

**THE SCHOOL OF MISSION AND THEOLOGY**

**FESTIVAL CULTURE OF NEPALESE IMMIGRANT STUDENTS LIVING  
IN OSLO**

**MASTER'S THESIS IN GLOBAL STUDIES**

**MGS-320**

**BY**

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## ABBREVIATION

CBS	-	Central Bureau of Statistics
HHN	-	Helping Hands for Nepal-Norway
IELTS	-	International English Language Testing System
MHS	-	The School Of Mission and Theology
NESCO	-	Nepalese Student Community in Oslo
NIDS	-	Nepal Institute of Development Studies
NRNA	-	Non-Resident Nepali Association, National Co-ordination Council, Norway
NSD	-	Norwegian Social Science Data Services
RSS	-	National News Agency
SSB	-	Statistics Norway
TOEFL	-	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UDI	-	The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration

# Chapter One

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Study

Human beings are the social creature. From baby to become a human being, the society s/he grows up teaches her/him a lot and craft to a social being. The behavior and perspective of a mankind are directly related to the society and its environment. "Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."<sup>1</sup> The activities of an individual directly reflect his/her society and his/her knowledge acquired from the society. A person lives adopting own self to nature as per the geographical location and behaves in the way other members of the society behaves. "How shall I live? has to be answered in day-to-day decisions about how to behave, what to wear and what to eat and many other things. Each of the decisions a person makes every day are decisions not only about how to act but who to be."<sup>2</sup>

Whenever a person travels distance from the origin of his culture, s/he will be in any way attached towards own culture. Culture plays a great role to integrate the members of society with the feeling of togetherness. So the culture is alive in the unity of the members of the society. "One is clothed in or by one's culture and knit up with its institutions and other people."<sup>3</sup> With the changing time, the culture keeps on changing gradually even in the place of origin. When the culture is carried away to the new circumstances than it get some changes or modified or can be generalized.

Nepal is a small country located in south Asia between two giants China and India. Nepal is small in term of area but Nepal is huge in term of religion, culture, tradition and nature; the country full of diversity. More than 10 religions have been listed by central bureau of statistics, Nepal with the majority of Hindus. "According to the Nepal Census Report, 2011, 81.3 % of the Nepal's population was Hindu, followed by Buddhist (9.0%), Islam (4.4%), Kirat (3.1%), Christianity (1.4%) and others (0.8%)."<sup>4</sup> Hindu and Buddhist accept

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<sup>1</sup>Adrian Holliday et al., *Intercultural Communication: An Advanced Resource Book for Students* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2010), 94

<sup>2</sup> Adrian Holliday et al., *Intercultural Communication: 94*

<sup>3</sup> Robert Eddy, *Reflections On Multiculturalism* (Maine: Intercultural press, 1996), 51

<sup>4</sup>Central Bureau of Statistics (2012), "*National Population and Housing Census 2011*" Available at <http://cbs.gov.np/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/National%20Report.pdf>, site accessed on 14 August 2015.



each other's religious practices and usually follow the combination of both faiths. Moreover, Nepal has different ethnic groups with their own language and culture. "There are 100 officially recognized caste and ethnic groups who speak 92 languages and Nepali is the state language, which also works as a lingua franca in this diverse community."<sup>5</sup> The presence of different races of people and the geographical variation has made Nepal very rich in culture and festival.

I grew up in the Hindu society. Thus, the society has crafted me according to that environment and social setting. I have inherited the Hindu culture, social values and norms. I have learned to celebrate many festivals throughout the year. Though Nepalese has a lot of festivals, I only feel comfortable to celebrate and entertain own festival. Nepal is the country full of diversity in aspect to geography, religion, culture, residence etc. Based on the geographical location, religion, and ethnicity; people have a different culture. Obviously, different religion has a different festival but in Nepal same religion has a different festival based on location and ethnicity. The festival celebrated in the eastern part of Nepal is celebrated differently in the western part.

From the beginning of my arrival to Stavanger, Norway, I was very curious about the festival celebration. Where, when, with whom and how can I celebrate? I personally also had some difficulties to celebrate few festivals in the very beginning of the arrival to Stavanger, Norway. Stavanger has very few numbers of Nepalese students and it was being harder to communicate and find free time to gather and celebrate any festival. After few months of arrival in Stavanger, I had got a chance to celebrate Nepalese festivals. But my expectation of festival celebration was not fulfilled by the celebration program. I felt something missing. The gathering was not like a gathering in Nepal and the celebration was not like we used to celebrate in Nepal. From that moment I was interested in studying about the Nepalese festival in Norway. As the part of master thesis, I have chosen the festival culture of Nepalese student living in Oslo.

## **1.2. Research Questions**

This is the research focused on the festival culture of immigrants. The research will describe the Nepalese festival and way of celebration in the land of origin and the host land. Moreover, it will be focused on the way of celebration of Nepalese festival by the immigrant

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<sup>5</sup> Phanindra K. Upadhyaya (2011) "*Multicultural and Multilingual Issues: Hegemony and Denial in the Constitutions of Nepal since 1990*" Available at [http://cadaad.net/files/journal/CADAAD%202011\\_Upadhyaya.pdf](http://cadaad.net/files/journal/CADAAD%202011_Upadhyaya.pdf), site accessed on 14 August 2015.

student in Oslo. The research will find out, what types of the festival are celebrated by Nepalese students? How do they celebrate? What are the similarities and differences between celebration in Nepal and Norway? Have Nepalese immigrant students maintain their religion, caste system, hierarchy, ethnicity, gender roles in the festival culture? This research will be focused on these issues.

The main aim is to figure out the festival culture of an immigrant student in the context of Oslo. So, the specific questions of the research are:

- Who (among immigrant students) celebrate and what kind of festivals do they celebrate and how do they celebrate?
- Who performs the rituals and how do they perform?
- In the context of multi-cultured Oslo city, how is the festival culture being practiced (as similar to Nepal)?

### **1.3. Scope and Significance of the Research**

This project is an academic research as a partial fulfillment of the masters in Global Studies. So this research is written in an academic perspective. The data collected during the field work will be analyzed to conclude the research. Among the various aspect of culture, the research is focused on the festival culture and this research will find out; what kind of festival culture is followed by the Nepalese students? What has been changed or modified? What kinds of festival culture have been left behind? What kind of new culture has been adopted? The most important why has this festival culture being followed as same, changed or modified? More detail study will be in the festival culture and challenges related to festival culture. After completion of this project, better information can be found regarding the festival culture of the Nepalese immigrant student in Oslo from cultural and religious perspective. So, future study and scholars can get the benefit as the good source of information and better understanding of the Nepalese festival culture.

### **1.4. Limitation of the Research**

Festival culture is a broad term and broad part of culture. In the context of Nepalese, there are more festivals than calendar days that are celebrated in Nepal by different races, religion, ethnic groups and in different locations. So the scope of festival culture in this research is narrowed to the major festival celebrated in Nepal and those festival celebrated in Oslo, Norway. Nepalese has a long history of immigration to Norway. But major immigration is after the year 2000. At present, Nepalese are residing in Norway in different status

categorized by the residence permit they possess like a permanent residence, business, short term visit, student and family reunification. But this research focuses on the student and only their families i.e. those migrated in the family reunification process of the students. Only students and their dependents are interviewed as the source of the information. This research is projected to be completed in the short span of time with limited source data. So, this research does not cover all the aspects related to the festival culture of Nepalese. It has been narrowed to immigrant students and their festival culture in Oslo. Therefore, this research has a limitation on the area of study, aspect of culture, respondents, nature and sources of data and time.

### **1.5. Organization of the Study**

The research is divided into 6 major chapters and those six chapters are separated in different subchapters and heading as per the requirements.

Chapter one includes the brief introduction of the research like the background of the study, research question, scope and importance of the study, limitation of the study and structure of the study.

Chapter two includes research design, area of the study, procedure of sampling, nature and sources of data collection, information on fieldwork, ethics, researcher's experience and situations

Chapter three explores the related literature available on this topic, previous studies related to the project, theories about the subjects, history of the Nepalese immigration, information about the Nepalese festival, comparative description of the festivals celebrated in Nepal and in Oslo and others related aspects with the festival culture of Nepalese immigrant students in Oslo. This chapter also includes how other researcher and scholars have described similar topics and their theories about the research.

Chapter four presents the data collected during the field work. It presents data breaking down to the different subchapters and heading and the comparison as to make easier to analyze the data and withdraw the conclusions.

Chapter five analyzes the data presented in chapter four to conclude the presented data and the research. The data collected during the field work and presented on chapter four is analyzed and interpreted in the light of theoretical perspectives.

Chapter six will provide the final conclusion of the presented and analyzed data and the research.

At the end of the research, bibliography shows the list of literature in alphabetical order implicated in the research.

## Chapter Two

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1. Research Design

In any research methodological approach defines the quality and reliability of the findings. The findings of the research are always the outcomes of the better approach. The research design is "a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place. A research design will typically include how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analyzing data collected."<sup>6</sup>

This project is planned for the qualitative research, to investigate in detail regarding the issues of festival culture of Nepalese students. "Qualitative research is that the process is inductive, that is, researchers gather data to build concepts, hypothesis or theories."<sup>7</sup>

Michael D Myers says that one of the key benefits of the qualitative research is that it allows a researcher to see and understand the context within which decisions and actions take place. It is often the case that human decisions and actions can only be understood in context - it is the context that helps to explain why someone acted as they did. And this context (or multiple contexts) is best understood by talking to people.<sup>8</sup>

So, I have decided to use two types of approach during this project. To explore the data and history regarding the diaspora community of Nepal secondary data will be used which are published by the central bureau of statistics (CBS) Nepal, and the government data of Norway (SSB.no). These data may be published in a hard copy or accessed online that depends on the availability of the data. A semi-structured physical interview will be done to collect the data regarding the festival cultural aspect of the diaspora community of Nepalese living in Oslo. As the answers or data collected during the interview are subjective, the explanatory method of data analysis is used for the interpretation of data.

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<sup>6</sup> Business dictionary; Available at <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/research-design.html>, site accessed on 13 January 2016.

<sup>7</sup> Sharan B. Merriam, *Qualitative Research: A guide to Design and Implementation*, (San Francisco: Wiley and sons Inc, 2015), 16.

<sup>8</sup> Michael D Mayers, *Qualitative Research in Business and Management*, (London: Sage, 2013), 5

## 2.2. Selection of the Study Area

Oslo, the capital city is the most populated and multicultural city of Norway. People from different parts of the world have gathered here for different purposes like business, education, visit, job or in search of better human rights. Oslo is also the most populated city of Nepalese immigrant student. In the multicultural context, how is the Nepalese culture practiced? Is the main issue of the research? "Multiculturalism ... is the way of matching place, role, and task ..." <sup>9</sup> Hence, multicultural Oslo is the better place than Stavanger for research related to culture.

As the collective groups of immigrant students from Nepal, we have a community named the Nepalese student community in Oslo (NESCO), Norway which is very active in organizing cultural programs and festival celebration program. NESCO has records of most of the festivals celebration program that can provide lots of information regarding the cultural activities of the Nepalese student community in Oslo as well as the festival culture of the Nepalese student living in Oslo. So, NESCO and its members are sufficient and reliable sources of information in the process of data collection.

Stavanger has a few Nepalese students living for a short period, maximum 2 years. Therefore, I decided to perform my research based in Oslo where I can find a bigger Nepalese community and I can find people living in Oslo for a short period (few months) to long period (ten years). Since I am a part of this community, I have access to language, intercultural competence, festival rituals and its significance.

## 2.3. Sampling Procedure

Interview method is considered as a good approach for the primary data collection in a qualitative research, I have also selected the interview method for the data collection of this thesis. Among the various types of interviews, a semi-structured interview is the suitable and widely used method in qualitative research. "Semi-structured interviews consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allows the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail." <sup>10</sup> Therefore, I have also used the semi-structured interview method during the data collection process. I had prepared a set of questions before the interview and during the interview; I asked different follow-up questions depending on the answer and the openness of the interviewee. Those

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<sup>9</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Culture In Liquid Modern World*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011) 55

<sup>10</sup> Nicholas Mays, *Qualitative Research in Health Care* (London: BMJ books, 1999) 11-19; Available at <http://www.nature.com/bdj/journal/v204/n6/full/bdj.2008.192.html#B2>, site accessed on 18 January 2016

follow-up questions helped me to get in depth answers. Objective questions or yes/no questions are avoided as far as possible. Only a few yes/no questions have been asked followed by why and how questions.

For the research interviewing all the Nepalese students living in Oslo is not possible so, certain a number of students had to be interviewed. Therefore, the common method used in research has been used to interview a selected number of students to represent the whole group of Nepalese students by the purposive sampling procedure. "The purposive sampling technique is a type of non-probability sampling that is most effective when one needs to study a certain cultural domain with knowledgeable experts within."<sup>11</sup> I selected much more persons than I needed from the list of participants in the festival maintained by NESCO. Those selected were emailed as first contact and informants were selected from those who replied the email with interest to participate in the research. It is a difficult part to choose the informants and very difficult to choose the right informants.

I have selected 14 respondents out of 18 interested students for my field work. To make the informants group inclusive as much as possible, I have selected 6 females and 8 males for gender inclusion, 6 dependents and 8 students. 7 had lived in Norway for about 2 years or less and 7 more than 2 years. 9 informants had lived in other cities before they moved to Oslo and 5 were living in Oslo since they have arrived Norway, 2 informants belong to the ethnic groups (*Tamang* and *Newar*). Ethnic groups can be defined as "people of the same race or nationality who share a distinctive culture."<sup>12</sup> Ethnic groups can also be defined as "a group socially distinguished by others or by itself on the basis of its unique culture, national origin or racial characteristics."<sup>13</sup> In the context of Nepal ethnic groups have their own unique culture and racial characteristics. It would have been better to get informants from several religious groups but unfortunately, I did not find any respondent besides Hindus. Before I started interviewing, I requested them to sign the information and consent sheet which they had read in their email. I have explained the purpose of the research and assured them about their privacy. So, after completion of the interview, I have given numbers to the recording to make the informants anonymous.

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<sup>11</sup> Dolores C. Tongco, "*Purposive Sampling as a Tool for Informant Selection*" Available at <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/bitstream/handle/10125/227/11547-3465-05-147.pdf>, site accessed on 18 January 2016

<sup>12</sup>The Dictionary, "Ethnic Group", available at <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/ethnic%20group>, site accessed on 20 March 2016.

<sup>13</sup> Philip Q. Yang, *Ethnic Studies: Issues and Approaches* (Sunny press, 2000), 11

Furthermore, name, age or specific address of the informants will not be used during the presentation and analysis of data. Even if the researcher wants to use the names of informants than researcher must use fictive name to maintain the privacy of informants.

#### **2.4. Nature and Sources of Data Collection**

The nature of this research is qualitative; the data collected are mostly primary data. Mainly the data related to the festival culture of immigrant students in Oslo are primary and subjective data. Partially, secondary data are also used in this research. Data related to immigration of Nepalese to Norway, festival culture in Nepal and features of Nepal and Norway are taken from secondary sources. These secondary data are both qualitative and quantitative. Use of secondary data in the research saves time and makes research reliable because secondary data are already collected and analyzed. But these data do not have freshness because it represents a certain time in the past.

Primary data are collected from the study area during the field work and informants are the sources of primary data. Secondary data are collected from different books, journals, magazines, periodicals, reports, exports and internet sources like the government sites of Nepal and Norway. Secondary data are used to support the primary data and to describe the history of Nepalese immigration and festival culture and rituals.

#### **2.5. Fieldwork**

Qualitative research is always better with the primary data. To obtain the primary data, field work is the important method in the research. I selected Oslo as my study area and did field work for about four weeks in October 2015. I used semi-structured interview method to collect the primary data required for the qualitative research.

For the additional information, I visited Nepalese community like Helping Hand For Nepal-Norway and personally met the president, visited Nepalese Student Community in Oslo (NESCO). I had also visited members of Non-Residential Nepalese Association to find the information about the immigration of Nepalese to Norway.

##### **2.5.1. As Researcher**

Initially, I was puzzled regarding the field work. Many questions were moving around in my mind. I was confused about when to start? How to get started? Where can I find my respondents? The more confusing was, whom should I choose as my respondents? As I had focused my field research in Oslo, we can find a huge Nepalese community there. I needed



just a few of them as my informants. It was very hard to choose the right informant making the sampling inclusive. I found it to be a challenging task.

During the first week of September, I met my supervisor and got ideas of collecting background information before starting the field research. So, while I was waiting for the approval for data collection from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), I started collecting some background information regarding Nepalese students and their festival cultures in Oslo. During my visit to the office of Nepalese Student Community in Oslo (NESCO), I got a chance of informal conversation with a few students living in Oslo for 3-4 years. Then I got the clue, whom should I choose as informants for my research. I got the list of the participant of a few festival celebration program organized by the Nepalese Student Community in Oslo (NESCO), and I selected a majority of my informants from this list.

As I got the approval email from Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), I firstly emailed my informants and then ask them if they can participate in the research. Secondly, I emailed the information and consent sheet to them. Then, I finalized the list of informants after they replied me. Out of 29 emailed, I got replied from 18 of them. I selected 14 as my informants out of those 18 who were interested. It was very stressing to fix the schedule of an interview with the interviewee. To make the interviewee comfortable, I fixed the schedule of an interview on their choice of location and time. Most of the interviewee preferred to meet at a restaurant which I found beneficial during the interview. Interviewee answered in depth. Few of them asked me to visit their apartment and I interviewed them in their apartment. Two of the interviewee preferred to stay in pen area so; we meet near the Oslo central station and interview in the open greenery area.

As I began my data collection interviewing respondent, I got very short and poor answers. Then I realized that I should explain to them in the beginning about myself and explained to them that please do not answer me predicting that I am from the same origin and I know most of the things. Afterward, I got the better answer and in-depth information. My interview was semi-structured so, to make my interview broader and in-depth, I asked some follow-up questions. A few informants I interviewed a second time after the valuable suggestion from my supervisor. The research period was wonderful; I knew the lifestyle of immigrants and students and the importance of festival to them. I also knew the cultural variation of the informants and their variation in the festivals rituals thought they celebrate similar festivals.

## 2.6. Validity and Reliability of the Research

The awareness of the researcher about the reliability and validity of the research results in admirable and meaningful completion of research. "Reliability is about the consistency of the results obtained from a measuring instrument in a piece of research."<sup>14</sup> Reliability ensures that research is trustful for the scholars. "Reliability is the consistency of measurements of a concept, using an identical measurement procedure and the replicability of the findings."<sup>15</sup>

Validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are. In other words, does the research instrument allow you to hit "the bull's eye" of your research object? Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions, and will often look for the answers in the research of others.<sup>16</sup>

As a researcher, I have collected authentic data from different sources being careful about the research ethics. All the collected data are analyzed and interpreted with the available theories and social concepts.

## 2.7. Ethical Consideration

Ethics is the most important part of the research. A researcher has to be very careful about the research ethics in order to perform a good research and to get better research results. Biasness of the researcher may collect wrong information or data that can lead to manipulated results. So, a researcher should be neutral in every aspect during the research.

I was very much aware of research ethics during my field work and will be careful in the future while writing the thesis. In the beginning, I sent emails explaining the purpose of the study and asked them to participate. As I got the positive answer from them I emailed information and consent sheet and provided enough time to study before I got them signed. I have explained to them why I was recording the interview and I had taken permission from informants to record the interview. The recording will be stored in my private laptop with password protection and it is accessible only for me. The private information of the informant will be kept secret. After the completion of my thesis, all this information will be deleted from by laptop.

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<sup>14</sup> Mick Finn et al., *Tourism and Leisure Research Methods: Data Collection, Analysis and Interpretation* (HarLow: Longman, 2000), 28

<sup>15</sup> Matthias Baumgarten, *Paradigm Wars: Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research* (Norderstedt :Grin Verlag, 2013), 4

<sup>16</sup> University of Guelph, "School of hospitality, Food and Tourism Management" available from: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/hftm/validity>; site accessed on 4 May 2016.

During the data collection, I conducted interview trying to bel and even explained to few respondents that not to consider me from the same background and not to understand that I also know those answers. Additionally, I will try to be objective while interpreting and analyzing the data.

## Chapter Three

### CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

#### 3.1. Festivals in Nepal

Nepal is the country with diversities in religion, culture, ethnicity and settlements. This has resulted in the presence of many festivals among the different groups of people. The common festival that can be observed are *Dashain, Tihar, Chhad, Buddha Jayanti (Vesak), Rakshya Bandhan, Gaijatra, Teej, Lhosar, Shiva Ratri, Holi, Id, Christmas* etc. this festival in Nepal are mainly set according to the lunar calendar. Besides, these main festivals, we can see many other festival celebrations in different geographical location by certain races and ethnic groups like *Indra Jatra, Macchendranath Jatra, Gode Jatra, Sakela* etc.

As the presence of multi-religion, culture and ethnicity, the festival celebrated in Nepal can be mainly categorized in:

1. National festivals
2. Religious festivals
3. Ethnic festivals

The government of Nepal has declared major festival of every religion present in Nepal as national festivals and provides public holiday, some other festivals celebrated by the followers of certain religion are declared as religious festivals and only those who celebrates the festival get holiday facility. Ethnic festivals are those celebrated by an ethnic group like *Newar, Magar, Tamang, Gurung, Rai, Limbu, Sherpa* etc. and only these ethnic groups enjoy a holiday during the festivals. For instance *Dashain, Tihar, Christmas, Eid* are in the category of national festivals while *Ram nawami, Krishna Janmaasthami* etc are religious festivals and *Lhosar, Sakela, Ghode Jatra* are Ethnic groups' festivals. The majority of the population in Nepal is Hindus so; most of the Hindus festivals are coded as national festivals.

Generally, festival means "a day or time of religious or other celebration, marked by feasting, ceremonies or other observances."<sup>17</sup> Festivals in Nepal are mostly celebrated based on the lunar calendar. Every festival has its own uniqueness in celebration and rituals. For instance, *Dashain* is festivals celebrated with family and relatives with the worship of *Durga Bhawani* and her different incarnations, *Tihar* is celebrated with friends, especially by sisters and brothers worshipping *Laxmi, Holi* with friends.

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<sup>17</sup> The Dictionary; Available at <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Cultural+festival>, Site accessed on 24 February 2016.

*Dashain* is the main festival in Nepal celebrated for 15 days which has a public holiday of 9 days. *Dashain* is celebrated as the auspicious day of victory of Goddess *Durga* over Demon, light over darkness. *Dashain* festival starts on the next day of no moon night of Aswin or Kartik (September or October) according to the lunar calendar. The first day is *Ghatasthapana*, which means the establishment of the *Dashain Ghar* (room for worshipping during the *Dashain* festival). Normally *Dashain Ghar* is shielded from the direct sunlight. Grains (especially barley and other grains like wheat, maize etc.) are seeded on the bed of sand inside *Dashain Ghar*. The moment of establishing *Dashain Ghar* and the seeding is determined by the priest and astrologers. Beginning from that day, worshipping of a different female goddess is continued for 9 days. These 9 days of *Dashain* is often called as *Nawa Ratri*.

With regular worships and visit to different temples, the days moves on. Then, the seventh day of the festival is called '*Fulpati*'. It is another important day of *Dashain*. Flowers with banana stalks, sugarcane are tied with a red cloth which is brought to the *Dashain Ghar*. The government of Nepal has an official program of *Fulpati*. *Kalash* filled with holy water, *Jamara*, banana stalks, sugarcane tied with red cloths from Gorkha palace is carried to Kathmandu Hanuman Doka palace (official *Dashain Ghar* of Government of Nepal. It is brought from Gorkha to Kathmandu by Nepalese Army. Government Officials and VIP persons join army parade in *Tudikhel*. The public holiday of six days begins from this day.

The eighth day of *Dashain* is *Maha Asthami*. The goddess of war and power *Durga* and *Kali* are worshiped and different male birds and animals like goat, sheep, buffalo, and duck are sacrificed. These animals are sacrificed with especial prayers by the elder persons of the house. The sacrifice of animals and birds is done throughout the day in almost every house and the *Durga* and *Kali* temples. The meats of these sacrificed animals are consumed by the families.

The ninth day of *Dashain* is *Maha Nawami*. On this day as well animals are sacrificed to honor goddess *Durga*.

On this very day the god *Vishwa Karma*, the God of creativity is also worshiped. All factories, vehicles, any machinery instruments and anything from which we make a living are worshiped. We also give sacrifices to all moving machinery like cars, airplanes, trucks etc. to get the blessing from goddess *Durga* for protection for vehicles and their occupants against accidents during the year. The entire day is colorful.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Avigya Karki, Visit Nepal, Dashain Festival in Nepal; Available at [http://www.visitnepal.com/nepal\\_information/dashain.php](http://www.visitnepal.com/nepal_information/dashain.php), Site accessed on 28 February 2016.

The tenth day is the *Dasami*. On this day, we take *Tika* and *Jamara* from our elders and relatives. Red *tika* is taken as the symbol of victory and blessing. Most of the relatives and family members visit home to get *tika* and blessing on this auspicious day. This granting and taking *Tika* and *Jamara* continues for four more days. Then festival comes to the end of the festival on the fifteenth day on full moon day. We dispose of most of the thing we set from the first day to ninth day. "The full moon day is also called '*Kojagrata*' meaning 'who is awake'. The Hindu goddess of wealth *Laxmi* is worshipped. On this day, the goddess *Laxmi* is given an invitation to visit each and everyone. *Dashain* thus is not only the longest festival but also the most anticipated one among all the festivals of Nepal."<sup>19</sup>

*Gadhi Mai* festival which is celebrated in every five years in the southern part of Nepal is the festival with the largest number of sacrifice. Hundreds of butchers slaughter animals for two days which begins with the early rituals. "... watch over 400 butchers, who were lined up around the field as the pre-sacrificial ritual began at 2 am. I get this strange kind of energy when I am on the slaughter field. I don't feel remorse—not at all. I just feel lucky that I am pleasing the Goddess, It's a part of our culture, said 38-year-old Yadav Kumar"<sup>20</sup>

At present, many people and animal activists are raising their voice against the animal sacrifice. So, in comparison to previous year animal sacrifice is decreasing in many festivals. "The number of devotees has increased but that of the buffaloes slaughtered is less than last time"<sup>21</sup> said Prem Prasad Shah, a member of the post-sacrifice management committee.

Though many people and animal activists are against the sacrifice saying its cruelty to animals, most of the devotees are sacrificing animals relating with thousands of years old tradition and culture of *sanatan* religion. "The ritual, which is believed to be the largest animal sacrifice in the world, has drawn criticism from activists at home and abroad."<sup>22</sup> The animals' sacrifice in Nepal during the festivals has drawn the attention of the world animal activists' and peoples'. Similar voices are raised against the animal sacrifice in India and the whale and dolphin massacre in the Faroe Islands in Denmark.

*Tihar* is another festival celebrated for 5 days with a public holiday for 3 days. *Tihar* falls on the month *Aswin* or *Kartik* (September or October) according to the date fixed by astrologer on the lunar calendar. It starts mostly from the thirteenth day of ending of *Dashain*

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<sup>19</sup> Avigya Karki, Visit Nepal, Site accessed on 28 February 2016.

<sup>20</sup> Chahana Sigdel, "Sacrifice despite widespread objections" The Kathmandu Post; Available at <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2014-11-29/sacrifices-despite-widespread-objections.html>; site accessed on 11 March 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Chahana Sigdel, "Sacrifice despite widespread objections" site accessed on 11 March 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Chahana Sigdel, "Sacrifice despite widespread objections" site accessed on 11 March 2016.

festival. On the first day of *Tihar*, people worship Crow as the messenger of the news. The dog is worshipped on the second day as the guard of the house. The cow is worshipped in the morning of the third day and the goddess of wealth '*Laxmi*' in the evening with the song of *Laxmi* and '*Bhaili*'. Ox is worshipped on the fourth day as the helper in the farming. Among the ethnic groups *Newar*, the fourth day is observed as the '*Maha Puja*' which literally means worship of own self. On the fifth day sister worships their brothers with colorful *tika*, garland and special gift and vice versa.

Festival like *Chhad* is celebrated only by the *Madeshi* population living in southern plain of Nepal whereas; *Lhosar* festival is celebrated only in upper Hilly region and the Himalayan region of Nepal. *Lhosar* festival is of three types celebrated by a different ethnic group of people. "*Tamu Lhosar* is the festival of Gurung community of Nepal and *Lhosar* means New Year. *Tamu Lhosar* is a celebration of Gurung's New Year. The *Tamu Lhosar* marks the beginning of the *Tamu Sambat* or *Gurung* Calendar Year."<sup>23</sup> *SonaIm Lhosar* is the festival of *Tamang* community of Nepal and they also celebrate this festival as the beginning of their own new year. *Gyalpo Lhosar* is celebrated in Nepal by *Sherpa*, *Bhutia* and *Yolmo* communities. Different communities at different places have their own way of celebration. The differences between these three *Lhosar* are on the celebration date, way of celebration and the celebrating community. As a similarity, all three *Lhosar* are celebrated as the beginning of the New Year of the celebrating community. These festivals are celebrated according to the own calendar of the ethnic groups. Meanwhile majority of Nepalese celebrate New Year in the mid-April according to the lunar calendar which is the official calendar of Nepal. Different ethnic groups of Nepal use their own calendar and celebrate the festival as per their own calendar.

*Sakela* is the biggest festival, *Kirat* Community celebrate. *Ubhauri* and *Udhauri* are the two main festivals of *Sakela*. *Ubhauri* means upward and *Udhauri* is downward. As *Kirats* move uphill and downhill on the summer and winter seasons.

According to the Holy book of *Kirat* '**Mundhum**', a year of 365 days is divided into two phases *Ubhauri* (going up) and *Udhauri* (going down).

Every year *Ubhauri* is celebrated on *Baishak Sulka Purnima*. It is on the same day of *Bhuddha Purnima* or *Bhuddha Jayanti*. *Sakela Ubhauri* falls on the month of *Baishak* (April-May) and *Sakela Udhauri* falls during the month of *Mangsir* (October-November) of *Bikram Sambat* calendar. Traditionally the *Kirat* people used to climb up to the mountains in summer to avoid the heat and malaria (epidemic) after

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<sup>23</sup> *Festival In Nepal*; Available at <http://www.weallnepali.com/nepali-festivals/tamu-losar>, Site accessed on 22 February 2016

performing the *Ubhauli* rituals. During these traditional rituals they worship their ancestors and nature, seeking better wealth and crops. At the start of winter with similar rituals for *Udhauli*, they used to move down the hill.<sup>24</sup>

Even, Nepal has festival only celebrated by women. Teej is the festival enjoyed by the ladies of *Bhramins* and *Chhetri* caste. *Teej* is observed for three days during the full moon day of late August or early September. Unmarried ladies worship Lord Shiva to get the blessing of better Husband and married women worship *Lord Shiva* for the long life of their husband. This festival is celebrated according to the Hindu mythology which states that Goddess *Parvati* wanted a better man as her husband and worshipped *Lord Shiva*. She was blessed my *Lord Shiva*. At present also, ladies worship *Lord Shiva* with a day fasting.

*Maha Shivaratri* and *Buddha Jayanti* is the festival celebrated commonly by both Hindu and Buddhist of Nepal.

*Buddha Jayanti* is celebrated with great devotion and significance in Nepal in their own traditional and unique style. In Nepal, some celebrate it by worshipping Buddhist stupas and Buddha images, others by visiting *Swayambhu*, *Anandakuti* and other Buddhist shrines and *Viharas* in the early morning and observing precepts, doing the *Buddha puja*, and giving *Dana*. On this day, there is a Buddhist congregation at *Anandakuti Vihara* to celebrate *Buddha Jayanti* at the national level. Here the celebration is held every year by observing precepts, *Buddha puja*, listening to sermons, and paying homage to the Buddha's holy relic which is put on display just for that day.<sup>25</sup>

Due to the presence of multiple races of people and ethnic groups with variation in language, tradition and culture, Nepalese celebrate festival more than calendar days. And all these festivals are celebrated with peace and harmony between communities.

Nepal is the 'Land of Festivals' with at least one part of the kingdom celebrating a festival every day of the year. Festivals may be linked with the memory of the departed soul, to herald a different season, to mark the beginning or end of the agricultural cycle, to mark national events or for family celebrations etc. On a festival day, the Nepalese take their ritual bath, worship different gods and goddesses, visit the temple, observe fasting and organize feasting. The most important aspect of Nepalese culture is the religious harmony and that is why understanding prevailing among the Hindus and Buddhists.<sup>26</sup>

The ritual bath is mandatory to perform the rituals during the festivals. The ritual bath is in addition to the normal bath with the chants and prayer. During the bath, the person

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<sup>24</sup> *Festival In Nepal*, Site accessed on 22 February 2016

<sup>25</sup> Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK), *Buddha Jayanti in Nepal*; Available at [http://www.lumbini.org.uk/may\\_1998\\_8.html](http://www.lumbini.org.uk/may_1998_8.html), Site accessed on 22 February 2016

<sup>26</sup> Green Horizon Tours and Travels, *Nepal Culture and Festival*; Available at <http://www.greenhorizontour.com/Nepal-Information/nepal-culture-and-festival.php>, Site accessed on 23 February 2016



speaks a special prayer and follows specific steps which shift the normal early morning shower to the ritual bath. Such ritual bath is the regularly practiced by the priests and most *Brahmins* and practiced by others at the time of festivals.

### 3.2. Festival Cultures in Nepal

When a person comes migrates from place of origin to any other place than new surroundings starts crafting in the new approach and new trends. "When a group of individuals have different cultures and come into the first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original pattern of either or both groups."<sup>27</sup> Culture may get changed completely, modified or hybridized. Similarly, due to the migration and difference between the communities, festivals celebration in Nepal is different in different geographical locations.

Though a majority of the population is Hindu, the way of celebration of the festival in the southern part of Nepal and the northern part is different and also the way of celebration in the eastern part and western part is different. Even in the same region way of celebration differs between two ethnic groups. For instance, during the celebration of *Dashain*, the greatest festivals of *Hindus*, ethnic groups like *Newar*, *Magar*, *Gurung* use alcohol as the important part of the festival whereas *Bhramins* do not. Most of the Nepalese use red *tika* from their elders in *Dashain* as the symbol of victory of god against demons, truth against falsehood meanwhile Mongolian race people and Buddhist accept white *tika*. "... getting the *tika* - red or white color mixed with rice and worn on the foreheads, as sacred marks symbolizing blessings from deities and senior kin"<sup>28</sup>

Besides all these diversities, music is an inseparable part of each and every festival celebrated in Nepal. All of these festivals discussed above also have a typical music. For instance, *Mangal Dhoon* (holy sound) is a special music played during *Dashain* and it is also the music played during other festival rituals as well. *Lhosar* and *Teej* have its own music. *Deusi* and *Bhaili* songs are played during *Tihar* celebration. In most of the festival, music is played live by the members of a community. Among all, music is very important in ethnic communities like *Newar* and Mongolian races ethnic groups like *Gurung*, *Tamang*, *Rai*,

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<sup>27</sup> Young Yun Kim and William B. Gudykandt, *International and intercultural communication annual*, vol. XI, (Newbury Park, Sage Publication, 1987) , 10

<sup>28</sup> Tanka B. Subba and A. C. Sinha, *Nepali Diaspora in a Globalised Era* (Routledge, 2015); Available at <https://books.google.no/books?id=MumoCgAAQBAJ&pg=PT365&lpg=PT365&dq=Symbol+of+red+and+white+tika.+in+nepal&source=bl&ots=9c1alEPHbw&sig=C3MrA4GEttOGtfwHS62ZDTd7Dc8&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi-0ZPzIMnLahWKIJokHRvwCqcQ6AEILzAE#v=onepage&q=Symbol%20of%20red%20and%20white%20tika.%20in%20nepal&f=false>, Site Accessed on 14 March 2016.

*Limbu, Sherpa* etc. Live music is played by the member of the communities in almost every festivals celebrated by *Newars'* communities.

"A prominent factor in a Nepali's everyday life is religion. The natives of Nepal still follow age-old customs of Hindu and Buddhist religious practices. Adding color to the lives of Nepalese are festivals the year round which they celebrate with much pomp and joy. Food plays an important role in the celebration of these festivals."<sup>29</sup>

Food culture is the significant part of the festivals. The most of the festivals celebrated in Nepal has a specific cuisine. For instance, *Dashain* has varieties of meat as the major food, *Tihar* has sweets with special bread '*sel Roti*', mixed grain soup and curry in *Janai Purnima*.

*Makar Sankranti* or *Maghe Shankranti* reminds us of some delicious food. *Till ko laddu* (Brown Sesame seed Fudge), *Chakku* (Molasses), Ghee (Clarified Butter), *Tilauri*. Spinich and Yam's curry is cooked as *Maghe Shankranti's* special food. A special type of Spinich called *Patne Palungo* specially grown in Nepal and yam (yam is *Tarual* in Nepali) is regarded as very important and special food of *Maghe Shankranti*.<sup>30</sup>

Mythical stories behind the celebration of a festival and the rituals are the enduring part of the festivals in Nepal. *Dashain* is related with the war victory of goddess over demons while *Tihar* is related to the love and relationship existed between the brother and sister (*Yama* and *Yamuna*), *Teej* is related with the blessing of Lord *Shiva* to *Parvati*. Some festivals are celebrated in memories of their ancestors. Festivals like *Kul puja* or *Kul Deuta Puja* are devoted to the ancestors. This culture and ritual of worshipping their ancestors are observed in almost caste and ethnic groups of Nepal.

In *Brahmin* community worshipping *kuldeuta* is to make ancestors happy and sacrificing a goat, purified rice pudding and flat bread prepared by rice flour. *Newar* sacrifice goat, chicken, eggs for their ancestor. Similarly, *Thulung Rai* sacrifice chicken and pigs. Similarly, worshipping *kuldeuta* is carried out by sacrificing male sheep, cock, pigs, goat and other bird species such as pigeons by the *Magar* of *Karnali* region.<sup>31</sup>

This festival of *Kulpuja* creates the environment of gathering member of an ancestor at a place every year forming a close bond between the members. "The ritual mode is transcended by amore existential type of performance ... A mode in which members of

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<sup>29</sup> Green Horizon, *Nepal Culture, and Festival*, Site accessed on 23 February 2016

<sup>30</sup> *Maghi*; Available at <http://www.weallnepali.com/nepali-festivals/maghe-sankranti>, Site accessed on 11 March 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Prakash Prasad Sapkota, "Kulpuja: A Ritual and Behaviour of Magar" *Dhaulagiri Journal of Sociology and Anthropology* Vol. 5 (2011), 239-246; Available at <http://nepjol.info/index.php/DSAJ/article/view/6366/5198>, Site accessed on 24 February 2016

human communities make known to each other, as the best they can, the often veiled truths of their existence"<sup>32</sup>

"Ritual is the prescribed order of rites, regularly repeated action or behavior."<sup>33</sup> The different festival has a certain set of rituals which differs between the communities. Usually, *Brahmins* or priests perform the ritual in the ceremonial celebration in the communities like *Bhramin* and *Chhetri* while *lama* performs rituals in *Tamang* and *Gurung* communities. Despite the variation in performance and the performer, the ritual has meaning to the communities which are similar. "... ritual forms for the purpose of social control and/or social communications."<sup>34</sup> Rituals are defined by the composition of the community as well as well as the geographical location which defines the activities of the communities. "Ritual is a mode of social action."<sup>35</sup> Those communities settled on the high hill visit to the top for some offering meanwhile communities living on the bank of the river makes the offering in the bank of the river.

In the context of Nepal, multiples of the festivals have a system of a sacrifice of the animals as the offering to the goddess. The offering is sometimes granted when some predetermined goals are achieved. In the festival like *Kul Puja*, "the key element of this ritual lies in sacrifice. They sacrifice as the ritual killing of substitutes as a way of ensuring contact and communication with ancestors."<sup>36</sup>

Festivals are the occasions to spread the culture and rituals to the new generations in the community as well as the external people. The concentrations of the ritual in the festival are significant which can be noticed from the distance. "Cultural performances are the ways in which the cultural content of a tradition is organized and transmitted on particular occasions through specific media."<sup>37</sup> By the means of festival and ritual community is attached to its place of origin and bonded with members. The intensive form of rituals is observed in the temples and occasion with an involvement of the priest. In the everyday life, people are performing many rituals which are continuously carried for the generations and are unnoticed. Rituals and cultures in Nepal are not the system of performing but the way of living. Rituals can be seen on the street every moment but they are unnoticed and the

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<sup>32</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual* (2006), 119

<sup>33</sup> Prakash Prasad Sapkota, "Kulpuja" (2011), 239-246, Site accessed on 24 February 2016

<sup>34</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford, Oxford university press, 2009), 89

<sup>35</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, (Oxford, Oxford university press, 2009), 41

<sup>36</sup> Prakash Prasad Sapkota, "Kulpuja" 239-246, Site accessed on 24 February 2016

<sup>37</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 39

collective forms are admitted. "Rituals are ... as a particularly intensive form of communication by virtue of their formality and repetition."<sup>38</sup>

### 3.3. History of Migration of Nepalese to Norway

According to Oxford Dictionary "migration is the movement from one part of something to another."<sup>39</sup> The movement of things, animals or human from one place to another for a certain period of time is migration. In the context of human being migration has been common and frequent due to the development of science and technology. People migrate from one place to another to seek the betterment of life. Migration may cause for the purpose of the job, business, and study or in search of a better geographical location.

"The history of labor migration from Nepal dates back to the period of unification, more than 300 years ago."<sup>40</sup> According to Sijapati and Limbu, the formal migration of the Nepalese started with the end of the war between Nepal and British East India Company. "The formal migration of Nepalese out of the country is generally associated with the induction of young Nepali males into the British army. The May 1815 treaty between Amar Singh Thapa and General David Ochterlony in Malaun (now in India) during the Anglo-Gorkha War paved the way for a tradition that has lasted almost 200 years."<sup>41</sup>

In the context of Norway, Nepalese migration is late as newcomers. According to NRNA, there were very few Nepalese who moved to Norway as asylum seekers and family reunification. After the 1990s, Nepalese has migrated to Norway as skilled job seekers and few as students. After 2000 Nepalese have immigrated to Norway mostly for higher education as students. "The history of Nepali people living in Norway goes back to more than 40 years ago. Most of the Nepalese living in Norway today had come to Norway in the last 10 years."<sup>42</sup> Since Norway has the free education system, Norway has become an attractive destination for Nepalese for higher education. Nepalese immigrants in Norway are the first generation immigrants that are Nepalese living in Norway were born in Nepal. Those who were born in Norway are still under 18 years of age.

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<sup>38</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 92

<sup>39</sup> The Oxford Dictionaries; Available at <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/migration>, Site accessed on 25 February 2016

<sup>40</sup> International Labor organization, *Labor Migration for Employment: A Status Report for Nepal 2013/14* (2014); Available at [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-kathmandu/documents/publication/wcms\\_312137.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---ilo-kathmandu/documents/publication/wcms_312137.pdf), Site accessed on 28 February 2016

<sup>41</sup> Bandita Sijapati and Amrita Limbu, governing Labor Migration in Nepal: An Analysis Of Existing Policies and Institutional Mechanism (Kathmandu, Himal Books Press, 2012), 5

<sup>42</sup> Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) National Co-ordination Council, Norway, Nepalese in Norway; Available at <http://www.nrnanorway.com/cu.html>, Site accessed on 28 February 2016

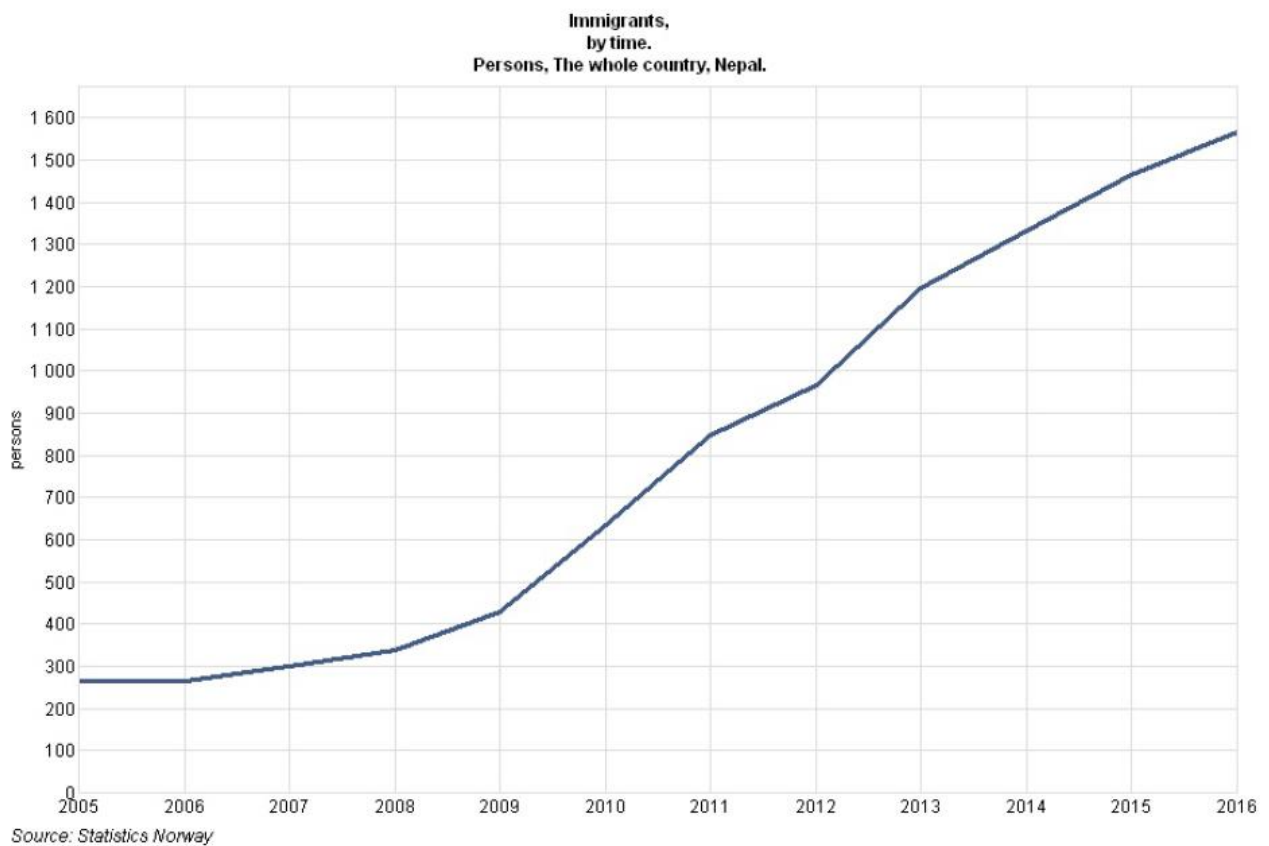
### **3.4. Present Scenario of Migration**

There are two universal factors of migration that is pull factor and push factors. In the context of Norway, both the factor has affected for the Nepalese migration. Political instability in Nepal, an irregular academic session conducted by universities, expensive fees in universities has acted as the push factors while free social security, quality education, better human development index and mainly free education system have acted as a pull factor for Nepalese immigrant.

Nepalese immigration to Norway was in few hundred till 2007. It had boost up since 2008 and continuously growing. The immigration in 2005 was 265 persons which reached 337 persons in 2008. In 2009, it was 429 persons which increased by three times to reach 1566 person till the end of 2015.

At present Norwegian government hires 40 *Sherpa* every year as the skilled worker to build trekking path in tourist place in Norway. Besides these, most of the immigrants are students who live in Norway for a short period of two years and six months. Only a few student stays for more than two years with continuous higher study or skilled job in Norway. Family reunification scheme also has supported Nepalese immigration for the short term. Family member (spouse and children) of students also immigrate to stay in Norway as long as students' reside in Norway. Limited parents of student visit for a short term of a week to three month which is unnoticeable.

**Figure 1: Immigration of Nepalese to Norway (2005-2015)<sup>43</sup>**



### **3.5. Festival Culture of Nepalese Living in Norway**

From the homeland and context of the diversity among the communities and religion and rituals, Nepalese student has immigrated to the multicultural city Oslo and other cities of Norway, where they are uniting being Nepalese. Such diverse people have traveled long and form groups of Nepalese student and permanent residents like Nepalese Student Community in Oslo (NESCO) and Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) National Coordination Council, Norway. Despite their differences in the origin, NESCO organizes a festival program to address all the students and try for the maximum participation of students and their family. NESCO has also bought enough utensils required for cooking during the festivals. Those utensils also can be used by any Nepalese students during the celebration or any ceremony. This research focuses on the way of their festival celebration in the new context.

In several cities of Norway, Nepalese students have tried their best for their unity. The main reason for this is to be together at the time of need and celebration. Student groups have

<sup>43</sup> Statistics Norway (2016); Available at <https://www.ssb.no/statistikkbanken/px-igraph/MakeGraph.asp?checked=true>, Site accessed on 7 March 2016

also helped for the newcomers each year by providing useful information and providing space for communicating with the other students. In the contest of Oslo, student program and gathering are mostly hosted by NESCO. Few of the programs are hosted by Helping Hands for Nepal-Norway. Nepalese students celebrate varieties of the festival in their homeland but they celebrate the festival like *Dashain*, *Tihar*, *Teej*, *Shiva Ratri*, New Year etc which are mostly hosted by NESCO and sometimes in coordination with HHN.

Despite the festival celebration by Nepalese students in Oslo, it is noticeable to them that they celebrate very few festivals in Oslo. I have experienced much less festival celebration in Stavanger during my stay of almost 11 month (August 2014 to June 2015). It is true that all the festivals of Nepal cannot be celebrated in Norway due to the lack of venue, time and availability of materials and of course the barrier of the Norwegian law as well. "... ritual practices are produced with the intent to order, rectify or transform a particular situation."<sup>44</sup>

NESCO tries the best to make maximum participation in all the festival. Still out of nearly eight hundred students living in Oslo, only about one hundred fifty participates in the celebration and the participators change in most programs. The maximum number of students' participation was counted in *Dashain* festival. Only a few participate regularly. The few number of participation of students in the festival may be due to the busy life in Oslo with job and study or may be a lack of holidays from study and jobs during the festival time. Moreover, students prefer to travel Nepal mostly during the *Dashain* and *Tihar* festivals. Those who are unable to travel to Nepal manage to participate in the program in Oslo.

Festivals like *Holi* and *Shiva Ratri* cannot be celebrated due to the restriction by law. Get together and camp firing for a whole night in the presence of marijuana (cannabis) is the rituals of *Shiva Ratri* which is restricted by law. *Holi* is observed during the sunny days of March in Nepal so the people can play with water as much as they want. Similar weather condition and the environment is not available in Oslo to support for the festival celebration like *Holi*. People fear to play with water due to coldness in the month of March in Oslo. So when Nepalese students celebrate *Holi*, they only use more colors and less water."In the course of the interaction and assimilation, the deep-rooted socio-cultural norms and values are analyzed and tested in the different context, which may fail sometimes. So they are modified and reshaped in a new way."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 108

<sup>45</sup> Parshu Ram Bhandari, *Cultural Identity Of Nepalese Immigrants Living In Oslo*, (2015), A Master Thesis submitted to MHS, Stavanger

In the new context of new rules and regulations and new kinds of setting has sometimes forced Nepalese student to adjust anyway in the available environment. So some festival cultures and rituals have been modified or changed. "Working of rituals in society can be seen as a vehicle of grace, without our coming to the simplistic idea that rituals always in the common good. ... rituals can be devoted to destructive violence as well as to peace and freedom."<sup>46</sup>

In Nepal, religion, culture or festival are not only followed or celebrated as the religion act or practice but it is the way of life. People live with the religion every moment. We can see cultural behavior in simple action. Festivals celebrations are fixed to match the environment and the weather conditions. Festival celebration is the time to share and relax with family and friends. Festival like *Sakela* is celebrated with the change in season and the weather, *Chhad* is celebrated in the bank of a river, the festival observed in the southern part (which is warmer with intense sunlight and plain area) of Nepal.

During the festivals, people visit the temple related to the festival throughout the day. *Durga* temples are visited in *Dashain*, *Krishna* temples in *Krishna Janma Asthami*, *Bauddha Stupa* are visited on *Buddha Jayanti* while *Shiva* temples are visited during the *Shiva Ratri and Teej*. *Ganesh* temples are crowded by the visit every Tuesday. In comparison to Oslo, Nepalese immigrant students miss those temples they used to visit during the festivals. If we see the demographics feature of Oslo, we find Oslo as the multi-religious city. Large numbers of people are residing in Oslo who is the followers of the Hindu Religion. In contrary, it is very hard to find the Hindu Temples in Oslo. Most of the Nepalese immigrants leaving in Oslo are Hindu. We find huge groups of Indian and Sri Lankan Hindus living in Oslo. Only Sri Lankan Hindus have established Hindu Temples with multiples of the goddess is at the same temple, which is visited by Nepalese Hindus as well. But this temple is very hard to locate and does not resemble as temple unless entered inside. There is no any information on the way to the temple and from outside it seems as if it is a residential building. Nepalese people are familiar with the *Pagoda* style temple and their perception and feeling will be unsatisfied while visiting the temple in Oslo built by Sri Lankan Hindus.

*Pagoda* is the original Nepalese temples architecture, which may have stored roofs or 5 projecting roofs of decreasing sizes, richly carved pillars, struts, doors, and windows. The roof is usually gilded and the main entrance has got a semi-circular tympanum with a central figure of an enshrined deity. Struts are placed at 45 degrees from the vertical walls of the shrine. The metal finial is bell-shaped and consists of the usual part of the inverted bell, lotus, *Kalash*, jewel, etc. The final is covered up with a

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<sup>46</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 132



triangular core with an umbrella on top. Several other symbolic animals and structures are depicted on the temples.<sup>47</sup>

During the festivals celebration in Oslo, most of the festival rituals are either partially performed or missed which has brought the feeling of a party than festival celebration among the participators. Among the Nepalese immigrant students, many of them are from the priest family or *Bhramins* by the caste. Still these people do not want to identify themselves as the member of priest family or the *Bhramin* caste. Hierarchy among the students is maintained either by the relationship or by the age not by the caste system. So, mostly rituals are performed by the elder person attending the festival celebration and rituals are performed by the elder individually or commonly in the group by the attendants. "Believing ... is making and preserving relationships of trust."<sup>48</sup> This has created a kind equality among the students. Students belonging from higher caste (priests of *Bhramin*) have accepted the hierarchy system of Oslo. Even their families in Nepal have accepted this.

Festivals like *Lhosar*, *Sakela*, *Gai Jatra*, *Machhindra Jatra* etc. are missing among the Nepalese students. The main reason behind this is the few numbers of students are in Oslo who are from the ethnic groups to celebrate those festivals. "The Hindus who now reside in a wide variety of contexts outside India, the categories of 'little' and 'great' Tradition have even more limited value. ... the range of religious phenomena so long associated with the Hindu 'little tradition' has been narrowed or displaced altogether among migrants and their descendants."<sup>49</sup>

### **3.6. Migration, Festival Culture, and Festival Rituals**

Migration, in general, is the process of moving from a place (place of origin) to a new place (host land) in search of better settlement conditions, job opportunity, business, education, facilities, peace and human rights etc. In the context of Nepalese student immigration to Norway, the free education system of Norway is only the reason which acts as a pull factor for the immigrants. For another citizen migration to Norway is the betterment of life in regard to job, business and human right condition and as an asylum seeker for some of the migrants from war zones.

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<sup>47</sup> Mukhan Jha, *India and Nepal: Sacred Centres and Antropological Researches* (New Delhi: MD Publications, 1998), 158

<sup>48</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 111

<sup>49</sup> Steven Vertovec, *The Hindu Diaspora: Comparative Pattern* (London: Routledge, 2000), 40

Migration by many different groups has result Oslo becoming a diverse city. Different religion and culture have moved to Oslo along with the migrating people which have provided a location for the interaction of a culture to various other cultures. The interaction between different cultures has some influence on each others' culture. But most of the migrants try to practice their own culture. "Transnational migrants often embark on a process of 'making values from two worlds fit'. Such negotiations of meaning can raise fundamental questions among groups as to: who we are, who is not part of us and how we are to act properly or morally or politically in relation to the perceived condition of location."<sup>50</sup>

Immigrants become strangers in a new land with the loss of familiar sounds, sights, and smells. The expectations of customary behavior, hearing one's native language, and support from family and friends can no longer be taken for granted. Even the most routine activities of everyday life—shopping for food, working, and leisure time pursuits can be alienating experiences for many new immigrants who find themselves in strange settings that require constant mental strain to navigate and to be understood.<sup>51</sup>

The first generations of migrant are attached to their homeland and are in frequent communication with their relatives and friends. They are familiar with a certain culture on which they are grown up. Besides that culture, all other seems to be new and unfamiliar. "Diasporas may effectively negotiate a new level of adaptation to host societies on the one hand as well as the continued maintenance of relations with the home country on the other."<sup>52</sup>

According to Kim Knott and Sean Mcloughlin, heritage language will be limited in the second generation and host language will be dominant over heritage in the language in the third generation. "The general use of the heritage language in all contexts by the first generation gives way to the functional distribution of the heritage language in the home and the host language elsewhere in the second generation, to the potential domination of the host language in all contexts in the third generation."<sup>53</sup> Similarly, culture or festival cultures and rituals may have same effects by the host culture. Moreover, festival cultures and rituals are not as easy as a language to maintain by the diasporas. When the second generation is brought up in the new cultural setting and festival cultures and rituals, the host culture can decline from the second generation.

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<sup>50</sup> Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (2009) , 45

<sup>51</sup>Charles Hirschman, *The Role of Religion in the Origins and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States* (Sage publication, 2011), 5

<sup>52</sup> Kim Knott and Sean Mcloughlin, *Diasporas: Concepts, intersections, identities*, (London: Zed Books Ltd., 2010), 135

<sup>53</sup> Kim Knott and Sean Mcloughlin, *Diasporas:* ( 2010), 137

In the first generation of diasporas, attachment and feelings towards the culture and rituals plays a key role in the continuity of the culture of heritage land. This is simply the belief what we have learned to perform. "Rituals, whether religious or not, make references to realities not always visible to the physical eyes."<sup>54</sup>

At present development of technology also has created a new way of communication between the land of origin and host land. Diaspora group can communicate their friends and relatives in the virtual world through internet access. Skype, Messenger, Viber, Facebook, Twitter and much more have significant role in the communication between diasporas and their family and friends. Even, this virtual world has a role on the ritual practice and performance in the diasporas. Prayers and rituals are practiced at home in the land of origin which are played electronically in the host land at the same time of performance and recorded as well. Virtual media like Skype, Messenger, Viber etc. have facilitate people in two geography to communicate with videos. So, the ceremonies and rituals can be transferred by the means of internet whereas electronics like laptop and mobiles act as the camera person and transferring device. Festivals celebrated in Oslo are watched by friends and families in Nepal and ceremonies and festivals of Nepal are watched in Oslo. Ceremonies like name giving ceremonies of a newborn child and prayer are performed at homeland which is played live by the means of the virtual world. "Hindu rituals procedures have become truncated refashioned or eclectically performed. Much of the style or corpus of rites has been virtually 'invented' in conjunction with social change in the community and basic rites have been mutually 'negotiated' so as to provide a kind of socio-religious bridge between migrants from originally distinct traditions."<sup>55</sup>

When a certain ceremony and rituals are not possible to perform in the host land due to the lack of some materials required for rituals or the unavailability of the priests then such rituals are performed by their families in the homeland. This kind of practice can be observed among the Nepalese diasporas community in Oslo and another part of Norway as well as other countries. For instance, due to the unavailability of priest, weaning ceremony of children who have born and lived in Oslo is celebrated in Oslo. At the same time rituals are performed at home by grandparents in Nepal. Diasporas feel the importance of the ceremony and they want to practice but the socio-cultural norms and values are tested and challenged in the different context. "Ritual performance is not in itself merely, nor even necessarily, factitive. It is not always performative in a simple way, merely bringing into being

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<sup>54</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 111

<sup>55</sup> Steven Vertovec, *The Hindu Diaspora*, 17

conventional states of affairs through conventional actions. It is rather, meta-performative and meta-factitive, for it establishes that is, it stipulates and accepts the conventions with respect to which conventional states of affairs are defined and realized."<sup>56</sup>

Being far from the homeland and to practice ritual is a challenging, still immigrant students in Oslo try their best to do as far as possible. "The simplest ritual activities are seen to fuse a people's conceptions of order and their dispositions (moods and motivations) for actions."<sup>57</sup> Nepalese immigrant students connect this practice of rituals and culture with their identity and origin. They practice rituals relating to moral ethics. Religion for Nepalese is symbolized by the moral activities they perform in day to day life. "We engage in rituals in order to transmit collective messages to ourselves."<sup>58</sup> So, during the festival time, students unite together to share the collective feeling between own selves.

Catherine Bell characterizes ritual as the exchange point between moral bond and imagination. "...social (ritual) symbolism as the switch point between the external moral constraints and groupings of the socio-political order and the internal feelings and imaginative concepts of the individual actor."<sup>59</sup> For diasporas, it is not easy to adjust and adopt in the strange land with their moral ethics and cultural feelings. These moral ethics and cultural feeling are in many circumstances are behaved as the strange behaviors. The ethics and identity struggle hard to retain. "... who we are waits upon who we say we are. When we perform ourselves, we do not simply express what we already are: we perform our becoming and become our performing."<sup>60</sup> Diaspora culture and ritual defines the identity.

When a child grows up in a certain society, the culture, festivals and rituals are taught to develop as the member of the society. The child enjoys festivals and learns to celebrate on the way the other members of the society do, performs the rituals as others do and the culture defines the perspective of the child. "Rituals are as pathways and of ritualizing as making of these paths for behavior to follow."<sup>61</sup> Later the person assembles the behaviors for own self from the culture and the society. So these behaviors learned from the childhood preserved and maintain by the diasporas as far as possible as their key of identity regardless of the setting of the host land. When the culture and ritual become tough and makes the life tougher than the culture are modified and generalized in the way to adapt in the strange land which is suitable for the diasporas.

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<sup>56</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 147

<sup>57</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 27

<sup>58</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 73

<sup>59</sup> Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory*, 24

<sup>60</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 114

<sup>61</sup> Tom F. Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 131

### 3.7. Gender Roles in Festivals and Rituals

Biologically, human beings are stratified into male and female dichotomies. Similarly, society has identified members of society as men and women. Biology has separated human being with the structure of the body and their biological properties while the society has divided by the activities they do and the role performs in the family and the society. In general, "gender is defined as socially and culturally constructed accepted behaviors and relations between male and female. Behaviors and relations are structured in the society."<sup>62</sup> Every society has some differences which have created differences in the role of the member of the society. These differences in the role have created inequality between the genders in the society but the degree of the inequality varies between the societies. Division of labor between the genders is directly dependent on the characteristic of the society like traditional society and modern society or patriarchal and matriarchal society or modern industrial society. Gender roles are more rigid in the traditional, patriarchal or matriarchal societies while more flexible in modern or industrial society.

In the context of Nepal, the majority of the societies are patriarchal societies with the senior most male member of the family as the head of the family. Very few societies are matriarchal as the senior most female member of the family as the head of the family. "Only 17 percent of the total population resides in urban areas and 83 percent in the rural areas."<sup>63</sup> Nepalese societies are guided by the caste and hierarchy system. Most of the matriarchal societies are found in the Hilly and Himalayan region of Nepal among the *Sherpa* castes.

Gender roles in the context of traditional societies and the rural societies, gender role are rigid while modern and urban societies have flexible gender role regardless to the matriarchal or patriarchal societies. Male members of the societies are responsible for the work outside the house and female members responsible for the work inside the house. While family as a unit works in the agriculture. The differences between patriarchal and matriarchal society in Nepal is the head of the family who makes decision for family activities. Male members play vital role in the trade, business, raising children, education of the family members, arranging food , cloth and shelter, making loans and maintaining relationships while female members are responsible for maintaining the house, cleaning, looking after a

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<sup>62</sup> Binod Pokharel, "Gender Roles and Activities Among the Rural Poor Households: Case Studies From Hill Village," *Occasional Papers in Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. 7 (2001), 65

<sup>63</sup> CBS Nepal, *National Population and Housing Census 2011*, (2012) Available at: <http://cbs.gov.np/image/data/Population/National%20Report/National%20Report.pdf>, site accessed on 16 March 2016.

child, preparing foods and caring family. "Gender is the element that regulates contacts and relations among individuals, thus resembling India. The domestic space is associated with female socialization, and exterior spaces (such as workplaces or cafes,) relate to the male socialization, reproducing the classical differentiation between public space as a space of men and private space as a space of women."<sup>64</sup>

Similarly, during the time of festivals also male members of the societies plays the vital role in the arrangement of the festivals. Male member collects the material required for the festival while female members prepare inside the house for the festival. In most of the festival, rituals are performed by the head of the family or other male members. At the same time, female members mostly visit the temples and prepared special foods according to the festivals. Another role of the men and women may be exchanged in the modern and rural society but the ritual practices in the festivals are the mainly the responsibilities of the men. Nepalese societies have the importance of hierarchy. So, the major rituals or important rituals are practiced by a male while only a few and minor rituals are practiced by the female. Arrangements for the rituals practice are assisted by the female. Hard work that requires physical strength is the duty of men and light work is normally expected for women.

In the context of Oslo, both the genders have active participation for the arrangement of the festivals and rituals practice. Hierarchy plays a key role to decide who to perform the rituals. The senior most participant of the festival performs the rituals and leads the festival ceremony. Meanwhile, better suggestions and assists are admitted. Immigrant students have seemed to practice equality between the genders. Still, hard works like carrying heavy food materials are expected to be done by men and light works by women. Women are expected to prepare food in the homeland. In contrary, women only assist for light work of cooking while men have replaced women in cooking in Oslo. At least seventy students and their family participate in the festivals celebrated in Oslo and preparing food for all at once requires more strength that is why men prepare food in Oslo during the festival celebration program.

"After the historic election of Onsari Gharti as the Speaker of Parliament and Bidhya Devi Bhandari as the President, Senior Supreme Court Justice Shushila Karki, on Tuesday, became the first woman member of the Judicial Council. Karki will be appointed as the chief justice after the present Chief Justice Kalyan Shrestha completes his tenure in April."<sup>65</sup> This

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<sup>64</sup> Ines Lourenco and Rita Cachado, "Hindu Transnational Families: Transformation and Continuity in Diaspora Families" *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* (2012), 63

<sup>65</sup> The Kathmandu Post Editorial Desk, "Breaking Barriers" *The Kathmandu Post*; Available at <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2016-01-08/breaking-barriers.html>, site accessed on 17 March 2016.

shows the involvement of the female in the mainstream politics and administrative bodies of the Nepal as well as the inclusion and equality between the genders. The perspectives and the scenario regarding the gender are changing towards equality but still there is some cases of inequalities in ritual practice exist in the rural areas of Nepal.

## Chapter Four

### PRESENTATION OF DATA

#### 4.1. Distribution of Immigrants

In the last 20 years, migration of both Nepalese labour and students has increased significantly. The unstable political situation, unemployment and better earning in foreign countries have acted as the factors of migration for Nepalese labour. At the same time, quality education, better social security and job opportunity after education have acted as the factors of migration for students. "During the last fiscal year 2014, more than 520,000 labour permits were issued to Nepalese planning to work abroad. Malaysia is now the number one destination country for Nepali migrants, closely followed by Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait."<sup>66</sup>

Further, ICEF Monitor (2015) writes, ".....Nepal's mobility numbers had been growing steadily in recent years. The Ministry of Education shows that there was a record-high of 29,380 students who had applied for a no-objection letter (effectively an application for permission to study overseas) between June 2014 and June 2015."<sup>67</sup> This shows that the numbers of students willing to study abroad are increasing every year. The major destinations of Nepalese students for studying abroad are USA, Australia, UK, Germany, Denmark, and Bangladesh. In comparison to migration to USA and Australia, very few students travel to Norway. Norway has been the destinations of students for some specializations or master degrees. The following bar diagram shows the few years migration of Nepalese students.

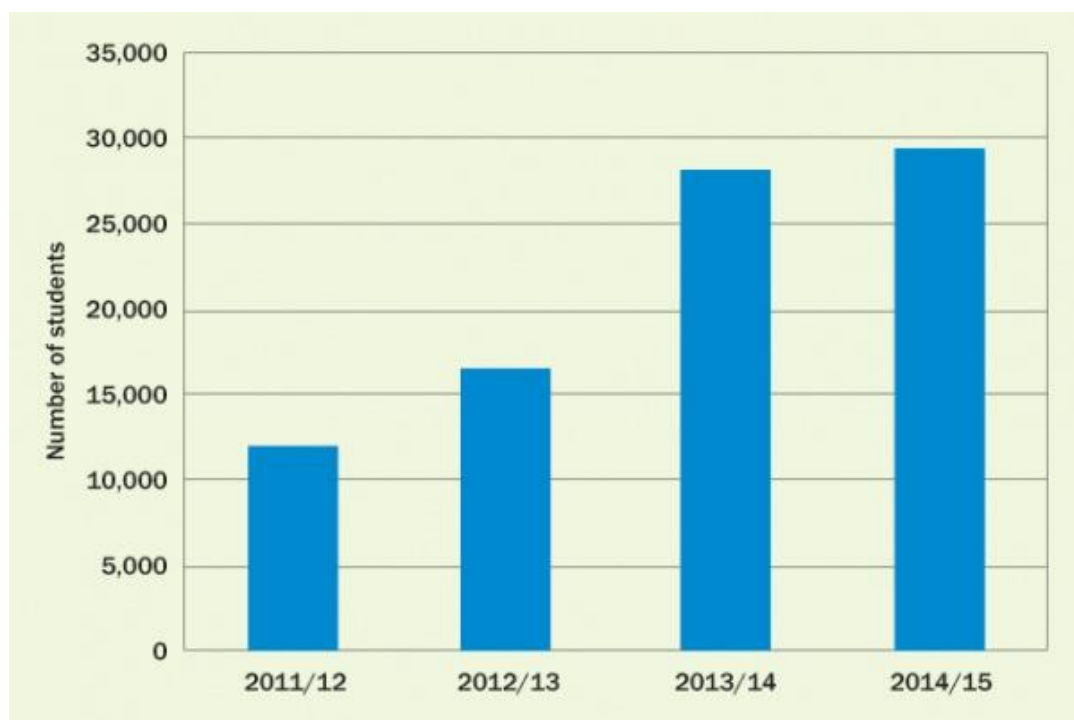
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<sup>66</sup>International Labour Organization; Available at <http://www.ilo.org/kathmandu/areasofwork/labour-migration/lang--en/index.htm>, site accessed on 19 March 2016.

<sup>67</sup> ICEF Monitor (2015); Available at <http://monitor.icef.com/2015/12/nepal-emerging-as-an-important-growth-market-for-international-education/>, Site accessed on 19 March 2016



**Figure 2: Number of no objection letter issued for study abroad.<sup>68</sup>**



#### **4.1.1. Personal Information**

Identity can be defined as "the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language and culture."<sup>69</sup> Identity depends upon how an individual or the society presents themselves to others. "Identity is a fundamental aspect of a person's existence, in that identity can determine one's right and freedoms as a member of a cultural group and often limit them from identifying with a group that maintains different characteristics."<sup>70</sup> So, the identity is related to the belongingness, religion, culture, society, status and many other aspects according to the perspective. The personal information of the respondents has been obtained as per the information shared by the respondents during the data collection process. The personal information of the informants is recorded as age, sex, marital status, education, religion, economic background, caste, ethnicity etc.

<sup>68</sup> Nirjana Sharma, "More Students Seeking 'No Objection Letter' to Study Abroad" Republica, (2015); Available at <http://myrepublica.com/society/story/23904/more-students-seeking-no-objection-to-study-abroad.html>, site accessed on 19 March 2016.

<sup>69</sup> Yasser Fouad Selim and Eid Mohamed, *Who Defines Me: Negotiating Identity in Language and Literature* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 138.

<sup>70</sup> Krista E. Wiegand, *Religious, Ancestral, and National Identity: Political Use and Abuse in Lebanon* (Washington: American University Press, 1997), 1

#### 4.1.2. Gender Information

"Population of Nepal as of the census day stands at 26,494,504 with the male population of 12,849,041 and female population of 13,645,463. Sex ratio (number of males per 100 females) at the national level is 94.16 in 2011. In abstract number, there are 796,422 more females than males in the country."<sup>71</sup> This data shows that female population is higher than male population in Nepal but in the case of migration of labour or students, the male population is a lot higher than females'. "Overseas employment is heavily male dominated: roughly 95 percent of all labour permits are given to men."<sup>72</sup>

In the context of students, "the total number of 28,763 no objection letters (effectively an application for permission to study overseas) had been issued out of which 9,334 had been issued to female and 19,429 issued to male dated between 17 July 2014 and 16 July 2015 (fiscal year 2071/72 BS in Nepal)."<sup>73</sup> This clearly shows that female emigrants for abroad studies are only one third while males are two thirds of total emigrants.

**Table 1: Gender Information of the Respondents**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	8	57.14
Female	6	42.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

Above table illustrates the rough proportion of the male and female migrants from Nepal. "In the year 2014, out of 1,418 migrants from Nepal to Norway about 800 were male."<sup>74</sup> According to the information provided by the respondents, less number of female immigrants for the studies abroad is due to the unsupportive family. Parents do not prefer to send their

<sup>71</sup> CBS, National Population and Housing Census 2011 (National Report); Available at [http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010\\_phc/Nepal/Nepal-Census-2011-Vol1.pdf](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/2010_phc/Nepal/Nepal-Census-2011-Vol1.pdf), site accessed on 20 March 2016.

<sup>72</sup> International Labour Organization; Available at <http://www.ilo.org/kathmandu/areasofwork/labour-migration/lang--en/index.htm>, site accessed on 19 March 2016.

<sup>73</sup> Nepal Education in Figures 2015; Available at [http://www.moe.gov.np/assets/uploads/files/Nepal\\_Education\\_in\\_Figures\\_2015.pdf](http://www.moe.gov.np/assets/uploads/files/Nepal_Education_in_Figures_2015.pdf), site accessed on 20 March 2016.

<sup>74</sup> Statics Norway, Nepalese immigrants in Norway by sexes (1970-2014), cited from: Bhimsen Saru, *Migratory Experiences of Nepalese Families With Small Children Currently in Norway* (2015), A Master Thesis submitted to MHS, Stavanger.

daughter or daughter in law for studies abroad in comparison to son. Neither the women can convince their family for studies abroad nor does the family support them. When they do study on their own, they need to leave their husband and family at home which are tough for them. So, most of the females are dependent visa i.e. migrated to Norway under the family reunification scheme of UDI. "The trend shows that men started going abroad for the work whereas women became mostly the dependents."<sup>75</sup> A similar development has been seen in the context of students as well. In the context of Nepal, gender is not considered equally for abroad study, male is prioritized.

#### **4.1.3. Religious Background**

The population of Nepal follows more than ten religions. Among them, Hindus are the dominant population of 81.3%, Buddhists, Muslims and Kirat are other religious belonging. Unfortunately, all of my respondents are Hindu by religion. Most of the respondents shared that the main festival they used to celebrate in Nepal is celebrated here as well. Meanwhile, they do not perform daily rituals like visiting temples in the early morning, prayers and chants in Oslo. Just a few respondents said they have heard about the Hindu temple in Oslo but they have not been in the temple. The majority of the respondents said that they have visited the Hindu temple in Oslo but they miss the environment of temples of Nepal. Those chants and prayers on the pagoda style temples.

Most of those who visited the temple in Oslo were unsatisfied with their visit to the temple and wanted to visit any other if possible. One of the respondents expressed that on the way to the temple he felt like he was visiting someone's house instead of a temple. He had to struggle to find the way to the temple. He was excited as he reached the temple area but his excitement vanished as he entered the temple. He says that he felt like a food served for a hungry man with everything mixed and cooked instead of making them separate and with different tastes and flavours.

The most of the Nepalese temple has system of one god one temple. There are only few temples with multiple gods i.e. 2, 3, or more somewhere. So, most of the Nepalese expect temple with single god or goddess. According to the informant, the Sri Lankan Hindu temple in Oslo consists of multiple gods. He saw 4 or 5 statues in the middle of the hall and more statues on the wall. It was not his expectation. Further, he explains may be they do not have

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<sup>75</sup> NIDS, Nepalese Migration Year Book 2010; Available at [http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sites/default/files/pdf/migration\\_year\\_book\\_2068.indd.pdf](http://www.sasnet.lu.se/sites/default/files/pdf/migration_year_book_2068.indd.pdf), site accessed on 20 March 2016.

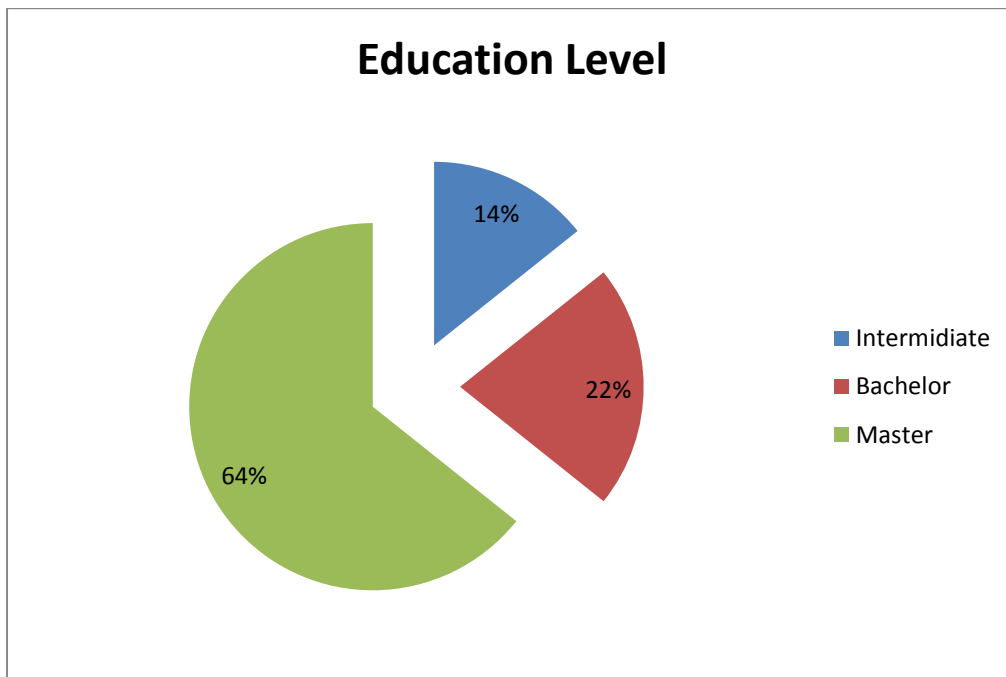
enough space and building for one god and one temple. They wanted to keep all of the gods and goddess so, they have managed multiple in one temple.

Researcher has also similar experience during the visit to the temple. It was very hard to locate due to lack of information on the way. When researcher finally reach to the temple that resemble house, he was still in confusion either its temple or house of someone. Finally, researcher noticed shoes outside and realized that was the temple. As per Hindu norms, Hindus do not enter temple with their shoes on. So they take off their shoes outside the temple. In Norway shoes are not expected outside anyone's house.

#### 4.1.4. Education Level

The respondents chosen for the research have variation in respect to the academic qualification. The variation can be divided into three major categories and presented as below.

**Figure 3: Education Level of Respondents**



The pie chart shows that among the respondents nearly two third (64%) of them have a master degree, 22% of them have a bachelor degree while only 14% of them have intermediate of higher secondary education. Those with intermediate and bachelor degree are mostly dependents migrants (who migrated on the process of family reunification of students). Students have completed their master degree in Nepal and/or in Norway.

As the requirement for admission in universities in Norway, students in Nepal have to complete 16 years of academic years for master's admission. Since Nepal has three years of bachelor, they only complete 15 academic years. So, students complete a master degree in Nepal and apply for a second master degree in Norway. Another reason is that most of the universities have a bachelor degree only taught in Norwegian language and master degree in the English language. Therefore, students prefer to study master degree in Norway.

Few respondents explained that to apply for Norwegian universities, English language test is compulsory. They also mentioned IELTS or TOEFL is the test required for universities with minimum grades of band score 5.5 in IELTS, 80 in The Internet Based Test (IBT) TOEFL or 550 in Paper Based Test (PBT) TOEFL. One of the respondents mentioned that some universities in Norway ask for the experience letter in the related academic field as the requirement for the admission.

#### 4.1.5. Marital Status

In the context of Nepal, "The legal marrying age in Nepal is 20 years old for men and 20 years old for women."<sup>76</sup> But most of the parents do not care about the law and even government is not concerned to implement the law."Current records at the ministry of health and population show at least 23 percent of girls getting married off at 15–19 years."<sup>77</sup> This clearly indicates that early age marriage is still in practice. The marital of respondents is given in the following table.

**Table 2: Marital Status of the Respondents**

Status/Gender	Male	Female	Percentage
<b>Married</b>	5	4	64.29
<b>Unmarried</b>	3	1	28.57
<b>Divorced</b>	---	1	7.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>76</sup> Embassy of United States, Getting Married in Nepal; Available at <http://nepal.usembassy.gov/service/passports-notaries-and-other-support-for-u/marriage-to-a-nepali.html>, site accessed on 21 March 2016.

<sup>77</sup> Naresh Newar, "Child Marries Defies Laws in Nepal" Inter Press Service; Available at <http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/10/child-marriage-defies-laws-in-nepal/>, site accessed on 21 March 2016.

Data shows that nearly two third (64.29%) of Nepalese immigrant students are married whereas one quarter is unmarried and around 7.14% of them are divorced.

Few decades ago, marriage in Nepal was mostly arranged marriage, arranged by the parents. But the situation has been changed at present. Love marriage is in the process of overtaking the arranged marriage. Once married means that the girl used to live with her husband though she is not happy and unsatisfied with the marriage, or a wrong person chosen by her parents. At present, freedom and equality have played the vital role in decision making of women. She can easily be separated from her husband at her will. "The number of divorces has doubled in the last five years to 1,824 in 2013, most of them filed by women. One in ten family-related cases filed in the courts is divorce."<sup>78</sup>

In the context of migration to Norway, it is very hard for a woman to convince her husband and in-laws to study abroad. Even parent of girls insists them to get married before going abroad. Among the female migrants to Norway, most of them have migrated as dependent visa (family reunification scheme of UDI) to their husbands who are students. One of the female respondents mentioned that she got married just before she travelled to Norway.

One of the female students added that it was very stressful for her to manage her travel to Norway. She faced difficulties to convince her family. A similar problem was mentioned by a male student but he convinced his wife easily. Meanwhile, single immigrants easily get permission to travel abroad for the higher studies. The main reason of difficulties is that parents have not travelled abroad and are unknown about the society and social condition of the abroad. In comparison to Nepal and Norway, Norway has better living standards, social security. Researcher has also experienced that, street of Norway are the safest street to walk any time day or night. The degree of safety is very low in the context of Nepal than in Norway. Another reason is that travelling abroad means the traveller will be alone in the foreign land for certain period, so s/he have to manage all the thing at own and it is very difficult. So, parents do not want their daughter or daughter in law to be in difficulties.

#### **4.1.6. Economic Background**

The economic condition of the family and the individual plays the major role in the abroad study process. Lots of investment is required to travel abroad for studies including the academic fees, accommodation and other expenses. The majority of student have travelled to

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<sup>78</sup> Bhrikuti Rai, "Not So Happily Ever After", Nepali Times; Available at <http://nepalitimes.com/article/nation/%20number-of-nepali-women-filing-for-divorce-rises,1513>, site accessed on 21 March 2016.

USA, Australia, UK and other European countries for higher education. The expenses in these countries in comparison to Nepal are much higher. So, a huge amount of money is required even for short stay. The expenses must cover two years in the case of master, or for a master plus a PhD it takes more than four years.

**Table 3: Economic Background of the Respondents**

<b>Economic class</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Higher class</b>	3	21.43
<b>Middle class</b>	9	64.29
<b>Lower class</b>	2	14.29
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that mostly middle class moved to Norway for higher studies. Only 21.43% of the students who were economically strong have travelled to Norway while 64.29% of the students had an average economic condition and 14.29% had a lower economic condition.

The migration trend from Nepal shows that only higher class people travel abroad for higher education on their own investment. Students from middle and lower class have to find either scholarship or loan from relatives or bank. For studies in Norway, the student "must have enough money to live on, at least, NOK 100,920 per year".<sup>79</sup> This amount of money investing is not so easy for the students where a government officer earns NOK 1834 a month (pay scale of NRS 23172 converted to NOK as per the exchange rate of 21 March 2016. NOK 1 is equal to NRS 12.64). So, the abroad study is beyond the reach of poor peoples.

Two of the respondents disclosed that they have received a loan from a bank for the study in Norway with the collateral of their immovable properties. Their family must pay interest of bank with instalment every month.

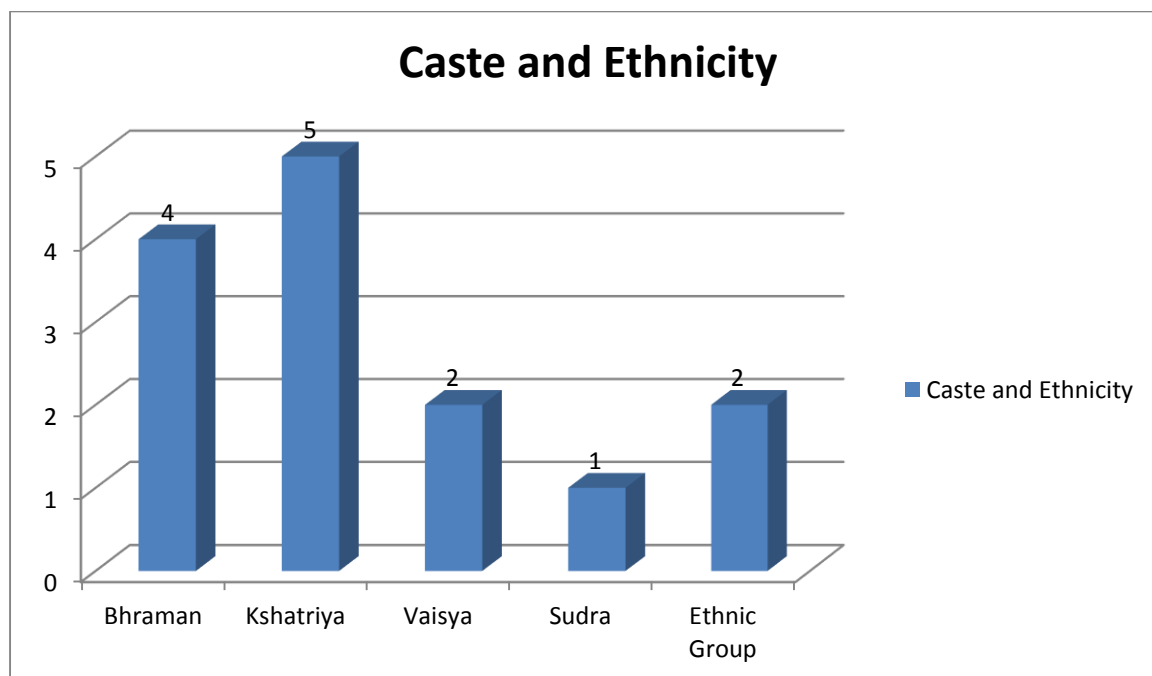
Though the academic fee in Norway is only semester fee which is also very low in most of the universities and higher in colleges, other expenses are unbearable for students. The situation of students is intolerable in other countries like USA, Australia, UK, Denmark etc. where tuition fee, semester fee as well as other fee are very high.

<sup>79</sup> UDI, Student Permit; Available at <https://www.udi.no/en/want-to-apply/studies/studietillatelse/?c=npl#link-58>, site accessed on 21 March 2016.

#### 4.1.7. Caste and Ethnic Background

Caste and ethnicity are the major factors that contribute in the social hierarchy of an individual in the context of Nepalese society. Nepalese peoples are divided into different castes and ethnic groups. "Caste system has an important role in social stratification in Nepal. The caste system is divided into four folds which are *Brahman* (priests and scholars), *Kshatriya* (warriors), *Vaisya* (merchants and traders), and *Sudra* (laborers). The caste of an individual basically determines his ritual status, purity, and pollution."<sup>80</sup> More here; comment.

**Figure 4: The Caste and Ethnicity of the Respondents**



The bar diagram shows that the highest number of migrant are *Kshatriya* caste followed by *Bhraman* and the lowest is *Sudra*. The majority of the students are *Bhraman* and *Kshatriya*. Similar kind of proportion can be seen in the colleges and universities in Nepal.

According to the historian, in the beginning, the caste was divided only according to the profession. As the division of caste system was practiced is wrong way relating it to the hierarchy and hierarchy was based on the profession then the government has amended the law for the equality of every citizen irrespective of any caste. Constitution of Nepal 2015 has

<sup>80</sup> "Caste System of Nepal" Go Nepal; Available at <http://www.gonepal.eu/about-nepal/social/caste-system-of-nepal>, site accessed on 21 March 2016.



continued the equality of every citizen. "No discrimination shall be made in the application of general laws on grounds of origin, religion, race, caste, tribe, sex, physical condition, a condition of health, marital status, pregnancy, economic condition, language or region, ideology or on similar other grounds."<sup>81</sup>

By the division of the caste system, the person from the lower caste is treated inhumanly. The person from the lower caste is not considered as human and treated as impure human. People from the upper caste like *Bhraman* and *Kshatriya* do not touch the lower caste persons. Lower caste people are not allowed to enter the upper caste person's house and to touch the food. This kind of system of untouchability is still in practice in some rural places of Nepal. The prevailing law of Nepal has been challenged and the government does not seem to be concerned about this. "No person shall be subjected to any form of untouchability or discrimination in any private and public places on grounds of his or her origin, caste, tribe, community, profession, occupation or physical condition."<sup>82</sup> People are educated and aware about the malpractice of the society.

With the development and modernization caste system is slowly being out of practice. The young generation in the modern cities in Nepal does not practice caste system at all. But it is still in practice in the rural areas of Nepal. "The caste system is slowly being abandoned because it is difficult to practice in the modern society due to lack of time and development in educational, legal and social awareness."<sup>83</sup>

When it comes to ritual practice, only *Bhraman* are familiar with these, and have studied about the rituals and prayers. So, *Bhraman* are the one who can perform the ritual in the right way. The reason is traced since his or her childhood, because a *Bhraman* child concentrates towards prayers and rituals while children of other castes concentrate in their own business. Furthermore, lower caste people are not highly educated due to lack of resources and few possibilities for the study. Respondents from lower caste agree that most of the people from lower caste do not give priority for education but attitudes of people are changing and like in the respondent group, only few are educated.

Most of the ethnic groups have their own priest, and every ethnic group has a priest in between themselves. The *Bhraman* people does not perform rituals in the festivals and ceremonies of the ethnic groups. *Gubaju* is senior among *Newar* ethnic groups and the priests

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<sup>81</sup> The Constitution of Nepal 2015, article 18 (2); Available from [http://www.nepalembassy-germany.com/pdfs/Constitution\\_full\\_english.pdf](http://www.nepalembassy-germany.com/pdfs/Constitution_full_english.pdf), site accessed on 22 March 2016.

<sup>82</sup> The Constitution of Nepal 2015, article 24 (1). Available from [http://www.nepalembassy-germany.com/pdfs/Constitution\\_full\\_english.pdf](http://www.nepalembassy-germany.com/pdfs/Constitution_full_english.pdf), site accessed on 22 March 2016.

<sup>83</sup> "Caste System of Nepal" Go Nepal; Available at <http://www.gonepal.eu/about-nepal/social/caste-system-of-nepal>, site accessed on 21 March 2016.

of *Newar*, *Gubaju* performs all the rituals of *Newar* in the festivals and ceremonies. The *lama* is the priest of *Tamang*. A person who is from the *Tamang* community can study the process of religion, rituals and holy books to become *lama*. *Nachung* is the priest of *Rai* ethnic community, *Brahman Magar* is the priest of the *Magar* ethnic community.

Respondents from an ethnic group agree that they have their own caste priest to perform rituals during the ceremonies and festivals. They want people from another caste as guests during the rituals but do not accept them interfering on the rituals. They also agree that they do not prefer for higher degrees rather they concentrate on their family business or services. The respondents from ethnic groups also added that due to few in numbers they are unable to celebrate their ethnic festivals. They only celebrate the common national festivals with friends. They miss their festivals, rituals, and their families a lot.

#### 4.1.8. Duration of Stay in Norway

Normally, Nepalese immigrant students have a year of residence permit which can be renewed each year till the end the university degree. If the study is a master degree then the student has two years of residence permit and if the course of study is PhD, then the student has three years of residence permit. After the completion of the study, UDI provides six months of job seeker residence permit. If a student fails to find the skilled job related to his/her academic study then s/he has to leave Norway according to the immigration rules. So, Nepalese students live in Norway for a short duration. Those who find skilled job stays for a long period.

**Table 4: Duration of Stay of respondents**

<b>City</b> <b>Duration in years</b>	<b>Residents in Oslo</b>	<b>Resident Outside Oslo</b>
1	4	3
2	5	4
3	3	1
4 or more	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>

Table data shows that majority of Nepalese immigrant students lived outside Oslo after arriving in Norway. Only five students out of fourteen have lived in Oslo since their arrival to Norway. Only two students lived outside Oslo for more than two years out of nine students. Most of the Nepalese student moved to Oslo from different cities of Norway for their research or to find a job after the completion of their study.

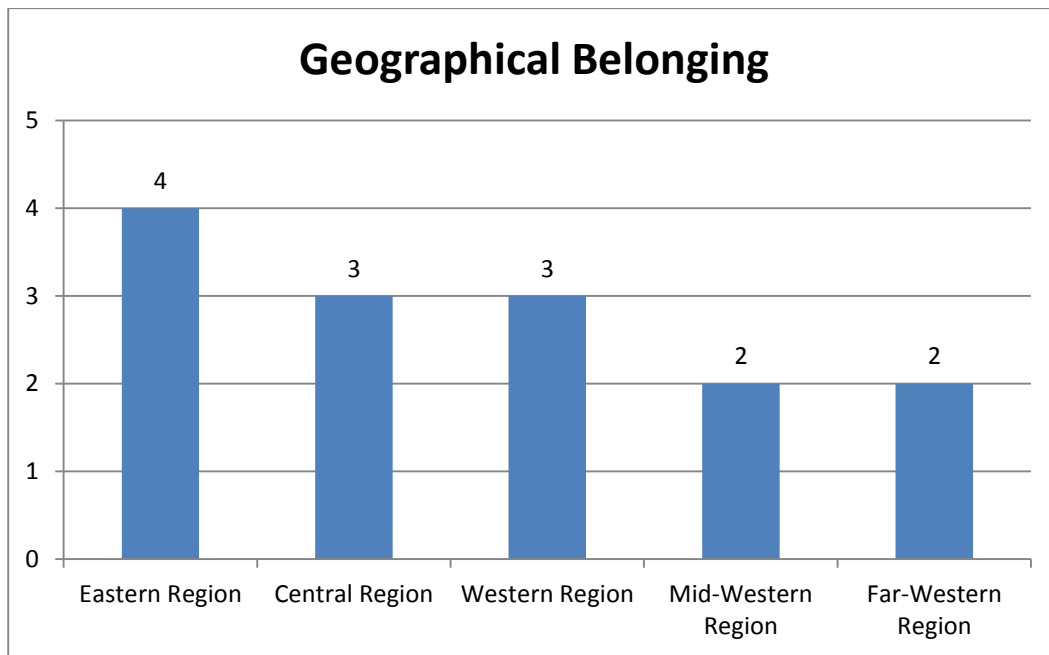
As the reason to move in Oslo, respondents explained that the city they lived in had few numbers of Nepalese students or just a small community; it was very hard to find a job or no job for part time work. Students get 20 hours of work permit per week according to the Norwegian Law. They added further, they feel lonely and isolated to live outside Oslo. When they started living in Oslo, they find themselves more comfortable and friendly due to the presence of a large community of Nepalese. Major festival celebration in group resembles them celebrating in Nepal.

In overall, students are satisfied in their living in Norway because of free education, social security, better job opportunity after completion of study here in Norway or elsewhere. Many of the respondents admitted that if possible they want to work and live in Norway for a long period.

#### **4.1.9. Geographical Belonging**

Nepal is divided into five geographical regions. In terms of settlement, races of people, language and culture these five regions are different from one another. The language spoken in the eastern part of Nepal is not similar to the western part. When a strange person starts speaking other can correctly guess, from which region does he/she belongs. Similarly, festival and culture are different in accordance with the region.

**Figure 5: Geographical Belonging of the Respondents**



From the chart, it is clear that eastern region of Nepal has highest rate of migrants followed by central, western, mid-western and far-western. Travelling abroad has been a fashion in the eastern and central region. Midwestern and far-western region of Nepal are economically backward in comparison to other regions. The development process is slow and less compared to the eastern region. Many high profile personalities are from the mid-western and far-western region of Nepal but when compared, the general literacy rate to educated people and infrastructural development is behind the eastern region.

Development Region is a political or administrative division made by the state for the smooth running of administration. Nepal was divided into five development regions in 1981 with a view of promoting national unity by removing regional imbalances and also by utilizing the natural resources of the Mountains, Hills and the Terai (southern plain land) in a proportional and beneficial manner.<sup>84</sup>

*Deuda* dance is the typical dance of the far-western region and it is popular in the mid-western region as well. *Deuda* dance is performed during the *Gaura* festival celebrated by the Hindus of the far-western region of Nepal. *Deuda* song is also very popular in the region which is a conversational song sung by two groups of male and female. But eastern region people express the *Deuda* song and dance as a very slow. The eastern region is familiar with the varieties of music and dance and their mixing. *Maurini* dance is the typical dance of the eastern region, which is performed during different festivals and ceremonies. *Roila* songs and

<sup>84</sup> Jitendra Sahayogee, "5 Development Regions of Nepal" Available at <http://www.imnepal.com/name-development-region-nepal/>, site accessed on 22 March 2016.

*Thado vaka* songs are famous in the western region of Nepal, especially in the district like Syangja, Palpa, Gulmi and Banglung.

In the central and western region, internal migration has a great effect. Culture and language have been mixed up with others. Most of the festivals of Nepal can be noticed in this region. When a group is celebrating festival huge mass will be busy in their daily works. People from southern part celebrate *Chhad* in Kathmandu and Pokhara and people from far-western region celebrate *Gaura* festival with *Deuda* dance and song in Kathmandu and Pokhara while the native will be busy in their business and works.

#### **4.2. Festival Culture of Immigrant Students in Nepal**

As presented and discussed in this chapter above, there are lots of variations between Nepalese students. Variations in terms of language, culture, place of origin, caste and ethnicity. Despite the diversity, they are all Nepalese by nationality and citizenship, which is enough for them to unite together in Norway. So, they celebrate together as much as possible. They celebrate major festivals of Nepal being together when organized by NESCO and/or HHN. Most of those who celebrate the festival together in Oslo were strangers to each other in Nepal.

When these respondents were in Nepal, they used to celebrate their festivals with family and friends. All of the respondents used to celebrate the major festivals of Nepal. In addition, they used to celebrate those local festivals of their locality or area.

One respondent from the Nuwakot district in the central region expressed that he misses the *Goers* festival celebrated with Bullfighting on his locality. "Every year thousands of spectators descend on the Himalayan foothills of Nepal for a bullfighting festival, during the day of *Makar Sankranti*, which heralds the end of winter according to the Hindu calendar."<sup>85</sup>

One respondent who is from Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal expressed that he misses the festivals like *Indra Jatra*, *Gai Jatra* and *Machhindra Jatra*, which were celebrated at Kathmandu. The respondent also added the missing homemade alcohol and feast (*Lapte Voj*) with friends, family, and relatives. Furthermore, the respondent missed the *Lakhe* dance and *Haku Patasi* dance with live music by community members. This respondent has understood that those cultures and rituals of Kathmandu are not possible to celebrate and

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<sup>85</sup> Sanjaya Dhakal, "In Pictures: Bullfighting in Nepal", BBC News; Available at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-30855914>, site accessed on 22 March 2016.

perform in Oslo. Therefore, the respondent is waiting to travel to Kathmandu and enjoy those all.

Another respondent who is from the eastern region of Nepal disclosed the *Haat Bazar, Mela*, and that the visit to *Pathivara* temple during the festival was a lot of fun. She agrees with the respondent from Kathmandu that she is waiting to go home and visit the temple.

One respondent from the *Gurung* community (ethnic group) explained that he misses the dancing and singing at *Rodhi*. "Dances on 'Maruni Bhaka' representing Koshi zone, *Newari* dance representing the *Newar* community of Bhaktapur, *Bhojpuri* dance from the Janakpur zone and 'Mayur dance' reflecting the culture of the ethnic community of Chitwan district, among others mesmerized the audience."<sup>86</sup> Nepalese ethnic groups and other people have varieties of culture. This culture includes different dances like *Angulima* dance, *Jhagad* dance, *Kumari* dance, *Lakhe* dance, *Shiva Tandap*, *Kauda* dance, *Aarati* dance, and *Shrepa* dance etc are some popular cultural artifacts of different caste and ethnic groups.

### **4.3. Religion and Festival Culture in Norway**

Regarding religious belonging of the respondents, a short discussion has been presented in this chapter above (in 4.1.3.). The respondents have continued their religion and culture in Oslo and other cities of Norway. They have explained that they practice their culture and rituals as much as possible. Most of the respondents have a common view that all the festivals, culture, and rituals they used to practice and perform in Nepal are not possible to do in Norway. So they celebrate the common festivals of all Nepalese.

Even these common festivals of respondents are missing morning visit to temple and prayers. They shared that they only have one temple in Oslo which does not resemble them as a temple and they do not feel like visiting temple. So, they follow faith and belief without practice.

In the context of festival celebration, most of the festivals are organized on the festival date as in Nepal and few are organized any other days, which are suitable for them to celebrate. Saturday or Sunday whichever is available for the students near to the festival date. It is hard to manage for students with their studies, part-time job or skilled job. Hence, it is better to celebrate with a maximum number of participations.

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<sup>86</sup> Republica, "Showcasing Nepal's Rich Culture on Stage", MY Republica; Available at [http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news\\_details&news\\_id=80717](http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=80717), site accessed on 22 March 2016.

About half of the respondents agree that religion has been generalized, so instead of visiting temples early morning the visit 'YouTube' or any other online sites for morning prayers. Those rituals which are not possible to practice in Oslo are watched live from Nepal sitting in Oslo. Two of the respondents stated that in a case of festivals which are not organized by NESCO or any other Nepalese groups in Oslo, then they celebrate a few festivals with limited friends in their own apartments.

#### **4.4. Meaning of Festivals in Nepal**

Festivals celebrated in Nepal have a mythical story behind the festival. Few of which are presented in the previous chapter above (3.1. and 3.2.). This is a master thesis so this research cannot include the entire mythical story behind each and every festival. So the researcher has tried to present the meaning of festivals in the perspective and experience of the respondents.

Most of the respondents enlightened that festival means time to get together with family, friends, and relatives. Members of family who stay separated with the purpose of business, job, education etc. visit their family during the festival. Therefore, festivals provide an environment to unite the family members. "Calculated on the basis 4,000 buses are heading towards various destinations across the country and each bus carrying 50 passengers, there will be around 200,000 passengers. This means, within three days, as many as 12,000 buses will carry 600,000 people to their destinations."<sup>87</sup> This is the estimated travel in public buses in just three days before *Dashain* festival. The travel in *Dashain* remains in the peak for almost 15 days.

For some other respondents, festival means time to share happiness and enjoy together. Festival days also refresh mind and body. Celebration restores the energy to work after the festivals. For few of them, festivals like *Kul Puja* and *Gai Jatra* remind them about their ancestors and family members who have passed away.

Two respondents who were involved in the business (their own or family business) said that festival means time to be busy in the business; it is the time to earn for living. People want to buy lots of things during the festival which creates the flow of money; that is why it is the time to collect, get benefit from the investment.

For those who were in a job, festival means time for the holiday to relax and chill. It is the time to get paid without any work. So they enjoy the festival as much as they can. The

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<sup>87</sup> Sanjeev Giri, "Vehicle shortage could affect *Dashain* Travel", The Kathmandu Post; Available at <http://kathmandupost.ekantipur.com/news/2015-10-13/vehicle-shortage-could-affect-dashain-travel.html>, site accessed on 30 March 2016.

government in Nepal provides public holidays for the major festivals of Hindu and other festivals like *Eid* for Muslims and Christmas for Christians also have a public holiday. As bureaucracy get paid equal each month despite how many days and holidays the months have. Staffs in private corporations get paid in the same way. So they enjoy festivals with the public holidays.

Different meaning of the festivals to the respondent clearly indicates that the meaning of the festival depends on the perspective of the person. For about 80% of them, festivals mean the relaxing and enjoying time with family and friends with the best cuisine related to the festival.

#### **4.5. Meaning of Festival for Immigrant Students Living in Oslo**

Students from Nepal have travelled a long distance for their higher study. They have physically left their home and family for a long period. Those who are married, after a certain period of arrival to Norway normally they apply for the dependent visa for the travel of their spouse. So most of the married students' couples are living in Norway and the rest of the family members are in Nepal. So they feel lonely when they are free and especially they feel lonely during the festival time in Nepal. So, this is one reason for uniting for the celebration of the festivals. As loneliness and homesickness cause mental sickness and may cause depression and being in mass means avoiding such sickness and be familiar with the new environment. Fun and enjoyment of the festival celebration also attracts more participants in the program. This is the time to get out of the busy life and feel free.

For the students living in Oslo, festivals are the means of representing their religion, culture and belief. Most of the students were following the religion and maintaining their culture individually. As they started practicing in collective form then they form a community or a group in Oslo as NESCO in 2007. Then afterwards, the students started gathering at a certain place at least during the festival and time of need. NESCO has an active board member to organize the celebration program. These active and volunteering board members are selected from the interested students every year.

Most of the respondents said that festival in Oslo or any cities outside Oslo is celebrated as the continuation of the Nepalese religion and culture. These festivals in foreign land signify that we have crossed many lines of the border but we have brought our culture and tradition with us.

One of the respondents explained that when an individual will be performing and celebrating festival it would not be worth it. The dominant culture will keep on dominating



the small fragments, as it remains unnoticed and vanishes. But when the culture and religion along with festivals are celebrated in the collective form, it will be noticed and retain the identity. So, the festivals in Oslo are the cultural identity of the students from where they belong to. These festivals have saved the identity of students and created the collective 'we' feeling among the students.

#### **4.6. Festival Rituals among Immigrant Students**

Nepalese have hundreds of festivals to celebrate which may seem somehow similar to an outsider. But every festival has its own uniqueness in the way of celebration, in the rituals, goddess worshiped and the prayer. So festival ritual is the most important part of the festival and immigrant students try to follow the rituals as much as possible. But sometimes circumstances and the environment acts against the rituals and at that moment rituals are generalized.

For example, an elderly person in the family offers *Tika* and *Jamara* and juniors receive. This is the culture and rituals of the *Dashain*. Some other prayers and rituals have to be practiced by the elderly person. But when students celebrate the same festival '*Dashain*' in Oslo, even the elderly person who is celebrating the festival will not be sure that he/she will be performing the ritual on that day. When he/she is sure of performing and become ready for that he/she would have already missed the early morning rituals bath and prayers. As a result, student generalized the festivals. In the most popular festival '*Dashain*', rituals has to be practiced from early morning since the first day days of the festival to the tenth day. So it very costly for students to afford the student party hall at Kringsjå. Therefore, they perform the rituals of the celebration day at the venue and rest other rituals individually at home.

All the materials are not available to perform the rituals. For example on the seventh day of *Dashain* is *Fulpati*, the ritual of *Fulpati* is to take flowers with banana stalks, sugarcane tied with red cloth to the *Dashain ghar*. But banana stalks and sugarcane are not easily available in Norway. The rituals and process of *Dashain* are described in the chapter above (3.1). On the eighth day and ninth day of *Dashain* sacrifice is not possible in Norway due to the legal barrier. Animals are not allowed to be privately slaughtered in open, even less so when the animal is conscious. Few respondents also explained that it is very hard to find the suitable clay or sand to seed barley and other seeds for *Jamara*.

Respondents also added that they have been blocked by the rule of Norway to celebrate the festival *Shiva Ratri*. Opening a fire for the whole night is the process of celebrating *Shiva Ratri* which is not allowed. Even festivals like *Chhad* and *Teej* are not

celebrated with all rituals. Performing rituals in the river is not possible and not accepted in Oslo. Students added that when someone reaches in the new land, then s/he needs to try what locals do. Local in Norway or in Oslo do not bath in the river and do not dispose of anything in the river. Rituals of *Chhad* and *Teej* consist of a lot of flower and color with foods and cloths flowed in the river which seems unsocial behavior in Oslo.

Two of the respondents disclosed that due to the unavailability of the priest, the naming ceremony of their child was performed in Nepal and played here live through social media and the internet. The ritual of the naming ceremony is to perform especial prayers of naming ceremony and to provide the name as per the time of birth depending on astrology which is announced in the ear child by the priest. Mostly grandparents perform the rituals of parents along with the priest in Nepal.

#### **4.7. Connection from Norway to Nepal**

Social interaction is the characteristics of human as they as social beings. "Social interaction is the process by which we act and react to those around us. Social interaction includes those acts people perform toward each other and the responses they give in return."<sup>88</sup> People communicate with others around them and to those who are physically far in a distance.

In the past people used to communicate with distanced people by the means of letters. Development of technology made easier to communicate by the means of telephone or emails. It is more comfortable to communicate with cell phones and social media. The virtual world has connected people who are at the distance.

All the respondents agreed that they have their family and friends in Nepal and they communicate with them frequently. Mostly as the medium of communication, they use social media, the internet and sometimes, through cell phones. Moreover, they also use social media like Facebook, Viber and Skype to communicate with their families and friends. They also share their pictures and videos of the festival celebration with friends (who are here in Oslo and also in Nepal) and families. They also do not miss to communicate during the time of festivals. Even though they are far and could not join the festival celebration, they communicate to feel the joy of the festivals and get the blessing from the elders. Sharing the feeling of the festivals in Oslo has explained the way of living of the immigrants students.

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<sup>88</sup> Boundless, Available at <https://www.boundless.com/sociology/textbooks/412/social-interaction-5/understanding-social-interaction-50/understanding-social-interaction-314-5912/>, site accessed on 31 March 2016.

Those movies and pictures of the festivals certainly explain and indicate to the family and friends that immigrants student have not lost somewhere after travelling to abroad. "Nepalese have their own deep-rooted eastern typical Nepalese norms and values, which they practice in every way possible. They celebrate their Nepali feast, festivals and practice their Nepalese ethics, norms and values."<sup>89</sup>

Respondents explain that festivals celebration in Oslo connects them to Nepal. They get connected with other students by the emotions and also get connected to Nepal by the feeling and emotions. Furthermore, students are connected with the culture and identity by the means of festivals. Festivals in Oslo fulfil the missing of home, friends and family and the communication with the family and friends through the social media, internet or telephones during the festivals decreases their absence in the family in Nepal.

Moreover, as per the rules and regulation of Norway, immigrant students are allowed to work for the part time of 20 hours per week. According to the prevailing law, Nepalese students are also working partially. The income of student is very low which is barely enough for them to cover their own expenses in Norway. In spite of these circumstances, Nepalese students get connected through the economy as well. The remittance is sent to their family mostly during the time of major festivals. The remittance is one way to get connected during the festival and add more happiness to the family. A few respondents disclosed that especially their juniors (brothers, sisters or nephew) are very happy to get money for shopping before the festivals. Shopping before the festival starts is the trend of Nepalese.

With the arrival of *Dashain* festival, people have begun flocking to local markets to do *Dashain* shopping. The crowd of people doing shopping for clothes and other necessary items for the festival can be seen jamming the footpaths as well as expensive shops. Vendors on the footpaths of *Mahendrapul*, *Chipladhunga* and *Prithvi Chowk* have made it difficult for pedestrians even to walk.<sup>90</sup>

In other words, shopping in the festivals has always been the culture of the Nepalese women and teenagers.

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<sup>89</sup> Parshu Ram Bhandari, *Cultural Identity of Nepalese Immigrants Living in Oslo*, (2015), A Master Thesis submitted to MHS, Stavanger

<sup>90</sup> Rishi Baral, "*Dashain gives markets a move on*", The Himalayan Times; available at <https://thehimalayantimes.com/business/dashain-gives-markets-a-move-on/>, site accessed on 2 April 2016.

## Chapter Five

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data that are presented and described in the previous chapter (chapter four) is analyzed in this chapter on the basis of theoretical knowledge and scholarly literature available. "The process of evaluating data using analytical and logical reasoning to examine each component of the data provided. Data from various sources is gathered, reviewed and then analyzed to form some sort of finding or conclusion."<sup>91</sup> The life structure, cultural pattern, festivals and rituals that have been described in the previous chapter and the changes and modification noticed during the presentation and description of the collected data are analyzed as per the perspective was given by the respondents.

At the present context of modernization, migration is a social and common phenomenon. In the course of development and globalization, some region has been more developed with better life standards and some regions backward with under developments and minimum human development index. This triggers the pull and the push factors of migration. As the result of migration, people from a different region occupied with dissimilar perspective and social norms, values and beliefs are in contacts between each other. On the process of adaptation, those social norms, values and belief an individual had carried are modified to fit in the new setting.

Every society has uniqueness in regards to religion, culture, social composition, social behaviors, belief, norms, and values. So when a person is grown up in a society, s/he develops a certain paradigm and perspective based on the society. Normally, when a person arrives in a new setting, s/he tries to defines things and phenomenon with own acquired set of belief and perspectives. But in most of the cases, this does not work out properly and in the right way. So the person tries to modify his/her set of belief and perspective to adjust in the new society after the migration. Similar patterns of modification are seen in terms of Nepalese immigrant students.

"Transnational migrants often embark on a process of 'making values from two worlds fit'. Such negotiations of meaning can raise fundamental questions among groups as to: who we are, who is not part of us and how we are to act properly or morally or politically

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<sup>91</sup> The Business Dictionary, available at <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/data-analysis.html>, site accessed on 9 April 2016.

in relation to the perceived condition of location."<sup>92</sup> Nepalese immigrant students have also tried their best to adjust themselves by uniting to answer 'who we are?' they are emotionally attached to their homeland despite of the geographical distance and separation from the home land.

### **5.1. Modification in Culture**

Nepalese students have migrated from the country where the majority of the population (81.3%) follows Hindu religion. The religion and culture are not just followed or practiced but it is the way of living. Culture is the key factor defining the day to day action of people. "Culture as ensembles of beliefs, ideas, and instituted practices constitute the common sense, taken-for-granted and usually, not consciously reflected upon aspects of the routine daily action."<sup>93</sup> Usually, festivals are the part of the culture but in the context of Nepal it is very hard to distinguish between the culture and religious and traditional festivals. The number of festivals celebrated in Nepal as a whole is more than the days in the calendar.

In comparison between Nepal and Norway, differences can be found in most of the aspects from the state of modernization, religion, culture to social norms, values and beliefs. In the context of Nepal, a society has mostly a single religion with similar culture in comparison to multi-region and culture of Oslo, Norway. And in the context of Nepalese students, they have moved from Hindu religion based society to Christianity based society in Oslo. So, the social norms and values of the society in Oslo are different than that of any part of Nepal. That is why students have to adjust themselves in new context.

Therefore, the deep-rooted social norms, values, and beliefs are in some ways modified to fit the available cultural environment of Oslo. The actions that are guided by the norms and beliefs have been modified. The Morning Prayer and culture of visiting temples and sacred places has been modified to listening prayer from electronics due to the lack of Hindu temple in Oslo. The availability of temple in each community in Nepal has been replaced by only one Sri Lankan Hindu temple in Oslo. This temple is seldom visited by the informants since they do not have any other option. This is the only Hindu Temple in Oslo and Nepalese students visit it during the festivals.

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<sup>92</sup> Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (Abingdon, Routledge, 2009), 45.

<sup>93</sup> Steven Vertovec, *The Hindu Diaspora*, 64

The practice of equality in the context of Oslo and presence of educated people has changed the caste and hierarchy culture of Nepalese student. In the process of migration students have brought many aspects of culture with them but they have left their culture of hierarchy and caste system in Nepal. If they were in Nepal caste would have play vital role in defining the hierarchy in the society which is practiced in the most of the occasions but in Oslo age and relationship defines the hierarchy which is rarely practiced.

## **5.2. Change in the Festival Culture**

Festival culture of the students has been drastically changed. The number of festivals from a few hundred celebrated throughout the year have been reduced to few numbers not more than 20 festivals celebrated in a year. Regional festivals and ethnic festivals are hardly celebrated. Among the common festivals celebrated by the most of the students, only major festivals are celebrated. The main reason for the huge change in the festival celebration is the lack of holidays from the study and job. The presence of a few numbers of students from the same region and ethnic group is another reason for the absence of regional and ethnic festivals. Some of the common major festivals like *Shiva Ratri* and *Chhad* are not celebrated due to the legal barrier.

Besides the festival celebration program organized by the NESCO or any other Nepalese group, few students have reported that some festivals are celebrated among few friends in their own apartment. In the informal conversation with the members of NESCO, they informed that if they consider very few numbers of students will be participating in any festival then they do not organize such festival. And NESCO organizes common festivals celebrated in all the part of Nepal.

The Norwegian government does not provide any kind of holidays for the Hindu festivals. So, due to the unavailability of time for celebration, Nepalese students do not get proper time to celebrate festivals on the same festival date as in Nepal. Therefore, some of the festivals are organized and celebrated few days ahead or after the festival date in Nepal. The researcher has observed this behavior of students during the stay in Oslo. The students do not want to miss the festival celebration and are eager to celebrate whenever it is possible to celebrate. Such kind of celebration has created more attachments with the culture and festivals.

Uniting together in the time of need and festivals celebration is characteristic of Nepalese people. Festivals are celebrated jointly in different countries by the Nepalese

immigrant students as well as labors. The joint festival celebration by the Nepalese students is noticed in countries like the USA, Australia, England, Germany, Denmark, China, Bangladesh etc. Other Nepalese communities also celebrate festivals together in countries like Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, South Korea etc. "The *Sagarmatha* Group in Saudi Arabia is organizing the *Dashain* greetings exchange and various cultural programs in Riyadh. The programs are being organized with an objective of celebrating *Dashain* festival bringing together all Nepalese living in Saudi in one place."<sup>94</sup>

### **5.3. Modification in Festivals Rituals**

Being a part of the same community and culture, the researcher has noticed and respondents have explained the modification in the festival rituals among the Nepalese students. If these festivals celebrated in Oslo were celebrated in Nepal, the part of the rituals would be performed either by the priest or by the head of the family. A priest is a person belonging to a higher caste that has studied the rituals and is familiar with practicing rituals. These rituals have to be performed correctly and by a priest. Also the head of the family performs rituals as he is on the top of the hierarchy in the family and is well experienced with the ritual practice. Normally, the priest performs rituals in the ceremonies whereas the head of the family performs during the festivals. But in context of Oslo the rituals are performed by the most elder person participating in the festivals considering him/her as the top in the hierarchy. Gender is not considered as the important factor. Female are also expected to perform rituals if she is the eldest participant. In contrary, female performing rituals in Nepal is not a common behavior.

In the context of Nepal, the materials collected for the ceremonies or for the festival rituals should be clean and pure as per the social values, norms, and beliefs. People from lower caste are considered to be impure while sages, priests and persons from higher caste *Brahman* and *Kshatriya* with ritual bath are considered as a pure person to perform the rituals. The rituals are performed with the special prayer and chants related to the particular festival or ceremonies. Among the ethnic groups, their own priest performs the rituals of the ceremonies and festivals.

Contrary to the existing ritual practice system in Nepal, Nepalese immigrant students perform the festivals rituals in their own way. Caste and ethnicity have no role to play to

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<sup>94</sup> Rastriya Samachar Samiti (RSS), "*Nepalese in Saudi Arabia Gathering Together for Dashain Celebration*", The Himalayan Times; available at <https://thehimalayantimes.com/nepal/nepalis-in-saudi-arabia-gathering-together-for-dashain-celebration/>, site accessed on 2 April 2016.

determine the hierarchy between the students. An elderly person by the age or relationship performs the rituals and this system is accepted and approved by the students. Among the participants of the celebration program, students are identified belonging from the *Brahman* caste as well as the priest family. But these persons do not want to introduce themselves as a higher caste person or from the priest family. Even when they are asked to perform the rituals, they simply reject stating that anyone can perform the rituals. Furthermore, they admit that they are always ready to assist if there is any confusion while performing the rituals. Knott indicate this behavior as effective negotiation. "Diasporas may effectively negotiate a new level of adaption to host societies on the one hand as well as the continued maintenance of relations with the home country on the other."<sup>95</sup>

The students belonging to the *Brahman* caste or the priest family want to hide their identity to maintain the equality between the Nepalese students. The educated people do not entertain the existence of the malpractice in the society. "The role of *Brahmin* priests ... is openly rejected by the progressive and well educated Surinamese Hindu youth of the Netherlands."<sup>96</sup> In the context of Nepalese immigrant students in the Netherlands and in Norway as well, they are highly educated and driving manpower of the society. Therefore, they want to change the malpractice of the society and want to continue the good culture of the society.

Being far from their homeland, Nepalese students are concerned about the continuation of their social culture and identity so they have united together and have been forming groups like NESCO (only of Students) and NRNA (Skilled workers, business personal as well as students). These groups have played a role of medium for a unification of Nepalese and protection of the culture and identity.

#### **5.4. Practice of Equality**

Nepalese immigrant students have tried their best to practice the equality among themselves. No discrimination is noticed regarding the caste, ethnicity, religion or gender. The malpractice of untouchability is not in existence between Nepalese immigrants students. Respondents from lower caste shared their experience as they have not felt any kind of misbehavior or discrimination from any Nepalese students after migrating to Norway. Most of them are friendly and helpful to others especially to the newcomers every year.

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<sup>95</sup> Knott , *Diasporas*, (London, Zed Books Ltd., 2010), 135

<sup>96</sup> Steven Vertovec, *The Hindu Diaspora*: (London: Routledge, 2000), 17



While Nepalese immigrants are compared to other Hindu migrants, similarities can be found with immigrants in Netherlands but contrasting with Hindu community in Leicester. Similarity with Surinamese Hindu youth in Netherlands is that the caste system and *Bhramin* priest has best rejected and more equality is practiced between the immigrants. Whereas, Gujarati Hindu in Leicester has good practice of caste system and priest are on the top in the hierarchy. These differences in practice between the Hindu groups are more connected with the education level and the number of Hindus present in the community. Communities in Norway and Netherlands are very small and highly educated at the time of migration in comparison to Leicester. The level of education and quantity has played key role to determine the differences in practice of the diasporas in variation locations.

## Chapter Six

### CONCLUSION

Nepal is a multi religious country with more than 10 religions. Hinduism is the major religion in Nepal. Approximately 81.3 percent of the total population follow the Hindu religion. Hindu religion has multiple gods and goddess, which can be noticed in Nepal by the presence of different temples in the community. Nepalese has hundreds of festivals celebrated throughout the year with the worship of certain god and goddess in the festival. Normally, temples in Nepal are visited every day. Special visit of devotees can be seen during the festival days. Festivals like *Dashain*, *Tihar*, *Maha Shiva Ratri*, *Buddha Jayanti* and many others are celebrated in every part of Nepal and with the mass people visiting temples and sacrificing animals. Rituals are performed at home and at the temples by the priest and the elderly person of the family.

Some other festivals are celebrated by the ethnic groups relating to the seasons and specific time of the year. These ethnic festivals are celebrated by the corresponding ethnic group. For example, *Tamu Lhosar* is celebrated by the *Gurung* community of Nepal, *Yamari Purni* by the *Newar* community and *Sakela* by the *Kirat* community. Some festivals are celebrated according to the geographical location. For instance, *Indra Jatra*, *Ghode Jatra* in Kathmandu, *Gaura Parba* in far western part of Nepal, *Chhad* in the southern *Terai* of Nepal.

People with such diversity in Nepal have migrated to Norway. They have migrated with different purposes; most of them have migrated for the higher education. This research has focused on the festival culture of these students who are living in Oslo. Field study was conducted for the collection of data.

The researcher has selected inclusive sample among the Nepalese immigrant students. Purposive sampling procedure was used for sampling. A semi structured interview was conducted to gather the in depth information from the respondents. Mainly data were collected about the festival culture of immigrant students here in Oslo and festival culture in Nepal before migration. These entire interviews conducted in the Nepali language (mother tongue) were recorded with the permission from the interviewee.

Both quantitative and descriptive method has been used to present the collected data. Quantitative presentation is used to present the personal information of the respondents. This information is shown by the means of figures, diagrams and tables. The data besides the

personal information of the respondents are presented in descriptive method. Analytical theories like transnationalism, migration, intercultural communication and ritual theory are used during the analysis of the data. The researcher was neutral during the data collection but the researcher has also used the available insight knowledge about the religious, cultural and rituals aspects of Nepalese. Being a part of Nepalese festivals culture and a practitioner has been the great advantage for the researcher during the presentation and analysis of the data.

From the research, the researcher has concluded that immigrant students are stable with their religious behaviors and practice. Students worship god and goddess every morning. They have secured their festivals culture and continued the rituals as far as possible. But few systems have been changed after arriving to Norway and few has been displaced.

Due to the unavailability of the Hindu temples, the culture of visiting to temples early morning and specially on the festival days with especial offering is only present in mind. Students occasionally visit to the Sri Lankan Hindu Temple. Live performing of morning prayers and chants has been displaced by the electronic media. Students play the prayer and chants in laptops and mobiles. The major festivals of Nepal are celebrated in groups at the time and place as organized by NESCO.

Caste system for hierarchy is no more in practice between Nepalese students. They have united by 'we' feeling. The role of priest has been displaced by the elderly person among the participants of the festival. For example, the mother of a participant was the eldest person who performed the rituals in *Dashain* festival celebrated in 2015. She offered *tika* to the entire participants. This shows that caste and gender based hierarchy is flattering among the immigrant Nepalese in Oslo.

In comparison to Nepal, fewer festivals are celebrated in Oslo by the Nepalese. But still they do not miss to unite during the festivals. Students initiate organizing the festivals to share time with friends and make it meaningful. Students also do not miss to communicate with their friends and families in Nepal with the means of virtual media like Skype, Viber, Facebook etc. This is the consequence of globalization, which has connected two geographies. Feelings are shared and good wishes are exchanged. Festivals in Oslo or any cities outside Oslo are celebrated as the continuation of the Nepalese religion and culture. These festivals in foreign land signify that we have crossed many lines of borders but we have brought our culture and tradition with us.

Festivals like *Shiva Ratri* and *Holi* and *Chhad* have restrictions by law. Even though, Nepalese students celebrate these festivals and rituals in their own generalized way. They celebrate *Shiva Ratri* without marijuana. The *Holi* festival is celebrated only in the apartment

of students between fewer friends and in many groups. Similarly, *Chhad* is also celebrated indoor. Moreover, all the materials required for the festivals and rituals are not easily accessible so such things have been generalized. Sacrifice during the festivals is absent among Nepalese in Oslo but offerings are done. Slaughtering animals in public or privately is not allowed in Norway. In common student only practice those rituals which are possible for them to perform in the contexts of Oslo.

Students are allowed to work only fifty percent. According to UDI, international students can only work 20 hours per week. Most of the Nepalese students work unskilled or semi-skilled job during their study period. That is why, they do not get leave from their work during festivals time. And also the Norwegian government has not provided any holidays for Hindu festivals so, universities and colleges do not provide any kind of leave for the celebration of festivals. This is the main reason the researcher has found for the low number of students who participate in the festivals and the majority of participants changes in every festival.

Nepalese students are fewer in comparison to other communities in Oslo or any other cities of Norway. Scattering in different places has created fear of losing their culture and identity. This fear of losing has also hold together the Nepalese students. United Nepalese students have their own identity and culture, which represents Nepal and the culture of different parts of Nepal.

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