's hospitality programs to retain students who might otherwise leave the country.

Social Impressions in Promoting Brain-drain

Participants highlighted that one significant reason for the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is the social impressions in promoting brain drain. They expressed concerns about family choices and connections, life standards and activities, friends, neighbors and peers' influence and connections with an international society, which makes our hospitality professionals believe that there is a challenging work environment and limited career growth opportunities to grow in a hometown where this lack of support often leads skilled professionals to seek opportunities abroad where the industry is better structured and more valued.

To provide a deeper understanding, I have portrayed their stories under two distinct sub-headings below, each capturing a different facet of the social impressions that impact their career choices in the hospitality and tourism field.

Family Choices and Connections

Amani understood that it is not just about students; it is also about the mentality of parents. It's not only students who are eager to go abroad. Their parents also have a strong interest in sending them. This mentality has become a serious problem. In this research, one participant shared her experience regarding parents' perceptions of sending their children abroad. The way they responded to us was shocking. One parent mentioned that their child has been regularly sending back 1–1.5 lakh per month from Japan. He has been working there while continuing his studies. He is able to pay his college fees, cover his daily expenses, and still send around 1 lakh to support his parents.

Comparing this situation to Nepal, studying, working, and saving such a significant amount doesn't seem quite possible. Adding to this, she further shared that the mentality of sending students abroad driven by both students' and parents' desires has become a serious problem. It contributes to brain drain, financial strain on families, and the undervaluing of local opportunities. Family members also discourage students from returning. Many students find it challenging to adjust to their home environment after living abroad for years. Some fear they will face consequences at home for their outspoken political opinions expressed abroad (Ziguras & Gribble, 2015). This situation can result in a loss of talent for the country, missed opportunities for local development, and personal frustration for students who may not wish to follow this path.

In this regard, Santi expressed:

There is a concrete mindset amongst students and some parents also that the investment of Rs. 8-10 lakhs done for the course can be earned back by students during their internship abroad. That has become the only center of attraction for this course.

In this matter, she reflects on a scene of parents who, while they invest money in their children for education, want to earn back through an internship abroad, which quickly becomes a dominant factor in students' decisions to pursue hospitality programs. While international exposure can offer valuable experience, this focus on short-term financial returns often overlooks the broader, long-term benefits of the course, such as skill development, industry knowledge, and career growth. It also creates unrealistic expectations about the compensation from internships abroad and may limit students' vision of contributing to local opportunities and industries.

Adding to this, she shared:

My brother, who has completed a 1-year diploma, had worked in golf countries for 5 years with monthly earnings of 1 lakh, but he decided to come back to Nepal and do something. When he came back, he could hardly earn 15 Thousands per month, so he applied to Canada. Right now, he is in Vancouver, Canada, earning five lakhs around monthly.

Pratyush stated that when he asked +2 students about their future careers and further higher studies, 99% of students gave the same answer.

The mindset of students is to complete their +2 and go abroad, whichever country accepts them. Whenever we ask +2 graduated students what they are

aiming for after this, they instantly reply that they will go abroad and settle outside because Nepal doesn't have a fruitful future. For this engraved mindset of students, our society, teachers, educational structure, and parents are also responsible.

He reflects a sense of the engraved mindset among students that education abroad is the only way to achieve success, which has been shaped by a combination of factors, including societal pressure, teacher guidance, the structure of the educational system, and parental expectations. These influences collectively reinforce the belief that studying abroad is the ultimate path to financial success and career growth, often overshadowing local opportunities and discouraging students from exploring career options within Nepal. This mindset has become ingrained over time and continues to impact students' educational and career decisions. In this regard, Rabi shared:

I also felt that by working for 10 years in Kathmandu, he still couldn't afford a house, so 2 years ago, he flew to Japan, but we were connected with each other and also used to speak often. I also intend to earn enough outside to build a house in Kathmandu for my wife and children.

The focus on family choices and maintaining a quality life has led skilled professionals in the hospitality industry to leave the country. When skilled human resources perceive that local programs lack quality, they are naturally drawn to opportunities abroad, where they believe they will receive better financial support and an improved standard of living. The effect of mindset, democratic parenting, democratic teaching, and the school environment on global citizenship, analyzed using multilevel structural equation modeling, contributes to the brain drain in the hospitality sector (Damrongpanit, 2022). This situation highlights the need for a stronger emphasis on creating ample opportunities within Nepal's hospitality industry to retain students who might otherwise seek opportunities abroad.

Relatives and Peers' Influences and Connections

Amani explained that due to the high tuition fees, living expenses, job income per month and relatives abroad, hospitality and tourism graduates, as well as + 2 graduates, are attracted to foreign land as per my own experience in my family, when

I asked my niece why she wanted to go abroad after +2 without completing her bachelor's degree. She read me the college offer letter, and we calculated the cost of living, her tuition fees, and her potential job income per month. The data itself showed that she could easily cover her tuition fees and living

expenses. Similarly, it became comparatively easier to get a job after course completion, so I eventually gave up on convincing her not to go to Australia. Instead, I suggested she try for scholarships to make her life a little easier.

In the above sharing, she reflects that the participant initially had reservations about her studying in Australia, but after evaluating the financial and career factors, she now supports her decision and also encourages her to apply for scholarships to make her experience even more financially comfortable. Due to this, hospitality undergraduates develop a career identity during the course of their studies in their institution. They have discovered that many hospitality students choose to pursue a hospitality career after they graduate abroad (Mooney & Jameson, 2018). In this regard, Santi shared:

The first question during admission asked by parents is where are you taking for internship? Can you take in XYZ... countries also or not? They are not at all interested in course structure or how we are shaping their children.

In this regard, she pointed out that Parents' primary concern during admissions is not about the course structure or how their children will be developed through the program. Instead, they are mostly focused on where the internship opportunities are located and whether internships can be arranged in specific countries, such as XYZ. Further, she shared her own experiences of her Hospitality graduates from her own institution,

Another example can be derived from my BHM 5th Batch student (Currently, BHM 15th batch is running) named M. Maharjan. He completed his internship at the Hilton Hotel in Dubai for 1 year. After completion of the internship, he came back to Kathmandu and worked in a guest house in Thamel for a 20-25 thousand salary. This paycheck was not enough to maintain his standards, so he joined our college and worked at the Front Desk for 1 year. Around 5 months ago, he left for Canvera, Australia, for a Front Desk internship, and now he is happily living there.

Pratyush claimed that if we got a visa from a third-world or developed country, we would celebrate like winning a great match,

We happily celebrate the occasion when someone gets their VISA approved, especially VISA approved for the USA, Canada, and Australia and fails to recognize the impact of skilled, productive manpower leaving the nation can bring to the next generation.

In this matter, he pointed out that even though we are happy about the visa approvals, the shift from local to global recruitment practices in Western countries' low-wage service sectors, such as fast food chains and Tim Hortons, raises important concerns (Rahim, 2014). I believe we should also take a moment to consider the wider ramifications. Instead of continuously seeking opportunities elsewhere, we should focus on fostering an environment that encourages talented individuals to stay and contribute to the advancement of our nation. After all, these migrations impact not only the individuals who leave but also the entire country, its economy, and future generations. In this regard, Pratyush shared his own experience as a hospitality and tourism graduate working as a teaching professional in Nepal.

This one incident happened to me also when I chose teaching as my profession due to my passion for teaching. However, one of my friend's mom sympathized with my unsuccessful career just because I chose the teaching profession and suggested that my mother send me abroad where her son is living and earning handsomely. The harsh truth is despite teaching being such a Nobel profession is highly criticized in our society.

Rabi stated that the parents are very aware d and plan where they connect to their relatives and friends before finishing their children's education in Nepal for abroad:

A typical family separates certain budgets for the education of a child, such as two years after SEE, then 4 years for a bachelor's and two more years for a master's. To the students desiring further study in a foreign University, a letter specifying the matter for such delay needs to be submitted. Colleges give such letters during recommendation letters. The outcome of such delay affects the time frame associated with visionary parents.

In this regard, he reflects that Parents typically allocate a specific budget for their child's education, covering 2 years after high school, 4 years for a bachelor's degree, and 2 years for a master's. For students planning to study abroad, universities often require a letter explaining any delay in this timeline. This delay can impact the planned timeline set by parents for their child's education. This situation underscores the need for a stronger emphasis on ample opportunities in Nepal's hospitality Industry to retain students who might otherwise leave the country.

Policy Level Influences for Brain-Drain in HM

Participants highlighted that one significant reason for the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is the policy-level influence in the hospitality management industry. They expressed concerns about the no provision in public services with the absence of clear policies and rank of Hospitality Management Education in National level policy, which they believe contributes to a challenging work environment and limited career growth opportunities. This lack of support often leads skilled professionals to seek opportunities abroad where the industry is better structured and more valued.

To provide a deeper understanding, I have portrayed their stories under two distinct sub-headings below, each capturing a different facet of the no provision in public service and Rank of Hospitality Management education in Policy-level issues they face and how these impacts their career choices in the tourism and hospitality field.

No Provision in Public Services with Hospitality Management Specialization

Amani understood that meant that there were no job opportunities in public services, specifically for people who specialized in hospitality management.

We had a hospitality stakeholder meeting at KU, where we invited many leaders from *our industry*. *They also expressed this issue and are genuinely interested in collaborating to create human resources. Our next step is making an action plan. We need to make a breakup group for further discussion on matters like the role of the government, university, industry, hotel, CTEVT, local government, and others.*

Adding to this, she further shared that brainstorming on matters should be undertaken, such as how to support the private sector in enhancing quality service, the role of government policy, etc. In this regard, supporting the private sector in enhancing service quality requires a collaborative approach between businesses and the government. Amankwah-Amoah et al. (2018) argue that even though there are many academic studies on capacity building in social science, comparatively few have examined how the government may encourage capacity building among privately held businesses in developing nations. By looking at how a government may encourage capacity building among private businesses, we hope to close the knowledge gap. By focusing on human resources training, technology adoption, and creating policies that

promote fair competition and consumer protection, the overall service standards can improve, benefiting both businesses and customers.

Santi explained that the policy of Nepal for retaining skilled human resources in the home country was not properly practiced yet,

For example, in Australia, the Australian government has an SOL (Skilled Occupation List) scheme. Under this, there is a list of skilled manpower such as chefs, plumbers, barbers, and drivers. If your skill also falls within this list, a certain number of points is given, and based on that, Temporary Residence (TR) to Permanent Residence (PR) is allotted. This entire process can be completed within a short period of 3–4 years.

She added that Nepal lacks effective policies to retain skilled human resources. In contrast, Australia's SOL (Skilled Occupation List) grants points for skills like skilled manpower like chefs, plumbers, and drivers, enabling a streamlined transition from Temporary Residence (TR) to Permanent Residence (PR) within 3–4 years. Boella and Goss-Turner (2013) argue that content has been extensively updated to reflect current challenges and trends, such as the structure of the labor market and industry, the effects of social media and IT, the rise of global multi-unit brands, the function of employer branding, talent management, equal opportunity and diversity management are directly relation with the hospitality and tourism sector.

Pratyush narrated:

We do have thoughts about the hospitality and tourism industry. Enough placement for internships, as a government college, could make a mandatory policy for completing 6-month internships in Nepal, and the remaining 6 months, if desired, can be done abroad. For this to effectively take place, discussing such mandatory policy with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and ambassadors, the Tourism Board of Nepal, and the Hotel Association of Nepal, we could have signed an MOU stating the mandatory provision of internship in Nepal for 6 months. Additionally, we can provide facilities that are better than those of private colleges in terms of G2G processing for credit transfer. This policy has the potential to retain skillful human resources for a particular time and create a desire to stay in Nepal by showing a ray of hope for the future to the distressed student.

In this regard, he reflects that if hospitality and tourism-related bodies—such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassadors, the Tourism Board of Nepal, and the

Hotel Association of Nepal actively plan and create job opportunities along with well-structured policies, they can help retain skilled professionals in the country.

Additionally, government colleges could offer better credit transfer services than private colleges. This policy aims to retain skilled talent in Nepal, providing students with hope for a future here while allowing them to gain valuable experience.

Acharya (2012) claimed that skilled manpower and student migration are inevitable in this globalized world. It was found that the primary motive for student migration was to obtain a recognized degree and better opportunities, ensuring a higher return on investment in education. However, Nepalese students were also motivated by the opportunity to work and study in their destination countries. Nowadays, the debate on brain drain has shifted toward brain gain in the globalized context, influenced by higher education policies, human resource planning, and policies designed to attract skilled hospitality graduates abroad.

Adding to this, he further shared that despite having expertise in managing hospitality services (such as hotels, resorts, tourism, and event management), there are no designated positions or career paths in the public sector that require this specialization. Instead, public sector employment is more focused on fields such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure rather than hospitality, which is more commonly found in the private sector. As a result, individuals with a degree or expertise in hospitality management may find limited opportunities for government jobs. In this regard, Rabi narrated,

Nepal is a beautiful country with an immense tourism scope. In my personal opinion, at first, favorable policy should be made at the government level; then, for the production of skillful human resources, colleges and university affiliations should come together and conduct various tourism-related programs.

In this regard, he pointed out a problem related to this concern in Nepal. With its stunning landscapes and cultural heritage, Nepal has great potential in the tourism industry. He said that the first step should be for the government to create favorable policies that support and promote tourism.

Once the right policies are in place, colleges and universities can collaborate with tourism-related programs to produce skilled manpower. These institutions can offer specialized courses and training, ensuring that graduates are well-prepared to meet the demands of the growing tourism sector. By

aligning government policies with education and training, Sima (2024) proposed strategies for aligning education more closely with labor market needs. These strategies emphasize collaboration between educational institutions and industries, flexible learning pathways, and the use of emerging technologies. By addressing these mismatches, China can enhance its workforce's adaptability and productivity, ensuring sustained economic growth and competitiveness in the global market. Similarly, Nepal can effectively boost its tourism industry and create job opportunities for skilled professionals.

In this regard, Arun states, "I conclude that a course design should be based on industry interaction because, in the end, our product has to launch in the market. Thus, BHM is an international-level course for global market development. From the sharing above, Arun said that a well-designed BHM course based on industry interaction ensures that graduates are equipped with the right skills for global market development. By keeping the course updated with the latest industry trends and ensuring practical exposure, the course will produce skilled professionals who are prepared to succeed in the international hospitality and tourism markets. This approach benefits both the students and the industry, creating a workforce that meets global standards and drives growth in the hospitality and tourism sector.

The Rank of Hospitality Management Education in Policy

Amani explained that the Hospitality and Tourism sectors aren't given priority and are not put into serious consideration by our policy policymakers:

Through vigorous research, I can clearly state a few of the problems in our hospitality sector. The most significant issue is we are not able to give the environment of learning and earning simultaneously to students. Human resources are not being taken seriously, and the academic qualifications of master-level manpower are not given much priority. We should also research good practices found in the entire world and reflect on them as much as possible. Policymakers do not even consider this kind of serious discussion.

In the above sharing, she reflects that the core issues outlined as lack of an environment for learning and earning simultaneously, the under-appreciation of human resources, and the neglect of master 's-level qualifications highlight significant barriers to the development of a skilled workforce. To address these issues, educational institutions, governments, and the private sector need to collaborate to

create a more integrated approach that values education, provides practical work opportunities, and creates pathways for talented individuals to contribute meaningfully to the local economy. Lawler et al. (2010) claimed that Since local economies can only grow if their citizens do, inclusive talent development has become increasingly important in today's competitive labor markets. Economic development organizations are being compelled to reconsider homegrown talent development in the face of historically low unemployment and the incapacity to successfully attract talent due to diminishing interstate mobility. Top talent can be retained, and the hospitality and tourism sectors in Nepal can expand if skilled are valued and given the opportunity to learn, earn, and develop.

Santi highlights a concern about the support from our government level to enhance the hospitality and tourism sector,

We also lack operating standard restaurants and hotels, a night market, etc. For noticeable change to happen in the Tourism Industry, constant support from the Government is highly needed, as well as enthusiastic support from the state government level & individual level.

In this regard, Pratyush shared:

While talking about this course, I noticed that it doesn't have an extensive history; rather, it has always been an open course. Even though it is under the faculty of management, humanities students have also joined. From the start till today, research courses in the field of tourism & hospitality, like MPhil, PHD etc., are not been found. Around 60-65 colleges teach hotel management and tourism collaboratively. However, there has been a lack of specific policies in hospitality and tourism education.

From the sharing above, he shared that while there is a growing number of institutions offering hospitality and tourism programs, the lack of a specific policy in hospitality and tourism education limits the potential for standardized, high-quality education and the alignment of academic training with industry demands. A formal policy would guide the development of consistent curricula, create opportunities for industry collaboration, ensure quality control, and provide students with the skills necessary to succeed in the global hospitality and tourism markets. Despite labor being one of Nepal's main exports, critical labor shortages are experienced within the tourism and hospitality sectors. This contradiction between exporting labor and facing labor shortages in Nepal has received little attention in the context of

reviving the tourism and hospitality sector in this era (Dhakal & Brown, 2024). Establishing such a policy would benefit both the educational system and the industry, helping to develop a highly skilled and capable workforce. Adding to this, he further shared

I suggest the government only do brain gain at the policy level. Unless the government participates in stopping the Brain Drain crisis, there is no chance of rapid growth in national development. Authority-holding individuals or institutions have to become aware of this crisis and create schemes/policies to control it. NOC-granting authorized bodies should analyze the students' ability to qualify for further study and whether they should allow all students to go abroad. Such authority bodies should carefully evaluate prior to approving private universities that don't have standard reputations in the international market.

Rabi claimed that due to the instability of our government and unclear policies make skilled hospitality and tourism graduates a brain drain from our country,

The situation for those who have opened and operated businesses for a year or so is heavily impacted by political instability, tedious legal processing, and unnecessary donations to political parties & institutions. So, in the end, such elite business owners also prefer to go abroad when they become financially weak. The impact can only begin for the purpose of brain gain when the government takes action through effective policy because colleges do not have such power or interest in brain gain.

In this regard, he highlights the challenges faced by business owners in Nepal, particularly those who have been operating for a year or more. These entrepreneurs are heavily affected by political instability, complicated legal processes, and the pressure to make donations by political parties or institutions. As a result, even successful business owners can become financially weak and may choose to move abroad for better opportunities. The potential for Brain Gain to retain skilled professionals in the country can only be realized if the government takes proactive steps through effective policy. This is because colleges, while they educate and train, do not have the power or the interest to directly address the issue of retaining talent. Kenney et al. (2013) mention that as more academics have studied the fact that some immigrants are going back to their home countries to start new businesses, thus becoming returnee entrepreneurs, the idea of the brain has evolved. This is referred to

as a brain drain, where they bring back their experiences in their home country and impart knowledge, customs and global network. To counter this trend, the government must create policies that foster a stable business environment, reduce unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles, and incentivize skilled individuals to stay and contribute to the country's development. Without such action, the cycle of brain drain will continue in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Individual Commitments and Dilemma

Participants highlighted that one significant reason for the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is Individual commitments and dilemmas. They expressed concerns about the hospitality and tourism graduates face conflicting obligations or responsibilities like psychological, social, or ethical situations, as well as where these commitments can create a dilemma when it is difficult to prioritize or fulfill all of them at once, leading to stress, tough decision making and moral conflict. This type of commitment and dilemma makes skilled professionals seek opportunities abroad where the industry is better structured and more valued.

To provide a deeper understanding, I have portrayed their stories under two distinct sub-headings below, each capturing a different facet of the graded and non-graded category of students and locating future scopes in local rather than global spaces which they face and how these impacts their career choices in the tourism and hospitality field.

Graded and Non-Graded Category of Students

Amani highlights the different categories of courses available in hospitality and tourism education until we are facing a crisis of varying levels of skilled human resources in our hospitality industry,

There have been multiple courses such as 3-month course, 6 months course, 2 years course, 3 years diploma. If we can provide proper training to such human resources, we can have staff on the front line ready and, in accordance with individual willingness to learn, can bring turnovers. For this, an increase in investment is also required, but the fulfillment of mid-level and upper-level managers is still challenging because of the age factor.

Adding to this, she further shared that while there is a need for more investment (likely to improve the organization or achieve specific goals), there is still a challenge in meeting the needs or expectations of mid-level and upper-level managers, mainly due to the age factor. Ashton (2018) claimed that It was found that

the quality of work life, effective leadership, frequent training, job security, the hotel brand images and employees' personal characteristics, all of which are crucial, are more important factors in fostering human resources retain than higher payment. This age-related challenge could involve difficulties such as adapting to technological advancements, addressing generational differences in work culture, or managing an aging workforce. Santi pointed out problems regarding skilled people settling abroad:

We have also seen many hotels, bed and breakfast concepts in Rara, Solukhumbu, Nuwakot, etc., that have started from such Abroad Return Nepalese. However, almost all of our skilled, semi-skilled students are following the tendency to settle abroad. Semi-skilled people have chosen to go to golf countries, and skilled ones have chosen to go to European nations, such as Japan, Korea, the USA, etc. The major reason for such a tendency is because the youth don't have hope that they can do anything here rapidly. This lack of hope has led to unstable political conditions, unfavorable educational policy, insufficient job opportunities and other factors that have just added fuel to the fire.

In this regard, she reflects a sense that the main reason for this trend is that young people lack hope of achieving success quickly. Whereas low-graded human resources is chosen for golf countries, high-graded and skilled human resources is the quest for developed or third-world countries like the USA, Australia, Europe, Japan and many more. Adhikari (2010) claimed that it depends on its ability to control performance and enhance human resources skill and competency development while fostering a learning environment. Even though the Nepalese economy has adopted an open market policy and is making an effort to enter the global market, inadequate performance management and a failure to address human resources development are impeding competitive advantage. This hopelessness is caused by unstable political conditions, poor educational policies, and limited job opportunities, with other factors further worsening the situation.

In this regard, Pratyush shared,

Through this research, we also noticed that students who are good at studying try America, Canada, and Europe and students not very good in foreign countries, but overall, they all try to make their first priority to go abroad study. If we can respect and admire the ones who have decided to sacrifice

good money and be with us in this journey of the construction of a nation, I think then Good brains and skills can be retained more sustainably.

Pratyush pointed out that the tendency of brain drain of hospitality and tourism graduates are very different choices as per their grade, and it is usual in the globalization market, but if we are able to secure and retain those individuals who choose to sacrifice financial gain in order to help build and improve the nation. By doing so, it will be easier to retain skilled, talented, and dedicated individuals in a sustainable way, ensuring their contributions to the country's development are long-lasting. Essentially, showing appreciation for their efforts will make them more likely to stay committed to their roles and continue working towards national progress.

Continuing the discourse, Rabi shared:

I believe that people are attracted to going to foreign nations not by choice but due to a lack of good opportunities, which is easily assured by staying abroad. The hard work and dedication of 5-10 years shown in Nepal can never result in even half the same level of hard work and dedication done outside. Thus, any sound mind will choose outside, resulting in a crisis of Brain Drain. During our visit to various districts, we noticed that the colleges teaching +2 are promoting free IELTS classes. This clearly indicates that they do IELTS and go outside. Such a situation also threatens bachelor-level teaching institutions.

He further mentions that many skilled or different graded human resources are leaving our homeland for abroad not out of preference but due to a lack of good opportunities in our homeland, which are more easily available abroad. The effort and dedication invested in our homeland for five to ten years does not yield the same rewards as working abroad. As a result, people with sound judgment are choosing to go overseas, contributing to the brain drain crisis. During a visit to various districts, it was observed that many colleges offering +2 programs are promoting free IELTS classes, signaling that students are encouraged to study abroad. This trend threatens the future of bachelor-level educational institutions in Nepal. Arun claimed:

Um, Adding fuel to the fire, the point of attraction for this curriculum has become its internship abroad. The cost incurred of around 4-5 lakh at a 4-year bachelor's level is easily earned by a student during an internship abroad.

In this regard, he highlights that while hospitality and tourism students are graded differently, they are eligible to go abroad and earn money, which makes this

course attractive to many to pursue certain educational programs. Wanniarachchi et al. (2022) mention that career growth opportunities, incentives, and organizational politics all have a direct impact on brain drain, which is one of the main problems affecting the driven hospitality and tourism industry when human resources believe that organizational politics are high, they are more likely to migrate. The cost of a four-year bachelor's education in Nepal (4-5 lakh rupees) can often be offset by the income earned during an internship abroad, making this option financially appealing. This trend is further intensifying the brain drain crisis, as many students choose to go abroad for better opportunities, leaving local educational institutions and the workforce in Nepal vulnerable.

Locating Future Scopes in Local then Global Spaces

Amani highlighted that skilled human resources are difficult to retain due to living costs. *In present conditions, human resources for people aged 25-35 are very difficult to retain because of the opportunity cost. As per the youth mentality, the same hours worked abroad can bring more money and career-wise growth.* She reflects that in hospitality and tourism, graduates are not retaining in their home country in the current global economy, and professionals in the 25-35 age group face significant pressures to balance career advancement, financial growth, and work-life balance. They are driven by the possibility of better compensation, faster career progression, and the opportunity to work with international teams or gain global experience. Edirisingh and Manuel (2019) argue that the factors can increase employee retention like pay and recognition for completed work, offering demanding work, promotions, a learning environment, an inviting setting within the company, good vibes among coworkers, a healthy work live life balance, ad effective communication. If the companies don't provide competitive opportunities for career advancement and salary, there is a high possibility of losing skilled human resources. Therefore, companies need to adapt by offering more attractive packages, career advancement paths, and opportunities for global exposure to retain top talent.

In the same regard, Arun claimed:

The skilled human resources who are involved in the hospitality industry don't promote, grow and have proper documentation. There are push and pull factors playing their role. In Nepal, there are certain levels, and after that level, Nepalese manpower hasn't been able to grow. For instance, in the hotel industry, during promotion, management analyzes many factors, such as

qualitative service, educational background, experience, etc., and management is not willing to promote. This becomes a push factor for such skilled manpower to leave here. The industry should promote investment in human capital in a timely manner. They all desire immediate return, and their passion for work is declining. The industry plays another role by not investing in people in time, signing an agreement for 5 years stating the perks of joining, salary, and promotion aspects. This job insecurity in an industry also contributed to creating a gap.

In the above sharing, he reflects a sense of a huge gap in the hospitality and tourism industry by failing to invest in their employees at the right time and by offering long-term contracts with promises of career growth and perks that are often not fulfilled. This creates a sense of job insecurity among employees, who may feel that their efforts are undervalued or that there is no clear path forward in their careers. As a result, many talented individuals become frustrated and eventually leave the company in search of more stable and fulfilling opportunities, sometimes abroad. To address this issue, hospitality and tourism industries need to align their employment practices with employee expectations, offering more transparency, career development opportunities, and realistic long-term promises to ensure talent retention and reduce the gap in the workforce in the hospitality Industry.

Santi stated:

The graduates do not get positive hope in their home country; however, the remaining 90% of students don't want to return due to the absence of Dignity of Labor and inefficient work payment. Thus, most of the students in the tourism industry prefer to settle abroad to secure their lives and careers. The major reason for such a tendency is that the youth don't have hope that they can do anything here rapidly. This lack of hope has led to unstable political conditions, unfavorable educational policy, Insufficient job opportunities and other factors that have just added fuel to the fire.

Adding to this, she further stated how college can help students learn how to run a business in Nepal and become self-employed rather than waiting for the nation to provide suitable opportunities.

We have been successfully conducting practical Entrepreneurship training.

Pratyush shared that, *however, the distressing situation on top of that is we are unable to meet the demand for skillful human resources in those hotels due to*

the Brain Drain crisis. Therefore, I think the change in this situation can only be possible with policy level change, even by modifying some clauses in the Labor Act with respect to providing per-hour basis payment. This helps in creating an environment where students can learn and earn simultaneously.

The brain drain crisis has significantly affected the hospitality industry by creating a shortage of skilled workers, who often seek better opportunities abroad. One way to address this problem is through policy-level changes that adapt labor laws to allow more flexible working arrangements, such as per-hour payment. Sima (2024) claimed that the enactment of restrictive migration laws results in a brain drain in the home country on the one hand while, on the other hand, requiring good governance to tackle the brain drain caused by maladministration and poor governance, which negatively impacts the economy of sending countries. Additionally, restricting free movement and outlawing skilled labor are considered the best options for sending countries. These changes could make it easier for students and young professionals to gain valuable industry experience while earning money, thus creating a more skilled, experienced, and motivated workforce to help fill gaps in the local labor market. In this regard, Rabi claimed:

Most hospitality and tourism graduates are eager to apply for jobs in the Middle East. Dubai is the most preferred destination due to its low costs, lack of a language barrier, and relatively affordable living expenses. The appeal of Dubai is high because, after working there for a couple of years, it becomes easier to apply for migration to Australia, Canada, and other third countries. For those who have started and operated businesses for a year or so, political instability, tedious legal processes, and mandatory donations to political parties and institutions have significantly impacted their operations. As a result, even elite business owners, when they become financially weak, prefer to move abroad. Internship placements are often delayed by five to six months, and students frequently face nepotism and favoritism during training. Additionally, job hunting is challenging because employers seek work experience, yet gaining experience without a job is impossible. This vicious cycle has caused growing frustration among students, making migration an even stronger push factor.

He further shared that, in the context of Nepal, graduates face delayed internship placements, combined with nepotism and favoritism in training. This creates a system where students feel unable to advance in their careers despite their efforts and qualifications. The work experience paradox makes it nearly impossible for graduates to break into the job market, leaving them frustrated and disillusioned. This cycle of obstacles serves as a push factor, driving many students to seek opportunities abroad, where they believe they can gain experience, work-life balance, and career growth that they cannot find in their homeland. This situation highlights the need for systemic changes in educational and labor market policies to offer students fairer opportunities and break the cycle of frustration that pushes talent away from their home country.

Theoretical Discussion

In this section, I have provided a theoretical reflection on Lee's Theory of Migration (The Push and Pull Theory). The significant ideas from the data are connected to the Push and Pull Theory, which I have used in this research. The theory states that transnational migration across political boundaries is driven by push and pull factors that have a direct and evident influence on migration patterns. Meanwhile, Human Capital Theory is an economic theory that suggests investing in people through education and training can lead to economic growth, increased productivity, and reduced poverty. This theory is based on the idea that human capital, the knowledge, skills, and experience employees bring to a company, is a key factor in economic success. It further suggests that society gets financial benefits when individuals are equipped with the tools to improve their health, quality of life, and productivity.

Transformational Leadership Theory states that transformational leaders aim to create meaningful change by fostering a strong sense of purpose, collaboration, and commitment. This approach is particularly effective in addressing challenges such as employee retention and motivation.

Lack of Institutional Priority and Clarity in Hospitality and Tourism Education

The theme of "Lack of Institutional Priority and Clarity" in Nepal's Hospitality Management education reflects challenges in defining objectives, orienting courses to meet industry needs, and determining whether curricula should focus on generalization or specialization. This issue is critical in shaping the quality of graduates and their readiness to contribute effectively to both local and global

markets. Utilizing the push and pull, the human capital and transformational leadership theory, this discussion explores how unclear institutional priorities hinder the development of specialized professionals and offers strategies for reform.

The push-pull theory provides a valuable lens for understanding migration patterns and has been extensively explored in migration studies. Lee (1966) initially articulated this framework, emphasizing push factors (conditions in the home country) and pull factors (attractions of the destination country). In the context of Nepal, participants' insights, such as Amani's critique of the hospitality education system, align with literature that identifies institutional deficiencies as significant push factors (Bhattarai et al., 2023). Similarly, Pratyush's observation regarding marketing strategies that emphasize opportunities abroad mirrors Adhikari's (2016) findings on how aspirational narratives influence migration decisions. These studies reinforce the idea that perceived benefits of studying or working abroad act as influential pull factors, perpetuating brain drain.

Human capital theory, popularized by Becker (1964), suggests that individuals invest in education and skills to maximize their economic potential. This theory directly relates to participants' experiences, such as Arun's critique of the generalized nature of Nepal's hospitality programs. Studies, including Khadka (2016), have highlighted how a lack of specialized educational infrastructure limits the local workforce's ability to compete globally. Furthermore, the concept of fostering entrepreneurial mindsets, as Santi advocates, is supported by research emphasizing local investment in human capital development as a strategy to mitigate brain drain (Shrestha, 2020). This literature underscores the importance of creating high-value local opportunities to retain skilled professionals.

Transformational leadership theory, introduced by Bass (1985), focuses on leaders' roles in inspiring change and aligning institutional goals with broader societal needs. The leadership gap identified by Arun, particularly regarding the lack of specialized programs, reflects the findings of Bass and Riggio (2006), who noted that visionary leadership is crucial for systemic reforms in education. Additionally, Santi and Rabi's efforts to inspire entrepreneurship resonate with Goleman et al. (2013), as frameworks and literature highlight a clear pathway for addressing the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality sector. By tackling push-pull dynamics, investing in specialized human capital, and adopting transformational leadership, Nepal can transform its hospitality education system. These changes, supported by the insights of Bhattarai,

Subedi, and others, will ensure the development of a skilled workforce capable of advancing the local tourism and hospitality industries.

Educators' Roles in Shaping Future Direction in Hospitality Management

The role of educators in shaping the future of hospitality management graduates is pivotal, particularly in addressing the brain drain and fostering entrepreneurial ambitions in Nepal. Participants in the field emphasize the dual need for connecting students with market realities and instilling the motivation for entrepreneurship. This discussion explores how educators can influence career trajectories and strengthen Nepal's hospitality sector.

The Push-Pull Theory highlights factors driving migration, with institutional inadequacies as push factors and perceived opportunities abroad as pull factors (Lee, 1966). Participants like Rabi and Santi reveal how political instability and limited career growth opportunities in Nepal create an environment of uncertainty, pushing students to seek stability abroad. Conversely, colleges' promotion of internships and employment opportunities abroad acts as a pull factor, as evidenced by Pratyush's pride in Nepalese students being well-regarded internationally. Adhikari (2016) similarly emphasizes how educational narratives shape aspirations for international careers, reinforcing these migration patterns.

Human Capital Theory underscores the role of education in enhancing skills and productivity (Becker, 1964). Participants like Amani and Santi showcase efforts to equip students with practical skills, entrepreneurial mindsets, and leadership abilities, aiming to retain talent by creating value within Nepal. For instance, Santi's "learning pedagogy" emphasizes group research and skill enhancement, aligning with Shrestha (2020), who advocates localized human capital development to mitigate brain drain. Despite these efforts, Amani notes the challenge of competing with structured international opportunities, underscoring the need for further investment in specialized education and entrepreneurial support to maximize local talent.

Transformational leadership is vital for motivating students and fostering systemic change (Bass, 1985). Participants like Santi and Rabi embody transformational leadership by inspiring students to explore entrepreneurial ventures and contribute to Nepal's development. Rabi's example of utilizing seed money to establish a canteen business and Santi's celebration of a graduate's entrepreneurial success (Nachos) reflect leadership practices that align institutional goals with national development. Bass and Riggio (2006) assert that such leadership is pivotal in

aligning individual aspirations with collective progress, addressing systemic barriers while motivating students to invest in Nepal's hospitality sector.

By addressing the push-pull dynamics, investing in human capital, and adopting transformational leadership, educators can play a transformative role in reducing brain drain. Literature and participant narratives converge on the need to balance global competitiveness with local opportunity creation, fostering a generation of skilled professionals and entrepreneurs committed to Nepal's hospitality and tourism growth.

Social Impressions in Promoting Brain-Drain

The influence of social impressions, as highlighted by participants, significantly contributes to the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry. This phenomenon can be analyzed through Push-Pull Theory and Social Capital Theory, supported by literature and field insights.

The push-pull theory explains migration dynamics through factors that "push" individuals from their home countries and "pull" them to foreign lands. In Nepal, participants' narratives reflect critical push factors such as limited career growth, challenging work environments, and undervaluation of local opportunities. For instance, Rabi's decision to leave Nepal due to insufficient income, despite 10 years of professional experience, exemplifies this push. Simultaneously, pull factors like better-structured industries, higher salaries, and enhanced living standards abroad create strong incentives for migration, as seen in Amani's niece's evaluation of financial viability in Australia.

Studies by King and Skeldon (2010) affirm that economic disparities and the perception of superior opportunities in developed nations amplify these migration trends. The focus on short-term financial returns, as noted by Santi, reinforces the attractiveness of internships and employment abroad, overshadowing long-term local career growth.

Social Capital Theory highlights the role of networks, relationships, and shared resources in decision-making processes. Family choices, peer influence, and connections with international communities create a culture that normalizes and promotes migration. For example, parents' emphasis on remittances, as seen in Amani's case of a student sending back Rs.1 lakh monthly from Japan, underscores the societal value placed on financial contributions over local career development.

Pratyush's observation that visa approvals are celebrated like major achievements further demonstrates how societal norms glorify migration.

Bourdieu (2011) and subsequent studies (Portes, 2014) emphasize that such social capital not only facilitates access to global opportunities but also perpetuates the belief that success is unattainable locally. This aligns with Rabi's account of parents strategically planning their children's education to align with foreign opportunities. By understanding the interplay of social impressions, as illuminated by Push-Pull and Social Capital theories, stakeholders can develop strategies to mitigate the adverse effects of brain drain and promote sustainable growth within Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector.

Policy Level Influences for Brain-Drain in Hospitality Management

Policy-level factors are critical in addressing the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry. Participants emphasized gaps in public service provisions, the lack of recognition for hospitality management as a specialized field, and the absence of well-structured policies prioritizing the sector. These insights can be understood through the lens of human capital theory, push-pull theory, and institutional theory, supported by relevant literature and field findings.

Human capital theory posits that individuals seek opportunities where their skills and education yield the highest returns (Becker, 1993). The participants' narratives reveal that skilled hospitality professionals in Nepal perceive limited career growth, financial instability, and undervaluation of their qualifications. For instance, Amani highlighted the lack of positions in public services requiring hospitality specialization, underscoring a misalignment between education and employment opportunities. Rabi's observation that unstable government policies and legal hurdles deter entrepreneurs further supports this view. As the literature suggests, individuals invest in education with the expectation of economic returns (Sjaastad, 1962), and when domestic systems fail to meet these expectations, migration becomes an attractive alternative (Docquier & Hillel, 2012).

The push-pull theory explains migration decisions through factors that "push" individuals out of their home country and "pull" them toward foreign destinations (Lee, 1966). Push factors in Nepal's context include limited internships, political instability, and inadequate industry support. Santi's comparison with Australia's Skilled Occupation List (SOL) illustrates how structured policies in destination countries act as strong pull factors. Conversely, Pratyush's proposal for mandatory

internships within Nepal's tourism industry indicates potential strategies to mitigate push factors. By addressing these push factors through robust policies and creating domestic opportunities, the government can reduce migration incentives.

Institutional theory emphasizes the role of formal structures and policies in shaping behavior and decision-making (North, 1990). Participants' accounts suggest that Nepal's policy environment lacks the institutional framework necessary to support the hospitality sector. Amani's critique of the absence of master's-level recognition and Santi's call for government support highlight institutional deficiencies. Furthermore, the lack of specific policies for hospitality education, as noted by participants, limits standardization and quality in academic programs. Rabi's emphasis on the need for stability and supportive policies aligns with institutional theory's assertion that clear and consistent frameworks are essential for economic growth and talent retention. Addressing these institutional gaps and aligning policy with global best practices, Nepal can enhance its hospitality and tourism sector's attractiveness, thereby reducing brain drain and fostering sustainable development.

Individual Commitments and Dilemmas in Brain Drain

The phenomenon of brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is intricately tied to individual commitments and dilemmas, as revealed by the participants' narratives. This section synthesizes these field observations with theoretical frameworks, including push-pull theory, human capital theory, and institutional theory, to understand the underlying dynamics.

The push-pull theory provides a lens through which to view the migration of skilled professionals in Nepal's hospitality sector. Push factors, such as unstable political conditions, insufficient job opportunities, and lack of career growth, compel individuals to leave. Conversely, pull factors, including better-structured industries, higher salaries, and global exposure, attract talent to developed nations. Participants like Santi and Rabi highlighted that both skilled and semi-skilled graduates feel forced to migrate due to limited prospects at home. For example, free IELTS classes promoted by colleges underscore systemic encouragement for students to study and work abroad, further exacerbating the push factors.

Human capital theory emphasizes the economic rationale behind education and skill acquisition. Participants noted that investing in hospitality education in Nepal often yields lower returns compared to working abroad, where skills are more valued and financially rewarded. Arun's observation about internships abroad

offsetting the cost of a four-year degree reflects a calculated decision to maximize returns on educational investments. This aligns with literature suggesting that individuals migrate when their potential economic output is undervalued in their home country (Borjas, 2014; Docquier & Hillel, 2012)

Institutional theory underscores how systemic inefficiencies and organizational practices influence workforce dynamics. The participants' accounts of delayed internships, nepotism, and favoritism highlight institutional shortcomings that act as push factors. Additionally, Arun's critique of management's reluctance to promote skilled employees reflects a lack of effective human capital development within the industry. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), weak institutional structures can erode trust and motivation among employees, pushing them toward more reliable systems abroad.

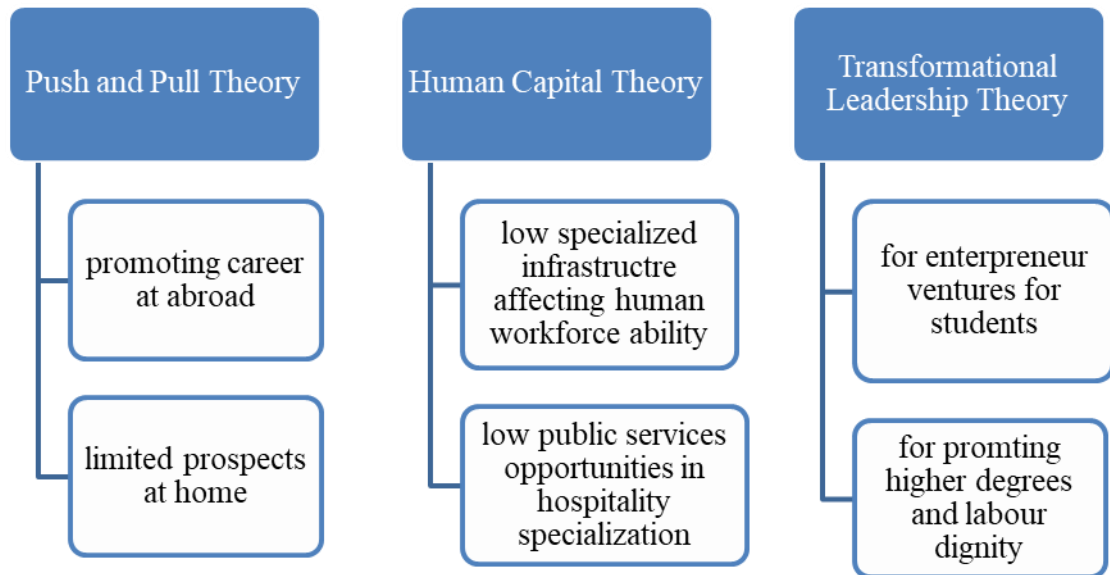
The psychological and ethical dilemmas faced by individuals further compound the brain drain issue. Balancing personal and familial obligations with professional aspirations creates stress and moral conflict, as noted by participants like Pratyush. This aligns with research indicating that conflicting commitments often lead to migration as individuals seek environments with clearer paths to personal and professional fulfillment (King & Skeldon, 2010).

Participants also highlighted potential solutions to mitigate brain drain. Amani and Arun emphasized the need for policy-level changes, such as offering per-hour payment structures, timely promotions, and clearer career advancement paths. Additionally, fostering an environment that values labor dignity and provides practical entrepreneurship training could instill hope and retain talent. Literature suggests that such interventions can enhance job satisfaction and reduce migration tendencies (Dustmann & Görlach, 2016)

The brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is a multifaceted issue driven by individual commitments, institutional inefficiencies, and systemic push-pull dynamics. By integrating theoretical insights with field data, it becomes evident that addressing the brain drain requires both structural reforms and a shift in organizational practices to retain and value skilled professionals within Nepal.

These theoretical concerns are presented in Figure No. 1.

Figure 1



Theoretical Essence on Reasons for Brain Drain

It shows that institutions have been promoting careers abroad as part of their business plan, which has played the role of pull theory in making students fly abroad. Similarly, institutionally limited prospects for students in the hospitality and tourism industry in their home country have pushed them back to find their future abroad.

Essence of Chapter

In this chapter, I have discussed the diverse themes under a literary theme, made an analysis of the findings with participants' quotes, and explained them with citations. Furthermore, I analyzed the above finding with theoretical analysis, where I made each finding connect with a particular theory.

CHAPTER V

COMPLEXITIES AND CONSEQUENCES OF BRAIN DRAIN IN THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the rich field narratives shared by participants, shedding light on the central research question: How do the experiences and narratives of educational leaders within the tourism and hospitality education field in Nepal elucidate the complexities and impact of brain drain in the hospitality and tourism industry? Through in-depth stories and reflections, the chapter captures the diverse perspectives of participants, bringing forward their insights into the challenges, motivations, and structural factors influencing brain drain in this sector. The narratives are organized into five distinct themes, each reflecting a unique dimension of the participants' experiences and viewpoints. These themes provide a structured framework for understanding the complexities and nuances that contribute to the brain drain within tourism and hospitality education in Nepal. Each theme highlights specific aspects of the participants' accounts, from personal challenges and institutional barriers to broader societal and economic factors.

In the later part of the chapter, these narratives are explored through theoretical lenses to draw out deeper meanings and implications. This theoretical discussion seeks to contextualize the participants' experiences within the broader scholarly discourse, offering insights that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the brain drain phenomenon in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector.

Lack of Quality Human Resources

It refers to a situation where there is an insufficient number of individuals with the skills, knowledge, and expertise necessary to meet the demands of the hospitality and tourism industry. This challenge often arises due to factors such as inadequate education and training systems, poor access to opportunities for skill development, brain drain, or misalignment between workforce capabilities and market needs. According to a report by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the mismatch between workforce skills and job market requirements is a significant barrier to economic growth and development in many regions, emphasizing the need for

investment in education, training, and lifelong learning. (International Labour Organization, 2023)

Amani highlighted that one significant impact of the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry is the lack of quality human resources,

On the basis of TripAdvisor data, investing in employees is equally important. If such neglect continues toward skilled human resources, students will gladly leave in the name of better opportunities. Reflecting on my experience last year in Pokhara at a five-star hotel, I realized that it was not satisfactory. I paid Rs. 500 for a simple watermelon juice. I am not complaining about the price, but the quality of service rendered was very disappointing. Some guests ignore such mistakes because they are highly fascinated by our unique culture and beautiful natural scenery. However, this doesn't mean we are doing justice to the amount paid by tourists. These mistakes are made by those who haven't been adequately trained and lack experience. Such inexperienced individuals are either hired to save money or because suitable candidates are not available. This highlights how valuable it is to retain skilled human resources. To achieve this, we need to value them and consistently provide an environment that allows them to sharpen their skills further. I am glad that there is some level of awareness among a few hotels regarding this matter.

Adding to this, she further shared that the lack of quality human resources directly contributes to brain drain, as skilled workers in the hospitality and tourism sectors seek employment abroad, where the industry is better structured, offers clearer career advancement, and provides better compensation. This outflow of talent weakens the local industry's ability to grow and compete globally. In this support, Janta et al. (2011) mention that opportunities to interact with people and work in a vibrant atmosphere are two benefits of employment in the hospitality industry. However, certain behaviors and working circumstances in the sectors are barriers to migrating workers' long-term commitment due to harmful elements such as poor pay, physical employment, discrimination, and management behavior. The lack of quality human resources in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry creates a vicious cycle of low-skilled or insufficient labor, leading to poor service, limited industry growth, and a reliance on foreign workers. Meanwhile, talented graduates and professionals leave the country for better opportunities abroad, further exacerbating the issue.

Santi claimed that I received a call from five stars, four stars and chain hotels for trainee or internship in the hospitality industry:

This crisis of Brain Drain that we are facing has made me so alert on the matter that when a continuous call comes from 5-star, 4-star, and 3-star for job vacancies, the only question that I have is what is the payment offered and do we have dropout facility after 10 pm shift. Their reply is that for 6 months it is free and after 6 months we offer nominal payment and uniform to be brought from home. This disappointing situation has led to a Brain drain. Furthermore, even in Nepal's hotel top positions, such as GM, restaurant manager, and chef, we don't give enough opportunities to Nepalese. Thus, we have to hire people from India or other European nations. The double-standard nature of people, such as paying so little for work if s/he is Nepalese but is ready to pay double if s/he is a foreigner, can be clearly visible. Recently, a reputed hotel owner contacted me requesting to send some trainees to his hotel because the previous ones he trained could not handle guests.

In the above sharing, she highlighted that in Nepal's hospitality industry, top positions such as GM, restaurant manager, and head chef are often filled by foreign workers rather than locals. This is due to the limited opportunities given to Nepali professionals, leading to a reliance on hiring from India or European countries. Xing (2023) claimed that hospitality had seen exceptionally high turnover rates in recent years, the fact that behaviors of employees is thought to be a normal occurrence in the sector. Low staff morale, work satisfaction, customer perceptions of service quality, and increased employee recruitment and training expenses are all directly related to turnover.

As a researcher, I have experienced a lack of skilled human resources and hospitality and tourism graduates; the hospitality industry is hiring low-graded and semi-skilled human resources nowadays; due to this, a hotel owner recently expressed dissatisfaction with previous Nepali trainees, stating that they could not handle guests properly, suggesting gaps in training and skills. In this regard, Pratyush shared:

Recently, I was requested by Malla Hotel, Drishya Hotel, Kailash Kutee and others for post vacancies in different departments. When I share such vacancies with students coming to get character certificates, they reject the offer out-front without even giving me some time to think about the salary

payment position simply because they don't have an interest in staying in Nepal at all. In the present context, Nepal's industries are not performing well. As a result, businesses cannot reach their full potential, and consequently, the companies are unable to offer good payment to their skilled human resources. Thus, good and skillful human resources have all left the nation.

Supporting the discourse, Arun shared that recently, an international brand arrived:

Hilton Hotel gave job offers to weak students as well. The reason for this was due to a shortage of staff and a lack of availability of qualified human resources. Furthermore, in the hotel business, there is a tendency when an Indian works in Nepal at the level of manager s/he enjoys a salary of 1.5-2 lakh with an apartment for stay, transportation and food availability as well. However, at the same level, if a Nepalese is appointed, he is paid half of the salary enjoyed by that Indian individual. This brassiness is a result of the Nepalese's lack of commitment. Comparing the scenario with the context of Nepal, we are far behind, and the main reason is the lack of quality human resources. We indeed produce quality human resources, but only to meet the purposes of other nations.

Arun pointed out that Hilton Hotel, an international brand, recently offered jobs to less qualified students due to a shortage of staff and a lack of skilled human resources in Nepal's hospitality sector. Adding to this, he further shared that it also highlights a disparity in salaries, where an Indian manager working in Nepal receives a significantly higher payment (1.5-2 lakh) along with benefits like housing, transportation, and food. In contrast, a Nepali manager in the same role is paid half that amount. This inequality is attributed to the perceived lack of commitment among Nepali workers. The hospitality and tourism education sector of Nepal produces skilled professionals, but they are often better utilized abroad, contributing to the shortage of quality human resources within the country. Based on the previous experiences, Rabi shared:

Hospitality graduates get very easy access to explore abroad compared to other sectors because they are well-skilled in terms of the hospitality industry. In comparison to other sectors, we observed that skilled human resources in the hospitality sector fly abroad more often. For instance, if a bank manager

is a foreigner, they are required to undergo compulsory training, but for hotel management students, no such extra training is mandatory.

Furthermore, during our research, we also noticed that five-star hotels in Nepal struggle to find suitable human resources, so they have to outsource them. For instance, recently, one of our students who was working as a manager informally complained to us about the market situation. In the five-star hotel where he was employed as a manager, all lower-level staff were outsourced from security guard suppliers, and such inexperienced staff were assisting in the kitchen and front desk. For a manager, working with such unfitting staff was very disappointing and frustrating, so he quit his job.

His sharing reveals that due to the lack of skilled human resources, the Star Hotel hired low-graded human resources from different HR solution agencies to run their operation smoothly.

Lack of Quality Service in Industry

It refers to a deficiency in the standard of services provided by businesses within the hospitality and tourism industry. This issue can manifest as poor customer experience, unmet expectations, inconsistent delivery, or failure to adhere to industry norms and regulations. Contributing factors often include insufficient employee training, lack of accountability, resource constraints, or inadequate understanding of customer needs (Parasuraman et al. 1985).

Amani shared her understanding:

Nepalese have become a push factor as all Nepalese intend to earn money, and they care about love for the motherland in the face of a hefty sum of money. They all desire immediate return, and their passion for work is declining. The industry plays another role by not investing in people in time, signing an agreement for 5 years stating the perks of joining, salary, and promotion aspects. This job insecurity in the industry also contributed to creating the gap.

She stated that the lack of early investment in employees, combined with the unmet promises of long-term contracts (such as salary and promotion) and the resulting job insecurity, creates an environment where talented individuals feel undervalued and are likely to leave. Rydzik and Bal (2024) argue that rapid political and economics shifts in recent decades have weakened state safeguards and created

and created more unstable youth labor markets, making young people overseas more precarious. This contributes to the gap in skilled human resources, as employees are pushed to seek opportunities in better-structured, more stable industries or even abroad. From such kind of mindset of employees, we can't expect quality service in our hospitality and tourism industry. In this regard, Santi shared:

When I inquired about payment and transportation facilities, the response was disappointing: "3–6 months of free labor, and then we will start paying them." If this cycle continues, it will soon become a major issue, and the responsibility of handling foreign guests may shift to unqualified individuals in an attempt to cut labor costs. As a result, poor service may discourage tourists from returning.

Adding to this, she further shared:

The absence of skilled manpower has adversely affected the maintenance of quality service in the hospitality and tourism sector. During hotel visits with my students, we often notice unchanged bed sheets, unclean water glasses, and poorly maintained toilets. However, when I reported these issues to the supervisor, they failed to acknowledge them. Guests paying for a room expect excellent hygiene; if their expectations are not met, why would they choose an expensive stay? Supervisors might assume guests won't notice, but foreign visitors pay attention to such details, and even slight inconveniences can damage a hotel's reputation, especially when they are paying a premium. Without skilled human resources, tourists may face issues with food service, room maintenance, or communication barriers, ultimately affecting hotel revenue.

She states that the lack of skilled human resources in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector negatively impacts service quality. During hotel visits with students, they noticed issues such as unclean bed sheets, dirty water glasses, and poorly cleaned toilets, which were ignored by the hotel staff. This poor service affects customer expectations, especially when guests pay premium prices for their stay. Foreign guests, in particular, are highly attentive to cleanliness and quality, and even minor inconveniences can harm a hotel's reputation. Without skilled workers to address these issues, the overall guest experience, including food service, room service, and communication suffers, ultimately impacting hotel revenue. Additionally, she shared a personal incident that occurred at a well-known five-star hotel.

For example, based on my recent experience, I visited a five-star hotel and ordered lemon tea. However, I was disappointed when it arrived the lemon wedge was not properly cut, and other essential elements were missing. I knew this was not the waiter's fault but rather the chef's inefficiency. So, I requested to meet the chef to discuss the issue and demonstrate the correct way to present lemon in lemon tea as well as the proper technique for cutting meat for choila. When I met the chef and offered guidance, instead of being grateful, he questioned my credibility, asking whether I was a working chef somewhere. Nevertheless, I introduced myself as a faculty member at a reputable college that trains students to become chefs.

Pratyush stated that more Hospitality and Tourism graduates are frustrated and non-productive skilled human resources are engaged in the Hospitality Industry today:

Considering our student status, we are in a similar situation. Hardly a student wants to do an internship in Nepal with a payment of Ten thousand Nepalese currency per month when they have seen the payment of Dirham 1,000 per month. So, we also are facing the same struggle to retain students. Any sane mind will be frustrated if one has to anticipate such a large gap. The chance of such productive youth returning after seeing how handsomely one is paid abroad for services rendered of a similar nature is very rare. It's not like none return few do with the intention to bring change in Nepal, but the trend line shows less than 1%.

He shared that the lack of skilled human resources is causing huge losses in Nepal's hospitality industry due to difficulties in retaining capable, skilled, and knowledgeable workers in the sector. Rabi highlighted that a manager at a five-star hotel quit his job due to the challenges of managing unqualified staff. One of my BHM students, who works as a hotel manager at a reputable five-star hotel in Nepal, became frustrated and disappointed while working with unqualified staff, ultimately leading him to quit his job. This scenario highlights how compromising quality standards results in guest dissatisfaction, a decline in repeat customers, and overall business downfall.

Adding to this, he shared his own experience:

I have frequently visited this hotel in Kathmandu, so when I visited its Nepalgunj branch, I expected the same level of service. However, the situation at the Nepalgunj Hotel was disheartening. I felt sorry for the entire industry. I

have often used this hotel as an example for my students, but seeing its current condition, I couldn't help but file a complaint with the Kathmandu branch regarding its poor services—despite being a five-star hotel.

Due to unfit and underperforming employees, a former BHM student who worked as a hotel manager in a reputable five-star hotel in Nepal encountered several difficulties. In addition to making him feel frustrated and disappointed, which ultimately led to his resignation, this also draws attention to a larger problem: sacrificing quality standards. Adhikari (2018) claims that informants are economically weak; the high unemployment rate, fear of a competitive job market, social pressure, and lack of relevant qualifications pushed them to go abroad. Income differences, feelings of males as breadwinners, and the aspiration of quick earning retained them abroad. After going abroad, returnees felt the value of education and appropriate skills for earning them and for their children, which made them frustrated to retain and maintain their country. Such concessions can hurt the hotel's reputation and overall business performance by leading to guest discontent, decreased loyalty, and a drop in return business. He shared that the lack of skilled and human resources in a five-star hotel at Nepalgunj faced a negative experience by respective guest and reflected the negative message and reputation of the hospitality industry.

Arun highlights a concern about universities and colleges that focus on enrollment numbers and revenue generation rather than retaining skilled graduates in Nepal's hospitality industry. As a result, the industry faces a shortage of quality service today. Adding to this, he shared:

The university's primary concern is how many students graduate each year, while colleges focus on enrollment numbers to calculate revenue. Nobody encourages students to work in Nepal and contribute to its development. Chinese and Indian entrepreneurs are gaining popularity, but Nepali entrepreneurs struggle to succeed due to a lack of risk-taking mentality. As a result, the hospitality industry struggles to maintain service quality due to a shortage of skilled human resources.

While colleges prioritize student enrollment in order to determine revenue, universities frequently concentrate on the number of students who graduate each year. Students are not, however, strongly encouraged to remain in Nepal and support its advancement. Thapa and Panta (2019) claimed that getting people to become entrepreneurs, leaders, and decision-makers in both the public and private sectors is

vital. As more institutions participate in training and degree programs, the field of hospitality and tourism management education is emerging and becoming more significant. Due to a culture that discourages taking risks, Nepali entrepreneurs find it challenging to compete with Chinese and Indian businesses. This makes it harder for industries to continue providing high-quality services, which further impedes the nation's progress, especially when combined with the lack of qualified human resources.

Limitations in Diversity of Industry

The lack of qualified human resources has severely hampered the diversity and operational efficiency of the hospitality sector. This deficiency impacts a number of positions in the hospitality industry, such as restaurants and hotels, which results in less-than-ideal visitor experiences and higher operating expenses. The leisure and hospitality sector have the most excellent rates of employee turnover in the hospitality and tourism industry. Industry leaders are concentrating on creating inclusive workplaces and employing focused recruitment techniques to draw in a broad talent pool in order to address these problems. Adopting automation and techniques to draw has also been found to be a way to improve service delivery and alleviate skilled human resources shortages. The hospitality industry hopes to address present skilled human resources issues and foster a more varied production of professional human resources by using strategies.

Amani highlighted a concern about the limited range of services and lack of diverse skill sets in our hospitality industry:

My last years' experience in Pokhara in a 5-star hotel was not satisfactory. I paid Rs. 500 for a simple watermelon juice. I am not complaining about the price, but the quality of service rendered was very disappointing. Some guests ignore such mistakes because they are highly fascinated by our unique culture's beautiful natural beauty. This doesn't mean that we are doing justice to the amount being paid by tourists. These mistakes are made by those who haven't been adequately trained and are inexperienced. Such inexperienced need to be hired either to save money or because suitable people are not available. This shows how valuable it is to retain skilled human resources. To maintain them, we also need to value them and consistently provide an environment that further sharpens their skills.

Adding to this, she further shared that hiring inexperienced workers to save costs can lead to poor service quality and mistakes that hurt the business, and we are not able to diversify our industry as per guest demand. Graduates are deemed to be a key source of talent within many hospitality and tourism sectors, and thus, recruiting, developing and retaining them is viewed as a logical talent management policy. However, little attention has been paid to university graduates as part of the hospitality management strategy. If we are able to address these issues, we can definitely retain our skilled human resources in the hospitality industry. McCracken et al. (2016) highlighted that businesses should focus on retaining skilled human resources by valuing their contributions and offering an environment where they can continuously improve. Retaining experienced workers results in better service, higher customer satisfaction, and a stronger reputation, which ultimately benefits and diversifies the hospitality and tourism business in the long term.

She stated that Nepali workers going abroad should not be overly criticized, as they often leave due to the lack of opportunities and happiness in Nepal. It is the responsibility of the government and education system to create an environment and legal framework that encourages both locals and foreigners to stay and invest in Nepal.

Rijal (2022) claimed several factors affecting the retention of skilled human resources in the hospitality and tourism sector by investigating the shared impact of more innovative constructs, such as the state of glamour and lifestyle, social recognition, personal branding, and opportunities for cross-cultural learning, investigation of the shared impact of more innovative constructs, such as the state of glamour and lifestyle, social recognition, personal branding, and opportunities for cross-cultural learning. The hospitality and tourism industry has the potential to drive significant national development, mainly through the promotion of Nepal's natural beauty-like hills, mountains, lakes, landscapes, etc., which could attract tourists and generate substantial revenue. At the same time, brain drain is a longstanding issue that cannot be stopped entirely, so it can be reduced significantly through proper development and tourism promotion.

Pratyush stated that we are a top representative of our hospitality graduates:

Currently, a preconceived notion is deeply engraved in young minds to go abroad, obtain permanent residency (PR), work for a few years, earn good

money, buy a house and car, and then consider returning to Nepal. However, by the time this thought occurs, they have already lost their network, enthusiasm for business, and ability to reintegrate into society. The industry is also struggling due to the brain drain crisis. Despite announcing vacancies through various media outlets and contacting colleges, they fail to fill positions. See the dilemma on the one hand: NATHM receives widespread appreciation for training students exceptionally well, yet on the other hand, Nepal is unable to retain them and meet the nation's needs.

He said that due to the skilled human resources in the hospitality and tourism industry facing a brain drain crisis, the industry is struggling to fill vacancies. There was no proper representation to address this issue, making it difficult to retain skilled workers, which has a significant impact on national development. Rabi highlighted that the lack of a diverse skill set is preventing businesses from hiring qualified personnel, affecting the industry's ability to grow and meet the demands of guests. The core issue was identified as the presence of inexperienced staff members. Businesses could not recruit knowledgeable personnel in the hospitality sector due to a lack of skilled human resources and the unwillingness of people living in Kathmandu Valley to work outside the valley.

In this regard, Arun shared that the main reason for the lack of skilled human resources is often stated as political instability, but that is not the entire truth. The issue also includes political, social, and financial factors. People want to live a comfortable life, grow alongside technological advancements, and enjoy a socio-culturally rich lifestyle. He reflected that in order to fulfill the desire for a comfortable life, technological progress, social development, and economic security, skilled human resources believe they have better opportunities abroad. As a result, the local hospitality industry struggles with innovation, creativity, quality service, and diversity.

Mba (2022) argue that Due to globalization, the issue of human capital fights, as evidenced by declining mobility costs, demographic pressures, the fast growth of economically active populations in developing nations, and the need for young replacement immigrants in rich countries.

Impacts in Higher Education

Higher education has been dramatically impacted by the lack of qualified human resources in the hospitality sector, leading institutions to modify their curricula

in order to better educate students for changing market demands. In order to meet the needs of the industry, educational programs are placing an increased emphasis on flexible learning formats and practical skills. Universities are starting specialized degree programs to fill workforce gaps as a result of the industry's skill human resources shortages, which have also increased emphasis on apprenticeships and vocational training. This tendency is demonstrated by a few universities' launch of undergraduate programs in hospitality and tourism management, which aims to keep up with the industry's anticipated rise in employment. These educational programs are essential for closing the skill gap and guaranteeing a supply of skilled human resources to support the expansion of the hospitality industry. Amani highlighted:

The same happened with my close relative when I asked my niece why she wanted to go abroad after +2 without completing her bachelor's. She read me the college offer letter, and we calculated the cost of living, her tuition fees, and her job income per month. The data itself shows that she can cover her tuition fees and cost of living expenses easily. Furthermore, it became comparatively easy to get a job after the course completion, so I literally gave up on convincing her not to go to Australia. Instead, I suggested she try for scholarships that would make her life a little easier.

She clearly reflects that the charm of doing a bachelor's or higher degree abroad is grooming in our country, Nepal, due to the cost of living, tuition fees, job income, easy access to get a job after graduation, standard and secured life, sound in finance etc. makes attracted all students which makes difficult to enrollment in bachelor and master degree in college and university of Nepal. Ahmad and Buchanan (2017) argue that pull and push factors work together to determine why students choose to study abroad or at an international brand college for academic and reputations, marketability of the degree, low tuition fees compared to home institutions, low cost of living, safe country for study, similarity of education systems, and cultural proximity.

In this regard, Pratyush and Rabi narrated similarly. Pratyush stated that none of the +2 students wants to do a bachelor's degree in Nepal, and BHM graduates are in a hurry to catch their jobs as soon as they can,

we have shifted internships in our last semester, i.e., 7th and 8th semesters, to address the issue. So, this might sound like we have added a push factor for the Brain Drain crisis emerging rapidly in Nepal. But if you consider another

angle to look at this matter, students passing out from here and going abroad to make their career have outperformed themselves. I have asked students of +2, where I myself have been teaching, regarding doing a bachelor's in Nepal and how many wants to do a bachelor's abroad. The answer frightened me because this rough survey shows that most of the bachelor colleges have to go through a phase of shutdown pretty soon because of Brain Drain. In this current operating 8th batch, many students who have returned to Nepal after internship for exams constantly ask the same question when we have exams because they fly back immediately after the exam and Viva. They couldn't even wait for results, as they would lose a month's worth of pay. So the student's frame of mind is like an academic degree of 4 years and a job offer letter in hand.

Adding to this, he further shared that the student's mindset reflects the growing trend where students view a degree as a means to get a job rather than a pursuit of academic growth. In this regard, Rabi shared:

During our visit to various districts, we noticed that the colleges teaching +2 are promoted by free IELTS classes. This clearly indicates IELTS and go outside. Such a situation also threatens bachelor-level teaching institutions. During our research, we traveled to many districts of Nepal to counsel students who have completed +2. When we inquired about which subject they were interested in mostly. We learned that it's HM, but they are thinking of studying abroad.

He reflects that the training studying abroad among students after completing + 2 facilitated by initiatives like free IELTS classes is threatening Nepal's local bachelor-level education system. Students' mindset is now primarily focused on obtaining a degree from abroad, which undermines the local education institutions and contributes to the brain drain by encouraging students to leave the country for better prospects elsewhere.

Santi explained that Nepal has a multifaceted impact on higher education, In the time of my research in 2014 during my visit to Switzerland, I learned that unless a person has experience from 6 months to a year in the hotel would not be eligible to join the Bachelor program. Here, we have BHM for 4 years, and in Switzerland, the program duration is from 5 to 8 years. This includes studying, a 6-month internship in Australia, another 3 months internship in

Japan etc., and another reason for such a long duration of the bachelor course is due to tuition fees. Unlike here, where parents pay tuition fees on abroad, students pay their fees themselves through working and payment mechanisms is done on a unit basis. The state government also helps with some percentage of the fee if they come from ABC nation. Few have the intention of attaining a degree only because by the time students complete their degree, they have already gained valuable skills and experience on the field, so doors for many favorable opportunities are also simultaneously created. So we concluded that the main reason why students prefer to stay in Switzerland is that they highly benefited from its leveraging educational structure.

Adding to this, she further shared that due to the brain drain in results, lower student retention rates, a decline in education quality, a loss of research potential, and a reduced talent pool for industries critical to Nepal's development. Addressing these issues will require a combination of policy reforms, economic opportunities, a learning and earning approach and investment in education to retain talent and create a sustainable higher education system in Asia's developing educational institutions, and transnational education is gaining popularity as a means for students to desirable from a foreign university which has been demonstrated that the cost, appeal and student convenience of a destination have a significant impact on a university's ability to succeed when it enters a foreign market. (Ahmad & Buchanan, 2017). In this regard, Arun Pointed out a problem regarding the affiliated colleges, which types of colleges do not have proper calendars, which makes students feel comfortable and have internships after a second year abroad as per their choice, which makes less enrollment for the local colleges and universities in Nepal.

Overall Impacts on the National Economy

The lack of qualified human resources in the hospitality sector has a big impact on national economies. In many nations, this industry, which includes lodging, dining, and entertainment, contributes significantly to GDP and employment. Economic growth may be impacted by skilled human resources shortages in the hotel industry, which can result in low service quality, low customer satisfaction and low revenue. In order to ensure the stability of the industry and its continuous contribution to the national economy, these difficulties highlight the necessity of specific strategies to solve the skilled human resource shortage in the hospitality and tourism industry.

Amani highlighted a concern of retaining productive youth, those who can contribute to the economy through their creativity, critical thinking, and innovation,

We are pushing our youths from here and outside the University (like the call from Chandigarh University) are pulling them by appreciating their creative thinking and out-of-the-box thinking ability and, through different schemes, retaining productive youth to glorify their economy. Lastly, who is to blame for these conditions, our inability to retain productive youth or the ability of foreign nations to appreciate through facilitating schemes? Due to the push of our youth abroad, direct and indirect loads of revenue flow out of our nation.

She reflects that youth's productive potential is seen as valuable for the country's economic growth and development. While local systems may be failing to support and retain creative youth, foreign countries or institutions are more effective at recognizing and nurturing their potential. The question of who is to blame for the local failure to retain talent or foreign success in attracting it raises a broader issue of how nations support and value their youth, especially those with the potential to innovate and contribute meaningfully to their economies in their home country. The hospitality and tourism sectors are closely linked to the expansion of the global economy, and numerous factors have both positive and negative effects on the tourism sector, which in turn have both short-term and long-term effects on the world economy. Such impacts on the global tourism industry include culture, peace, security, the developed infrastructure of the world, visa facilities, natural beautification, human attitude, the number of tourists, the world population, education, income level, the price level of various commodities worldwide, the availability of different languages, hotel rates etc. (Khan et al., 2020).

In this regard, Arun shared:

Thus, in my opinion, the reason for all this is a lack of perfect knowledge and human resources. But if we wait for somebody to come and help, then it does not happen. Our locality and community should be made better by our own efforts to attract more tourists. A favorable policy must be enacted, and a structure that promotes tourism should be constructed. If we don't understand the value of tourism, it will be very challenging in the long term, and even sustaining will be difficult as well.

He shared that the main reasons behind the challenges faced in the hospitality and tourism sectors are the lack of proper knowledge and skilled manpower. Due to

this, we are not able to earn and make profit maximization in the hospitality and tourism industry. Here, nobody will come to help solve these problems. We, local communities, and citizens need to take responsibility for improving our own surroundings to attract more tourists. It is essential to enact tourism-friendly policies that can support and nurture the industry. The government should focus on creating infrastructure and systems that promote tourism, making it easier for both tourists and businesses in the sector to thrive. If we still fail to understand and value the tourism industry and retain our youth in the hospitality industry, it would lead to long-term challenges. If the potential of hospitality and tourism is not realized, it will be difficult to sustain the industry in the future, making it harder to maintain growth and success. We should advocate for a proactive, locally driven approach to improving tourism, alongside the creation of supportive policies and infrastructure, to ensure the industry can grow, profit maximization and flourish sustainably in our country. Santi pointed:

People going abroad shouldn't be overly criticized because they do not see opportunities or happiness in Nepal. It is the responsibility of the government and the education system to retain them by creating an environment and legal structure that even attracts outsiders to Nepal. The hospitality and tourism industry alone are a remarkable sector, and its growth can lead to the overall transformation of the nation's infrastructure. For instance, people go to Dubai not only for work but also for entertainment, shopping, visiting man-made artificial gardens, and more. However, Nepal does not need artificial gardens because we are naturally blessed with breathtaking hills, mountains, lakes, and landscapes. If we can effectively channel this natural beauty through tourism promotion, it will generate significant revenue.

She said that our government and education system should be responsible for retaining our youth in Nepal and Nepal's natural beauty. Its hills, mountains, lakes, and landscapes can be key assets for promoting tourism and generating substantial employment, enhancing social progress, and fostering harmony. The industry provides work for hundreds of millions of people worldwide. Not only is the hospitality and tourism sector the largest employer, but it is also the only one. Which contributes to the development of sustainable economies is the role. (Sofronov, 2018). Adding to this, she further shared a few examples,

Recently, one of my students, who is working in a Gulf country, was assigned as a housekeeping supervisor at an international chain hotel, Hilton. We have

been in regular contact. The chef at that hotel highly appreciated our student's talent. Based on this positive feedback, we recently sent five more students through HR. The students who returned from Hilton were very pleased because the starting salary was as sweet as honey. I felt incredibly proud at that moment, knowing that we were able to retain our students in Nepal, and they were also happy to be working at Hilton. This is one of the key reasons I stay in touch and frequently communicate with various hotels that help our students establish their careers in Nepal.

Pratyush shared that the only alternative to growth in our country is the hospitality and tourism sector,

I am convinced that tourism is Nepal's most promising path to swift economic growth, as seen in Thailand and Dubai, which transformed their economies through tourism. Despite abundant opportunities, Nepal has overlooked many prospects for tourism promotion. Nepali students interning in the USA save around 25–30 lakhs annually after expenses, whereas in Nepal, they earn only 15–20 thousand, making it difficult to stay. Internships in Nepal often offer little to no pay, while abroad, entry-level positions provide 40–50 thousand monthly. In the Middle East, students receive benefits like free visas, tickets, and accommodation comparable to a three-star hotel in Nepal, along with a 1,000-dirham salary, an offer few would decline. Consequently, many students opt for opportunities in the USA, Canada, or the Middle East, gaining experience and later applying for permanent residency. This cycle repeats with every graduating batch. If Nepal could retain skilled professionals, it could achieve world-class hospitality standards, as Nepali workers excel abroad, often earning awards in countries like the USA, Europe, and the Middle East. The demand for Nepali interns remains high, yet retention efforts are minimal. Providing vocational training, academic awards, and graduate-level management positions could help, but the industry currently struggles to maintain quality standards.

His response reflects that due to brain drain, Nepal is unable to sustain a strong economy. If Nepal had been able to retain its skilled human resources, it could have achieved world-class hospitality standards, as many Nepali individuals are excelling abroad in countries like the USA, Europe, and the Middle East, often receiving awards for their outstanding work. There is also a high demand for Nepali

students to do internships in foreign nations. Khan et al. (2020) mention that the tourism industry plays a significant role in global development and is both positively and negatively correlated with economic growth. On the one hand, certain factors drive the tourism industry in the short and long run, while on the other hand, these same factors can impact global economic growth in both positive and negative ways.

If Nepal could retain even a portion of these skilled individuals by offering vocational training, academic incentives, and graduate-level management positions, it would significantly improve the hospitality and tourism industry. However, due to the lack of such opportunities, Nepal's hospitality industry struggles to maintain high standards and is unable to contribute effectively to the national economy.

Theoretical Discussion

In this section, I have done a theoretical reflection on Lee 's theory of Migration (The Push and Pull Theory). The data's major ideas are connected to the Push and Pull Theory that I have used in this research. The Theory states that it has a direct and obvious relationship to the push and pull processes that drive transnational migration across political boundaries. In contrast, Human capital theory is an economic theory that suggests that investing in people through education and training can lead to economic growth, increased productivity, and reduced poverty. The theory is based on the idea that human capital, or the knowledge, skills, and experience that employees bring to a company, is a key factor in economic success. The theory suggests that society benefits economically when people are equipped with the tools to improve their health, quality of life, and productivity. The Transformational Leadership Theory states that Transformational leaders aim to create meaningful change by fostering a strong sense of purpose, collaboration, and commitment, making it particularly effective in addressing challenges such as employee retention and motivation.

Lack of Quality Human Resources

The issues presented in the text highlight the challenges in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry, particularly the brain drain of skilled human resources. These challenges can be analyzed using push-pull theory and human capital theory, supported by relevant literature. The push-pull theory explains migration as influenced by "push" factors (conditions in the home country that drive people away) and "pull" factors (opportunities in foreign countries that attract migrants). In Nepal's hospitality sector, participants highlight numerous push factors, such as low wages,

lack of benefits (e.g., unpaid internships, nominal payments, no transportation support), and limited career advancement. For instance, Santi stated that unpaid internships with nominal future pay exemplify an unappealing work environment, driving skilled graduates to seek opportunities abroad.

In contrast, the pull factors include structured and lucrative opportunities abroad, as mentioned by Rabi, who noted that hospitality graduates easily find work internationally without additional training requirements. International brands offer higher pay and benefits, such as apartments, transportation, and food, as noted in the example of Indian managers in Nepal earning significantly more than their Nepali counterparts. This disparity highlights how foreign markets effectively attract and retain Nepali talent.

Human capital theory focuses on the economic value of investing in skills, education, and training. While Nepal produces skilled hospitality graduates, the inability to provide competitive wages, career development, and adequate working conditions results in a significant outflow of this talent. As Amani noted, poorly trained and inexperienced workers are often hired locally to save costs or due to a lack of skilled candidates, leading to poor service and guest dissatisfaction.

The lack of investment in human resources was further evident in Rabi's example of a 5-star hotel outsourcing inexperienced staff from security agencies, causing frustration for managers. This failure to develop and retain local talent undermines the sector's growth and forces reliance on foreign workers, as highlighted in the example of Hilton Hotel hiring less qualified candidates due to staff shortages.

The push-pull theory has been widely used to study migration patterns, emphasizing how economic disparity and limited local opportunities push individuals abroad (Lee, 1966). Similarly, human capital theory argues that skilled workers will migrate to areas where their expertise is valued and compensated adequately (Becker, 1964). These theories align with participants' observations of better pay and working conditions abroad pulling Nepali professionals away while the lack of incentives at home pushes them out.

The participants' experiences underscore how inadequate investment in human capital and poor working conditions in Nepal's hospitality industry create a cycle of brain drain. Addressing these issues requires offering competitive salaries, structured career opportunities, and equitable treatment to local workers. Strengthening domestic

capacity through better training and development is essential to retain talent and enhance the industry's global competitiveness.

Lack of Quality Service in Industry

The challenges faced by Nepal's hospitality industry can be analyzed through the lens of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which highlights motivation and hygiene factors. Hygiene factors, such as job security, compensation, and working conditions, are fundamental to employee satisfaction. The participants in the text highlight unaddressed hygiene factors, including unpaid labor, poor salaries, and the lack of clear career progression, which contribute to employee dissatisfaction and demotivate. Without addressing these, motivation for passion-driven work or skill development diminishes, creating a workforce that prioritizes monetary benefits abroad over loyalty to local employers.

The Human Capital Theory emphasizes the value of investing in employees' skills and knowledge to enhance organizational performance. In Nepal's hospitality sector, as Amani and Pratyush state, there is a lack of early and continuous investment in training, which contributes to inefficiency and skill gaps. This lack of investment, combined with unmet contractual promises, discourages employees and students from pursuing long-term careers in Nepal, leading to a brain drain as they seek better opportunities abroad.

From a Service Quality perspective, the industry struggles to meet core dimensions such as reliability, responsiveness, and assurance, as shared by Santi. Issues like unhygienic facilities, untrained staff, and poor service delivery directly impact guest satisfaction. This gap between customer expectations and perceptions leads to negative experiences, tarnishing the reputation of Nepal's hospitality sector, as evidenced by Rabi and Arun's experiences. Furthermore, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs supports the argument that the industry fails to meet employees' physiological and safety needs, such as adequate pay and job security, preventing them from progressing to higher needs like self-actualization, which would fuel passion and innovation. Arun's observations on universities focusing on revenue over quality education reflect a lack of alignment with this theory, as students are not equipped or encouraged to meet higher-order needs within the industry.

From the above discussion, I understood that the lack of skilled human resources and ineffective workforce management in Nepal's hospitality sector is rooted in systemic issues, including inadequate investment in human capital, unmet

hygiene factors, and poor adherence to service quality frameworks. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-pronged approach focused on employee development, motivational strategies, and institutional reforms to enhance service quality and retain talent locally.

Limitations in Diversity of Industry

The hospitality and tourism industry in Nepal, as discussed by participants, reflects systemic issues linked to Human Capital Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and concepts of Brain Drain in developing economies. These limitations hinder the industry's ability to grow, innovate, and meet diverse consumer demands. This theory emphasizes that economic growth depends on the education and skills of the workforce. Amani and Rabi's concerns about hiring inexperienced personnel to cut costs indicate a lack of investment in training and retaining skilled graduates. Studies suggest that hospitality businesses that prioritize human resource development outperform those that do not (Baum, 2015). Retaining experienced graduates, as Amani noted, not only improves service quality but also builds a robust reputation for the industry, fostering customer satisfaction and repeat business.

Maslow's theory highlights how unmet needs drive behavior. Nepali skilled graduates often migrate abroad to fulfill higher-order needs, such as esteem and self-actualization, which they struggle to achieve in Nepal due to limited opportunities. Pratyush and Arun's observations align with this theory; they highlight how political, social, and financial instability drive talent abroad. This issue could be addressed by creating an environment that supports career growth, economic security, and social progress, fulfilling skilled graduate's psychological and self-fulfillment needs.

Brain drain significantly impacts Nepal's hospitality sector, as skilled graduates trained in institutions like NATHM often leave for better opportunities abroad. This aligns with the "Push and Pull" framework in migration studies, which explains that skilled graduates are pushed out by poor working conditions and pulled by better opportunities elsewhere (Docquier & Hillel, 2012). Pratyush's mention of the disconnect experienced by Nepali expatriates highlights the long-term implications of this issue, including the loss of networks and enthusiasm for contributing to the home country.

Santi's insights on leveraging Nepal's natural beauty align with the resource-based view framework, which emphasizes using unique resources for competitive advantage. Nepal's pristine mountains, lakes, and landscapes provide unmatched

potential for sustainable tourism. However, as Arun pointed out, innovation and creativity in service delivery are hindered by the lack of skilled human resources. Addressing this requires systemic improvements, including political stability, infrastructure development, and targeted investment in hospitality education.

Effective government and institutional support can mitigate the limitations in the industry. For instance, countries like Bhutan have successfully balanced cultural preservation with sustainable tourism development through policy interventions. Drawing from these examples, Santi and Arun suggest that Nepal could implement legal frameworks to attract both domestic and international talent, ensuring sustainable growth and reducing brain drain.

The limitations in Nepal's hospitality industry stem from under-investment in human capital, unmet worker needs, and structural inefficiencies. Addressing these requires a multi-faceted approach, including retaining skilled workers, fostering an enabling environment for innovation, and leveraging natural resources through sustainable tourism promotion. This aligns with the participants' insights and global literature on labor retention and industry development.

Impacts in Higher Education

Lee's Push-Pull Theory of Migration (1966) provides a useful framework to analyze the preference for studying abroad. The "pull factors," such as better job prospects, financial independence, and improved quality of life, contrast sharply with the "push factors," including Nepal's under-resourced educational infrastructure, lack of career opportunities, and affordable tuition fees. The trend highlighted by Amani, where students find it easier to fund their education and life abroad, aligns with modern updates to Lee's framework in studies like Altbach and Reisberg (2013) on international student mobility.

The idea that students gain valuable skills and experience through international internships resonates with Becker's Human Capital Theory (1993). Education, particularly abroad, is seen as an investment in personal capital. Santi's observation about Switzerland's structured learning and work-integrated education aligns with studies showing that countries emphasizing skill-based education, like Switzerland, attract international students while enhancing employability (Brown et al., 2020)

Arun criticism of foreign-affiliated colleges reflects Institutional Theory, which highlights how external pressures, such as global education systems, influence

local practices. Nepali institutions are struggling to compete with flexible, globally connected foreign-affiliated colleges. This theory is supported by Knight's (2011) work on transnational education, which shows how foreign-affiliated colleges use branding and global linkages to attract student

The shift in student mindsets, as pointed out by Pratyush, reflects a focus on basic physiological (financial stability) and safety needs (secure jobs). The prioritization of education as a means to meet these needs over self-actualization (academic growth) aligns with Maslow's theory. This framework has been applied in education research, such as by Robbins et al. (2019), to show how socioeconomic conditions shape students' goals.

These theoretical insights and references highlight the systemic challenges in Nepal's higher education sector, including brain drain and declining enrollment, while offering a basis for policy and institutional reforms.

Overall Impacts in the National Economy

The loss of skilled graduates and labor due to brain drain, as highlighted by Amani and Pratyush, aligns with Becker's Human Capital Theory (1993). The theory emphasizes the economic value of investing in education and training to improve national productivity. Nepali youth moving abroad reduces the nation's ability to harness their creative and critical thinking potential locally. This is consistent with the findings of Docquier and Hillel (2012), which show how brain drain affects human capital accumulation and economic development in home countries.

Santi and Pratyush's observations about better pay and opportunities abroad reflect Lee's Push-Pull Theory of Migration (1966). Push factors, such as limited opportunities and poor compensation in Nepal, drive individuals abroad. Pull factors, including structured internship programs, higher salaries, and incentives like free visas in foreign nations, attract Nepali talent. Literature like the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s 2019 report supports this, showing that economic disparities between origin and destination countries constitute a significant factor in skilled migration.

Arun and Santi emphasize tourism as a critical economic sector for Nepal. The insights align with Porter's Competitive Advantage Theory (1990), which suggests that leveraging unique national resources, such as Nepal's natural beauty, can create sustainable economic growth. Studies by Netto (2009) highlight how nations like

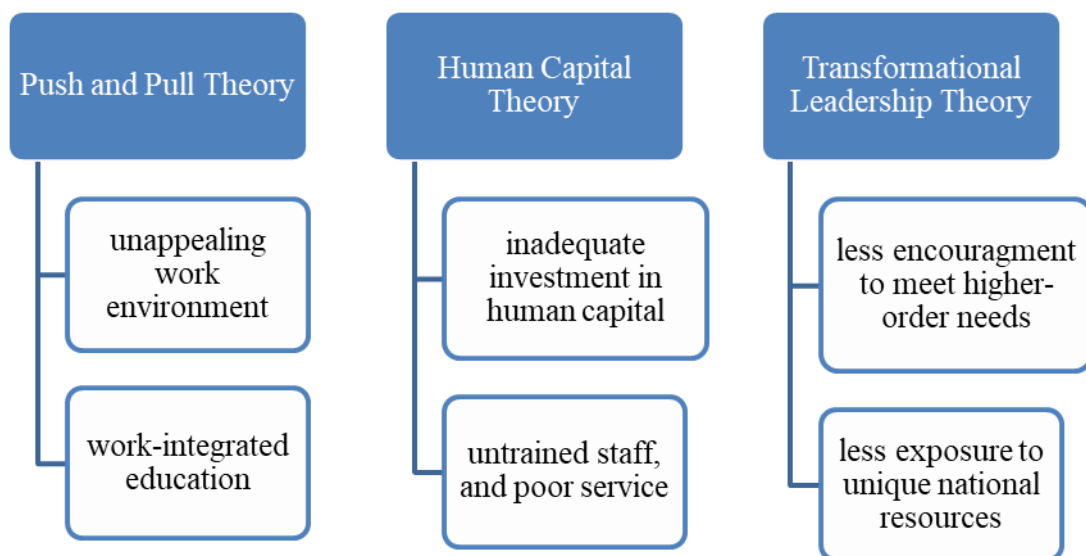
Thailand and Dubai have utilized tourism to spur economic development through innovative strategies and infrastructure investments.

The value of retaining skilled individuals through vocational training, as noted by Pratyush, ties to Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964). When organizations or governments invest in individuals through training, incentives, and career advancement, employees are more likely to reciprocate with loyalty and retention. Research by Homans (2014) on employer-employee relations supports this argument, emphasizing the importance of mutual benefit to reduce skilled graduates' migration. These theories and literature highlight how strategic investment in human capital, tourism infrastructure, and policy reforms can address Nepal's economic challenges caused by brain drain and under-utilization of its hospitality sector.

These theoretical concerns can be presented in the figure. 2. The complexities as per push and pull theory could be noticed based on the appealing environment in the home country's educational institution. Its consequence is the drain as students find work-integrated educational practices abroad. Similarly, inadequate investment in human capital is such a complexity in educational space that it causes the retention of untrained staff and poor services, leading to the brain-drain effect. It shows that leaders are not encouraging the human resources for higher order needs

Figure 2

Theoretical Insights in Complexities and Consequences



So, they could not focus on unique national resources. These complexities and consequences resulted in brain drain among students.

Essence of Chapter

In this chapter, I have discussed the diverse theme under a literary theme, analyzed the findings with participants' quotes, and explained it with citations. Furthermore, I analyzed the above finding with theoretical analysis, where I made each finding connect with a particular theory.

CHAPTER VI

KEY INSIGHTS, REFLECTION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The chapter is about the reflection of the journey of my dissertation writing. I developed insights from the whole process, which is also part of this chapter. Besides that, I have extended what I have come up with. My dissertation work concluded with expressions of some of the implications that I had drawn from the study.

Insights from the Study

I discussed the stories of my participants in Chapters IV and V under ten different themes and classified them into various sub-themes based on the research questions. These discussions, which involved sharing participants' experiences, led me to construct the following insights. Brain drain has become a major concern for Nepal, particularly in the hospitality and tourism industries. The emigration of skilled human resources to other nations significantly impacts the country's economic and social development. Educational leaders aim to create meaningful change by fostering a strong sense of purpose, collaboration, and commitment, making it particularly effective in addressing challenges such as employee retention and motivation.

From the participants' narratives and the information they shared, I found that there are many reasons driving brain drain in the hospitality and tourism sector. One of the primary reasons is economic incentives abroad. Skilled professionals in this field are drawn to better financial opportunities in wealthier nations, particularly in the USA, Australia, and Gulf states, where salaries are significantly higher. For instance, a hotel manager or chef in Nepal might earn only a fraction of what they could in these countries. Income inequality makes emigration a viable solution for experienced professionals.

Similarly, the lack of career advancement opportunities in Nepal's hotel and tourism sector contributes to brain drain. The industry often lacks proper infrastructure and sufficient training funding, which frustrates skilled professionals seeking career growth. Many choose to move abroad, where they can access better training, qualifications, and a more straightforward path to career advancement.

Political and economic instability further exacerbates this issue. Financial challenges, lack of private sector support, frequent strikes, and inconsistent

government policies discourage skilled professionals from staying in Nepal. The promise of stability and a well-managed workplace abroad becomes highly attractive.

Additionally, access to international education plays a significant role in brain drain. Many Nepali students who pursue hospitality and tourism courses or internships abroad choose not to return, as they find better recognition and opportunities in foreign countries. Exposure to international norms and practices encourages them to seek employment where their skills are more valued.

The consequences of brain drain are far-reaching. A significant impact is the skill shortage in Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector. Hotels, restaurants, and catering organizations struggle to find adequately skilled staff, affecting customer satisfaction and service quality. This shortage may make Nepal a less desirable tourist destination.

Economically, brain drain results in lost potential revenue. While remittances from Nepali workers abroad contribute significantly to the country's GDP, the migration of highly skilled professionals limits the growth of local industries. The inability to retain skilled human resources hampers innovation and the development of high-value services.

Culturally, brain drain also affects Nepal's tourism appeal. Experts with deep knowledge of Nepal's unique heritage and traditions may leave, reducing the authenticity of the visitor experience. Skilled professionals in hospitality and tourism are crucial for preserving and promoting local traditions. Their absence could make Nepal a less engaging destination, ultimately harming the country's reputation as a global hub for cultural tourism. This highlights the urgent need to retain talented and skilled professionals for the sustainable development of Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry.

Participants shared insights on mitigating brain drain by enhancing domestic opportunities. Creating competitive opportunities through better salaries, training programs, and an encouraging work environment can help retain skilled professionals. Collaborations between educational institutions and the hospitality industry could also be crucial in addressing this issue. Additionally, policy support and incentives from the government can play a vital role. For example, tax incentives for businesses that invest in employee training and professional development could make domestic opportunities more attractive. Recognizing and rewarding outstanding talent through national honors or diplomas could foster a sense of professional pride and belonging.

One participant, Pratyush, shared his experience of applying these insights in his educational institute. He emphasized that to mitigate the brain drain, Nepal should align its hospitality and tourism education programs with international standards. Doing so would better equip students to compete globally and motivate them to contribute to the local economy. Partnerships with foreign organizations for exchange programs and certifications could further enhance the appeal of local education, strengthening Nepal's ability to retain skilled human resources and ensure the sustainable growth of its hospitality and tourism industry.

Reflection on My Research Journey

Starting a new journey is always difficult, but the challenges you face throughout, and the feeling of accomplishment you get at the end give you contentment. My research journey has been similar in this context. While I did research on this topic of hospitality and tourism-related brain drain from Nepal, it has been a deeply enriching and eye-opening experience. Throughout this journey, I was preparing research questions as a research participant will be from the hotel industry like General manager, front office manager, residential manager, food and beverage manager, executive housekeeper, and executive chef from five-star hotels who have industry experience with national and international. Who is directly coordinated and involved in the hotel industry? Then, as per my faculty members' support and guidance, I have changed my research participants, who are involved in the hospitality and tourism education sector and engaged with different hospitality institutions associated with BHM students' internships for home country or abroad, counseling for further studies and many more. Who will be the best participant to share their experiences and stories for my research on the topic of Hospitality and Tourism Brain-drain from Nepal? Then, I came to know that the reasons, complexity, and consequences of the issue and the interplay of economic, social, and cultural reasons drive skilled human resources to seek opportunities abroad.

With the completion of the research, I have learned that the fact that systemic problems, such as instability and lack of local opportunities, significantly contribute to brain drain was one of the most crucial lessons. It provides insight into the pressing need for targeted industry and policy initiatives to retain skilled human resources in the country. By hearing lived experiences from hospitality and tourism educational leaders, I understand the complex emotions of the psychological and practical challenges faced by those who are uncertain about whether to stay in Nepal or go for a

better chance abroad. Another important aspect was that none of the educational institutions and leaders tried to convince their skilled graduates to retain their home country to minimize brain drain. Experts in hospitality and tourism have not discussed creative ways to close the gap between local needs and international experience. This problem strengthened my belief in the importance of teamwork and the need to have a positive and professional environment in the hospitality industry.

This dissertation is based on the narrative inquiry, focusing on the lived experiences of educational leaders. With their shared experiences, I found that to think of workable solutions in addition to helping me better understand the brain drain phenomenon. With the right policies in place, I am confident that Nepal can overcome this challenge and emerge stronger. I now have a better understanding of the resilience and potential of the country's hospitality and tourism industry.

Conclusion

The study tries to investigate the hospitality and tourism-related brain drain in Nepal. The participants shared the reasons and consequences of skilled human resources being brain drain from our country, whereas Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry requires collaboration between the educational institutions, the hospitality industry, and civil society. To address the brain drain of skilled human resources, we have to address the root causes and create a welcoming, professional environment where we can mitigate and encourage sustainable growth in the hospitality and tourism industry. By retaining and nurturing skilled human resources will further the huge goal of national development in addition to increasing the country's competitiveness abroad.

The study explores the experiences and leadership strategies of educational leaders in the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry, where they not only draw attention to the competitiveness of Nepali skilled human resources globally but also to systemic issues such as inadequate infrastructure, slow career advancement, and political instability. To solve this, infrastructure and training must be improved, hospitality industry processes must be brought into line with international standards, and public-private partnerships must be encouraged in order to attract and retain skilled human resources.

The participants shared that by applying the expertise of the Nepali inequality, implementing educational reforms and offering incentives for local employment, hospitality skill gaps can be further reduced in industry. With a careful, collaborative

approach, brain drain can be transformed into a growth opportunity that sustainably supports the hospitality industry.

The study highlights that to foster a professional environment, the private sector, educational institutions, the hospitality industry and civil society must work together to address the brain drain in Nepal's hospitality and tourism industry. Where talent and skilled human resources may be retained and attracted by making infrastructure investments, bringing industry processes into line with international norms, and interacting with the global hospitality market as well as maintaining brain drain in the hospitality and tourism industry, proactive strategy can turn it into an opportunity, promoting sustainable growth and furthering national development in hospitality and tourism industry in the home country.

Implications of the Study

I believe this study has significant implications for many stakeholders in the hospitality and educational field, particularly for hospitality and tourism professionals, educators, policymakers, and future researchers.

Implications for hospitality professional

The study findings provide information about the importance of hospitality professionals in Nepal addressing the issue of brain drain in the hospitality and tourism sector. These insights can help create strategies to reduce the migration of skilled human resources to other countries. Employers and administrators should work on making the work environment more supportive. They can do this by offering better salaries, career growth opportunities, and support systems. This study shows that providing counseling and motivational programs that recognize and celebrate local talent can encourage them to work and stay in Nepal. Additionally, offering skill development and training programs can boost confidence and improve expertise, which will help retain skilled human resources in the hospitality industry.

Implications for Educators

The study showed that educational institutions should focus on improving hospitality training programs. These programs should teach personal and professional ethics, such as respect, commitment, and a passion for the industry. Similarly, including lessons on career opportunities within Nepal can show skilled graduates the potential for success at home. Encouraging innovative thinking and entrepreneurship can inspire students to contribute to the growth of the hospitality sector. Teaching

sustainable hospitality and tourism practices can also help students understand how they can make a positive impact on the country through the hospitality industry.

Implications for Leadership Development

The findings and insights of the study presented a clear picture of the transformational leadership qualities that educational leaders of BHM colleges possess. It supports aspiring college leaders in becoming successful hospitality teachers and positively impacts the retention of skilled graduates in the hospitality and tourism industry. Through an analysis of the many roles, educational leaders can play along their leadership journey and develop their leadership skills to motivate their students in their academic institutions to retain skilled graduates for our own hospitality industry.

Implications for Policy Makers

The findings and insights of the study showed the gap between policy provisions and hospitality practices. Policymakers need to create strong policies to support and retain skilled human resources. Providing job security, health benefits, and retirement plans can make jobs in Nepal more attractive. Celebrating the achievements of local hospitality professionals can build a sense of pride in working in Nepal. Offering financial and logistical support for entrepreneurs can encourage professionals to start their businesses and stay in the country, which will enable us to retain our skilled human resources in the hospitality industry.

Implications for Future Researchers

This study offers a valuable starting point as a foundation for future research on the topic of hospitality and tourism-related brain drain from Nepal. More studies are needed to explore the reasons behind the brain drain in the hospitality sector and the social and economic impacts it has on Nepal. Learning from the strategies of other countries can also help develop better ways to retain talent in Nepal. By implementing these ideas, Nepal's hospitality and tourism sector can create a better environment for professionals, reduce brain drain, and support the growth of the industry. There are not many studies conducted on the title of hospitality and tourism-related brain drain from Nepal in our context. I have tried a small-scale study on that title to explore their experiences. Therefore, it will be helpful to future researchers in further study for reference.

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APPENDIXES

Annex I: Participants' Detail

Name	Age	Gender	Teaching Experiences
Amani	48	Female	10
Santi	44	Female	14
Pratyush	45	Male	19
Rabi	41	Male	16
Arun	58	Male	36

Annex II: Guiding Questions Based on Research Questions

1. What's your full name?
2. How many years of experience have you attained in an education sector?
3. What is the current position you are holding in the college?
4. What are your key responsibilities in the college?
5. How many years of experience do you have in this college?
6. What's your current designation and Key responsibilities associated with it?
7. Do you see any relation between Nepal's education system and Tourism industry?
Please, share us your experience and viewpoint regarding this matter.
8. Has Nepal's education sector contributed on production of skilled manpower for Tourism industry? What kind of role have you been playing for production of skilled manpower?
9. What is your perspective regarding Brain-Drain issue? In this matter what problem do you think Nepal is facing? Please share your point of view regarding this matter.
10. How have you acknowledged the crisis in Hospitality and Tourism sector due to Brain Drain? Please share your perception.
11. In context of Brain Gain have you contributed in any manner as a hospitality and tourism leader being on a field for more than a decade? Please express your experience.
12. As per your experience what impact does lack of skilled manpower will bring upon Nepal. Please share your viewpoint on this crisis.
13. In context of Brain Gain have you contributed in any manner as a hospitality and tourism leader being on a field for more than a decade? Please express your experience.
14. In your opinion what can be major reasons for emerging of Brain Drain crisis in entire Nepal. In context of Brain Gain have you contributed in any manner as a hospitality and tourism leader being on a field for more than a decade? Please express your experience.
15. On the basis of your experience how do you think we can stop or control the crisis of Brain Drain?
16. Do you think Nepal's educational structure also has played influential role for causing Brain Drain crisis? Please express your experience regarding this matter.

17. We have come to the last part of our interview, is there something that I have fail to ask you regarding this subject matter of Brain Drain prevailing in Hospitality and Tourism Industry or you want to add something on this topic. Please express your perspective if any.

Annex III: Plan for Field Preparation and Interaction with Participants

1. Research questions
2. Interview guide
3. The narrative inquiry
4. Audio record and written text
5. Raw transcript
6. Checking for saturated information
7. Working in transcript
8. Start narrative data analysis
9. Coding
10. Categorizing
11. Formulation of theme based on shard story
12. Prepared the final dissertation report.

Annex IV: Informed Consent Form

Informed consent form for the study purpose on “Hospitality and Tourism Related Brain Drain from Nepal, A Narrative Inquiry in Kathmandu Valley.”

Namaskar! I am Purna Dangol, studying Master in Philosophy of Educational Leadership in Kathmandu University School of Education (KUSOED). I am here for a study to explore the learning experiences of Hospitality and Tourism Educational Leaders in their Academic Institutions as a partial fulfillment of academic requirement. You are invited to participate in the interview. It will take around 45 to 60 minutes and will require 1 or more visits with you. I would like to inform you that this study does not have any foreseeable harm to the participants, your participation in this is voluntary and you have full right to withdraw at any time you want. Your obtained information will be kept confidential.

I would like to request you for note taking of important points of interview and audio recording. I want to make you sure that information you provide is only used for the study purpose and all the records and notes will be stored securely and will be destroyed after the completion of the study. I assure that, you and your organization's identity will not be disclosed in the study. I hope you will participate in this study by providing your valuable information with face to face interview. Your responses will contribute to the successful completion of the study and will be highly appreciated.

Consent

I , hereby give my consent for participation in the above mentioned study knowing that all the information provided by me will be kept confidential and used for only study purpose by the researcher . I have read the forgoing information and understood or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask question about it and any question I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without legal rights being affected.

Signature of participant

Date