Factors Influencing Brain Drain among Nurses of Nepal

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Abstract

Many talented and educated people like doctors, nurses and engineers are migrating from Nepal to other developed countries. The mostly migrated countries include Australia, the USA, Canada and UK. The objective of this study was to explore the factors influencing brain drain among nurses. This study was carried out among 100 nurses from different educational consultancies of Kathmandu and Lalitpur districts where the nurses had been processing to go abroad. Descriptive cross-sectional study design was used for study. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was applied to select the sample. Semi- structured self- administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Data was collected from 17th September to October 16th, 2014. Objective of the study was explained to different private consultancies and informed written consent was taken from participants before data collection. Data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics.

Study showed that40% of the participants were quite young 20-25 years of age. Similarly 58% of the participants had been working under private institutions and 51% of the participants had got 10,000 -20,000 (86.20$ -172.40$) Nepalese rupees salary per month in Nepal at present. Canada (29%), UK (27%), USA (24%) and Australia (20%) were the preferred destination country of brain drain. Prime push factors for brain drain were perceived lack of higher education and training (43%), lack of support and encouragement from higher authorities (42%) and increased work load (40%) respectively. Prime pull factors for brain drain were high salary (74%), better career opportunity (39%) and better education for children (28%).

The study concluded that financial incentives, career development and management issues are core factors for motivating of nurses for brain drain. So, it would be recommended that the government of Nepal must recognize the contribution of nurses to the health care system and offer them standard salaries, benefits and career opportunities to prevent further migration of nurses from Nepal in coming days.

Key words: Brain, Career, Influencing Factors, Nurses

Introduction

Brain drain also called "The human capital flight" has become the most concerning problem in Nepal in all sectors. There is a huge mass emigration of technically skilled people from Nepal to other country. Un-employment, instability of nation, unstable political system are the main reason for migration of skilled human resources of Nepal. Thus, brain drain is a great loss to Nepal (Neupane, 2011).

Motivations to nurse migration were linked to financial, professional, political, social and personal factors. Although economic factors were the most commonly reported, they were not the only reason for migration. This was especially evident among nurses migrating between developed countries

(Dywili& Bonner, 2011).

According to Ministry of Health and Population (2013), Nepal currently has 0.50 nurses per 1,000/ population and 0.17 doctors per 1,000/ population while the total number of doctors and specialists (4,401) and nursing professionals and nursing associates groups (13,323) across the public and private. This represents a total ratio of 0.67 doctors and nurses per 1,000/ population, which is significantly less than the WHO recommendation of 2013 showed that 2.3 doctors, nurses and midwives per 1,000/ population and is low compared to other countries in South Asia (TamrakarSayami, 2016).

International migration of Nepalese nurses started mainly after the new millennium, and by 2010, it is estimated that there are between four to five thousand Nepali nurses who have migrated to western countries, particularly the UK, the USA and Australia (Adhikari, 2011).

Ninety percent of all migrating nurses were moving to just five countries: Australia, Canada, Germany, UK and USA for economic improvement. Young, well-educated, healthy individuals are most likely to migrate, especially in pursuit of higher education and career development was identified in 85% of the respondents. Among them 80% of the nurses were in abroad due to inadequate resource in their working areas and they stated that their supervisor's management and leadership skills were inadequate and this led to de-motivation of them to retain own countries. Seventy percent of the nurses told that recognition and/or appreciation, either from managers, colleagues, or the community was a theme found in this study (Shattuck et al., 2008).

Statistics from the Nursing Council of Kenya indicate that more than 800 Kenyan nurses leave the country every year to seek employment abroad especially in the United States of America. Most of them are women aged between 30 to 46 years working in the public health sector and are highly qualified. Countries of destination are the USA accounting for 59% of applications and the UK with 27%. A number of push and pull factors, have been cited as influencing the decisions of health professionals to leave their countries of origin. Push factors include low remuneration, poor working conditions, low job satisfaction, lack of professional development and career opportunities and political and ethnic problems including civil strife and poor security. Pull factors are include attractive remuneration, new career and personal development (Joan & Victor, 2013).

According to the records of Nepal Nursing Council, 2010, a total number of 3461 nurses migrated abroad between 2002 and 2011. The number further increased to 4155 from 2011 to 2013. This data showed that average 26 nurses migrate each month from Nepal and their favorite destinations were UK, Australia and the US. It is estimated that in 2008, Nepal ranked fifth in the hierarchy of source of countries of nurses drain to go in the UK for work (Gurung & Fachhini, 2011).

Study on reasons behind chooses to study nursing by Subedi, 2012 in Nepal among 200 nursing students. Result revealed that an over whelming number of student nurses (82%) mentioned that "they want to go abroad". Thus aspiration and dream to go abroad is the fundamental catalytic factor for students to choose nursing education.

Methodology

This study was carried out among 100 nurses from different consultancy of Kathmandu and Lalitpur district where the nurses were processing for abroad. Data was collected from the Euro American Educare, New Baneshwor, Pacific Education consultancy point, Kumaripati, Nibson International Info Centere, New Baneshwor and CHERUB education, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal.

The Descriptive cross-sectional study design was used for the study. Non- probability convenience sampling technique was used to select the sample. Semi- structured self- administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Data was collected from 17th September to October 16th, 2014. Firstly, we found out the most popular consultancies purposively. The objective of the study was explained to different private consultancies and approval was obtained. Participants' address, phone number and

e-mail were taken from those consultancies and the participantswere contacted at their convenient place. Informed written consent was taken from participants before data collection. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics.

Results

Table 1: Background Information of the Participants

n=100

Characteristics	Number
Age in Years	
20-25 years	40
26-31 years	33
32-36 years	21
> 36 years	6
Education Level	
PCL	24
BN/B.Sc.	53
MN/M.Sc.	23
Experience in Nursing	
< 1 year	16
1 - 5 years	45
6 - 10 years	28
11 - 15 years	6
> 15 years	5
Positions	
Staff nurse	28
Nurse in-charge	35
Nurse supervisor	10
Nurse researcher	5
Nurse teacher	22
Present Employer	
Government	18
Private	58
NGO/INGO	24
Monthly Income in Nepal	
< 10,000	9
10,000 - 20,000	51
20,000 - 30,000	21
>30,000	19

Background information of the participantsshows in table one. Maximum 40 (40%) of the participants were of 20-25 years and as expected all the participants were female. Like as 53% of the participants have done BN/B.Sc. nursing and 23% have done MN/M.Sc.Forty five percentof the participants had 1 to 5 years of experience in nursing and 52% of the participants had taken their last degree from Tribhuvan University, 35% of them had been working as a nursing in-charge.At present, 58% had been working under private institutions and51% of the participants had earnedNRs. 10,000-20,000 (86.20$ -172.40$) salary per month.

Table 2: Destination Countriesand Expected Monthly Income

n=100

Characteristics	Number
Country chosen to migrate	
USA	24
UK	27
Australia	20
Canada	29
Expected Monthly Income in Abroad	
1-3 Lakhs Nepalese Rupees	5
4-6 Lakhs Nepalese Rupees	56
> 6 Lakhs Nepalese Rupees	39

As shown in table two that the favorite destination country of majority (29%) of the participants was Canada, (27%) to the UK, (24%) to the USA and 20% to the Australia. Similarly, (56%) of themassumed that their wage abroad would be 400-600 thousands Nepalese Rupees per month.

Table 3 : Influencing Factors for Brain Drain

n=100

Variables	Frequency	Percent
*Push Factors for Brain Drain		
over work load	40	40
Lack of promotions and upgrading system	22	22
Lack of higher education and further Training	43	43
Lack of attractive incentives	21	21
Lack of support and encouragement from higher authorizes	42	42
*Pull Factors for Brain Drain		
Better life	67	67
Better education for children	28	28
Political Stability	12	12
Better career opportunity	39	39
High salary	74	74
Luring western life	2	2

*Multiple responses

Table 3 reveals thatalmost(95%) of the participantswere dissatisfied with their present job. The majority (43%) of them were unsatisfied with their job because they had lack of higher education and further Training, 42% of the participants were unsatisfied with their job because there was lack of support and encouragement from higher authorizes. Likewise, 4o% was unsatisfied with their job because of increased work load.The majority (74%) of the participants agreed that high salary of foreign country was the real influence for the brain drain. 67% of the participants agreed that better life of foreign country was a prime factor of brain drain, 39% of the participants agreed that better career opportunity offoreign country and 28% agreed that better education for children was the influence factorsfor brain drain.

Table 4: Participants' opinion towards Brain Drain

Variables	Frequency
Feeling about Brain Drain (n=100) Sad	68
Sympathetic	21
Guilt	11

Variables	Frequency
Plan to return Nepal (n=100)	
Yes	69
No	31
If Yes (n=69)	
Forever	3
To meet family only	44
Only at old age	22
Need to control Brain Drain (n=100)	
Yes	22
No	78
*Ways to control Brain Drain(n=100)	
Provide better opportunity for study	17
Provide better opportunity for job	30
Political stability	16
Increased economic condition	32
Job satisfaction	36
Better career opportunity	27

*Multiple responses

Table 4 depicts that the majority (68%) were sad and (21%) of the participantssympathetic about country's loss of skilled human resources. Similarly, 69% of them said that they wanted to come back to their birth place. Among them 63.7% of the participants wanted to come back Nepal to meet their family. Although, 78% of the participants were against the viewon the need of the control brain drain. The majority (36%) of the participants told that it should be controlled by providing job satisfaction towards nurses.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that 29% of the participantsprocessing go to Canada, 27% of the participants applied to the UK, 24%of the participants applied to the USA and 20% of the participants applied for Australia. This finding is consistent with the study report of Shattuck et al., (2008) where close to (90%) of all migrating nurses were moving to just five developed countries: Australia, Canada, Germany, UK and USA for economic improvement. Similarly this finding is consistent with the study of Gurung & Fachhini(2011) whoshowed that a total number of 3,461 nurses migrated abroad between 2002 and 2011 (average 26 nurses migrate each months) and their favorite destination were UK, Australia and the US. It is estimated that in 2008, Nepal ranked fifth in the hierarchy of source of countries of brain drain of nurses to the UK.

Almost (95%) of the participants were dissatisfied with present job of nursing. Among them, (43%) were dissatisfied with their job because they had lack of higher education and training, (42%) were disappointed because there was lack of support and encouragement from higher authorizes, (40%) of the participants were displeased because of over work load.All the above factors were considered as push factors of brain drain. This finding is inconsistent with the findings of Shattuck et al., (2008).That study showed that nurses are most likely to migrate, especially in pursuit of higher education and career development was identified in 85% of the participants, (80%) of the nurses were in aboard due to inadequate resource in their working areas and they stated that their supervisor's management and leadership skills were inadequate.

Seventy four percent of the participants were agreed that high salary of foreign country was an influencing for brain drain. This finding is inconsistentwith the study of Lofters

et al., (2014) where the study illustrated that 51% of the participants choosing to emigrate from their home country because of socioeconomic situations in their home countries.

The study showed that (39%) of the participants agreed that better career opportunity of foreign country was the real influencing factors for brain drain. This finding is different with the study ofLofterset al., (2014) because that study revealed that 23% of nurses were choosing to emigratefrom their home country to get opportunities for professional advancement.

The study showed that 36% of the respondents agreed that brain drain should be controlled by providing job satisfaction towards nurses. Likewise, 30% of the respondents agreed that it should be controlled by providing better opportunity for job and 27% agreed that it should be controlled by establishing better career opportunity towards nurses.This study is similar with the study of Joan & Victor (2013). That study revealed that despite efforts to retain health workers through increased salaries, improved working conditions, health reform and decentralization, there is a continued loss of qualified health professionals to other occupations and internal migration, as well as migration abroad.

Conclusion

On the basis of our finding it is concluded that the Canada,UK, USA and Australia are preferred as the favoritedestination countries of brain drain of Nepalese nurses. The majority of the nurses are dissatisfied with their present job in Nepal due to lack of higher education and training, lack of support and encouragement from higher authorityandwork load. All these factorswere considered as a main push factor of brain drain on the basis of respondents' priority. High salary, better career opportunity and

better education for children in foreign countries were considered as a main pull factor of brain drain on the basis of their priority.

High quality nursing care cannotbe provided unless issues of de-motivation will be addressed. So, financial incentives, career development and management issues are core factors for affecting motivation of nurses for brain drain. Measures to control brain drain should be designed in accordance with the push and pull factors existing in the country by the Government of Nepal.

Acknowledgement

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