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Understanding Intentions and Aspirations of Nepali Migrant Returnees: A Structural Equation Modeling Study

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Abstract

Background: Labor migration is a movement of people from one country to the other country for employment opportunities. Labor migration is the term used to describe the exodus of Nepali laborers to other nations in pursuit of work, mostly due to financial need and work opportunities. The study focuses on foreign migrant workers who migrate from their native countries in search of better living conditions and incomes, as well as because of limited employment prospects and economic challenges.

Methods: A Descriptive and explanatory research design is used in this study. 403 return migrants were taken as a sample by using purposive sampling method. Theory of Economic of Labor is used. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data and PLS-SEM was used to analyze the data. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to evaluate the data.

Findings: The study shows mostly male are the migrant returnees from age range 30 to 40. Major variables to affect return decision of migrants are family obligation, psychological factors and Skill, development and career opportunity in home country. Majority of the people migrate for better work opportunities and to improve economic conditions. Mostly migrants faced the challenges like low wages, cultural differences and home sickness in host country which can be solved by fair wage rate, welcoming environment in host county, proper Nepalese agencies to help foreign migrants.

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Conclusions: The study emphasizes how family ties, psychological aspects, and the chances for skill development in their own country all play a role in the decision of many men to travel to and return to Nepal.
Implications: This analysis and findings will help the Ministry of Labor, International Labor Organization, and Nepal Labor Market, local government, and researcher on the similar field, professionals and future students.

Originality: This research is original and there is no conflict of knowledge.

Keywords: foreign migrant returnee, smart PLS, structural equation modeling, host country, home country

1. Introduction

Disparities in employment opportunities, wages, political and socio-economic coherence between countries is a significant motivation for movement of labor across national borders (Khalid& John ,1997; Wajiha wt.al, 2021; Mushtaq et.al, 2022). Labor migration is primarily driven by economic motives and backed by social networks and community ties (Williams et.al, 2020; Zhou et.al, 2025). Labor migrants commonly leave their home countries with the motivation to send remittances to support their families, and secure better living conditions and improve household status (Zhou et al,2025). Labor migration from low- and middle-income countries is shaped by a combination of "push" and "pull" factors. Limited employment opportunities, political turmoil and low wage rates push workers to seek employment abroad, in contrast higher wages, better working conditions, and economic stability in destination countries act as strong pull factors (Harris, 2010). In Nepalese context, overseas labor migration is concentrated in menial jobs in construction, and domestic services, with major destinations Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar (Regmi et.al, 2024). The remittances sent by Nepali migrants is an essential source of household income helping families to improving access to education and healthcare and uplift living standard (Seddon et al., 1998). Beyond household benefits, labor migration contributes to economic integration by the transfer of skills and technology, expanding trade networks, and stimulating cross-border investment flows (Farhana & Mannan, 2020).

Despite these benefits, migrants are also exposed to significant risks (Mak et.al, 2021). Labors are vulnerable to exploitative working environment, precarious occupational jobs, and insufficient legal protection (Bossavie & Denisova, 2018). The combination of these hazards with language issues, limited access to health care, demanding working conditions and poor social security leads to emotional distress (Hargreaves et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2014). The impacts of these sensitivities usually encourage laborers to move back to their homeland. Decisions on returns are often complicated by individual ambitions, family pressure and available economic opportunities upon their return (Weldemariam, 2023). Some migrants return with new skills, savings and wider career perspectives, while other returnees have serious reintegration problems such as unemployment, underemployment, lack of supportive environment in society and structural gaps (Simkhada et.al, 2017).

Over the last few years, the issue of reverse migration has been gaining scholarly and policy attention. Although a considerable literature has examined the drivers and consequences of outward labor migration from Nepal, the dynamics of return migration remain comparatively underexplored (Regmi et.al, 2024). Such under studied aspect does not only restrict theoretical development but also restricts the development of evidence-based policies which would help in producing better reintegration outcomes, decreasing vulnerability and opening potential contributions of returnees to the national development.

For a country like Nepal, the issue of return migration carries profound socio-economic implications. Remittances from labor migrants have long sustained household livelihoods and bolstered macroeconomic stability, yet the return of large numbers of workers often exposes structural weaknesses. Sudden waves of return, as witnessed during global crises, further strain Nepal's fragile labor market and social protection systems (Mak et al,2017). These challenges highlight that return migration should not be seen as the natural end of the migration cycle, but rather as a pivotal stage where thoughtful policies and supportive programs can transform returnees into active agents of entrepreneurship, innovation, and long-term development.

This study focuses on the return intentions of Nepali migrant workers from abroad. It not only analyzes the aspects that influence the choice of migrants to repatriate, but also the disadvantages they end up in as they work in the host nations, including job insecurity, poor social protection. Meanwhile, the study investigates potential interventions that may be facilitated to mitigate these challenges and contribute to the easier integration process, when persons arrive back home. By putting these issues into the bigger picture of migration economics, it is possible to understand in greater detail how labor mobility can help the development and at the same time unveil its weaknesses. The final objective is to present the evidence that can inform national labor regulations and migration policies in such a way that economic gains are not realized at the cost of long-term welfare of migrant workers.

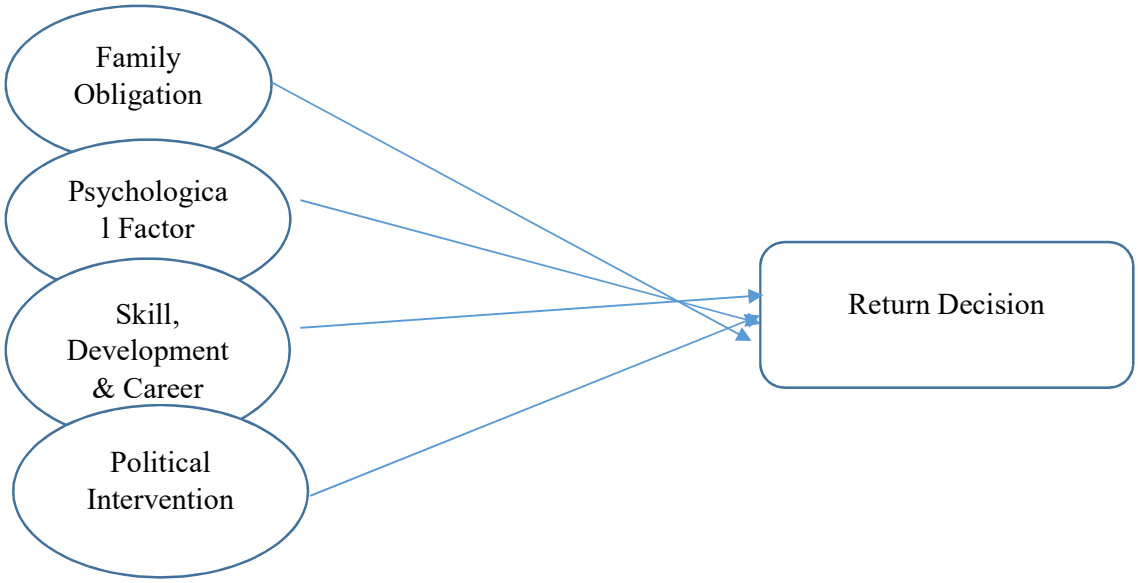
1.1 Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Formulation

A theoretical framework serves as an organized structure that explains the relationships among key concepts, ideas, and systems, guiding the understanding of migration and related phenomena through multiple perspectives, including the Economic Theory of Labor Migration, Transnationalism Theory, Social Network Theory, and Structural Theory (Aparicio et al., 2016). The Economic Theory of Labor Migration views migration and return as outcomes of economic expectations, household strategies, and contextual constraints, blending neoclassical and NELM perspectives abroad (Bakewell, 2010; Miah, 2022). The Transnationalism Theory emphasizes the multidirectional ties migrants maintain across home and host countries, shaping identities, resources, and socio-political processes (Weir & Ali, 2024). The Social Network Theory highlights the role of family, friends, and community ties in reducing risks, providing resources, and supporting integration across borders (Munshi, 2020). Finally, the Structural Theory explains migration as a response to macro-level forces such as labor market demands, state policies, and global inequalities that shape individual opportunities and decisions (Weir & Ali, 2024).

In this study, the framework draws on migration economics and return migration theory to explain the determinants of migrants' return decisions. Four interrelated domains are identified: family obligation, psychological factors, skill development and career prospects, and political intervention. Family obligation reflects responsibilities toward dependents and household needs. Psychological factors include emotional well-being, cultural identity, and the desire for social belonging. Skill development and career considerations account for whether the home labor market offers opportunities that match or exceed those abroad. Political intervention captures the role of policies, bilateral labor agreements, and regulatory changes that can accelerate or delay return.

As shown in Figure 1, these domains jointly influence the outcome variable return decision. The model recognizes return migration as a multi-causal process shaped by the combined effects of personal, economic, and policy factors, consistent with migration governance perspectives that stress the interplay of individual aspirations and structural constraints (Abel et al., 2023). This framework serves as the analytical roadmap for the study, ensuring that the investigation captures the complexity of return migration and yields insights for targeted reintegration policies in Nepal.

Figure 1: *Conceptual Framework*



Source: *(Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020).*

1.1.1 Family obligation

Family obligations remain one of the most compelling drivers of return migration. Migrants often feel a profound responsibility to provide material and emotional support to their families, which can outweigh economic incentives to remain abroad. Duties such as caring for elderly parents, financing siblings' education, or improving household living standards frequently influence return decisions, especially among those employed overseas (Shmulyar et.al, 2018). In many cultural contexts, family is integral to identity and social standing; prolonged absence can strain relationships, creating an additional impetus to return. Emotional bonds, familial pressure, and a desire for social belonging often reinforce this pull (Fleischer, 2007; Simoni & Voirol, 2021). Migrants may also return to marriage, raise children in a familiar cultural environment, or restore family cohesion. In such cases, family obligations can surpass economic considerations as the decisive factor for the return decision.
H1: Family obligation significantly influences the return decision.

1.1.2 Psychological Factors

Psychological factors are closely linked to migrants' sense of identity, belonging, and overall well-being. Elements such as cultural attachment, homesickness, and moral obligations to one's community often create a strong emotional pull toward the country of origin (Alili et al., 2019). Adverse experiences in the host country, including social isolation, discrimination, and uncertainty, can intensify this pull, encouraging migrants to return in search of familiarity and security. When aspirations abroad remain unfulfilled, feelings of failure or diminished purpose may emerge, further reinforcing the intention to return (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). Concerns about aging in an unfamiliar environment, along with the desire for emotional and social support, also make repatriation a psychologically attractive option (Munk, 2005). Taken together, these dynamics underscore the importance of emotional well-being, cultural rootedness, and psychological security in shaping return migration decisions.
H2: Psychological factors significantly influence the return decision.

1.1.3 Skill Development and Career Opportunity

Career prospects and the ability to apply newly acquired skills are powerful motivators for return migration. Migrants often return when they perceive better opportunities in their home country's emerging industries or expanding job markets. Acquired qualifications, international work experience, and enhanced competencies can be leveraged for career advancement, particularly in contexts where such expertise is in high demand (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). Government initiatives promoting entrepreneurship, economic reforms, and reintegration programs can further incentivize skilled returnees (Owens Foundation, 2007). When long-term career growth, job security, and improved living standards appear more attainable at home than abroad, the pull toward repatriation intensifies (Clemens, 2013). Thus, skill development and career opportunities act as both economic and aspirational drivers in the return decision.

H3: Skill development and career opportunities significantly influence the return decision.

1.1.4 Political Intervention

Political conditions in both host and home countries can serve as either push or pull factors for return migration. Restrictive immigration laws, visa limitations, or rising anti-immigrant sentiment in host countries can create pressures to leave (Munk, 2005). Political instability, labor market regulations, or discrimination may further erode the desirability of remaining abroad. Conversely, political stability, favorable policy reforms, and targeted reintegration programs at home can encourage voluntary return (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020). By shaping migrants' rights, security, and access to opportunities, political environments play a decisive role in influencing the attractiveness of return relative to continued residence abroad (Bove & Böhmelt, 2019).

H4: Political intervention significantly influences the return decision.

1.1.5 Return Decision

The return decision, as the dependent variable, reflects the culmination of multiple intersecting factors: familial, psychological, professional, and political. Family obligations often exert strong emotional pulls, compelling migrants to reunite with loved ones or fulfill caregiving responsibilities. Psychological considerations, such as homesickness or cultural estrangement, further reinforce the appeal of home. Concurrently, the prospect of applying acquired skills to advance one's career, particularly with supportive policies and market demand, creates economic incentives for return. Political contexts, whether restrictive abroad or enabling at home can decisively shift the balance toward repatriation. Collectively, these dynamics underscore that return migration is not solely an economic choice, but a multidimensional decision shaped by interconnected personal, social, and structural forces (Hargreaves et al., 2019).

2. Research Design

The study adopted a post-positivist philosophical stance, employing a deductive research design to test theoretically derived relationships between variables. Guided by both descriptive and explanatory purposes, the design enabled the exploration of cause-and-effect relationships while providing a structured account of the phenomena under investigation. Data was collected through a survey strategy using a mono method, aligning with the study's emphasis on quantifiable evidence and systematic analysis (Saunders et al., 2019). This approach ensured methodological coherence, strengthened internal validity, and supported the generalizability of findings across similar contexts (Dolma, 2010; Nikander et al., 2014; Ishtiaq, 2019; Hartling et al., 2012).

2.1 Variables and Its Definition

The variables used in this study are covered in this section the factors that affect an Individual's return decision are listed below:

Table 1: *Variable and its definition*

Construct	Explanation
Family Obligation	I returned to my home country to reunite with family members
	Caring for elderly or sick family members in my home country motivated me to return
	My family members in my home country strongly encouraged me to return and live here.
	The need to provide support to my family back home made me consider returning.
	I feel obligated to return to my home country to take care of my family or fulfill familial expectations
	I believe my return to my home country would improve the well-being of my family members there.
Psychological Factor	I feel a strong emotional connection to my home country.
	I often felt homesick.
	I feel that my cultural identity is stronger in my home country than in the host country.
	I experience a sense of isolation or discrimination in the host country.
	Returning to my home country would improve my overall happiness and well-being.
Skills, Development and Career Opportunity	I could apply the skills I gained abroad in Nepal
	The professional network and career opportunities in my home country are feasible for my new skills.
	I believe my career prospects in my home country are better now due to the skills I have acquired abroad.
	I feel that my skills and education are more valued in my home country.
	There is high chance to contribute my skills to the development of my home country is an important factor in my decision to return.
Political Intervention	Recent changes in the host country's immigration laws (e.g., stricter visa requirements or work restrictions) have made it more difficult for me
	I feel less secure about my future in the host country due to recent changes in immigration laws or policies.
	I am concerned that future changes in the host country's immigration policies might make it even harder for me to stay.
	The political climate in the host country has become less welcoming toward migrants, which has made me think about returning to my home country.
	There is changes in work permit regulations in the host country.
Return Decision	I am satisfied with my decision to return to my home country
	I believe returning to my home country has improved my quality of life.
	I feel that returning to my home country was the best decision for me in the long run
	I intent to stay in Nepal.
	I feel more fulfilled and at peace after returning to my home country.

2.2 Study Area and Population

The study area selected for the study is all over Nepal. Nepal is a landlocked country which have 7 provinces. 403 migrant returnees are the subject of this study. The nation is geographically varied, with the Terai plains in the south, the hilly region in the middle, and the Himalayan region in the north. By including migrant returnees from all seven provinces, the study guarantees a thorough grasp of migration patterns across diverse topographical and socioeconomic contexts. The study is conducted among the respondents who are the foreign migrant returnees from different; countries and return to their home country Nepal.

2.3 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size Determination

This study employed purposive sampling, a non-probability approach suitable when the population size is unknown and participants are selected based on specific characteristics, expertise, or experiences relevant to the research objectives (Sharma, 2017). The sample size was determined considering factors such as study objectives, expected effect size, population variability, and the desired level of statistical confidence. After adjusting for potential non-response, the final sample comprised 403 participants (Pipit Muliyah et al., 2020).

2.4 Research Instrument

A structure questionnaire has been developed and devised to conduct survey on intention of migrants for data collection. Pretesting of the data was conducted in 15 respondents and feedback was taken. Necessary changes were made according to it for final data collection. Primary data from questionnaire survey has been collected. The researcher has linked questionnaires to meet the various objectives mentioned above in the study. The formulated structured questionnaires are maintained in kobo toolbox for data collection. To maintain both online and offline methods for data collection kobo toolbox was used. Respondent filled the questionnaire through kobo toolbox. Furthermore, MS-Excel and Smart PLS 4.0 is used for data analysis. For data collection call interviews have been done and physical forms were distributed and collected.

3. Data Analysis and Techniques

Software such as KOBO toolbox, Microsoft Excel and PLS-SEM were used in the analysis of the current study. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential techniques Microsoft Excel was used for the data entry and tabulation. Tables and graphs are used to present the results of the statical analysis of the data. Descriptive analysis is a sort of data analysis that helps to explain, show, or summarize data points in a constructive way so that patterns might develop that satisfy all the data's conditions. (Mishra et al., 2019). Inferential statistics is a subfield of statistics that deals with making conclusions or predictions about a wider population based on data from a sample. (Marshall &jonker,2009).

4. Results

4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics

In this study, out of 403 participants, a substantial majority were male (83%), while females constituted 17%. The age distribution indicates that migration is most common among individuals in their prime working age: 43% were between 30–40 years, followed by 32% in the 40–50 age group, 21% aged 20–30 years, and only 5% above 50 years. In terms of place of origin, more than half of the respondents were from Kathmandu (52%), while 16% were from Bhaktapur, 14% from Lalitpur, and 18% from other districts. Educational attainment shows a relatively diverse profile, with the highest proportion having completed secondary education (28%), followed by intermediate-level education (26%), bachelor's degrees (20%), and master's degrees or higher (4%). Meanwhile, 18% of respondents had only primary-level

education, and 3% reported no formal schooling. Regarding host-country destinations, Dubai accounted for the largest share of migrants (23%), followed by Malaysia (18%), Qatar (17%), Saudi Arabia (14%), and Oman (8%), with 19% working in other countries.

Table 3: *Socio Demographic Characteristics*

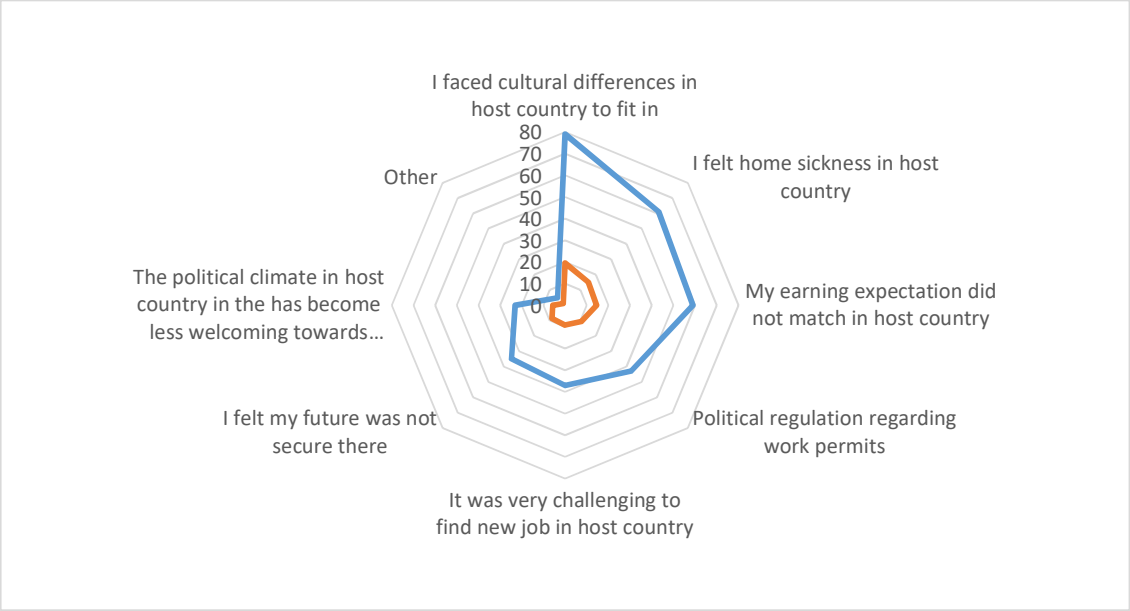
Title	Category	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	333	83%
	Female	70	17%
	Others	0	0%
Age	20-30	84	21%
	30-40	172	43%
	40-50	128	32%
	Above 50	19	5%
Address	Kathmandu	209	52%
	Bhaktapur	63	16%
	Lalitpur	58	14%
	Others	73	18%
Education Level	No Formal Education	12	3%
	Primary Level	74	18%
	Secondary Level	114	28%
	Intermediate	106	26%
	Bachelors	80	20%
	Masters and Above	17	4%
Name of Host Country	Malaysia	73	18%
	Dubai	94	23%
	Saudi Arabia	56	14%
	Qatar	70	17%
	Oman	32	8%
	Others	78	19%

Thus, the study shows most of the male are foreign returnee as compared to female. Mostly people from Gulf countries return to their home country. People from lower education backgrounds visited and returned from gulf countries.

4.2 Challenges Faced by Foreign Migrants

Respondents were asked if they had faced any challenges that had affected their decision to leave host country. According to the data 49.88% respondent replied yes and 50.12% replied no. Among migrants, 19.51% reported facing cultural differences in the host country, 15.06% experienced homesickness, and 14.57% found their earnings expectations unmet. Additionally, 10.62% struggled with work permit regulations, 9.14% faced difficulties securing new jobs, 8.64% felt uncertain about their future, 5.68% encountered unfavorable political climates, and 1.23% reported other challenges.

Figure 2: *Challenges faced by migrants*



The respondents were asked whether the difficulties they encountered are manageable or not, and if manageable, what management techniques they used to deal with them. This can contribute to managing the challenges faced by migrants in host country in better way. By analyzing the response of respondents, 114 respondents agree that the challenges can be managed and remaining 88 respondents disagree. Most of respondent i.e. 11.36% answered as the managerial solution to challenges they faced that the earning wage should be more as per working hours, 9.63% answered host country should make welcoming environment for migrants, 8.64% answered host country should prevent discrimination practices for immigrants and provide equal employment opportunity, 8.4% answered Nepal government should take feasible work hour permit from host country for migrants, 7.16% answered there should be proper Nepali agencies for help and support migrants, 5.68% answered Nepal government should provide training and skill enhancing programs to get job opportunity in host country,5.68% answered host country should lose the travel permits to visit home and the remaining 0.74% answered other options such as good health service, learning opportunity in host country.

4.3 Inferential Analysis

4.3.1 Common Method Bias

The common method bias is tested using the full collinearity test. As per Kock & Lynn (2012) when the VIF score is less than 5, it indicates that the data is appropriate for additional analysis and is unaffected by common method bias.

Table 4: *VIF for Common Method Bias *

Construct	Family Obligation	Psychological Factor	Political Intervention	Skill Development and Career Opportunity
VIF	1.969	2.201	1.191	1.277

4.3.2 Measurement Model

Measurement model is a framework that outlines the connection between latent components and observable indicators (Diamantopoulos et al., 2008). In measurement model validity and reliability are tested. This study is a reflective measurement model. In reflective

model, Internal Consistent Reliability, Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity are observed.

Internal consistent reliability can be defined as the extent to which a set of reflective indicators consistently measures the same underlying dimension. This consistency is frequently examined using statistical measures such as Cronbach's alpha, which determines the average correlation between the indicators (Hajjar, 2018; Lawaju et al., 2024). To achieve an internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's alpha, which is computed for accurate consistency estimation. It is appropriate for Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability to be between 0.6 and 0.9 (Hajjar, 2018). In this study, Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) meet all the requirements. Consequently, this study's model has internal consistency reliability (see table 5).

Table 5: *Internal Consistent Reliability*

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)
Family Obligation (fo)	0.92	0.938
Psychological Factor (ps)	0.829	0.874
Political Intervention (pi)	0.941	0.955
Return Decision (rd)	0.948	0.961
Skill, Development & Career Opportunity(sdc)	0.948	0.96

Convergent validity is the highly theoretical relationship between the instrument used and the measurements of other constructs (Hajjar, 2018; Khadayat et al., 2024). To show an adequate degree of convergent validity, they advise that an AVE value not be less than 0.50. This criterion ensures that the construct is sufficiently represented by its measurements by showing that the latent construct accounts for at least 50% of the variance in its indicators (Cheung et al., 2024). In this study, all indicators have loading more than 0.7 and some constructs achieved values above 0.5 for the AVE (Magar et al., 2023) indicating no issue in convergent validity.

Table 6: *Convergent Validity*

Constructs	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE
Family Obligation	fo1	0.869	0.719
	fo2	0.679	
	fo3	0.833	
	fo4	0.887	
	fo5	0.909	
	fo6	0.888	
Psychological Factor	pf1	0.863	0.59
	pf2	0.549	
	pf3	0.867	
	pf4	0.633	
	pf5	0.865	
Political Intervention	pi1	0.874	0.809
	pi2	0.897	
	pi3	0.919	

	pi4	0.906	
	pi5	0.901	
Return Decision	rd1	0.934	0.83
	rd2	0.914	
	rd3	0.946	
	rd4	0.831	
	rd5	0.925	
Skill, Development & Career Opportunity	sdc1	0.886	0.829
	sdc2	0.915	
	sdc3	0.934	
	sdc4	0.896	
	sdc5	0.921	

Discriminant validity refers to the completeness and correctness of the factual data presented in a study. HTMT is a contemporary and reliable technique for evaluating discriminant validity by looking at the proportion of correlations between models. A construct's discriminant validity is assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion by determining whether its AVE is higher than its squared correlations with other constructs. Both approaches aid in confirming the differences between conceptions (Cheung et al., 2024).

In this study the cross-loading values meets the criterion for higher factor loading compared to other notions (see Table 7). In context of HTMT test, values less than 0.9 for the HTMT criterion are values widely accepted. All constructs HTMT value lie below 0.9. Hence the data is considered valid as per criterion of discriminant validity. Fornell and Larcker criterion is also satisfied as the two constructs AVEs is higher than squared correlation between two constructs which is also satisfied as shown in table 9.

Table 7: *Factors Cross-loading*

Constructs	fo	pf	pi	rd	sdc
fo1	0.869	0.653	0.159	0.707	0.322
fo2	0.679	0.428	0.201	0.442	0.191
fo3	0.833	0.559	0.155	0.619	0.287
fo4	0.887	0.619	0.123	0.684	0.29
fo5	0.909	0.597	0.104	0.67	0.309
fo6	0.888	0.636	0.128	0.734	0.331
pf1	0.625	0.863	0.251	0.68	0.359
pf2	0.304	0.549	0.357	0.263	0.237
pf3	0.629	0.867	0.219	0.65	0.336
pf4	0.341	0.633	0.359	0.329	0.308
pf5	0.625	0.865	0.245	0.64	0.349
pi1	0.151	0.284	0.874	0.144	0.265
pi2	0.132	0.31	0.897	0.193	0.282
pi3	0.166	0.303	0.919	0.198	0.287
pi4	0.175	0.309	0.906	0.192	0.299
pi5	0.113	0.279	0.901	0.155	0.291
rd1	0.747	0.692	0.177	0.934	0.412

rd2	0.704	0.651	0.161	0.914	0.352
rd3	0.724	0.678	0.181	0.946	0.395
rd4	0.577	0.574	0.199	0.831	0.368
rd5	0.732	0.658	0.193	0.925	0.373
sdc1	0.311	0.419	0.293	0.385	0.886
sdc2	0.277	0.346	0.28	0.344	0.915
sdc3	0.335	0.403	0.293	0.414	0.934
sdc4	0.337	0.342	0.288	0.37	0.896
sdc5	0.305	0.363	0.289	0.382	0.921

Table 8: *HTMT*

	fo	pf	pi	rd	sdc
fo					
pf	0.75				
pi	0.183	0.42			
rd	0.811	0.75	0.209		
sdc	0.364	0.464	0.335	0.439	

Table 9: *Fornell Lacker Criterion*

	Fornell- Lacker				
Constructs	fo	pf	pi	rd	sdc
Family Obligation (fo)	0.848				
Psychological Factor (pf)	0.693	0.768			
Polotical Intervension (pi)	0.165	0.331	0.9		
Return Decision (rd)	0.768	0.716	0.199	0.911	
Skills, Development & Career opportunities (sdc)	0.345	0.413	0.317	0.417	0.911

4.3.3 Goodness of Fit

To determine the goodness of fit SRMR value was calculated. In this study the SRMR value is 0.06 which is less than 0.08 indicating that the model is fit (Ghombavani et al., 2020).

4.3.4 Structural Model

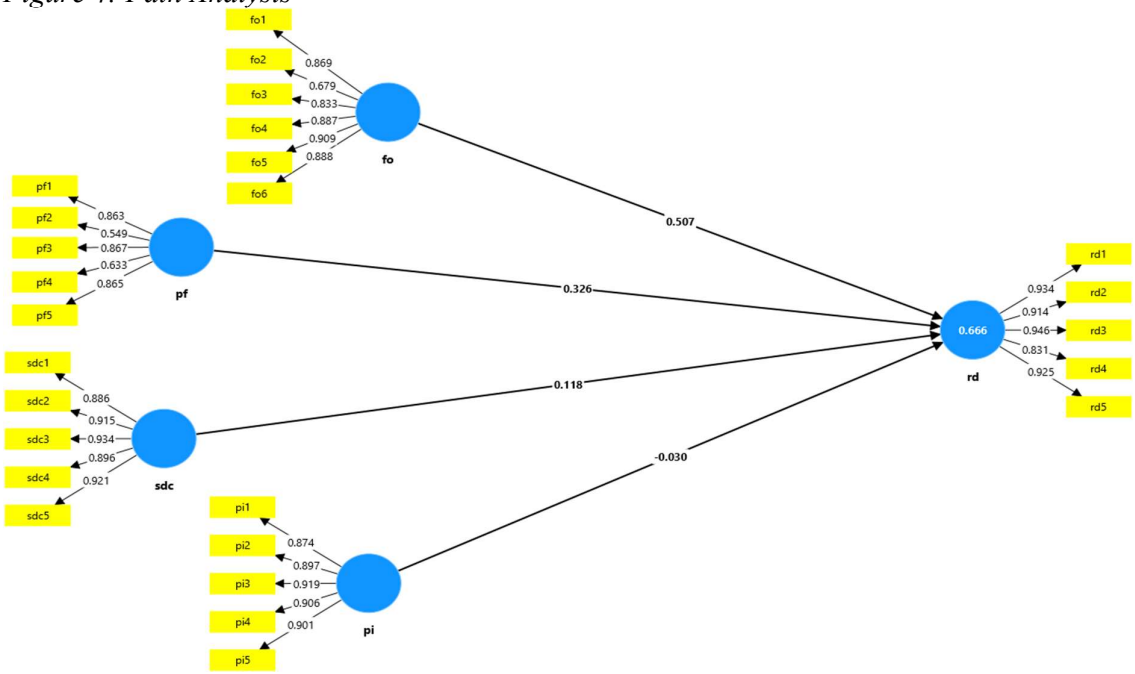
A structural model is the part of a structural equation model that describes the connections between latent constructs and shows how one construct affects another. By defining the direct and indirect effects of constructs, this model allows researchers to test theories regarding causal links and the general framework of the theoretical model (Diamantopoulos et al., 2008). In the structural model, the evaluation begins with R^2**,** followed by VIF**,** path coefficients, and Q^2**.**

Table 10: *Coefficient of Determination (R2) and F square*

Constructs	R Sqaure	Constructs	F Square	Constructs	VIF
Return Decision	0.666	fo -> rd	0.39	fo	1.969
		pf -> rd	0.144	pf	2.201
		pi -> rd	0.002	pi	1.191
		sdc -> rd	0.032	sdc	1.277

As per table 10 the purpose is to evaluate the model's ability to explain and predict changes in endogenous variables caused by external factors. R-square measures and significance level of path coefficient is primary assessment requirement for the structural model. F square measures the intensity of an independent variable's influence on a dependent variable. It is useful in determining how much variance in the dependent variable is explained by each independent variable. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) measures multicollinearity in regression models by showing how much a predictor's variance is inflated by correlations with other predictors. A VIF below 3.3 indicates no multicollinearity, and since all values are under this threshold (Table 10), no issue exists (Kock & Lynn, 2012).

Figure 4: Path Analysis



Source: *Author's computation*

Figure 4 shows four independent variables i.e. family obligation, psychological factor, skill, development and career and political intervention, whereas return decision is dependent variable.

4.4 Hypothesis Test

A hypothesis is a detailed, testable statement of what the researcher believes the study's outcome will be. It is an empirical notion in the sense that it can be tested through experience; experience can be used to determine if a theory is valid or not.

Table 11: *Hypothesis Test*

Hypothesis	Beta	SD	T-Values	P values	LLCI 2.50%	ULCI 97.50%	Decision
fo -> rd	0.507	0.037	13.701	0	0.431	0.576	Supported
pf -> rd	0.326	0.041	8.038	0	0.246	0.404	Supported
pi -> rd	-0.03	0.031	0.964	0.335	-0.091	0.031	Not supported
sdc -> rd	0.118	0.036	3.297	0.001	0.048	0.188	Supported

Result supported at significance level: P<0.05.

Table 11 illustrates that P-value is less than 0.05 for all hypothesis except for hypothesis. There is significant relationship between variables of all hypotheses except for variables pi. The hypothesis shows there is significant relation between family obligation, psychological factors, skill, development and career opportunity with return decision. However, political intervention shows the insignificant relation with return decision.

After path coefficients, **Q^2** is evaluated as a measure of predictive validity in PLS path models. It indicates how well the model predicts endogenous variables. Q^2 values of 0.02–0.15, 0.15–0.35, and >0.35 represent negligible, moderate, and substantial predictive power, respectively (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). In this study, Q^2 = 0.66, showing substantial predictive relevance.

4.5 Robustness Check

4.5.1 Linearity

Linearity means that the latent variables along with their related indicators, and the latent variables themselves, are related linearly. It is important to check linearity to identify whether model is liner or nonlinear which helps to ensure that the model is valid and increase the reliability or accuracy of the conclusion (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). Most of the variables are insignificant which indicates that model linearity is satisfactory (see Table 12).

Table 12: *Linearity*

	Original sample (O)	SD	t values	P values	Decision
QE (fo) -> rd	-0.021	0.025	0.826	0.409	Insignificant
QE (pi) -> rd	0.03	0.032	0.94	0.347	Insignificant
QE (sdc) -> rd	0.024	0.032	0.758	0.448	Insignificant
QE (pf) -> rd	-0.066	0.024	2.801	0.005	Significant

4.5.2 Heterogeneity

Heterogeneity has been described as exhibiting diversity or something quite diverse within a population, dataset, or group. It always shows that the materials under investigation are not uniform that is, they are not of the identical or of the same nature (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). To analyze the heterogeneity Finite Mixture Partial Least Square (FIMIX-PLS) procedure was followed in Smart PLS 4.0. The value is scattered in Table 13 so that there is no issue related to heterogeneity means that all the data different in nature.

Table 13: *Heterogeneity*

	Segment 1	Segment 2	Segment 3	Segment 4	Segment 5
AIC (Akaike's information criterion)	714.058	521.45	412.792	300.678	272.661
AIC3 (modified AIC with Factor 3)	719.058	532.45	429.792	323.678	301.661
AIC4 (modified AIC with Factor 4)	724.058	543.45	446.792	346.678	330.661
BIC (Bayesian information criterion)	734.065	565.465	480.816	392.71	388.702
CAIC (consistent AIC)	739.065	576.465	497.816	415.71	417.702
HQ (Hannan-Quinn criterion)	721.978	538.874	439.72	337.109	318.597

MDL5 (minimum description length with factor 5)	854.093	829.528	888.912	944.84	1084.866
LnL (LogLikelihood)	-352.029	-249.725	-189.396	-127.339	-107.331
EN (normed entropy statistic)	0	0.873	0.537	0.61	0.657
NFI (non-fuzzy index)	0	0.895	0.519	0.555	0.589
NEC (normalized entropy criterion)	0	51.135	187.035	157.643	138.769

4.5.3 Endogeneity

Endogeneity arises when the explanatory variable, in any case of statistical modeling and particularly regression analysis, correlates with the error term; therefore, it shows biased and inconsistent estimates (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). Gaussian Copula analysis was used in the research to identify whether endogeneity is present in the model or not. The significance level to test the endogeneity is 0.05. P-values more than 0.05 which are insignificant depict the absence of endogeneity or generation of incorrect and invalid parameter estimations. On the other hand, p-values less than 0.05 show significant pair wise correlations. This insignificance supports the fact that there is no endogeneity that exists in these pair-wise relationships. Gaussian copula (GE) approach can be used to address this problem.

Table 17: *Endogeneity*

Construct	Coefficient	P values
GC (fo)	-0.002	0.979
GC (pi)	0.28	0.004
GC (sdc)	0.229	0.023
GC (pf)	-0.153	0.007
GC (fo)	-0.037	0.652
GC (pi)	0.287	0.004
GC (fo)	0.033	0.669
GC (sdc)	0.237	0.022
GC (fo)	-0.22	0.022
GC (pf)	-0.261	0
GC (pi)	0.31	0.001
GC (sdc)	0.265	0.008
GC (pi)	0.213	0.066
GC (pf)	-0.089	0.199
GC (sdc)	0.193	0.059
GC (pf)	-0.133	0.018
GC (fo)	0	0.995
GC (pi)	0.31	0.001
GC (sdc)	0.265	0.01
GC (fo)	-0.184	0.071
GC (pi)	0.167	0.154
GC (pf)	-0.193	0.027
GC (pi)	0.273	0.016
GC (sdc)	0.248	0.015

GC (pf)	-0.046	0.507
GC (fo)	-0.01	0.817
GC (pi)	0.252	0.035
GC (sdc)	0.175	0.089
GC (pf)	-0.208	0.003

5. Discussion

This study examined the determinants of return intentions among Nepali migrant returnees, employing Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to assess the relationship between latent constructs and their corresponding indicators. The structural analysis was guided by the conceptual framework, which posited that family obligation, psychological factors, and skill development and career opportunities positively influence the decision to return (Mohamed & Abdul-Talib, 2020; Nikander et al., 2014). The results support this framework, as all three hypotheses were accepted, with p-values below the 0.05 threshold and standardized coefficients falling within the established confidence intervals. These findings confirm the existence of statistically significant associations between the identified factors and return decisions.

Specifically, Hypothesis 1, which proposed a positive relationship between family obligation and return decisions, was supported. This suggests that migrants' commitments to their families constitute a strong motivation for repatriation, consistent with prior studies emphasizing the role of kinship and family ties in shaping return migration (Shmulyar Gréen & Melander, 2018). Similarly, Hypothesis 2, focusing on psychological factors, was also validated. The results indicate that emotional well-being, cultural attachment, and the desire for a sense of belonging contribute positively to migrants' intentions to return, aligning with the findings of Song (2018), who highlighted the psychological and emotional dimensions of return migration.

Hypothesis 3, which examined the influence of political intervention, was not supported. The results suggest that political factors were not perceived by respondents as a significant determinant of return. This diverges from the conclusions of Song (2018), who found political instability and governance issues to play an influential role in shaping return intentions in other contexts. The divergence may reflect the Nepali case, where economic and social factors overshadow political considerations in migrants' decision-making processes.

Finally, Hypothesis 4, concerning skill development and career opportunities, was also supported. Migrants indicated that the potential to apply acquired skills or pursue improved career prospects at home significantly influenced their return decisions. This finding is in line with Bossavie and Denisova (2018), who emphasized the importance of skill transferability and professional opportunities in shaping the return migration process.

Overall, the study highlights that while family and psychological attachments remain central, the economic dimension, particularly skills and career opportunities also plays a pivotal role in shaping return intentions. The relatively weak role of political factors in this context underscores the predominance of social and economic motivations over institutional or governance-related considerations in the return migration dynamics of Nepali workers.

6. Conclusion

This study emphasizes the intricate interactions between variables that affect migrant returnees' desire and intention to return to Nepal. It demonstrates that the main factors influencing their return are social reintegration, employment prospects, family reunification, and economic stability. The study also looks at the difficulties that migrants encounter in their new countries, including social discrimination, employment insecurity, legal constraints, and

workplace exploitation, all of which have a big influence on their desire to leave. It also looks into the motivations behind their departure from their host nations, such as difficult working conditions, little opportunity for professional advancement, and unstable finances. By tackling these goals, the study gives insightful information about the migration cycle and suggestions for how communities, organizations, and policymakers may help returnees reintegrate. enhancing job prospects, fortifying reintegration initiatives, and fostering entrepreneurial initiatives will be essential in ensuring that returnees contribute effectively to Nepal's economic and social development.

The study emphasizes how family ties, psychological aspects, and the chances for skill development in their own country all play a role in the decision of many men to travel to and return to Nepal. Returning to Nepal is frequently prompted by the need to reestablish ties with family as well as the emotional and social aspects of living in the host nation. The decision to return is also influenced by the possibility of both professional and personal development in Nepal as well as the difficulties encountered abroad, including limited career advancement, employment instability, and cultural adjustment. By addressing these issues, an environment that is more favorable for both attracting and keeping talent overseas and promoting a long-term return for Nepal's growth.

Economic, social, political, and personal factors interact in a complicated way to impact migrants' decisions to return home, and these decisions are frequently altered by shifting conditions in both the host and home nations. The host nation presents a number of difficulties for migrant returnees, such as social isolation, economic instability, and legal obstacles that impede their capacity to reintegrate and their chances for the future. Government-led reintegration programs, skill-development projects, and legislative changes to facilitate the transition and lessen the difficulties faced by returnees are all essential components of a comprehensive strategy to address these problems. Providing mental health resources and cultivating social support networks will also be essential to enabling migrants to reconstruct their lives in a stable and dignified manner.

Policy-making, economic development, and social reintegration are all significantly impacted by the study on the intention and aspirations of Nepali migrant returnees in Nepal. First of all, it offers insightful information about the variables affecting return migration, which aids legislators in creating focused reintegration initiatives that complement the abilities and goals of returnees. The results emphasize that in order to optimize returnees' economic contributions to Nepal, better job options, assistance for entrepreneurs, and talent recognition are required. The report also emphasizes how critical it is to address the psychological and social difficulties that returns encounter, pointing to the necessity of community support initiatives and counseling services. Additionally, by pointing out possibilities for cooperation between the public and private sectors and identifying gaps in reintegration programs, it informs migration management strategies. Finally, the research can be used as a basis for future research, encouraging further exploration of long-term reintegration outcomes and the role of digital platforms in connecting returnees with opportunities.

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