



# Paperless Reality: Transnational parenthood and undocumented Nepalese in Portugal

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## **RESUMO**

Os migrantes em situação de trabalho não-documentado ou ilegal são agentes económicos que produzem riqueza no país onde residem, pagam impostos, mas não têm direitos legais. Isto acontece com um número substancial de nepaleses residentes em Portugal. Além disso, a grande maioria é qualificada, em termos de escolaridade, embora não seja capaz de progredir profissionalmente devido à sua situação irregular. Este estudo centra-se na imigração contemporânea de nepaleses indocumentados em Portugal e seus impactos nas famílias. O objetivo foi entender como a educação transnacional é praticada e percebida por mães e pais nepaleses que vivem em Portugal em situação irregular. Este estudo utilizou um método qualitativo através da micro-etnografia, utilizando entrevistas em profundidade e observação participante. Entre os oito participantes da pesquisa, seis eram nepaleses desafiados pela distância e uma situação não documentada, com as famílias que ficaram no Nepal; e dois eram informantes-chave com informações sólidas sobre eles. Os resultados evidenciam as perigosas trajetórias de migração dos nepaleses, bem como suas expectativas frustradas, de mobilidade descendente e exploração como migrantes irregulares. Em segundo lugar, também expressa as diferenças de género em relação à maternidade e paternidade à distância, enquanto não-documentados, bem como os mecanismos utilizados para lidar com a situação. Dado que as políticas e fronteiras a nível macro estão a tornar-se mais rigorosas, existe espaço para os contrabandistas migrantes cobrarem pelos migrantes nepaleses que desejam trabalhar em Portugal. Uma das principais constatações é que os nepaleses vivem em situação irregular, sendo qualificados e trabalhando em empregos precários e com dívidas elevadas para com os intermediários. Este estudo contribui ainda para a reflexão sobre as implicações dos assistentes sociais no apoio aos migrantes irregulares.

**Palavras-chave:** Imigração, migração indocumentada, parentalidade transnacional, migração ilegal, Nepaleses, Portugal

## **ABSTRACT**

Undocumented working migrants are economic agents who produce wealth in the country where they reside, paying taxes, but not having legal rights. This happens with a substantial number of the Nepalese residing in Portugal. Furthermore, the large majority of them is qualified, in terms of school education, although not able to progress professionally due to their irregular situation. This study focuses on the contemporary immigration of Nepalese undocumented in Portugal and its impacts on families. The aim was to understand how transnational parenting is being practiced and perceived by Nepalese mothers and fathers living in Portugal, in an irregular situation. This study employed a qualitative method through micro-ethnography, by using in-depth interviews and participant observation. Among eight participants of the research, six were Nepalese challenged by distance and an undocumented situation, with families who stayed in Nepal; and two were key informants having solid information on them. The findings, firstly, evidence the perilous migration trajectories of the Nepalese, as well as their frustrated expectations, mobility descendant and exploitation as irregular migrants. Because the macro level policies and borders are becoming stricter, there is space for migrant smugglers to charge for Nepalese migrants who wish to work in Portugal. Secondly, the outputs revealed gender differences concerning mothers and fathers parenting at distance, while undocumented, as well as their coping mechanisms. Thirdly, the results demonstrate that the Nepalese are living undocumented, while being qualified and working in precarious jobs and high debts to the intermediaries. This study further contributes for the reflection on social worker's implications in giving support to irregular migrants.

**Keywords:** Immigration, undocumented migration, transnational parenting, irregular migration, Nepalese in Portugal

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## **List of abbreviations**

CBS: Central Bureau of Statistics

IFRC: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

INE: Instituto Nacional de Estatística

IOM: International Organization for Migration

MIPEX: Migrant Integration Policy Index

NIDS: Nepal Institute of Development Studies

NRNA: Non- Resident Nepali Association

SEF: Serviço de Estrangeiros e Fronteiras

EU: European Union

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Program

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

NASW: National Association of Social Workers

IFSW: International Federation of Social Work



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# 1. Introduction

Irregular migration, also named as “illegal” or “undocumented”, is an issue of growing amount and importance. According to United Nations (UN) , around 258 million people are worldwide migrants, which reveals an expansion of 49% since 2000 (UN, 2017). This implies that only 3.4% of the world's population are global migrants, which means that most the total populace does not move abroad. Albeit overall records are hard to obtain, the United Nations has surveyed that globally there are about 30 to 40 million undocumented or irregular migrants. This means that to the 258 million international (regular) migrants, sums up about more 15 and 20 per cent who are irregular (international) migrants (UN, 2017).

Therefore, what is exactly an “*irregular migrant*”? According to International Organization of Migration (IOM) *Glossary*, an irregular migrant is,

A person who, owing to unauthorized entry, breach of a condition of entry, or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The definition covers inter alia those persons who have entered a transit or host country lawfully but have stayed for a longer period than authorized or subsequently taken up unauthorized employment (also called clandestine/undocumented migrant or migrant in an irregular situation) (IOM, 2011, p. 54).

In the history of migration, separation and transnational families have been thought as a direct result of migration. Transnational families are an increasingly important area in migration studies and have received considerable attention in social work. Migration trajectories of undocumented immigrants is challenging and this study focuses on mechanisms of overcoming the challenges in performing long distance parenting roles. Moreover, migration is both an economic and social process. Migration decisions may be made based principally on economic circumstances, but the process also affects family life. This research focuses on undocumented status and how it affects parenting across borders.

The key aspect of this research is then to explore how parents understand and experience parenthood from a distance while living in an irregular situation. The researcher explores facets of families who are challenged by borders and visa status. It is a current trend in migration that families are divided in different parts of the world, which brings challenges to the notion of family. According to the definition from the *A Dictionary of Sociology* of “family”, “is an intimate domestic group made up of people related to one another by bonds of blood, sexual mating, or legal ties. It has been a very resilient social unit that has survived and adapted through time”(A Dictionary to Sociology, n.d.). However, with the globalization and the progression of the communication technology making the world ‘smaller’, we can see an enormous movement of transnational families living cross borders. The participants of my research are from Nepal, living in Portugal, whose families are stayed in origin country, and are challenged by distance and confusing irregular situation in the destination country.

The idea for this thesis originated when I was in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2016, the first semester of Master's Program. I interacted with many Nepalese, whose situation shocked me, particularly as this was the first time I was in a foreign country. I had to deal with questions of "how I got into Portugal", and "how much money I paid to get there", or sometimes, "which country I overstayed in", among other questions. I wanted to understand more about the movement of Nepalese and started figuring out that they were entering from different European countries, or by paying some amount of money with the help of 'smugglers' who have been living in Portugal. They have either had their visas expired or came in to Portugal without any visas and living without a right to stay in Portugal. The experiences of meeting many irregular immigrants coupled with unique courses during the first semester; namely Sociology of the Family, as well as Family and Migration. My analysis also draws greatly from my experiences as a participant observer of daily life and conversations with many migrants, who were not originally tied to my research.

## **Problem statement**

Even though there is a growing number of irregular migrants who leave their families behind, there is very slight attention paid to their family life. The opportunities for transnational families to meet are scarce and there is a large level of uncertainty and prolonged separation. Irregular migration trajectories on its own are considered risky as a lot of stress factors are attached to the process. An estimation of the annual gross revenue of migrant smuggling marked in an average of USD 5 to 6 billion in 2015 (Interpol, 2016).

According to International Labor Organization (ILO), average monthly earnings of employees in Nepal was approximately 57 Euros<sup>1</sup> (ILO, 2008). Whereas, the average monthly income of employees in Portugal is 839 Euros (ILO, 2016). This massive difference in wages also shows the economic motivation to migrate to foreign countries of Nepalese. Scarcity, social and political unpredictability, poverty and not to mention, the restricted convenience of authorized migration routes, push persons to unlawful networks to facilitate their irregular admission, transit or stay in the EU and elsewhere (European Union, 2016). The criminalisation of irregular entry furthermore upsurges the vulnerability of migrants to abuse and exploitation (UN, 2017), which starts at home country as Ya states.

One of the most significant current discussions in legal and moral philosophy is about the problems faced by illegal migrants usually begin in their home countries, especially through unethical practices by illegal brokers and private employment agencies. Migrant workers end up in exploitative working condition due to a lack of accurate information on the living and working conditions in receiving countries (Ya, 2016).

In my Google Nepal search for the precise keywords 'undocumented Nepalese in Portugal and transnational parenting' on the search bar the result was "Your search did not match any document". It was apparent that the issue of undocumented Nepalese is underreported and

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<sup>1</sup> The currency was in Nepalese Rupees and was further converted to Euros using the following website: <https://www.xe.com/currencyconverter/>.

under studied. However, there were several documents on how Nepalese are travelling all over the globe in search of better opportunities and ultimately, a better life.

## **Background and purpose of study**

Nepal is formally known as the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal. It is a landlocked country in South Asia bordering India and China. It is one of the least developed nations in the world, and more than one-quarter of their inhabitants live below the poverty line (Central Intelligence Agency, 2018) . The current population of Nepal is approximately 29 million and I argue that there is nearly no social security and few development opportunities, in which the state does not guarantee wellbeing of its citizens and therefore cannot be classified as a “welfare state” by textbook definition. Issues of poverty force millions of people to cross borders and leave families behind.

Nepal is the top country of the world most dependent of remittances for the national GDP. Remittances, the money sent someone in the home country, plays therefore an important role in Nepal’s GDP as it currently stands at 32 percent of country’s total GDP, according to the World Bank data (World Bank, 2016). According to World Bank (2018), the remittances flow to developing countries positioned at \$466 billion in 2017 and are anticipated to raise up to around \$485 billion in 2018. Similarly, remittances towards South Asia was \$117 billion in 2017. We must keep in mind that such fascinating numbers are not just merely statistics of a country and flow of economy, but probably evidence that demonstrates significant universality of transnational families. In fact, these remittances received by the countries, undeniably goes to their transnational families and relatives that make such enormous and persistent flow feasible. Likewise, communication technology and migrant networks have revealed the boundless opportunities that prevail across borders in foreign countries.

It is important to highlight the educational qualifications of the Nepalese immigrants in Portugal. According to the Portuguese Census, nearly two thirds of the Nepalese completed the secondary school and a quarter the university (Bajracharya, 2015a). Therefore, they are qualified immigrants working in manual jobs in agriculture and restaurants. This characteristic of education distinguishes the Nepalese from other immigrants in Portugal. Plus, to descendent mobility in the profession, they are also undocumented, which leaves them in a more vulnerable situation.

## **Aims of the research and methodology**

This study aims to gather meaningful data and answer the questions below.

### Main question

- ❖ How do the transnational parents perform parenting roles from a distance while living in an irregular situation?

### Sub questions

- ❖ Are there any challenges and impacts of irregular situation in transnational parenting?
- ❖ What was their motivation to choose Portugal as a destination country and how did they become undocumented?
- ❖ What are the coping mechanisms that immigrants adapt regarding parenting from afar and family separation?
- ❖ What are the differences and similarities concerning male and female gender in transnational parenthood among undocumented migrants?
- ❖ What future expectations plans do these parents have for their children?

The main purpose of this research is therefore to understand the perception and practice of transnational parenting of undocumented Nepalese parents in Portugal. It also intends to fulfil the objective of social work MFamily and apply theoretical knowledge gained during the course. It similarly aims to contribute to the growing knowledge body of irregular migration and transnational parenting research; and provide a perspective of changing Nepalese emigration and families.

The complementary aims are listed below.

- To explore the underlying economic and non-economic causes for irregular migration.
- To comprehend the connection with the migrant networks in Portugal and family ties back in Nepal.
- To identify the major motivation and influences of irregular migration from Nepal to Portugal.
- To explore the positive and negative consequences of irregular migration on migrants and their transnational parenthood in the study area.
- To assess the effects of migration with emphasis on the gender dimension.

The methodology used to achieve these aims was qualitative in nature. According to Bryman (2012), a qualitative study is to characterize the phenomenon, whereas a quantitative is to test hypothesis and measure the dimension. The study has been carried out through micro-ethnography, by using in-depth interviews and participant observation. The interlocutors were three men and three women, plus two key informants. The secondary data for this research was in international and national databases collected through SEF (Portugal), World Bank, United Nations, and the Office for Education Statistics and Planning, Ministry of Education, and Department of Foreign Employment (Nepal). Moreover, the data for Nepalese migrants were also extracted by earlier research work completed by students in ISCTE-IUL, from MFamily Master, which is currently the only available published data in English on Nepalese immigrants in Portugal.

## **Significance of study**

In this research, I attempted to draw from theories on migration and concepts of Sociology of Family to explain the phenomenon of transnational families. Recently, studies have begun to combine both migration and families into one study. Whereas, in the past, most of the studies were focused on only one of the topics but did not integrate them both in one study simultaneously.

This research brought up interesting and unanticipated results. Migration and settlement in Portugal for many Nepalese is a risky, costly, and a prolonged endeavour with lengthy separation from their family members. The higher expenses in the destination country tied with expectations, economic responsibility of family left behind have made lives tougher for many Nepalese. On top of that, living with debts and loans acquired specially for the migration process has contributed in creating several stress factors in Nepalese living in Portugal. The findings of this study show that lives of irregular migrants were already filled with problems and risk before the migration process.

The study also pinpoints the evidences of human rights violation, smuggling, the undocumented immigrants having a fair contribution in the economy of the country of origin as well as destination country with tax payment and social security payment in the Portuguese economy. The irregular migrants in the job market must pay equal taxes as regular immigrants or citizen. It may not be wrong to assume that the economy of a destination country boosts as the revenues rise. Likewise, one of the findings was a huge level of exploitation as the country's tax system and legal work do not go hand in hand for the irregular immigrants. To illustrate, in Portugal it happened that the tax office did not give them a tax number because they did not have a job but they were only given a job if they have a tax number. They could apply for a residency permit only if they had the tax number and a job contract. The irregular immigrants also contribute a fair share to the global economy with the help of remittances. However, with all these duties at hand, this population has no rights and is labelled as "illegal", "irregular" or "unauthorized" immigrants. They are subjected to abuse and exploitation in some of their work places or by recruiters. Even though, this was the selected migration channel for the immigrants, as the interviewees of the thesis, who felt trapped living with hefty debts to the recruiters. It is also found that they have long regularization procedures.

Likewise, it was interesting how gender played an important role in parenting and the empowerment of women and men. The study has found that there are both cost and benefits in their decision to migrate. However, the researcher argues if there are more costs than benefits. Benefits being, women being empowered and men taking roles of domestic helps as well. Economic status being uplifted and parents being able to provide for their children and trace their future. Female migrants have felt a sense of emancipation however, male migrants have also gained status and respect in their community back home. If we turn to how it has impacted parents, the results reveal gender differences. Nevertheless, there are similarities, both women (mothers) and men (fathers) interviewed shared the common feelings of loneliness, guilt, and self-blame for the situation they are living in. To maintain parenting, there was serious

dependency on communication technology. Likewise, there was an economic transformation in some of their lives as the salaries moved up but most of the interviewees were pushed to the cycle of debt and living with it having a hard time paying off the debts and meeting financial expectations of the family. The living standards had gone down in terms of housing.

## **Social work implication**

According to the most recent global definition issued by International Federation of Social Workers in 2014,

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing (IFSW, 2014).

Regarding the definition of social work, it is also pertinent to read the explanation of the National Association of Social Workers, from the United States. Their code of ethics has a list of comprehensive ethical principles that are grounded on social work's central ideals of social justice, dignity and worth of the person, service, veracity, ability and importance of human relationships (NASW, 2017). These values have established standards to which all social workers must abide.

As the definition of social work suggests, human rights are one of the fundamental principles of social work as expressed in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights according to its global definition. Before moving on to the significance of human rights based approach in social work, let us understand human rights in general. Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our human rights without discrimination. These rights are all interrelated, interdependent and indivisible (OHCHR | What are Human Rights, n.d.).

Human rights are considered valid universally and equally for everyone. The social work profession is based in the assumption that human rights for all persons is vital for a better world and the persistence of humanity. The profession of social work takes responsibility to eliminate violation of human rights and professionals must exercise this duty in their practice with people, universally.

However, an ethical dilemma arises when the criminalization of irregular migration comes in action. For social workers based in Europe, in the field of irregular migration, one must understand that in nearly all European Union member states, irregular entry and stay are offences that are typically punishable and condemned with custodial penalty. In some conditions, a person may as well be detained in the return procedure (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014). Also, according to pertinent European Union (EU) legislation,



the associated countries must punish persons who help irregular migrants to enter and stay in the EU.

Regarding social work implication, there are many structural drawbacks that immigrants face in most parts of the world. Irregular immigrants suggested that they would be happy to receive immigration support and services to safeguard their permanency, safety, and well-being. However, the movement toward the criminalization of immigration, and more precisely, the undocumented population, has led to prevailing dilemmas and barriers to which social workers are required to respond (Furman, 2012). Along with the tough immigration regulation, social workers are in a difficulty in which they either conform and obey the law or interrupt professional values. Social workers can rationalize how they deliver services to undocumented migrants in a different way than others.

Criminalisation affects not only the migrants themselves, as well as individuals who assist them. For instance, providers of charitable or legal support or individuals who rescue migrants in suffering at sea. It has been informed that Malta, Portugal, and Spain do not punish irregular entry or irregular stay with a fine or imprisonment, but return actions are immediately started (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014).

### *Structure of the dissertation*

The research paper is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1, this one, established the introduction, which focus on the context and purpose of the study. Chapter 2 is composed of literature review which stretches review of books, papers, journal articles and reports about Nepalese immigration, Portuguese immigration laws, irregular migration, remittances, and transnational parenting practice. Chapter 3 exhibits the theoretical outline of concepts and key issues related to irregular migration networks and transnational parenthood.

Similarly, Chapter 4 is focused on methodology and presents the research strategy, design, data collection techniques, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. Chapter 5 is composed of analysis and findings regarding participants motivation to travel in an irregular manner, migrant networks, how are they carrying out parenting roles while being undocumented and their coping mechanism and plans for future retrieved from in-depth interviews and observation. Finally, chapter 6 is composed of conclusion, which summarizes the main findings and proposes future research from other standpoints.

## **2. Literature review**

The researcher presents the literature review to contextualize and better understand the undocumented Nepalese population in Portugal and transnational parenthood. The chapter is divided into six sections, starting namely with the synopsis of Nepalese migration, and following with the remittances, irregular migration, transnationalism, South Asians in Portugal, and the Portuguese legal framework. It intends to relate and articulate the main research question of the thesis, how are transnational parents performing parenting roles from distance while being undocumented? The sub questions are focused on their motivation to immigrate to Portugal, their coping mechanisms, and future expectations for their children.

### **2.1 Synopsis of Nepalese emigration**

Migration is considered an important phenomenon and has been evident throughout the history of mankind, playing a pivotal role in leading to the world known to us today (IFRC, 2011). According to International Organization of Migration Glossary (IOM, 2011, p. 52), international migration is “Movement of persons who leave their country of origin, or the country of habitual residence, to establish themselves either permanently or temporarily in another country”. An international frontier is therefore crossed. Likewise, in the courses of the overall globalization process that is occurring across the globe, the exchange between information and individuals from one place to another has never been easier. A massive movement flow of culture, ideas, behaviors, families, information and especially money are regarded as key components of migration.

Nepal has a long history of work relocation and migration. The acceptance of youthful Nepali people into the provincial British armed force in the mid nineteenth century gives off an impression of being the principal example of the state's inclusion in formalizing work relocation through bargains between two governments (Bhattarai, 2005). Furthermore, Nepalese have moved to India for work for a substantial length of time and the border crossing is habitually not observed as migration, because of India and Nepal's open frontier and their ancient migration history between each other (Kollmair, Manandhar, Subedi, & Thieme, 2006).

A great part of the historical backdrop of work relocation for outside work from Nepal is portrayed by the surge to India, at any rate up to the mid-1980s. Nepal and India share a long and open border and no documentation or visa is required to cross the border from both sides (ibid). However, this has room for contest as the term ‘international migration’ suggests, the movement from one country to another is known as such migration and only because there are open border, countries, statistics, and researcher must consider and observe the movement as migration.

After the displacement of Nepalese populace for military reason, another flow of movement likewise began towards Middle Eastern nations which were incited by the 'oil boom' in mid-1970's (Bhattarai, 2005). Seddon, Adhikari, & Gurung, (2002) specify that it was amid the late 1990's that Nepalese populace started to emigrate progressively to a portion of the Gulf nations. The tremendous interest for work in nations like Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates charmed the youthful Nepalese individuals hunting down business openings, particularly for

the rural population as they were the ones who were deeply affected by the initiation of Nepalese civil war in 1996 (Bhattarai, 2005). In the meantime, the brutal and rough, decade-long Maoist insurrection that began in 1996 had seriously influenced Nepal's economy.

Nepalese government figures have placed unemployment at 3.20 percent and populace beneath the poverty line remain at 25.2 percent. A report prepared by International Labor Organization (ILO) on Nepali youth between 15-29 discovers youth unemployment rate among college graduates is at 26.1 percent, which is almost three times greater than those without even primary education. Regardless, this could be a direct result of labor migration, extension of the sector of services and the strength of subsistence farming (Serrière, 2014). Most part of youngsters who work in Nepal (92.2 percent) are occupied with casual work without any privileges like fundamental wage, paid yearly and sick leave, and so on.. (Serrière, 2014).

Nepalese have moved to various parts of the world and an example of relocation can be set up as indicated by the financial status, which begins in Group A, the ones richer and with more education, declining gradually until the group D, the ones with lowermost financial and educational resources. Gurung (2000) presents in Figure 1 that Nepalese labors opting to work in the Gulf countries are found to be not as much educated and less rich (Group D) than those aiming to go to North America and Europe. He studies that Nepalese with the maximum capitals and education (Group A) migrate to Anglo-Saxon countries like Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, The United States of America, and Japan while people in Group B migrate to nations in Europe like Belgium, Germany, Switzerland; persons in Group C migrate to East Asian countries like Malaysia, Maldives, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Guam; In Group D, they migrate to Gulf Countries and the persons in Group E migrate to India. Migration of enormous sum of Nepalese to Portugal is a new phenomenon which is not communicated in Gurung 's study. But it could be probable that the most of the labor migrants coming to Portugal, show the similar features as the other migrants in Group C as a European country (Gurung, 2000).

Figure 1: Choice of destination country by socio-economic status of Nepalese, 2000

<i>Economic Group</i> <i>(from richest to poorest)</i>	<i>Choice of Destination Country</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, United Kingdom, United States of America.</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>Belgium, Germany, Switzerland</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>Guam, Malaysia, Maldives, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>Gulf Countries</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>India</i>

Source: Gurung (2000).

Nepal is presently facing several effects and influences of migration. Likewise, among the numerous impacts of foreign employment, the social dynamics seem to be drastically changing, with many individuals in the working-age populace. Men are found becoming more absent

from households in the current times. Besides, social and cultural ideals are also being transformed as more and more women join the labor force largely and universally which is a completely new paradigm (Department of Foreign Employment, 2016).

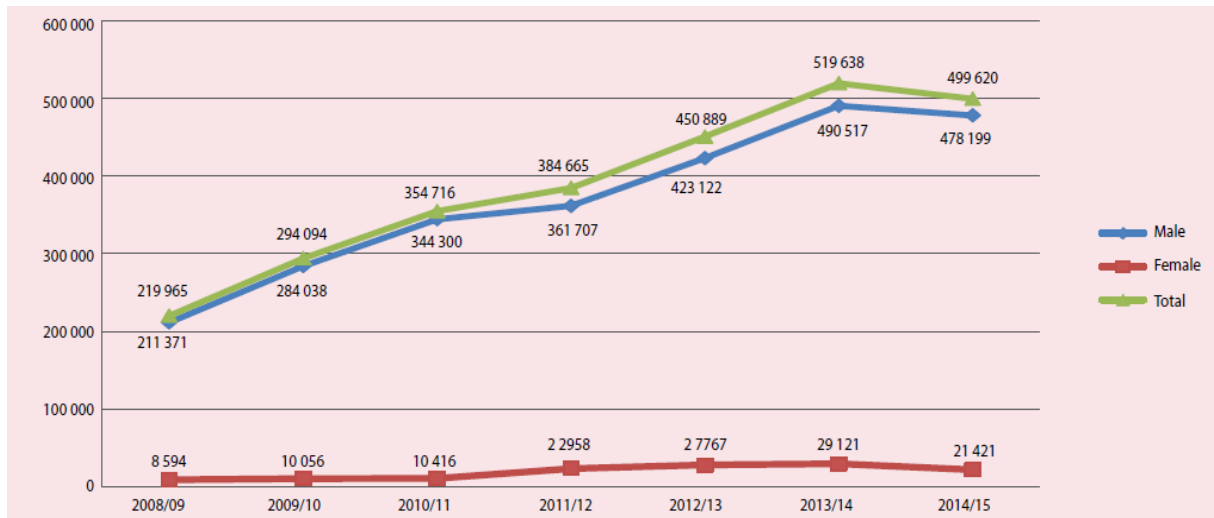
Nepalese migration is only a new trend to Southern Europe which is Spain and Portugal (Dahal, 2016). There has been insignificant increment until 2005, and after that time there was an enormous rise in number of Nepalese migrating to Portugal (Bajracharya, 2015).

### 2.1.1 Current trends of Nepalese labor migration

Overseas employment is without a doubt the most notable inspiration for migration from Nepal to other destination in the twenty-first century. More than 3.8 million work licenses to work abroad (except for India) were issued by the Government amid the 1993/94– 2014/15. Likewise, as per the ongoing statistics information (2011), almost 71 percent of the aggregate absent populace (1,921,494), or individuals living out of the nation (counting living in India) referred to private and institutional occupations abroad as the explanations behind leaving the country. Upwards of 1.2 million occupations were accessible in 27 nations, as per the pre-endorsement conceded by the Department of Foreign Employment in 2014/15 (Department of Foreign Employment, 2016). There are different factors related with the decision of choosing destination countries for Nepalese laborers, including financial condition, educational status, access to information and their own social networks (Gurung, 2000).

The inclination of migration for the individuals who have taken authorized approval from the Ministry of Labor between the years 2008/09-2013/14 has been printed in Status Report for Nepal: 2013/14 by the Department of Foreign Employment (2014) as seen in Figure 2. Department of Labor and Employment allotted a total of 2,723,587 work permits from 2008/09 over 2014/15. As per the data on work permits issued, men represented the main part of the labor permits in the course of recent years, at 95.7 percent. In any case, there has been a huge increment in the quantity of permits procured by women in that same period. The share of women migrants topped in 2012/13, at almost 6.2 percent of the aggregate labor migrants and has been falling subsequently. There was a persistent increase in issued grants until 2013/14, when the aggregate number plunged somewhat. The 3.8 percent diminish in 2014/15 from the earlier year is ascribed to the devastating quake that hit Nepal in April 2015.

Figure 2: Total number of labor permit issued yearly, 2008/09 - 2014/15



Source: Department of Foreign Employment, Nepal, 2016.

As indicated by the Central Bureau of Statistics of Nepal (2011), the combined number of emigrated Nepalese is around 2 million. A large portion of this populace (75%) dwells in India and Gulf nations, 38% and 37% individually, while just a little number of Nepalese lives in Europe i.e. 3% (CBS, 2016). According to the Nepalese migration profile as specified by Gurung (2000), these rates validate that many of the migrants, particularly the ones going to India and Gulf nations have little educational qualifications and monetary support. It might be believable that they were not ready to discover satisfactory employment openings in Nepal due to their lack of skills and constraining them into grim work (Dahal, 2016b).

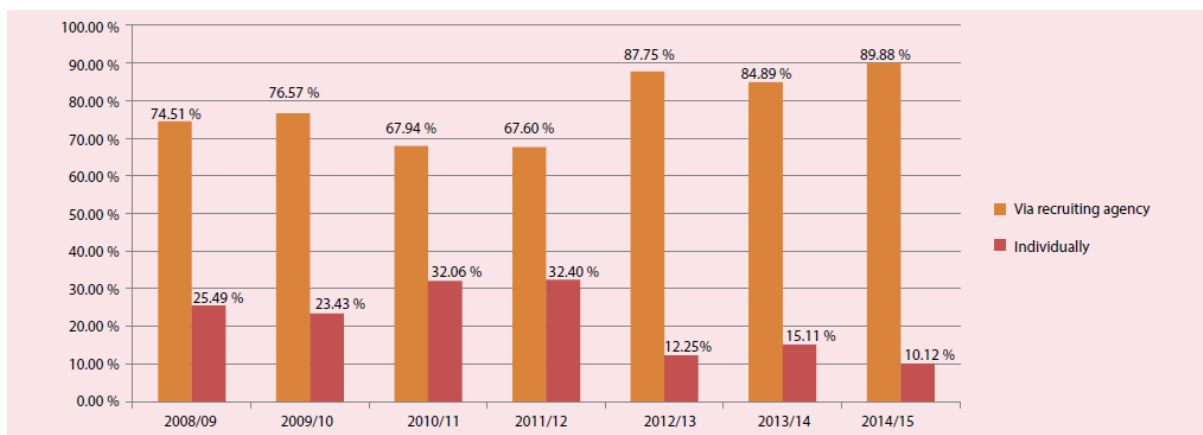
The World Bank Group (2011) made an examination on Nepalese individuals who had relocated for employment and returned, uncovering information on licensed recruiters they had and the difficulties they needed to overcome. The migrants said that informal communities in the international destination countries were of incredible help as it opened new channel for openings for work and safeguarded from exploitation, particularly for new migrants. They communicated that they were overqualified for the work they were doing and were not ready to find a superior occupation coordinating their expertise and potential. They had issues with delayed payment at workplace while some said that they confronted medical issues, it made them scared of losing their jobs (The World Bank, 2011).

The primary explanations behind Nepalese migration are joblessness rise and poverty, Maoist insurgency, democratization, and progression through establishment of Foreign Employment Act 1985. With the Foreign Employment Act, labor/abroad work organizations were approved (Gurung, 2000). Nepalese are engaged in for the most part in low or semi-skilled occupations, for example, building construction, carpentry, welding, painting, local work, kitchen helper, and security guards to name a few. Likewise, high frequency of utilizing counterfeit documentation or steering through a transitory third nation travel is also a very common trend among Nepalese going to foreign countries (Sijapati, Bhattarai, & Pathak, 2015).

As indicated by the human rights group Amnesty International, Nepali migrant workers are caught in an endless loop of debt obligation and exploitation because of a disappointment by experts to bring down recruitment firms or 'agencies' that charge wrongfully high expenses for employments abroad or education abroad (“Failed and exploited, Nepal migrant workers trapped in debt cycle – Amnesty,” n.d.). A study of more than 400 Nepali migrants by Amnesty discovered that workers are not just constrained up to 12 times more amount to agencies, yet in addition that most are compelled to acquire the cash from corrupt cash moneylenders at high loan costs. Migrant workers very frequently wind up caught in challenging circumstance of working abroad for quite a long time basically to pay off the immense, regularly unlawful expenses they were charged to take the activity (ibid).

To comprehend this trend further, using the help of a recruitment office has been the favored approach among migrants when looking for foreign employment, with 79.9 percent of all work permits during the last seven years issued to migrants using this method of migration. As Figure 3 outlines, there was a consistent increment in the two channels for getting a work allow until 2011/12, after which there was a significant reduction in the quantity of prospective migrants gaining a work permit without anyone else's help.

**Figure 3: Proportion of labor permits issued, by channel of migration, 2008/09–2014/15**



Source: Department of Labor Migration, Nepal 2016.

### *Grievances, distress and death*

In Nepal, the most widely recognized grievance or pain detailed by work migrants has been against recruitment offices or people who misinformed or misguided complainants amid the process of employment. Because of forged contracts, overcharging for administration services provided, and misrepresentation by breaching the employment agreement, work migrants have encountered seriously exploitive conditions, including limitation of movement, non-installment of wages and loss of wealth as a result of high migration costs. It is clear the level of fraud executed by recruitment offices and exploitation, abuse, damage, or death during employment in destination nations which have been constantly informed to the Nepalese government. Comparable tendencies appear to be basic in study consultancies, travel offices and so on in Nepal which has prompted a serious web of issues.

Similarly, Table 1 portrays an aggregate of 4,322 deaths of migrant laborers (4,235 men and 85 women) happening in 24 destination nations were reported to the Foreign Employment Promotion Board from 2008/09 to 2014/15.

**Table 1: Total reported number of Nepalese workers' deaths during foreign employment, by sex, 2008/09-2014/15**

Fiscal year	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
2008/09	87	3	90
2009/10	399	19	418
2010/11	541	8	549
2011/12	632	14	646
2012/13	716	11	727
2013/14	864	24	888
2014/15	996	6	1 002 (+2 sex unknown)
Total	4 235	87	4 322

Source: Department of Labor Migration, Nepal 2016.

The accounts of reported deaths in the destination countries over the past seven years disclose that most occurred in Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait (Table 2).

**Table 2: Reported number of Nepalese workers' deaths, by destination country, 2008/09–2014/15**

Country	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	Total
Malaysia	15	105	219	237	253	306	427	1 562
Saudi Arabia	27	124	133	179	206	220	273	1 162
Qatar	26	114	125	130	151	208	178	932
United Arab Emirates	13	53	37	50	47	69	57	326
Kuwait		3	10	22	22	39	33	129
Bahrain	2	5	12	8	14	8	12	61
Rep. of Korea	1	1	6	6	14	15	12	55
Oman	4	4	1	6	7	14	3	39
Lebanon	2	6	4	3	3	2		20
Israel		1		3	3			7
Japan				2	2	2	1	7
Afghanistan			2		1	1	3	7

Source: Department of Labor Migration, Nepal 2016.

#### *Causes of death*

The existing evidence specified that the main reasons of death amongst labor migrants when employed abroad was cardiac arrest (941 cases), natural death (847 cases) and other or





Nepal is attached with a free stream of finance and vice versa through their appointment in employment activities throughout their education and the post-graduation period. Thus, a thin line splits foreign study and overseas employment. Numerous cases have appeared in which “students” were sent in a foreign country for employment in the name of study which has also given rise to undocumented status of Nepalese in many countries (ibid).

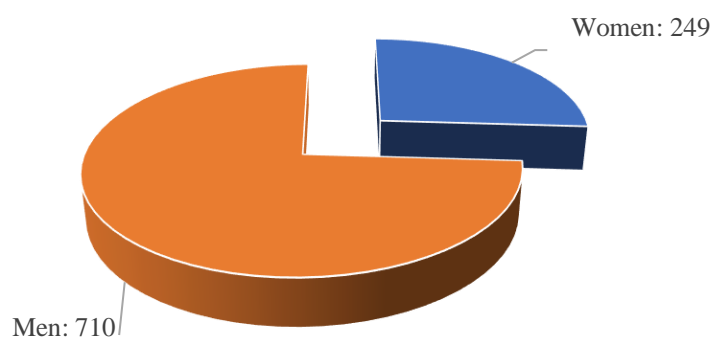
The description from Education Ministry of Nepal, 2016, indicates that an average of 54 students leave Nepal every day for study purposes in foreign countries. The figures for 2010/11–2014/15 also specify that the number of students leaving Nepal is growing, from 33 per day to 84. There is an increasing challenge with the interweaving of foreign study and employment. The statistics are alarming since the education ‘consultancies’ encompass private businesses and sham paperwork of sending students for foreign employment. This is now frequently exposed by the Nepal Police (Department of Foreign Employment, 2016). However, the issuance of labor permits or ‘NOC’ itself does not validate the number of people employed or migrated abroad. There are several ways of people migrating in the name of tourism, marriage, or irregular migration process to name a few which does not require a permit to be qualified to leave the nation.

## Nepalese in Portugal

### *Nepalese residing in Lisbon by sex in 2011*

The figure 4 represents the Nepalese immigrants residing in Lisbon in the year 2011 according to Census data from Portugal (Bajracharya, 2015). The census of Portugal in 2011 discovered that the total population of Nepalese immigrants at 959 individuals with 710 representing male and 249 representing female.

**Figure 4: Nepalese residing in Lisbon by sex in 2011**



Source: Bajracharya, 2015 based on INE, Census 2011.

### *Nepalese residing in Portugal by sex and age, 2011*

The figure 4 and table 4 exemplifies the population of Nepalese immigrants according to

nationality categorized by sex and age group, residing in Portugal in the year 2011 according to the census. Majority of Nepalese immigrants were from age group 15 to 39, which is 84%. According to (OECD, 2018), people between age group 15 to 64 are working population. Taking that into attention, Nepalese immigrants in Portugal who fall under this age group is represented by 96.6%. When comparing this number to the Nepalese population in European Union countries, there are around 88% of them who are from working age population (Bajracharya, 2015 CBS, 2015). Likewise, three quantities of the Nepalese residing in Portugal are men and on quarter consists of women as shown in Figure 3.

**Table 4: Nepalese residing in Portugal by Sex, Age, Educational level, and Income**

		N			% in column		
		T	M	F	T	M	F
<b>Age</b>	0 - 14	<b>31</b>	9	22	<b>3.2</b>	1.3	8.8
	15 - 39	<b>809</b>	609	200	<b>84.4</b>	85.8	80.3
	40 - 64*	<b>119</b>	92	27	<b>12.4</b>	13	11.8
<b>Educational level</b>	No schooling or pre-schooling	<b>63</b>	39	24	<b>6.6</b>	5.5	9.6
	Primary education	<b>68</b>	40	28	<b>7.1</b>	5.6	11.2
	Secondary education	<b>578</b>	426	152	<b>60.3</b>	60.3	61.0
	Tertiary education	<b>250</b>	205	45	<b>26.1</b>	29	18.7
<b>Income source</b>	Work	<b>695</b>	569	126	<b>72.5</b>	80.1	50.6
	Property or entrepreneurial income	<b>3</b>	2	1	<b>0.3</b>	0.3	0.4
	Supported by household	<b>154</b>	64	90	<b>16.1</b>	9.0	36.1
	Temporary benefits (unemployment, illness, maternity leave, social integration income)	<b>15</b>	10	5	<b>1.6</b>	1.4	2.0
	Retirement /pension	<b>5</b>	2	3	<b>0.5</b>	0.3	1.2
	Other	<b>87</b>	63	24	<b>9.1</b>	8.9	9.6
<b>Total</b>		<b>959</b>	710	249	<b>100.0</b>	100.0	100.0

Source: Bajracharya, 2015 based on INE Census, 2011. \* Note: Between 3 to 4 cases are related to individuals aged 65 or more.

#### *Education level of Nepalese residing in Portugal, by sex, 2011*

The table 4 also demonstrates the educational level of Nepalese immigrant in Portugal. Most of Nepalese immigrant have accomplished their secondary education, which is signified by 60 percent. One quarter (26%) of Nepalese immigrant finished their tertiary education. There were few who had education below secondary level, which is represented by 14 percent. Therefore, most of the Nepalese immigrants, around 86 percent living in Portugal, have completed at least secondary level of education. It shows that they have some degree of education, which is also confirmed by Gurung (2010), as he mentions majority of Nepalese travelling to America and Europe are educated.

Likewise, focusing on the research topic, the researcher has also found similarities with the following data among the ones she has interviewed. During her interviews most of her

interviewees were overqualified for the jobs here in Portugal.

*Sources of income of Nepalese in Portugal, by sex, 2011*

Table 4 depicts the data for Nepalese immigrants who have been working in the labor market. It displays that 73 percent of immigrants were working. Sixteen percent were supported by family and very few Nepalese had their source of income from unemployment benefit, social integration income other temporary benefit and property or entrepreneurial income. Observing the source of income of Nepalese immigrant women about 50 percent were working in labor market and 36 percent were supported by household income.

*Official statistics of Portuguese authority and estimates of Nepalese organizations*

Based on researcher's visit to the Non- Resident Nepalese Association (NRNA) and conversations with journalists they estimate that there is almost 15000 Nepalese living in Portugal both in documented and undocumented status. Nevertheless, according to the statistics of the Service of Foreigners and Borders, SEF, based in the resident permits, the total number of Nepalese residing permanently in Portugal in 2016 is 5835 (SEF, 2016).

In terms of inflow, the recent data of residence permits being granted was 1348 in the year 2016.(ibid) The total number of resident permits granted by the Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) to Nepalese immigrants from 2000 to 2013, from only two Nepalese to be granted resident permit in 2000, the number increased to 2588 in 2013 (Bajracharya, 2015).

*Distribution of Nepalese in Portugal by district and sex in 2016*

Nepalese reside in many parts of Portugal, with Lisbon and Faro districts showing the highest concentration. The distribution of Nepalese in Portugal by district and sex can be seen in the figure 5 which shows the highest concentration of Nepalese population in Lisbon which also led the researcher to conduct her micro ethnography and base her interviews in Lisbon.



The official data indicates 2,050 people in the metropolitan area of Lisbon alone in the year 2013; 671 misdemeanor proceedings initiated over stay in the country and 200 notifications for voluntary abandonment of the country to Nepalese in 2013 suggest an important immigration and illegal stay in recent years (Dahal, 2016). Likewise, in 2015 there were 4798 Nepalese living in Portugal. However, in 2016 SEF statistics show total inflow of 5835 Nepalese in year 2016, with 3863 being men and 1972 women. Among these, highest position was in Lisbon with 4333 Nepalese migrants residing; 2778 men and 1555 women (SEF, 2016). The inflow of Nepalese migrants in Portugal is an interesting yet understudied phenomenon. The large gap between documented and undocumented migrants calls for serious attention since the undocumented Nepalese do not make it to the official figures. Since most of the undocumented migrants come alone, there are significant impacts on their family.

Likewise, researcher's micro ethnography and previous researchers suggest that there are numerous Nepalese who are living in an undocumented status without a valid residence visa. Excessive length of stay (illegal stay, article 192 of Law no. 23/2007), out of 411,080 lawsuits that were filed, 941 Nepalese were highlighted under this lawsuit. Whereas, Voluntary Abandonment Notifications (NAV) also had significant increase of 35.8% compared to 2015, maintaining the tendency to increase this indicator. The most representative origins after Brazil and India was Nepal with 537 cases with Notifications (SEF, 2016). SEF Program in Movement is a program to take care of the files for the residence permits' applications and to deliver those directly to immigrants who have difficulties moving and no transport, or not enough means, to go by themselves to the main buildings/services of SEF in Lisbon highlighting as 49 Nepalese by granting a residence permit (ibid) .

In 2016 SEF also signaled 40 victims associated with the crime of trafficking in persons, constituting the nationalities among which the most relevant were 29 Nepalese. Likewise, SEF also indicated that Nepalese population is growing in terms of foreign population in Portugal. In terms of growth, they have highlighted Nepalese with 44.6% with the issuance out of 1,369 titles (SEF, 2016).

One of the most prominent Nepalese associations in Portugal is NRNA which also acts like an umbrella foundation for the Nepalese where they complain about their problem and receive help to solve matters. Some of the other Nepalese organizations are helping the immigrants by providing training classes and helping them to build social networks. Some organization such as self-help group is also present in Nepalese society established by the women to support in term of financial matter to ensure financial security during difficult times.<sup>2</sup>

## **2.2 Remittances**

### **2.2.1 Nepal: One of the world's top country most dependent on remittances**

In the most recent decades, the significance of remittances in connection to national improvement of Nepal has revealed understanding upon the global development agenda. In

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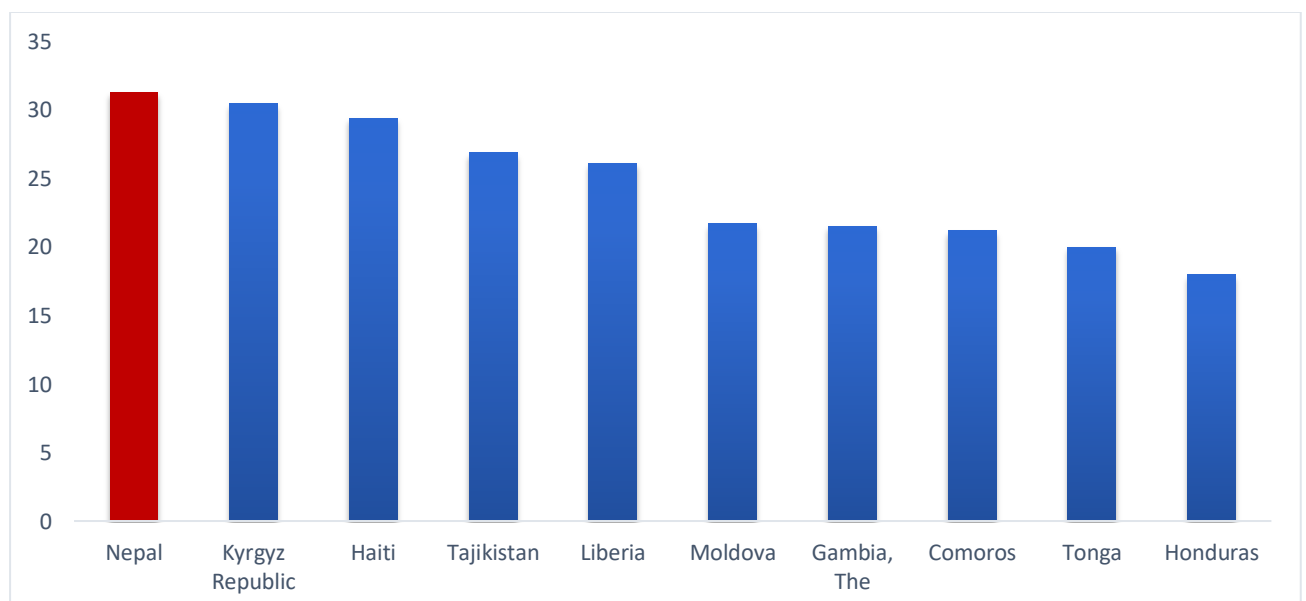
<sup>2</sup> See More in (Bajracharya, 2015)

2014, the World Bank distributed their 'Migration and Development Brief' where they showed that in 2013 the aggregate sum of remittances exchanged back to the global south, increased by 3.5 percent, to come to an expected aggregate of 436 billion USD (World Bank 2014). In various global south nations, the money from the remittances, now regularly exceed the aggregate sum of help got from the developed world. In 2013, the aggregate sum of remittances exchanged back to Nepal nearly surpassed the twofold measure of aggregate income from Nepal's export sector of merchandise and enterprises. Remittances in Nepal remained for 28,8 percent of Nepal's aggregate GDP in 2013 and the aggregate sum of money remitted back to Nepal has expanded by 40 times in extent to Nepal's aggregate GDP between 1991-2008 (Wagle, 2012).

Remittances contributed a 10.9 percentage part of the total gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003/04 also 27.7 per cent in 2014/15. The remittance drive, hence, is a main contributor to advance financing in Nepal. "The outflow of migrants in the past decade has been momentous in transforming the country's economic, social, and cultural fabric. Nepal has emerged as a remittance economy, shaped by migrants' cash flows, as it was the third-largest recipient of remittances—as a share of GDP—in the world in 2012 and the top recipient among least developed countries. Foreign employment has provided alternative livelihood opportunities, and remittances have helped to augment household incomes" (World Bank, 2017).

Figure 6 depicts the state-of-the-art 2016 Migration and Remittance data issued by the World Bank. Nepal remained as the uppermost nation most reliant on in remittances as a percentage of GDP in 2016 (World Bank, 2016). In study of World Bank report for 2016, it is concluded that Nepal is foremost in the classification with an estimated USD 6.6 billion in remittances equal to 31.3 percent of the country's GDP (DeSilver, 2018). Concerning remittances by fraction of GDP, Nepal (31.3 percent) was followed by Kyrgyzstan (USD 2 billion, 30.4 percent of GDP), Tajikistan (USD 1.9 billion, 26.9 percent of GDP), among others (World Bank, 2017).

**Figure 6: Top 10 countries in the world, personal remittances received in % of GDP, 2016**



## 2.2.2 Impact of remittances in developing countries

The remittance stream, along these lines, is a noteworthy reason of developing finance in Nepal. The outpouring of migrants in the previous decade has been crucial in changing the nation's financial, social, and cultural framework. Nepal has risen as a remittance economy, molded by migrants' money streams, as it was the third-biggest beneficiary of remittances as a share of GDP in 2012 and the top beneficiary among least developed nations. Foreign employment has given elective occupation opportunities, and remittances have enlarged household earnings. One of the key debates in theory about the development effect of remittances is the degree to which remittances make, or do not make, a significant contribution to the economic advancement of the recipient household (Eversole & Johnson, 2014).

The points of view of remittance beneficiaries made visible through an anthropological approach suggested categories for development analysis. For remittance recipients, the remittances are an approach to satisfy family's financial objectives now and later in the future. They are an instrument for helping the family – frequently, while likewise accepting assistance from other transnational relatives. Also, they are a thought about livelihood system, that frequently includes the need to 'sacrifice' for what's to come in the future (Eversole & Johnson, 2014). Discussing about a research done in 74 developing countries, it is found that there exists a noteworthy travel cost linked with international migration. Due to this, international migrants arise from those income groups which are just above the poverty line in middle income developing countries meaning that they can manage to pay for the migration process.

As specified by Richard and Page, worldwide remittances which are categorized as the share of remittances in country GDP has a statistical and compact, impact on diminishing poverty. By and large, a 10 percent expansion in the share of international remittances in a nation's GDP will prompt a 1.6 percent decrease in the share of population living in poverty (Richard & Page, 2003).

In the vast body of knowledge there is slight agreement and scarce data regarding the influence of international migration on poverty figure 5( *ibid*). Charles Stahl, for instance, inscribes that “migration, particularly international migration, can be an expensive venture. Clearly it is going to be the better-off households which will be more capable of (producing international migrants).” (as cited in Richard & Page, 2003).

Research likewise discovers that remittances worldwide have expanded during the past thirty years, particularly for progressing countries. Nevertheless, contrasted with private and official flows of capital, remittances are usually small. Additionally, a vital discovering is that worker remittances in respect to GDP are high particularly for small and generally developing nations or nations with a poor institutional structure (Buch, Claudia M.; Kuckulenz, Anja; Le Manchec, Marie-Helene, 2002). Remittances are connected positively to economic growth. Thus,

remittances may not only tend to shield families back home as suggested by the literature, but may also be supplementary capitals that can expand revenues of countries.

The flow of remittance revenue in Nepal is an indicator of the deteriorating business sector, which has declined the export commercial, mainly in terms of limited entrepreneurship prospects. Nevertheless, some Nepali economists have started to portray remittance income as the pillar of the economy, the Government differentiates it as a sequence of quick solutions to crawling financial development in place of a viable resolution. Also, an imperative downside, because Nepal's remittance economy is reliant on international migration, it is vulnerable to external economic crises (Department of Foreign Employment, 2016).

### **2.3 Irregular migration**

International migration has various facets and among them there is irregular migration. Irregular migration is a multifaceted phenomenon and contrasts greatly according to the national and regional situations. Although international figures are hard to obtain, J Chaime (2016) assessed that almost 50 million of all international migrants are in an irregular situation.<sup>3</sup> To elaborate further, from the standpoint of destination countries, it refers to circumstances where the entry, stay or labor in a nation is made without the required permission or documents obligatory under immigration protocols.

According to International Organization of Migration Glossary (IOM, 2011), an *irregular migrant* is

A person who, owing to unauthorized entry, breach of a condition of entry, or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The definition covers inter alia those persons who have entered a transit or host country lawfully but have stayed for a longer period than authorized or subsequently taken up unauthorized employment (also called clandestine/undocumented migrant or migrant in an irregular situation). Likewise, the *glossary* suggests that the term "irregular" is preferable to "illegal" since the latter carries a felonious meaning and is regarded as denying migrants' humanity. Whereas, *irregular migration* refers to "Movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries." There is, yet, a predisposition to control the use of the term "illegal migration" to cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in people (IOM, 2011).

According to United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN, 2017), it is presently assessed that about 258 million individuals are international migrants representing an upsurge of 49% since 2000. This means that 3.4% of the world's inhabitants are international migrants which suggests that most the world's population do not migrate abroad. In the year 2017, among the 258 million international migrants worldwide, 106 million were natives from Asia.

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<sup>3</sup> J. Chamie, "Understanding Unauthorized Migration", Inter Press Service, New York, 15 November 2016



Furthermore, the United Nations has predicted that internationally there are nearly 30 to 40 million irregular or undocumented migrants. It is a figure that totals between 15 and 20 percent of entire international migrants.<sup>4</sup> Approximately 1.9–3.8 million are assessed to be residing in the European Union<sup>5</sup>, and about 10.3 million in the United States. Furthermore, 30–40 percent of all migration tides in Asia are likely to arise over irregular networks.<sup>6</sup> Undoubtedly, some presume that “well over” 50 percent of gross immigrants in Asia and Latin America are in an irregular situation.<sup>7</sup> It is alleged that one in every five migrants living in the United States and Europe arrived in an irregular manner or overstayed their visas (United Nations, 2013).

Information about undocumented migrants or migrants in irregular situation is often hard to measure. Estimations and evaluations from various international organizations vary significantly from one source to another by the nature of the phenomena. For example, the IOM has approximated that 10–15 per cent of the world’s 214 million international migrants in 2010 were irregular (IOM, 2013 as cited in United Nations, 2013).

The United States of America (USA) is one of the rare nations with precise and accurate calculation of undocumented migrants. “Using a “residual methodology”<sup>8</sup>, the number of undocumented migrants in the USA was estimated at 11.7 million in March 2012 (Pew Research Centre<sup>9</sup>, 2013). For the 27 nations of the European Union (EU) in 2008, the CLANDESTINO Project<sup>10</sup> assessed 1.9–3.8 million undocumented migrants (CLANDESTINO, 2009). In Australia, the Government estimated that in 2012 about 61,000 people were in irregular situation (Australia, Department of Immigration, and Border Protection, 2013). The Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation estimated the amount of undocumented migrants at 3 million in 2013 (RIA Novosti, 2013), while the OECD had estimated a total of 5–6 million undocumented migrants in Russia in 2012” (OECD, 2012 as cited in United Nations, 2013).

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<sup>4</sup>14 UN DESA, Population Division, Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2003 Revision, [www.un.org/esa/population/publications/migstock/2003TrendsMigstock.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/migstock/2003TrendsMigstock.pdf). It is important to bear in mind, however, the fact that it is very difficult to accurately count the numbers of irregular migrants on a national, regional or international level. The 2009 Human Development report makes the point that most estimates of migrant numbers are derived from censuses, and that “there are good reasons to suspect that censuses significantly undercount irregular migrants, who may avoid census interviewers for fear that they will share information with other government authorities”. See UNDP, 2009, p. 23

<sup>5</sup> Clandestino, <http://irregular-migration.hwwi.net>.

<sup>6</sup> According to 2005 estimates available at [www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=329](http://www.migrationinformation.org/Feature/display.cfm?id=329).

<sup>7</sup> IOM, [www.iom-seasia.org](http://www.iom-seasia.org). Koser, 2007, pp. 57–59. 19 UN Economic and Social Survey 2004, [www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2004files/part2web/part2web.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wess2004files/part2web/part2web.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Irregular immigrant population are based on a **residual estimation methodology** that compares a demographic estimate of the number of immigrants residing legally in the country with the total number of immigrants as measured by a survey

<sup>9</sup>The Pew Research Center is a nonpartisan American fact tank based in Washington, D.C. It provides information on social issues, public opinion, and demographic trends shaping the United States and the world.

<sup>10</sup>The CLANDESTINO Project is a response to the need for supporting policymakers in designing and implementing appropriate policies regarding undocumented migration.

There are fair instances on how diverse foundations stretch different insights of this reality. In present years, many nations has paid more consideration to the quandary of migrants in irregular situation, and requested governments to address the matter (United Nations, 2013).

Irregular migration carries numerous challenges to nations of origin, transit, and destination, and primarily to immigrants itself (ibid). Immigrants in irregular condition are mainly vulnerable to discrimination, abuse, and exploitation, in complex peril of extreme scarcity. Such immigrants are in the same way in danger of being oppressed by criminal establishments involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling. These two major misconducts create a stern violation of the human rights of its victims (United Nations, 2013).

According to the European Union's website<sup>11</sup>, the movement of irregular migrants incoming the EU grasped astonishing heights during 2015 and continued to remain high in 2016. Nevertheless, the tides are from non-European countries that are very far from Europe. During 2016, member nations in the EU well-versed novel arrivals from Africa, the Middle East and Asia, numerous of whom turned to unlawful webs of smugglers for assistance.

“Migrant smuggling is a vigorous global illegal activity and a highly profitable business, entailing low overall costs to run smuggling operations and persisting high demand for services. An estimate of the yearly turnover of migrant smuggling results in an average USD 5 to 6 billion turnovers in 2015” (Interpol, 2016). Poverty, societal and political uncertainty, the accessibility of restricted lawful migration paths, push individuals to illegal networks to simplify their unauthorized admittance into the EU (European Union, 2016).

Many researchers in the arena of refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migration emphasize that the journey to the EU can be tremendously risky and smugglers often expose migrants to both life-threatening prospect and viciousness. The forfeiture of lives in the Mediterranean Sea reveals the necessity for a firm and imperative answer from the EU. The contest against migrant smuggling has been part of EU strategies attempting to curb irregular migration for more than a decade. In 2002, the EU adopted a legal agenda on smuggling, a Directive defining “the facilitation of unauthorized entry, transit and residence and a framework decision strengthening the strict framework for these offenses.” To avert the abuse of migrants by criminal webs and to lessen spurs for irregular migration, both the European Agenda on Migration and the European Agenda on Security acknowledged the contest against migrant smuggling as a urgency.<sup>12</sup> (European Union, 2016)

The European Commission states that migrant smuggling is progressively connected with serious human rights abuse and bereavements (European Commission, 2016). In May 2015, the European Commission approved a ‘plan of action against migrant smuggling’ intended to convert smuggling from a 'high profit, low risk' activity into a ‘high risk, low profit’ business,

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<sup>11</sup> Website: [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu)

<sup>12</sup>Website: [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/irregular-migration-return-policy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/irregular-migration-return-policy_en) (last seen in April 2018).

while safeguarding the complete respect and safety of migrants' human rights which in fact is a praiseworthy step to restraint smuggling of humans (European Commission, 2016).

According to a report arranged by the Interpol and Europol, more than 90% of the migrants approaching to the EU are 'facilitated', typically by affiliates of a criminal network. "The migrants who travel to the EU are possibly vulnerable to be targeted for labor or sexual exploitation as they need to repay their debt to smugglers. Many of the routes used by migrants to enter the EU, whether by sea, land, or air, are not novel. Migrants have used the western Mediterranean path via Spain and Portugal for more than a decade" (Interpol, 2016).

### 2.3.1 Irregular migration in Portugal

While searching for previous research of irregular migration in Portugal, major contributors in Portuguese immigration on irregular migration was focused on the Eastern European migration movements in Portugal (Baganha & Fonseca, 2004). On the other hand, there is no significant literature or previous research on Nepalese migrants who have entered Portugal in an irregular manner and living in an undocumented status.

In the last three decades, Portugal has undergone deep changes regarding international migration. Firstly, it has turned out to be a significant receiver of international migrants from Africa, specifically the ones approaching from the ex-colonies, sovereign countries since the middle 1970s. Moreover, it saw a increasing existence of Brazilians, from a narrow middle-high class group to middle-low and low-class immigrants. Thirdly, it detected a liberal variation of national backgrounds, mostly represented by the new and huge Eastern European community, but likewise noticeable in lots of other increasing foreign populations with novel noteworthy tides from Asian countries. Concerning smuggling, the robust development of the Portuguese economy principally clarifies the flow in the quantity of immigrants. Many of these migrants every so often arrived Portugal in an irregular pattern, by means of the services of smugglers and traffickers, and carrying out the lowermost occupations of the professional hierarchy (João Peixoto, 2009). Similarly, the population from Brazil, and approximately all Eastern European immigrants in Portugal arrived on an irregular basis, and legalized their status with the starter of permanent authorization status in 2001. In 2001, difficulties related with immigrants coming from the former Eastern union started taking on new magnitudes. The process of regularization in Portugal offered the opportunity to gain a legal status of permanence. (Sardinha, 2009).

Many immigrants had made their journey to Portugal in an irregular manner, mostly with smuggling schemes, without knowing what they would find in Portugal; without knowing the laws of the host country nor their citizenship rights, and worse still, many would remain in the hands of the traffickers that brought them into the country (Sardinha, 2009).

Correspondingly, central exploration feature rapid and massive inflow from Eastern Europe to Portugal due to three main reasons: the nonexistence control by other EU member states in the giving way of short term visas; the swiftness and affluence of movement inside the Schengen

territory; and the trafficking of people, prearranged in Eastern Europe under the cover of “travel agencies” (Baganha & Fonseca, 2004). Initially, because it turns plausible for many people to migrate, i.e. the limitations to moving overseas were increasingly dismantled in all these nations. Then since the enormous differences in incomes and standard of living amongst Eastern European countries and EU countries (ibid).

Still, with new entries and even with some departures, the fact is that after this unexpected upsurge, immigration in Portugal transformed radically and remarkably. Even though the explicit legal status of permanency authorization terminated at the end of 2004, legal status holders could still renew and exercise the rights granted with this status (Sardinha, 2009). The exercise of rights was very flimsy, since the permanent permit continued for one year maximum and need to be renewed each year. The ones lacking a job or contract would descent in irregular situation regularly.

## **2.4 Transnational parenting**

A large and increasing frame of literature has investigated transnational parenting. There are some studies with empirical data found on the issue of transnational parenting. The topic is largely based upon empirical studies that examine how family and households are becoming transnational which collectively provide significant understandings on varied facets of the focus issue. By drawing on a study of Nepalese labor migration to Japan, which explores how countries in Asia are lately observing the dynamical patterns of transnational families, the increasing participation of women in the international work force, as well as the Nepalese labor market and economy. As women have gradually left Nepal to gain advantage of overseas employment, a pattern of migration has developed, with children being left in the hands of relatives (Yamanaka, 2005). It is one of the prominent study that has found how Nepalese, regardless of gender are now looking for opportunities in foreign land.

Additionally, slight evidence exists about the arrangement of child care of transnational families, which demonstrate that there are negative consequences for the progress of children, as well as emotional costs for them and to their parents by further indicating how the negative aspects can be compensated by the positive impacts of remittances (Grassi & Vivet, 2015). Despite the presence of increasingly restraining migration policies, migratory tides from Africa and Asia towards Europe are significant. Also, the rise of transnational migrant families are ascending due to the migration of its members.

In the study of transnational families of Filipino origin studied by Parreñas (2005), the distance between the migrant father and their children leads to diminishing closeness in family relations. Similarly, an analysis done among Angolan transnational families, both parents and migrant children stated feelings of distress and emotional distance in relation to their father-son relationship. The outcomes also revealed differences in emotional well-being of transnational families, primarily the migrating parent. When the mother migrated, children complained more frequently about emotional state of desertion (Parreñas, 2008). Similarly, in most case studies, there were migrant parents and children left behind who often complained of the emotional distress of not being able to be share the daily life amongst each other. Likewise, the study

done in Angola suggests that transnational parents feel sad to live geographically far away from their children (Grassi & Vivet, 2015).

### *Nepali families and parenting in Portugal*

Transnational parenthood studies among immigrants in Portugal are still under researched in Portugal. Dangol (2015), has developed research about parenting among Nepalese residing with their children in Portugal. This research covers the innovative subject in the immigrants in Portugal of parenthood of Nepalese mothers and fathers who are separated from their children living in Nepal. The recent study done on the Nepalese parents living in Portugal found that the Nepalese culture typically influenced their childrearing as they projected to convey the values of respect, inter-dependence, educational achievements, and protection of inherent culture. But transmissions of these values were sometimes affected by Portuguese laws and norms, child's own standpoint and their support system and community (Dangol, 2015). Nepalese parenting practice incorporated characteristics of both the authoritative model and the authoritarian model suggested by (Baumrind, 1967). The parents were considerate, supportive and provided reasoning to their child which were the characteristics of authoritative parenting, but at the same time they imparted values of parent-child interdependence and established strict rules which they wanted their children to obey, which mostly represented authoritarian parenting. (Dangol, 2015).

Most of the parents disapproved the rights of children in the Portuguese context, which is, after the age of 18 as they were apprehensive about their children parting from them. Nepalese parents asserted that their directing attitude to their children were not to create authority or dominance, but was a consequence of love and concern they had for their children (ibid).

Dangol (2015), also found that there were gender differences in parenting experienced by mother compared to a father. The research explains that mothers were typically associated with providing care, attention, and comfort to the children, while, fathers were related with monitoring and disciplining. The parents disclosed the tendency to postponement of their children's reunification and arrival to Portugal as they believed, the quality of education system in Nepal were more developed compared to Portugal (ibid). The findings shed light on parenting practices that are common among Nepal families. The interviews in this research also reflected such beliefs among the Nepalese parents which were very noticeably supported by the traditional parenting style and importance of values and Nepalese culture.

## **2.5 Portuguese legal framework**

### Synthesis of Portuguese immigration

Portugal was long ago a country of emigration but in recent decades it has turned out to be a country of immigration. Emigration decreased during the 1970s, and the liberation of the past African colonies caused the influx of returnees, asylum seekers and migrants. More precisely, the 1970s manifested the turning point, and it was after the revolution of April 1974 that the country's democratization and decolonization directed to an increase of the foreign population in Portugal, condensed by the return of expat Portuguese citizens in the former Portuguese African colonies (João Peixoto, 2009).

Portugal's association and membership in European Union in 1986 made Portugal an appealing destination for non-EU residents who were trying to settle down in Northern or Central Europe. The 'construction boom' in the late 1990s to 2000 had an increasing demand for labor market, which attracted varied and increased number of foreign residents that established a new and multifaceted populace setting. Due to this reason, in the last three decades legislation for immigration changed (ibid).

According to Peixoto (2009), in 1980 the main foreign population in Portugal came from African countries, previous colonies (chiefly by Cape Verde and refugees from Angola and Mozambique). Then came the Europeans, mainly Spanish, and towards the end of the decade, Brazilians from South America. It was only in the late 1990s that greater fluctuations happened: together with previous migration flows, new population movements poured into Portugal, above all Eastern European (João Peixoto, 2009). In the late 2000s, the Portuguese economic crisis brought a reduction in immigration flows like other European countries that were hit by the crisis.

#### *Migration policy history of legislation, regularization, and family reunification*

Given its fresh antiquity as an immigrant-receiving country, Portugal formed numerous immigration laws, the first in 1981, the immigration law focused on the regulation of flows, overseen by the SEF (Aliens and Borders Service). The other migration law was passed in 1993 focused on regularizing many immigrants living irregularly in Portugal since the mid-1980s (João Peixoto, Sabino, & Abreu, 2009). The second process of extraordinary regularization occurred in 1996 which unified immigrants who had not been legalized in the earlier phase, and those who had settled irregularly in the existing time. In 1998 another immigration act was formed, which concentrated the period of residence for the issuance of a permanent resident visa from twenty to ten years (Lourenço, 2013).

In 2001, the demand for labor in Portugal increased and consequently the number of immigrants also augmented, including irregular immigrants. For this reason, the left-wing government introduced a alteration in immigration strategy and created a "stay permit", permitting that besides the "residence permit", immigrants "had also the possibility to ask for the new permit, which was, in effect, a temporary work stay visa granted in Portugal, based on the possession of a work contract. In fact, this mechanism corresponded to a third extraordinary regularization process of immigrants in irregular situations based on employment" (João Peixoto et al., 2009). This regulation also recognized, a 'quota system' for immigrants' enrollment, which made it mandatory for immigrants to apply for a visa in their nation of origin, at the Portuguese consulate present in that country.

In 2003, further adjustments to the immigration policies were announced in the Portuguese legislative agenda. This law concluded with “stay permits” for new influxes and require and maintained a quota system like that used by previous immigration law. According to Peixoto this quota system for labor employment continuously fail in contesting irregular immigration to Portugal. (Joao Peixoto et al., 2009).

In 2003 and 2004 new arrivals were in progress, concerning particularly Brazilian immigrants, because of the bilateral agreement between Portugal and Brazil, signed 11 July 2003. This bilateral agreement with the, article 71, which allowed the regularization of immigrants who were active in the labor market, regularized more than 80,000 undocumented immigrants. Finally, further regularization was introduced by the immigration law of 2007 (ibid).

It is vital to understand the history, migration policy and legal framework as it contributes to recognize that the regularization policy could be the motivational force for the current and existing immigrant residents and trend of undocumented migrants in Portugal. The legislation one way or another supports the new arrivals and the immigration laws are in favor of curbing irregular immigration. However, under other conditions, may well lead to consequences of enablement of irregular migration in grasp of smugglers and traffickers (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012).

To elaborate further, Portugal has a generous immigration policy which enables undocumented immigrants to enter the legal system. Although, there isn't a way to prove it but it does look like the smugglers have taken advantage of the policy and lured people into the migration by manipulating information and encouraging them. The policy not only called the attention of potential immigrants, but also the organized intermediaries. Since migration became a “business” , smugglers and traffickers remain as main group of actors who operate in the face of threatened legal ways for migration (Salt & Stein, 1997). The prearranged character of many influxes, through vigorous networks of smugglers and traffickers, is the unsurpassed description for such a swift increase and diversification of immigrants' origins (João Peixoto, 2009).

#### *Current policy framework and access to citizenship*

The integration of immigrants is one of the main objective of the Portuguese government. The establishment of the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI), previously identified as the High Commission for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME), played an indispensable role for migrants in Portugal regarding their integration. (Lourenço, 2013). There exists proper right to health care for legal immigrants and for the ones in irregular situations. There is also housing support and protection against illegal labor/exploitation, which are the concrete outcome of changing immigration policies that encourage integration (Lourenço, 2013).

Regarding access to citizenship the nationality law underwent several changes post 1959: in 1975, 1981, 1994 in 2006 and in 2017. Modifications to the Nationality Regulation pass into force on July, 2017 by presenting advances in the procedure of passing and issuing nationality (“Amendments to the Portuguese Nationality Regulation enter into force,” n.d.). A person at

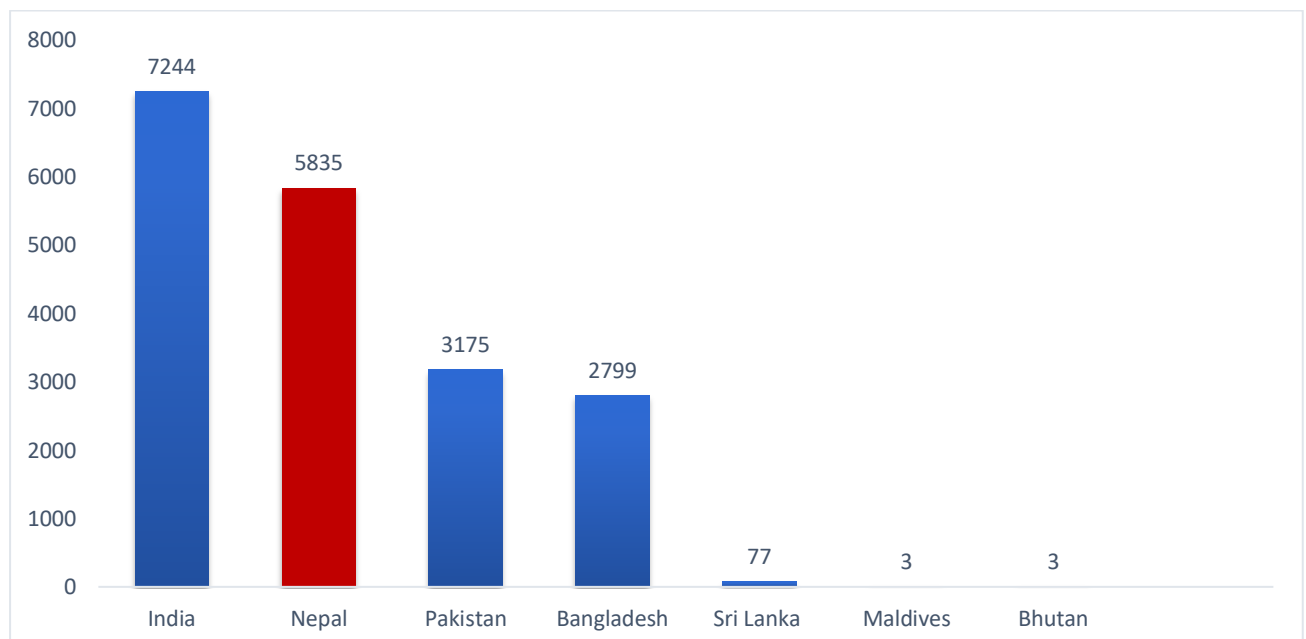
the age of 18 or over may apply for naturalization as a citizen of Portugal once they have lived lawfully for at least six years in the nation. In the residency prerequisite, one should demonstrate that they have adequate skill of the Portuguese language and have not been convicted of a crime that is punishable under Portuguese law (“Portal SEF,” n.d.).

The prerequisite similarly informs the procedure of granting nationality, mainly regarding proof of knowledge of the language, presuming that citizens of countries where Portuguese has been an official language for at least 10 years and have resided in Portugal for 5 years, know the Portuguese language, relieving them from the Portuguese linguistic proof of knowledge. (“Amendments to the Portuguese Nationality Regulation enter into force,” n.d.)

## 2.6 South Asian migration in Portugal

South Asia is a culturally and geologically varied region which includes Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. The researcher during micro ethnography has also been able to interact with significant population of South Asians as well. Figure 6 illustrates that in 2016, The SEF reported that India had the highest South Asian population in Portugal which is a total of 7244. Whereas, from Nepal there were a total of 5835 people which makes it the 2<sup>nd</sup> main South Asian Population in Portugal. Likewise, from Pakistan there are a total of 3175 people followed by 2,799 people from Bangladesh and 77 people from Sri Lanka. However, the lowest South Asian population in Portugal were from Maldives and Bhutan with only 3 people residing in Portugal from each country respectively.

**Figure7: South Asian Population residing in Portugal (2016)**



**Source:** (SEF, 2016).

### 2.6.2 Socio economic profile of South Asians

The South Asian presence in Portugal is not a recent phenomenon; populations from the Indian sub-continent, however working in various trade and commerce, have been visible in the



business area for approximately last 30 years. South Asian trade and business ventures in Lisbon, specifically in old Hindu Gujarati shops that are not rigorous in one definite area but spread all over the capital city of Portugal. (Cachado, 2017)

Indian immigrants and their offspring are divided into five major groups that include four religions: Hinduism, Islam (and within this, Ismaili Islam), Christianity (Catholicism) and Sikhism. They are mostly inclined to business and trade; the Indian populace has been able to find inventive strategies that contribute to its commercial success. However, the financial crisis that Portugal had, led to the departure of many Indians to the U. K (Lourenço, 2013).

Singhvi (2001), in the 'High-Level Committee Report on the Indian Diaspora', states that many Indians in Portugal are in business or the extensive commercial and some are employed as skilled or unskilled workers. Likewise, several Indians also have white collar jobs. Scholars suggest that cases of irregular immigration from India and other south Asian countries through other European nations also has amplified. Those migrants are often found working as unskilled or semi-skilled labor in the Portuguese labor market (Lourenço, 2013).

There has been some attention in the field of South Asian migrant's integration in Portugal as well. It is emphasized that despite the preservation of their traditional cultural inheritances, diverse groups develop positive integration approaches, particularly amongst the younger population. Liberal Portuguese immigration policies have enabled them to take benefit of numerous social supports, particularly in health, education, and housing. However, there are still few challenges in their integration to the Portuguese culture. For instance, the Punjabi group from India lately recognized in Portugal faced major integration problems due to the lack of fluency in Portuguese language. Thus, Lourenco (2013) suggests that Portuguese language training can turn as an architect for integration into Portuguese society, which will eventually result in peaceful synchronicity among societies of South Asian origin and broader Portuguese society (ibid).

Briefly, understanding transnational parenting of people living in an irregular situation is a very elusive phenomenon. This very nature of vagueness raises important issues of sensitivity of the question, vulnerability of the research subjects, and a series of ethical issues to be addressed when performing fieldwork with irregular migrants, also throughout the period of the study. Thus, the researcher has taken into consideration that the topic ranges that were reviewed in the chapter were correlated to issues of irregular migrant populations. Related to the fact that the increase of Nepalese immigrants working in Portugal is recent, there is few information on them; moreover, there is also scarce research on undocumented immigrants and transnational parenthood, to which this thesis aims to contribute filling the gap.

### 3. Theoretical concepts and key issues

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the theoretical outline which provides the basis for the study. After formulating the problem statement, there were many existing theories and ideas that were related to the researcher's chosen subject. The present research was informed by different theories and approaches relevant for the main topic, developing a discussion included in chapter 2 of the present thesis. The present research was informed by different theories and approaches relevant for the main topic, developing a discussion included in chapter 2 of the present thesis. It aided in giving the research a proper outline and direction. After careful and critical consideration of literature review, the researcher stumbled upon various theories and concepts that were useful in the study. The main conception of the research is framed on the intersection between transnational parenthood and undocumented migrants, as this research focuses on how undocumented parents are navigating parenting from a distance. The main theoretical background for the analysis of the Nepalese in Portugal is the delivery of macro, meso and micro dynamics implied in the decision to leave home and the social capital network theory.

#### *The social capital (network) theory*

The social capital theory migration is powerfully influenced by social network systems amongst the country of origin and the host country. Migration networks are measured as a social capital where people part of the network have certain means to receive information or support which helps in making migration beneficial by increasing gains and dropping the costs. - allowing, this way, to define a migration project and fulfil the conditions for departure.

Families and people at destination countries could assist in providing information on the opportunities, risks and challenges related with migration. They also support fresh migrants to settle down without difficulty by helping in housing and further assistance needed. Furthermore, the presence of friends or relatives at destination country makes the emotional cost of moving to a new place lower (Goldin, Cameron, & Balarajan, 2011). Thus, migration turns to be more appealing for people with connections at country of destination. Networks at various level are vital for most migrants and to a greater degree when migration pattern involves ambiguousness and indefinite consequences. Even for international migration, social network is very important if migration is irregular and involves higher risk even though some of these networks imply high costs for the individual (Ya, 2016).

The basic premise of Goldin (2011) explains the decision-making processes of the migrants and the inclination to the system perspective structure of micro meso and macro levels. It clearly indicates the possible reasons for a person to migrate, awareness of cost benefit calculation and risks that a migrant takes while choosing to migrate. It reflects on the neoclassical approach and explains the migration decision breaking out from the classic push and pull factors. Foundations of these theories have helped the researcher in building up the interview guides (See in appendix).

Similarly, there is ample evidence that Nepalese are migrating to escape the poverty and the poor governmental policies implying challenging consequences in lives of the Nepalese has seen previously in the literature review. Goldin talks about wages and rise of earnings between countries while comparing the socioeconomic development over time among few countries and the consequences it has on migration processes. Focusing on the micro level, the first ones to migrate are usually single and risk takers.

The meso level focus from networks to social capitals, relationships, and intermediaries that link possible migrants with prospects in destination realms. In the first phase, the micro level determinants will be prominent but the later phase of developing social networks to facilitate migration develops over time alongside the socioeconomic development process. The networks relay information that lowers the risk for the migrants to migrate. The networks are the web of people linked by either acquaintances, kin, friendship, or work experience. Goldin (2011) also talks about “dirty-dangerous job”. Migrants perceive that lives in foreign countries are lavish but after arriving, their perception starts to change. He claims that micro level of decision making is also important which includes their small level interactions including families, friends who help in decision making of migration.

Migrant networks usually play two prominent roles. Firstly, assisting migration through recruiters and private intermediaries, by providing limited information about the countries which are prominent in Asia. Likewise, secondly, we find the family and friends who are the major social networks that provide information. It is believed the presence of social networks in the destination countries lead to make decisions of costs and benefits. Likewise, associations and civic ties based in those countries help immigrants come together collectively and celebrate key festivals together which caters their eagerness for status and recognition.

Goldin (2011), draws our attention to typically low skilled or low wage-earning migrants who use irregular networks to cross borders in search of higher wages. He also traces how globalization and international migration of smugglers have opened doors for smuggling. The smugglers, despite of stricter borders and high expenses, aid desperate migrants. Some of these migrants end up being oppressed and exploited in workplaces. Thus, a migration industry of travel agents, lawyers, recruiter agencies, or even smugglers is also seen to be formed which helps facilitate people’s movements within the meso system. The determining factor of international migration comprise of “push” and “pull” factors of migration.

Likewise, The New Economics of Labor Migration theory (NELM) was advanced by Oded Stark in the 1980s, in cooperation with David Bloom, Eliakim Katz, David Levhari, Robert Lucas, Mark Rosenzweig, and J. Edward Taylor (Hagen-Zanker, 2008). It suggests that family is the major role-player of decision making and risk balancers. The issues of remittances also get linked here. It suggests that migration of one person is a joint group effort to risk in the absence of welfare state. Nepal does not take responsibility to guarantee well- being of its citizens and therefore cannot be classified as a welfare state in practical terms. People are displaced from their traditional livelihoods and become economically vulnerable. However, the expectations of remittances of family members are usually present as it was the primary

goal. Migration can be risky but sometimes may be the only strategy to solve financial problems in a family. The family centered decision of migration makes migration a social process (Goldin et al., 2011).

Demographic, political, and economic conditions shape the migration process and the size of the flows. Networks serve to link the two aspects together. The issue of strict immigration and border controls along with the trend of global integration acts as a precursor for unintended and economic consequences. The restrictive policies have accompanied by the entry of undocumented migrants who find their way into countries despite the restrictions, often through illicit means. The widening net of border controls is aimed at keeping undocumented migrants from entering or residing in destination countries but still haven't been efficient to prohibit high records of irregular migrants.

Furthermore, on a similar note, when discussing on the dynamics of migration, a broad social change takes place as it is an act of change of migrant's life and societies which they leave behind families and move to new countries. It may change from a demographic, social, cultural, or economic viewpoint. In social structure and changes, Jackson further talks about the international migration of highly skilled manpower in a complex model of society. He mainly sheds light on the status change with spatial mobility of immigrants and concepts of mobility status change and positional change of social mobility have been very significant during this research (Jackson, 1986). Jackson (1986), also mentions that racial characteristics act very powerfully to structure relations between immigrants and the natives in a destination country. Status dimensions could be of many characteristics for instance, being old, a woman, having educational qualifications. He asserts that immigrants are found filling vacancies in dirty or inconvenient work. However, Women are said to be employed and gained optimum amount of freedom, which is also a finding in the research,

Similarly, a study done by Portes, on the characteristics of labor market states that employment is given based on ethnicity rather than skill in casual, temporary work with little or no opportunity towards upward mobility. Their degrees not being recognized, there is a major fragmentation in the labor market based on the migrants' country of origin and racial characteristics (Jackson, 1986).

One of the most significant discussions in irregular migration in the southern European context is, as mentioned by Russel King's 'Southern European Model of Migration', The integral elements and foundations demonstrates connection between current irregular migration and the informal economy. The author emphasizes Southern European countries having to deal with large numbers of immigrants, many of whom arrive via irregular channels facilitated by smugglers, or enter by valid visa as tourists and then prolong by overstaying (King, 2013). The migration geographer shows that this migration trend has been engrossed by the 'demand-pull' factor of the requirement for inexpensive labour in some parts of the Southern European economies, namely agriculture, construction, and personal services, while a noteworthy 'push factor' is the need to escape poverty and conflict.

According to King (2013), most irregular migrants living in Europe, and most of those who were irregular but now have 'papers', entered Europe legally and then simply overstayed their visas. Indeed, regularisation has come to define the Southern European model of migration policy over the past decades in Spain and Italy initially, and latterly also in Portugal and Greece, which operationalised several 'amnesty' schemes. He asserts the fact that irregular migration is constitutive of the Southern European migration regime, and that new forms of irregularity and semi-legality are emerging (King, 2013).

### **3.2 Transnational families and separation**

The notion of transnationalism denotes to ties and connections joining persons and organisations across massive international boundaries. Chaloyan (2017) claims that the term transnationalism started to get attention amongst social academics in the 1970s and turned into a widespread subject of research since the 1990s. Transnational families are the ones that live separated from one another, but together are creating something that is a feeling of 'collective welfare and unity', such as "family hood" across national borders (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002).

Migrants often face descendant mobility and financial draining when living in the destination country. For the new comers', opportunities for finding work are often only available in certain low-paid sectors. Not being able to speak the new language, with their qualifications not being recognized, not having a work permit, and exposed to discrimination, are compounding issues. The unreliable and inflexible jobs undocumented immigrants frequently wind up in, are severely stressing for transnational parents. Studies have shown that transnational separation can result to lower wellbeing for parents. (Haagsman, 2017). In a few investigations guardians detailed feeling regretful and torn between their families and children living transnationally (Merry, Pelaez, & Edwards, 2017). Undocumented parents in some studies battled with not having the capacity to make a trip back to visit their families due fear they would unable come back to the host country (Merry et al., 2017).

Limited qualitative researches have specified that transnational parents endure health and emotional complications because of separation. The study done on Ghanaian migrants to determine the effects of transnational parenthood shows that migrant parents who are separated from their children show poorer consequences than those who live with their children in the destination country. Significantly, yet, these transformations were facilitated by parents' 'lower socio-economic and undocumented status' (Dito, Mazzucato, & Schans, 2017). Family parting is nowadays known as major social costs of immigration. Relationship maintenance of transnational families rest on regular communication from a distance with optimisms and collective hopefulness (Madianou & Miller, 2011).

### **3.3 Transnational parenthood**

There are few existing theories that relate to parenting in general. Parenting styles by Baumrind (1967) categorises three discrete techniques in childrearing such as authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive attitudes which turn out to be contributory in influencing, controlling and assessing the behaviours of their children. In transnational context, the prior viewpoints are likely to be challenged as families are substantially separated from each other.

If we now turn to transnational parenthood, until recently there has been little interest in transnational parenthood. Carling's concept on transnational parenthood gave me, the researcher the lens with recurring themes that have been central to the research. The study has basically studied the evolving works on transnational parenthood, focused on six unique themes such as gender, legislation, class, care arrangements, communication, and moralities. Gender relates with the difference among transnational motherhood and transnational fatherhood, as well as children's gender. Care arrangements is the theme which displays as often the most concrete challenge for transnational parents, and an area where material and emotional concerns interrelate. The third theme, legislation, primarily concerns how immigration law can be fundamental for separation and the scenarios for reunification, as well as for the practice of parenthood from distance. Communication across long distances is a crucial component in the normal practice of transnational parenthood, formed by the juncture of technological, financial, and emotional impacts. The concluding theme, moralities, emphasizes on the behaviours in which 'context-specific' social standards lead transnational parenthood (Carling, Menjívar, & Schmalzbauer, 2012a).

Many studies have found the themes to be recurring and that they are essentially identical. However, it is necessary to clarify here what is meant by those themes and which seem to apply in this study. The themes that are more relevant to this study are related to new communication technologies that help transnational families to communicate more frequently, as well as a confirmation of smooth parent child relationship. Even though findings approve that technology does not exclusively substitute physical interface. Still, communication is tremendously fundamental in transnational families. In addition to this, remittances are a method of keeping connection and is also of great importance to preserving and upholding family relationships (Parreñas, 2005; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012 as cited in Carling et al., 2012). The capability to send remittances stands out as a foremost reason that some migrants chose to migrate. Hence, parents expect that the remittances they send decrease the emotional costs of their migration and give their children enhanced and a better life that they think they deserve.

Merry and other co-authors (2017) explain main three discrete themes that emerged in the context of parenthood experiences of refugees, asylum-seekers, and undocumented migrants. The themes regarding hardship and loss, and building resilience and strength, which are consistent with observations made by others while the third theme on transnationalism highlights additional obligations, challenges and resources that need to be better understood and considered by care and service-providers working with

these families. A more comprehensive study would have included more themes that have been contested in the research done by is one of the most significant research in terms of undocumented migrants and their parenting experiences.(Merry et al., 2017).

The outcomes supremely highlight the strong sense of obligation, and distress parents experience in parenting from a distance their children who remain in the home country. This also suggests the need for lens through which policies and research may be approached. (Merry et al., 2017).

### **3.5 Transnational parenthood of undocumented migrants**

As fathers and mothers drift to deliver for the substantial requirements of their families, transnational parenting has come to portray household relations that are present across nations. In the globalized world with tremendous demand of labor force, the frame of literature on transnational families is escalating swiftly. Studies have presented understandings into how transnational parents uphold family closeness regardless of physical distance and separation from their children. Transnational parenting is different for documented and undocumented immigrants. (Fresnoza-Flot, 2009) describes how Filipino women redefine their motherhood while undergoing a challenging life due to their work and, for many, to their irregular migration status.

There exists an extensive variability of family structures and child-rearing, caregiving arrangements and traditions, and nurturing roles of migrant parents. On a research of motherhood among migrant women have illustrated the nurturing alternatives accessible to them, which were limited to transferring remittances and gifts, making phone communications, and reliant on extended household members to care for their children. ‘Commodification of love’ and ‘technological management’ of household relatives over consistent communication seemed to be central features of transnational mothering (Parrenas, 2001). Research on the consequences of relocation for the migrant mothers have highlighted overwhelming emotional state and, in gradual pace of time, the loss of motherly love. For the children left behind, understandable effects were poor school performance, jealousy, powerlessness and feelings of neglect. It also shows that household members are affected by migration and separation in a different way but predominantly in a negative way. (Fresnoza-Flot, 2009).

One of the few studies to consider was by Raijman, Schammah-Gesser, & Kemp (2003), on undocumented Latina migrants in Israel, showed their major source of ‘distress and ambivalence’ was their new child-rearing planning categorized by unspecified parting. On the other hand, (Parreñas, 2005), study on Filipino transnational families describes how prolonged separation because to the irregular migration status of migrant fathers and mothers in the United States has deeply influenced their children left in the Philippines, resultant in unsatisfactory protection/supervision and disappointment at school setting. These studies imply that structural factors such as the immigration policies of a receiving country strongly influence transnational family dynamics. Specifically, regulations that hinder family reunification have been shown to be detrimental to family relations.

Normally, official visit to the country of origin is a privilege only reserved for regular migrants and a practically unapproachable distant vision for people living in an irregular situation. However, undocumented migrant mothers dream of regularizing their status because without legal status, visiting their family would make it difficult for them to go back due to the numerous structural, bureaucratic, and financial obstacles to migration (Fresnoza-Flot, 2009).

Whether documented or undocumented, the Filipino mothers suffered emotionally from the separation from their families. Macro organizational restrictions fuel these hardships and the range of choices available to migrant mothers are reliance on remittances, phone calls and sending gifts. This recommends that their transnational mothering strategies also characterize their way of coping with life in general (ibid).

Similarly, U.S. migration rules and execution practices affect families and children mainly by separating couples, untying parents and children across borders for unspecified period of time, which leaves families in extremely vulnerable situations (Menjívar & Cervantes, 2016). Correspondingly, in a diverse tendency of undocumented parent's transnational parenthood, it is suggested to be triggered by enormous debt, hectic work schedule, and the lack of affordable child care for many Chinese immigrant parents to send their U.S born children to relatives (mostly grandparents) in China. (Wang, 2009).

#### *Effects of parents' undocumented status on families*

Transnational family scholars have reasoned that even though transnational parenting can bring added financial security to their families, transnational parent-child parting could correspondingly have unpredictable negative consequences (Haagsman, 2017). For instance, it has been considered that parents and children are negatively affected in their emotional health and well-being, as well as children in their educational ambitions or spirits (Salazar Parreñas, 2005).

Conditional risks are also linked with undocumented status comprising low wages, labour exploitation and poverty, which have straight consequences for immigrants and their children. Research notices that although undocumented immigrants are likely to be working in the labor market, they face a considerable earnings disadvantage compared to legitimate immigrants (Menjívar & Cervantes, 2016). Since undocumented employees lack privileges or liberties, they frequently work in unskilled employment situations where work instability is very common. It can become further complex on for transnational families of undocumented migrants who are parted by law and whose children are living dependently on caregivers.

Cooperatively, in view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that these studies outline a critical role for the research problem of the research and helped in shaping a clear research topic. It helped to develop various conceptual dimensions.



### **3.7 Communication**

Advancement of communication technologies empower transnational relatives to impart all the more frequently and with various means. This is vital in light of the fact that studies demonstrate that general and astounding communication is basic since it fills in as a constant confirmation of the parent-child relationship (Carling, Menjívar, & Schmalzbauer, 2012b).

Although findings demonstrate that it cannot be a substitute for physical contact, regular correspondence is vital to transnational parenting. Remittances are a form of keeping up contact and accordingly are also of indispensable significance to keeping up great connections and relationships. The capacity to send remittances is one reason a few migrants relocated in most cases. In this manner, guardians trust that the remittances they send diminish the emotional cost of their migration and give their children better opportunities (Fresnoza-Flot, 2009).

Maintaining association and contact among the families inside the care triangle might be crucial to the resilience of the transnational family. Past studies have noticed the manners by which modern day media communications have changed the possibilities for contact worldwide in spite of separation. Composing letters, which may take days or even a long time to reach destination, has to a great extent been supplanted by messaging or using cell phones and by utilizing email or Skype on a PC, with Skype permitting visual and also verbal updates continuously (Graham et al., 2012).

The communications has also empowered migrant guardians, particularly mothers, to keep up a distant nearness in their children's regular day to day lives. However, these new approaches for keeping 'in contact' have not just made communications easier but rather have additionally changed the expectations for migrants and their relatives left behind to stronger association within the transnational family. Where a migrant parent cannot manage to communicate consistently with their life partner and children, this might be perceived as a lacking or absence of care and sometimes even abandonment. Also, gender of parent plays a huge role in communication expectations from children. Much anticipation is from migrated mothers to communicate more is existing among transnational families (ibid).

When guardians are absent for uncertain and unverifiable timeframes, in some cases decades, regularly children have no genuine recollections of the parents, aside from the recreated stories and photographs that different grown-ups share with them (Schmalzbauer, 2004). This can restrict the upkeep of parent- child relations and debilitate communication amongst guardians and children after some time. As years go by, transnational ties may fade and family could displace parents in the hearts and brains of children.

### **3.8 Gender roles**

Studies make it evident that transnational parenthood is influenced in gender- definite ways. Mothers and fathers send gifts and cash and look subsequently on importance of communication by frequent contact. Nevertheless, mothers are required to also keep giving vigorous care and attention to their children left behind. In like manner, mothers keep on being compelled via expectations of traditional caregiving roles and commitments, while, fathers are

more peculiar than mothers to satisfy expectations of gender, and abandonment of families left behind might be more typical for fathers. (Carling et al., 2012a).

There is a consensus among social scientists that gender plays a huge role in parenting of fathers and mothers. When mothers migrate, fathers accept 'mothering' roles to a larger or slighter notch, and this may be a growing trend in nearly most parts of Asia where transnational families are turning out to be more widespread. Authors in Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka have discovered that non-migrant fathers do take on more care for children when their partners migrate, but then, there is substantial discussion concerning the level of their participation (Graham et al., 2012).

Previous studies have reported that women's migration outgrows the reconfiguration of the gender partition of labor in transnational families, whereas the migration of male members upholds it. Father-away migrant families usually suffer from emotional detachment, yet, migrant men do not consequently change their role of fathering to adjust the needs shaped by distance; and assert on preserving gender-normative opinions of childrearing compared to the mothers (Parreñas, 2008). Graham (2012), discusses the challenges and strategies for facilitating and perceptions of transnational mothering and fathering by families; when fathers migrate away from countries of origin for work, families differentiate it to be an addition to their breadwinner character, whereas they assess their mothers as being forced to work overseas due to poverty and scarcity. Furthermore, while migrant mothers change approaches for nurturing from afar, Graham and co-authors argued that migrant fathers do not alter their fathering practices to put up with distance. As a substitute, "perform a heightened version of conventional fathering" is established over the display of authority (Graham et al., 2012).

Drawing on an extensive range of sources, the authors set out the different ways in which gender roles are perceived and transnational parenting is practiced. Overall, there seems to be some evidence to indicate that important points of gender related issues have been growing and amplifying. It has helped to support the knowledge presented throughout the research. Although, there were a list of theoretical concepts, the insights have been very useful. However, there are limitations in the theories and concepts presented. Thus, in depth research is important to gain important insights with help of qualitative studies.

## 4. Methodology

This chapter demonstrates how the study was conducted. It describes the methodology for this research and will begin by providing information about the research design adopted in this study and the reason for selecting it. It also indicates the key steps in carrying out the research and selecting the participants. It will then explain the methods used to collect the data followed by the self-reflections and ethical considerations for this study. The chapter ends by stating the challenges and limitations of the study.

### 4.1 Population of the study

The interviewees are the parents of children left behind in Nepal who have entered Portugal and are undocumented in their right to stay in the country. The interviewees were eight in total, three men and three women, who are Nepalese immigrants; and additionally, the researcher also interviewed two key informants. Their ages ranged between twenty-eight and forty-two years old. The interviews with the key informants contributed to outline the research questions related to undocumented immigrants living in Portugal, due to their accumulated knowledge in this topic. The former six, helped to see the fatherhood and motherhood from distance by different angles, whilst focusing closely on the gender roles. The researcher followed the methodology of micro ethnography, with participant observation and qualitative interviews having semi structured questions, as well as analysis of secondary data.

To elaborate further, the participants should fulfil the two criteria given below:

- 1) Nepalese mothers and fathers living without their child/children in Portugal.
- 2) Lived in Portugal for at least three months without a visa, which enables them to be documented in the country.

Prior to undertaking the study, the researcher adapted different strategies that helped her in gaining access to her participants. The strategy to reach the population target for this study was as follows, (i) online social media in Internet used by Nepalese in Portugal; (ii) associations of Nepalese in Portugal; (iii) the choice of staying in a room rented to Nepalese owners. Therefore, the researcher used personal and virtual contacts. Firstly, the initial communications were mostly done through Face book groups. During the process of finding room in Lisbon and connecting with interviewees and associations, the information and correspondence were sent to the interlocutors through social media messengers, as Facebook. The researcher found out that Nepalese were very active and responsive in the Nepalese Facebook groups. Being a Nepali, the researcher herself, became member of various social media groups dedicated to Nepalese in Portugal, to better understand the current daily life, news on and cultural events, as well as articles that reflected on the lives of Nepalese living in Portugal. Secondly, the researcher contacted the leaders of the associations of Nepalese living in the country and could elicit some contacts and referrals from them, namely from “Non- Resident Nepali Association” (NRNA), *Magar Samaj* (Association belonging to an ethnic group of Nepal) and *Nepali Nari Samaj* (Nepali Women’s association in Portugal).

Thirdly, in the beginning of the research for this Master thesis, the author chose to live the entire semester with a Nepali couple, who have lived in Portugal for a very long time. She thought and discussed with her landlord as it would be easier for her to meet people helpful for her research and observe the daily life of Nepalese in general. The contacts were also received from the Nepalese she lived with during her research.

## **4.2 Research methodology**

The research was qualitative in nature. According to Bryman (2012), a qualitative study is to characterize the phenomenon, whereas a quantitative is to test hypothesis and measure the dimension. The research has been carried out through micro-ethnography, by using in-depth interviews and participant observation. The researcher has obtained information on arrival of the Nepalese immigrants to the country, income, work, education, residence, family, discrimination, immigration status and health services of undocumented immigrants. The use of individual in depth semi-structured interviews has been the ideal strategy because it gave an opening to have direct communication with the interviewees, as well as the likelihood for the researcher to clarify and enquire additional questions. Moreover, as Kvale (1996) mentions, enabling the researcher to understand the meaning from the subject's point of view, from the subject's own words. In-depth semi structured interviews are considered flexible as the interviewees do not have to answer only the set of questions with pre-determined responses as in structured interviews to be filled up, but are given the freedom to express themselves (Bryman, 2012), subsequently providing additional information useful in content.

The primary form of data collection selected was therefore in-depth interviews, based in the guideline with open ended semi structured questions. The research in the field was conducted between March and May 2018. Secondary statistical data are also part of the research, from SEF (Portugal), World Bank, United Nations, Department of Foreign Employment, form Nepal. and the Office for Education Statistics and Planning, Ministry of Education (Nepal). These last sources were accessed in Nepali language.

The fact that the researcher is also Nepali, speaking the same language, enabled a sense of trust, which was useful for the interviewees to feel confident in sharing information in the sensitive topic of parenting while being undocumented. The language used to conduct the interview was therefore Nepali, which is the language spoken Nepal, since some of the interviewees did not have a grasp of English language.

Due to the topic of the thesis, the researcher was invited to be part of the research project, "Immigration and trafficking for labor exploitation. Nepalese in agriculture in Portugal". More precisely, in both the Master thesis and this project were observed Nepalese who are undocumented and simultaneously exploited in labor. The project is coordinated by Cláudia Pereira, the supervisor, funded by the High Commission for Migration (ACM), with the reference PT/2017/FAMI/158, and ends in February 2019. For this reason, the guide of the interviews included some questions concerning the project, namely the information on recruitment through agencies and friends in Nepal, prior to the migration, and the

transformation of conditions when working already in Portugal. This partnership allowed to bridge the topic of the Master with the themes of labor exploitation and trafficking.

The researcher also participated in bimonthly “Lunch Scientific Writing Seminars”, together with other researchers. The supervisor organizes the Seminar. The author has reviewed drafts of papers related with migration, as well as a chapter of this thesis, of the literature review, has also received the commentaries from the other researchers. From these seminars came out the initiative of presenting a conference based in the thesis, after the defense, on the “Meetings of Migratory Experiences”, organized by the co-supervisor, Raquel Matias.

#### 4.2.1 Micro ethnography

The researcher used micro-ethnography for the study. Although the researcher followed ethnographic method in nature, in the sense that she was immersed in the social setting under study, it is presented as micro-ethnography provided the relatively short duration and the specific volume of data collected from the field (Wolcott, 1990). Bryman (2012) emphasizes that ethnography is a research method where “the researcher also makes consistent observations of the behavior of the members; listens to and engages in conversations; interviews informants on the issues that are not directly open to observation or that the ethnographer is unclear about; develops an understanding of the culture of the group and individual ‘s behavior within the context of that culture and writes up a detailed account of that setting.” (Bryman, 2012).

The inquiry on practice of transnational parenting was done through qualitative interviews which were the key sources of data bringing out the discourse on, whereas undocumented migration was researched through interviews and participant observation, this is, micro-ethnography.

During the participant observation, the researcher attended various events in Portugal organized by Nepalese associations, as well as festivals, which revealed to be very useful in having Nepalese’s perceptions about living in Lisbon. It gave a brief idea about the lifestyle of Nepalese in the country. The researcher went to the annual volleyball championship organized by the ‘Magar’ society in Portugal, on their biggest festival *Lhosar*. The event was a volleyball championship named “Inter European Lakhana Thapa Memorial Volleyball tournament and grand culture show” among the Nepalese who were living in various countries of Europe. To elaborate further, the countries that the playing teams came from were Denmark, Sweden, Luxembourg, England, Spain, Italy, and various cities of Portugal. It was held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at the premises of Parque de Jogos 1º de Maio, Alvalade in Lisbon, Portugal. It was a remarkable event that takes place yearly in the heart of Lisbon and was known as an essential meeting place and networking event where the entire Nepalese community living in Lisbon gathered during the whole day. The researcher got an opportunity to meet with many Nepalese working in the associations as the Non- resident Nepalese Association, women’s organization, youth leaders, welfare group leaders, social activists, journalists, and general people of all age groups were present in the event which helped the researcher to better understand the web of

connections, challenges, and experiences of Nepalese living in Portugal. She was further invited to other programs and exchanged phone numbers for future contacts with some key persons, who were willing to assist the researcher in the research project.

She also attended the women's day program organized by the Nepalese women's association on 10<sup>th</sup> of March. Although, the international women's day was supposedly on 8<sup>th</sup> of March but due to the time feasibility of working women, the program was celebrated on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March. It was indeed a brief event where she could interact with some women and listen to the progress of the association in Lisbon. It was more like an interaction program with some cultural shows as well. The event was focused on issues of women, domestic violence, women empowerment, discrimination, and current challenges in Portugal were discussed during the event.

Living with Nepalese and having observed their everyday issues and struggles of waiting to be 'legalized' has allowed to analyze how it is their main target. Nepalese people hosted dinner parties in restaurants in celebration of receiving residence permits and passports in the last week of February. The researcher herself was invited to one of those parties and observed the anxiousness of the Nepalese who were waiting for their own papers. It was nice to see that the ones who had papers usually consoled and comforted the undocumented migrants that their wait will finally be over.

#### 4.2.2 Insider-outsider difference

During the period of ethnography, the researcher was moving between covert and overt roles. Bryman (2012) states that to assume covert role is not to disclose the fact that you are a researcher whereas in overt role your identity as researcher is shared. While the interviewees were told in advance about the research and a consent form for the interview was given and signed (see in Annex 4), she was spontaneously invited to various events and social settings where participant observation was conducted covertly. She could blend in, in the social interactions being a Nepalese and because of the covert role at times (e.g., during a dinner event of a Nepalese who had just received his paperwork) she had to remind herself of her role as a researcher and not fall into 'going native' (Bryman, 2012) due to the time limitations within which the study had to be carried out.

### 4.3 Data collection tools

#### 4.3.1 Participant observation

The researcher observed the interlocutors in their homes as well in public spaces like communal gatherings, e.g. Holi festival, Nepali New Year Celebration, and restaurants for supplementary data on lives of undocumented migrants compared to the documented migrants. The observation aimed at exploring the understanding and practice which interview alone could not sufficiently provide for. As a part of the regular life, the researcher had been observing the interviewees in their daily environment such as home and public spaces (e.g., restaurants,

roads, shops, and train, metro, and bus stations). Getting to spend time within interviewees in their everyday life situations also gave the researcher additional advantage on use of observation for data collection. In Lisbon she was invited to meals at the homes of some Nepali families and she developed significant relations with other Nepalese, among which she interviewed two women. Therefore, participant observation was conducted both at public space and private homes.

#### 4.3.2 Qualitative interviews

The researcher had two interview guides, which were built based on the literature read on the topic, the questions like the research project on labor exploitation, and further questions conceived by the author. A first interview guide was constructed for the interviews with the Nepalese and a second one with the two key informants. The interview guides were built in Nepali language, for the interviews with the immigrants, and translated into English, for the readers of the thesis.

The guide for the Nepalese immigrants is composed of two main parts. The first part is divided into two sub-parts—about personal information and history of migration to Portugal; and the second part is about a more in-depth questions concerning long-distance parenting involving Nepali parents, on areas such as their perceptions/views concerning the meaning of parenting, their actual or performed roles before migrating and on current times, challenges encountered in performing long distance parenting, their means of coping in overcoming those challenges, future plans, hopes and expectations and lastly their advice to other Nepali parents wherever they are across the globe who have the same situation like them. The guide for key informants intends to draw information on crucial issue of irregular migration and trafficking problem in the Portuguese context while being focused on the Nepalese population. This was done with well informed and experts in the community. Both the interview guides are in Annex 1, available in Nepali and English.

Additionally to the interview guides, the researcher further used relaxed style of interviewing and avoided interview schedules (Bryman, 2012). The interviews used the flexibility that Bryman (2012), describes, this is, in qualitative interviewing, interviewees can depart significantly from any schedule or guide that is being used. They can ask questions that follow up interviewees' replies and can vary the order and even wording of questions (p.470).

Interviews were conducted in Nepali as it is the first language for most Nepalese so that interviewees could express themselves freely and were not limited by the language barrier. The interviewer used a voice-recorder instrument in getting their insights and narratives with their consent which has become beneficial to maintain the veracity of the information elicited from the interviewees and provided a more convenient way of analyzing them. Every interview conducted started by providing brief information about the interviewer, the purposes of the research being conducted, an overview of what the interview is all about and a review on their participation rights and expectations. The semi-structured interviews lasted a minimum of fifty minutes to a maximum one hour and thirty minutes.

### 4.3.3 Field notes

The researcher adapted the habit of having a field work journal where she noted down her objectives, activities of the day, impressions from the participant observation and reflections about the interactions made. Field notes are primary method of capturing data in participant observation with descriptive and systematic recording. The informal interactions happened mostly in cafes and cultural events which have helped in finding associations of Nepalese, women, men, and key informants for the research project.

### 4.3.4 Literature review and secondary data

The researcher has found some difficulties in finding documents, literatures, and legislations because most of the European researches done are usually on other languages than in English, such as either Italian, Portuguese among others. However, the researcher's language proficiency is in Nepali and English and she feels that there is absence of literature in English language.

The secondary data for this research, as already mentioned, was collected through SEF (Portugal), World Bank, United Nations, and the Office for Education Statistics and Planning, Ministry of Education, and Department of Foreign Employment (Nepal). The data for Nepalese migrants were also extracted by previous research work done by students in ISCTE-IUL who did their research on Nepalese migration. The data for Nepalese people was also accessed from SEF through the portal in their website and yearly reports. Likewise, she also interviewed two key informants who outlined the research questions related to undocumented migrants living in Portugal

## 4.4 Data analysis

The data collected was systematized with thematic content analysis. The testimony gathered by the interview guides and supplemented by unprompted unstructured interactions, was analyzed to identify the themes that came up from the interviews and observant participation. The interview guide prepared in the beginning of the research was pre- categorized into different themes so that it could be helpful to transcribe and analyze the data in the future through thematic analysis.

The researcher selected audio recording for the interviews as the importance is given to the words of the participants and correspondingly more convenient to transcribe and analyze the recordings of interviews. Interviews were conducted in the native language and later were translated in English. The process of transcribing the recording additionally gave the researcher a reasonable chance to reflect on the conversations and opinions of the respondent that were being shared.

Then the researcher traced and highlighted the central fragments of the interviews and notes. She identified the significant and more common themes which emerged through the interviews and observation. These themes were then brought under the three key research questions



looking a transnational parenting practice of among undocumented Nepalese in Portugal focusing on their entire migration trajectory, impacts of migration and future expectations. That is how the research produced the expected results.

#### **4.5 Ethical considerations**

This research engages a vulnerable population and ethical issues were carefully considered. Securing and ensuring the privacy of the interviewees were crucial as this research had the leeway of stigmatization. All the information that might disclose a participant's identity was kept classified. The names were picked randomly and were replaced by fictitious ones, corresponding to common Nepali names which aren't close to the interviewee's original names. The researcher has taken intense caution to carry out the overall research process ethically. The researcher thoroughly marked along with research ethics during field work and up to the final stage.

The participation in the research was completely voluntary; a desire of potential participants to refuse a meeting at any stage was accepted with understanding. An oral informed consent was also attained as it was necessary to make sure that the interviewees understood the aim, purpose, and methods of the research (for example, that it was going to be audio recorded), and that they were free to withdraw the consent at any stage. Participants were asked to sign a letter of consent. Likewise, the topic being a bit sensitive, to avoid any personal information leak, the privacy guaranties were well stated in the consent form, for instance, participants' identity will stay confidential and the names will be changed; the audio recordings, field notes and transcriptions will also be stored in a safe place with an exclusive access to for only the researcher and her supervisors. Likewise, Diener & Crandall(1978) call our attention to focus on four aspects of ethical issues in research, namely: harm to participant, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception. Getting access to the interviewees was also not easy due to their work schedules and their fear of being identified.

In the earlier times, it was mentioned that issue of irregular migration was “too hot to touch” (Duvell, Triandafyllidou, & Vollmer, 2008). The interlocutors might only violate migration laws concerning the admission and residence in each region but they could also similarly be tangled as perpetrators or victims in activities of prearranged unlawful networks to the degree that they use the facilities of human smugglers and traffickers. Due to this specific guideline, some names of companies and organizations that were found to be part of smuggling networks are not mentioned in the research (Duvell et al., 2008). Finding contacts is considered difficult because the immigrants are hidden, which express how vulnerable they are. Likewise, the research with irregular migrants may turn intrusive and interrogative and the researcher may be involved with people who are psychologically distressed due to this sensitive situation. Thus, compassion was highly maintained during the entire process of data collection and observation.

The ethical insight in conducting research also explains that there exists certain risk for the researcher, as we enter a shadow area where we may perhaps be facing perils as well as organized crime or activities and networks. The study may interact with those involved in

‘criminal activities – human smugglers, illegal agents, and corrupt officials, who might try to stop the researcher from pursuing the study either by a mild warning, threats or by force’ (ibid).

By the nature of the vulnerable people being interviewed, the researcher kept in mind that there might range circumstances from relatively comfortable lives to conditions of extreme hardship, from mild to severe exploitation, from autonomous lives to slave-like conditions, and from lacking certain social rights to serious violations of human rights. One of the main points of consideration during this study was that researchers are not principally advocates or human rights activists, but mainly academics, who hold a set of complex responsibilities for high quality and ethical research. It is often agreed that research ethics is not free of political bias. “Research has always a political dimension and researchers touching such sensitive issues like irregular migration should openly acknowledge this” (Duvell et al., 2008).

#### **4.6 Self-reflections**

It was the micro-ethnography that paved the way for the specific topic of the thesis. The researcher thought that it would be a very good idea to live with the Nepalese people in Portugal and understand their lifestyle and situations. The idea of having them as gatekeepers<sup>13</sup> was proposed ahead of moving in to the house. This theme of transnational parenthood was also triggered by an interaction with a person living in the same house, who had children living back home. She met journalists and activists during the time while socializing with diverse persons. They informed her that people came from several countries in the hope of having a permanent residency. Some voluntarily were entering the country, while some were lured into great jobs with hefty amount of money by the agents.

The experiences with the undocumented Nepalese migrants were rewarding and productive. They have been very vocal about their experiences and situations well ahead of the scheduled interview in forms of informal meetings and interactions. It helped the researcher to understand the general overview of lived experiences of various Nepalese in Portugal. She had been invited to lunch/coffee by some people who she met through her primary gatekeeper who took interest in her project and tried to help her in finding interviewees and data relevant to the research. The undocumented migrants are usually in constant interaction with their lawyers and seek counselling from the law firms. A snapshot of the trends of migration and their current struggles has enabled the researcher to open avenues for specific research area and to narrow down the topic. Additionally, her two supervisors have been immensely supportive in the weekly/biweekly meetings. They guided her with perspectives which otherwise she wouldn’t be exploring without their level of expertise. They were critical as well as give constructive remarks and good amount of appreciation of the drafts and works submitted/discussed.

The researcher felt like an “outsider” for being respected too much at normal settings. The interlocutors she interacted with saw her as an outstanding scholarship holder. Since there isn’t a significant influx of Nepalese students in Portugal, she was perceived as an ‘achiever’ of something they highly valued. She felt that while someone introduced her to new people and

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<sup>13</sup> A gatekeeper is a person who stands between the data collector and a potential respondent.

in different settings. The researcher thinks that it did act as a blockage for her to connect massively with them. Sometimes when she started the interviews, they would start with how things were prosperous back home and introduce themselves as successful individuals in the past, but as the interview went on they would slowly reveal details of both their struggles and happiness. After all, having the benefit of speaking the same language and sharing similar cultures she still felt like she couldn't connect entirely with them because they were living in two different conditions and lifestyle. That was when being an "insider" felt more like an "outsider". Nevertheless, she tried to make the conversation as comfortable as possible and to flow naturally which would limit the time to think too much about what might be the desired response and that the real information would emerge from her interviewees.

#### **4.7 Challenges and limitations of the study**

One of the prime limitations for the study was the length of time in which the study had to be carried out due to which the research was limited to micro-ethnography. Some participants despite knowing the anonymity that will be upheld were reluctant to take part in the research. The researcher understands that the hesitation came mainly because this study covered their legal status as living in an irregular situation. When the researcher tried to discuss it with some of her colleagues and friends, she was also suggested to think of topics that were less intrusive and did not determine their regular/irregular situation as they could sense the challenges beforehand. However, with time she managed to meet some people who were open about their situation and felt they wanted their voices to be heard. Nonetheless, it went on to be difficult at times when people lived in various parts of Portugal and coming to Lisbon was only for paperwork and appointments which were never in fixed period. Thus, the researcher felt often powerless and as was taking too much of their precious time. The research has been aimed to be clear, non-biased and accurate. Since the questioning was only with one parent, there may be different perspectives about transnational parenting of the other parent which this research does not cover. The aim is bringing out similarities and differences concerning gender.

Correspondingly, the researcher's gender being a female has also stood in the way as she did not foresee. Some interlocutors did not take the researcher very seriously as compared to her male colleagues doing the research. The researcher had initially contacted people from associations but later received unnecessary messages on meeting up, even if it doesn't have anything to do with the research. Likewise, this research has been a great revelation to understand networks of human smuggling and irregular situation. There have been various sensitive issues that came forward during the research, which will not be part of the research to reduce potential harm to the interviewee and the researcher herself.

With Informal contacts and interviews, the researcher figured that people are not only smuggled, but after being released from that situation, they also come to Portugal after they overstay in other countries and arrive with their visas expired. This has limited the representation of undocumented migrants here in Portugal.

The interviews were conducted in Nepali and translated in English for the analysis, there lies a risk in translation as some of their expressions might not provide the same depth and meaning as in the original language. However, the researcher as made her best effort to keep intact the essence and meaning intact. Another challenge, has been lack of literature or previous study on undocumented Nepalese migrants in Portugal as everything had to be built from beginning. Simultaneously this is a very pertinent opportunity to be able to contribute to the knowledge base.

## **5. Findings and analysis**

The findings presented in this chapter are an analysis of the lived experiences of six Nepalese people undertaking transnational parenthood from a distance; while living in an undocumented situation. The data is presented with a description of each participant, followed by specific themes, derived from the tool of content analysis, with excerpts of the participant's narratives from interviews conducted in Nepali. The interviews were then transcribed and translated into English by the researcher. The five main themes are migration pattern, long distance parenting roles and experiences, challenges, and impact of irregular status in maintaining transnational families, coping mechanisms and socialization and future plans.

### **5.1 Profiles of the participants and family information**

This section provides information on the interviewees and their family background, highlighting their transnational family setting and their migration trajectory. It carries details on when they got married, had children, and left their families behind giving a hint on the reasons for leaving their children behind. The illustration of details of their migration trajectory and some of the major characteristics of the interviewees are on a table (See table 6). It is evident from the table below that most of the participants in Portugal are in search of opportunities and economic upliftment.

Interviewees are 3 males and 3 females, aged between 28- 42, whose children are all under the age of 16. Five out of 6 participants are married, whereas one of them is divorced. They have left their children behind in the hands of caregivers, who are mainly their spouses and the grandparents of the children. Most of them are highly educated and two of them have upper secondary education (see table 5). Comparing their occupation based on their education status, they were employed in better positions in Nepal. They had a descendent professional mobility in Portugal, where they are working in restaurants and agricultural farms while one of them is unemployed.

Table 5: Socio demographic characterization of the interviewee and their families

<b>Id</b>	<b>Pseudo names</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Marital status</b>	<b>Education level</b>	<b>Occupation in Nepal</b>	<b>Occupation in Portugal</b>	<b>Occupation of the partner</b>	<b>Number of children left behind</b>	<b>Age and gender of children left behind</b>	<b>Major caregiver in in Nepal</b>
<b>1</b>	Amrit	32	M	Married	Upper secondary	Nepal Police (Law enforcement)	Dish washer	Housewife	2	11- Daughter 6 – Son	Wife
<b>2</b>	Deepika	28	F	Married	Bachelor’s in Civil Engineering	Primary School Teacher	Cook	Cook	1	7- Daughter	Grandparents
<b>3</b>	Kishor	40	M	Married	Masters in Sociology	Lecturer in university	Agricultural Worker	Housewife	2	16- Daughter 14- Daughter	Wife
<b>4</b>	Shreejana	38	F	Married	Upper Secondary	Housewife	Unemployed	Shopkeeper	1	6 - Son	Husband
<b>5</b>	Mahima	42	F	Divorced	Diploma in Hospitality Management	Resort Manager	Kitchen Helper	Not applicable	2	16- Daughter 13- Daughter	Grandparents
<b>6</b>	Devendra	32	M	Married	Bachelors in Business studies	Accounting and Administration	Agricultural Worker	Receptionist	1	5- Son	Wife

A summary of the interlocutors follows in the text below

### *Devendra*

He is 32 years old, married and the wife and son stayed back in Nepal. His family is a joint family type where his mother, father, brother, sister in law, wife and son live together in the same house. Family in Nepal is patriarchal, so the wife traditionally moves to the house of the husband, to live with him, his parents, his brothers, and his sisters-in-law. He left his child at the age of 2 years old, when he migrated in 2015. It has now been 3 years that he has lived separately from the family. Portugal is his first country of migration as he had never migrated before.

He has a bachelor's degree in business studies and was previously employed as accounting and administration assistant in a school. He met his wife at the same school where she works as a receptionist. He is now working in the agriculture sector in southern part of Portugal. He communicates via mobile phone and internet with his family back home.

He is waiting for his legal process and is currently living in an irregular situation. He says that Nepal is a very poor country, therefore in search of better opportunities he decided to migrate. His main motive for migration was triggered by the pressure from his family members, who wanted him to have a better life than the one in Nepal. He paid an amount of 6,500 Euros to his intermediary to enter Europe via Netherlands.

### *Deepika*

Deepika is the youngest of all participants, she is 28 years old and was pursuing her bachelor's in civil engineering in Nepal. She was married at a young age and migrated with her husband to Portugal in February 2016. The couple paid 17,000 Euros to enter Portugal. She was born and raised in a rural village in the eastern part of Nepal, but was sponsored and educated in one of the top schools of Nepal. She has a young daughter who is 7 years old, who was only 5 years when they left her in Nepal. The daughter is taken care of with the help of the grandparents and the husband's younger sister who is unmarried.

The couple is living in an irregular situation without a valid visa or residence permit, which bars them from applying for family reunification. As a mother, Deepika says that she has responsibilities of care and guidance for her young daughter, and feels guilty for not being there for her child. She hasn't had an opportunity to go back to Nepal in the past two years but maintains contact with her child with the help of internet and mobile phone. Plus, her child needs assistance from either her sister-in-law or in-laws to be in touch with her. She has empathy for her child, who cannot be with both her parents and is desperately waiting for her paperwork to reunite.

### *Amrit*

Amrit is 32 years old, married and the wife stayed in Nepal. They have two children, one boy and one girl aged 5 years and 11 years old respectively, who are taken care of by his wife. His mother and father are ageing and live in the village far away from the city. He had a risky migration trajectory, as he marked his journey from Libya to Italy on a boat with life

threatening conditions, during his journey, and then to Portugal. He spent about 5,000 euros on his journey with smugglers and agents.

The family has been separated for over 5 years now due to the legislation and immigration laws barring the families to reunite, as the husband is living in an irregular situation without a valid visa or residence permit. He had previous experiences of migration in Qatar and Libya.

#### *Kishor*

Kishor is 40 years old, comes from the western part of Nepal looking for opportunities in Europe. He is married and has two daughters living in Nepal, who are 16 and 14 years old respectively. He used to live with his extended family back in Nepal with his parents, brothers, his wife and two daughters. He is living in Portugal since the last 3.5 years without his family and doesn't feel complete being here but tries to ignore such feelings. He paid an amount of 10,000 Euros to his mediator to come to Portugal via Belgium. He has a master's degree from Nepal and his previous occupation was as a lecturer at the university and now he is working in an agriculture farm as a berry picker. He manages to communicate with his family with the help of technology and his family members have mobile phones making it easier for him to contact anybody directly.

#### *Mahima*

She is 42 years old and migrated to Portugal alone with a visit visa, with the help of consultancies to be part on a conference in France. She experienced a series of false documentation regarding employment and bank statements to get to Portugal paying a staggering amount of 9,000 Euros for her journey to Portugal. In Nepal, she was married at the age of 16 years old in, but divorced since the past 5 years. She was employed in a resort hotel as operational manager in Kathmandu and after her divorce she got the custody of her daughter, as the husband got married again. Since then, her mother and father look after her daughters and she became responsible for the upbringing and economic support of the family. She has been away from her family for 2.5 years now. When asked about reason for migration, she said that she was not happy with her economic situation there and even now.

Her daughters are 16 and 13 years old respectively, and maintains frequent communication with them as they are independent to contact her since they have their own mobile phones. Mahima is concerned about her daughters and has encountered challenges being a single mother. In Portugal, she is a kitchen helper. She has had negotiations with the caregivers and has suffered a great deal of financial burden.

#### *Shreejana*

Shreejana is 38 years old, is married and the husband lives in Nepal. Her family is composed of her husband, son, mother in law and father in law. Her son is 7 years old, in primary school, and is taken care by her husband and the in-laws who live in the same house, back in Nepal. She paid a total amount of 11,000 Euros to her intermediaries for a tourist visa to Denmark. She has a high school degree but has no work experience in Nepal before. In Portugal, she was briefly employed without a valid work contract and is currently unemployed and looking for a job.



The family has been separated for over a year because the legislation and immigration laws bar the migrants in irregular situation to reunite with the families. Her life in Nepal became quite difficult once her husband came back from the Middle East, where he was a migrant. The expenses started getting too much and child rearing was expensive in Kathmandu. She wanted the best for her child and her child's future.

Table 6 below characterizes comparatively the interviewees' migration trajectory. The table shows their motivations for migration, their migrating experiences before Portugal and their mode of entry. It also highlights the amount of money they spent to come to Portugal with their intermediaries, who arranged their migration journey. Furthermore, it displays their economic wage status, when they were back in Nepal, and the length of separation with their children.

Table 6 Migration trajectory of the interviewees

Name	Reasons for migration	Migrating experiences before Portugal	Mode of Entry	Amount spent to arrive in Portugal	Accompanied by	Length of Separation with children	Salary in Nepal	Salary in Portugal	Housing composition in Portugal
<b>Amrit</b>	Economic reasons	Yes	Via Libya and Italy without a passport)	5,000 Euros	Different people in different countries	5 years	110 Euros	580 Euros	Six other males
<b>Deepika</b>	Economic reasons	No	Via France on Tourist visa	17,000 Euros (with her husband)	10 other Nepalese	2 years	140 Euros	650 Euros	Husband
<b>Kishor</b>	Economic reasons	No	Via Belgium on Tourist visa	10,000 Euros	5 other Nepalese	3.5 years	157 Euros	580 Euros	Two Nepali couples
<b>Shreejana</b>	Child's future	No	Via Denmark on Tourist visa	11,000 Euros	Agent	1 year	Not applicable	Not applicable	Siblings
<b>Mahima</b>	Economic reasons	No	Via France on Tourist visa	9,000 Euros	Agent	2.5 years	156 Euros	No data	Two other Nepali women
<b>Devendra</b>	Family pressure	No	Via Netherlands on Tourist visa	6,500 Euros	5 other Nepalese	3 years	92 Euros	580 Euros	Seven males from work

This chapter draws on the findings along with the theoretical insights. The themes were classified according to the topics that arose from the content analysis and to the main research questions that are: a) How are they performing parenting roles from a distance while being undocumented b) What was their motivation to migrate to Portugal and how did they become undocumented. The themes also answer the sub questions, focused on their challenges in maintaining parenting from a distance, their coping mechanisms, gender, and future expectations for their children.

## **5.2 Migration pattern**

*Escaping poverty and low wage income in Nepal and looking for better economic situation and social status*

The interlocutors expressed common views on the decision to migrate, describing that their major push factor was their own country's socio political and lower economic status – 'macro' level, regarding the circumstances of the government regime (Goldin et al., 2011). They mentioned a variety of perspectives, which revolved around the common idea that Nepal is a poor country and, even though they have education degrees, the jobs in Nepal are not satisfactory for educated people because the average salary scale is very low. The main push factors were then low wages and unemployment in Nepal. They also hinted on added responsibility after marriage and children. The complimenting attraction for all the six interlocutors was regularization in Portugal and consequently a Portuguese passport, in order to swift family reunification process.

The bases of international migration encompass "push" and "pull" aspects of migration. (Goldin et al., 2011). When asked why the participants chose to migrate to Portugal (pull factor), they replied that they had an expectation of a Portuguese passport because the agents told them to choose Portugal as it was easier to get a passport in Portugal. The country's limited border constrictions also fuel the desire to achieve an international passport. It is mostly for a sense of freedom to move wherever and whenever and to be economically more prosperous. Moreover, it is also expected that they will be economically more stable and 'rich'. Thus, a migration industry of travel agents, lawyers, recruiter agencies, or even smugglers is also observed to be formed, to support the migration trajectories.

Below are the interlocutor's experiences in their own words. Plus, to the income dissatisfaction, their average salary is somewhere between 100 euros to 150 euros which wasn't enough to run a family (see table 9), there is also the expectation of their families after the formation of families.

"I had an idea and expectation of a Portuguese passport which would open my doors to success in life. Being a Nepali there is ton of hassle in getting visas to any country and once we get a visa we want to make the best of the situation. It is a *matter of honor to have permanent residency of a developed country which gives freedom to travel across*

*borders and a feeling of being able to do anything* with a strong passport. [...] After marriage more, responsibilities came up in life and the *economic status* was also going down. Thus, it was also one of the major factors. (Devendra, male, 32; my italics).

*My wife started comparing me with other men from our community who were earning a lot of money and sending children to good schools.* That's when I decided it was time for me to go to Qatar and start a life. (Amrit, male, 32; my italics)

I think my reasons are not very different than any other Nepali person's reason. Leaving Nepal was for economic difficulties. There is no social security, employment opportunities, and economic growth. I also migrated in search of those opportunities and better future. (Kishor, male, 40).

I was working as a school teacher when I was in Nepal while I was also studying. Me and my husband had two families to take care of, including my daughter, my parents, and husband's parents. We were not very poor but *it was difficult to manage everybody's expectations after marriage.* I got married quite early on terms to help my family. *All my friends were abroad.... They were living the dream* and I felt like it was time for me to go earn a better living and life. (Deepika, female, 28; my italics)

In the case of Amrit, after coming back from Qatar, his family started facing some financial difficulties as he was again unemployed in Nepal. He did not have an intention to migrate but his second migration was also a result of fulfilling his family needs. He also had issues in his relationship with his wife and a lot of dissatisfaction prevailed in the family.

Although Kishor was a lecturer in a university in Nepal, he wasn't being paid enough and his economic satisfaction was not met with. As most of the male participants, he was the sole bread earner. However, some women were also active in the labor market and breadwinner who were not satisfied with the wages back in Nepal. For instance, "I used to work in a hotel in Nepal. My salary was about 20,000 Nepali Rupees (156 Euros). I had the responsibility of raising my two daughters with that salary." (Mahima, female, 38)

From the excerpts it became obvious to me that there is a desire of social status of the interlocutors, following Jackson's insights, for instance, "a matter of honour" to have permanent residency of a developed country which gives freedom to travel across borders and a feeling of being able to do anything" (Jackson, 1986). Similarly, as mentioned in the theoretical review, the "new economics of labor migration theory" (NELM), asserts that family is the major role-player of decision making and risk balancers, while issues of remittances also get linked here. It suggests that migration of one person is a joint group effort mostly in the absence of welfare state. Migration can be risky, but sometimes perceived as the only strategy to solve financial problems in a family. Goldin talks about the role of differences of wages between countries, while comparing the socioeconomic development over time among few countries and the consequences it has on migration processes (Goldin et al., 2011).

Most participants mention status and honour associated with their migration attempt. According to the insights of (Jackson, 1986), it can be said that they clearly from middle class, and do not represent a low economic class and mention only the difficult economic situation.

However, regarding decision making we can see the interrelation and association with macro (country's situation and European passport), meso and micro level (comparison in community, family, friends) influences in decision making. Main factor which influenced migration is micro decision, as well as the decision together with the family, and denounces they are from middle class.

However, the expectations of remittances of family members are usually present as a primary goal. Similarly, there is ample evidence that Nepalese are migrating to escape the poverty and the poor government policies implying challenging consequences in lives of the Nepalese has seen previously in the literature review.

### 5.2.1 Settling of Nepalese immigrants in Portugal

#### *Amount paid to get to Portugal and intermediators*

Globalization, international migration, and closed borders have facilitated growth of smuggling people. As borders become tighter, smugglers demand higher amounts of money. However, the smugglers continue serving illicit migration for desperate migrants (Goldin et al., 2011). As per the social capital theory, migration is strappingly determined by social networks within the residence country of origin and the receiving country. Migration networks are measured as a social capital, where people part of the network have certain means to receive information or support. This helps in making migration beneficial by increasing gains and dropping the costs, allowing, this way, to define a migration project and fulfil the conditions for departure (ibid). The networks may be informal, as friends, or institutionalized, as agencies. The question is when these networks become relations of power abuse, as it happens with smugglers.

Their migration pattern needs attention. All participants except one arrived with a visa fueled by many forged documentations and designs. They have mentioned that the price to pay to the smugglers for their assistance is growing and varies largely in the relationship with the smuggler. For instance, if the smuggler is a friend or a relative then the cost is less than normal. Apparently, the people involved in smuggling of the interviewees happened to be somebody they knew via trusted sources, friends, and acquaintances. All the participants except for one took help from agents to get to Portugal and paid an average of 5,000 - 10,000 euros to the agent to set up a visa situation. The charge was to be 'sponsored' at an event or for tourism purposes by another person living in a European country.

Devendra was one of the interlocutors who came to the Netherlands on a tourist visa and then marked his journey to Portugal. He had paid an amount of 6,500 euros to the agent only to get to the Netherlands, excluding the travel tickets and personal costs of visa application, hotels booking etc. Kishor was introduced to the migration agent with the help of his friend. He also said that people from his village were also living in Portugal.

Networks of smuggling in cases of the interlocutors of this thesis were mostly comprised of government and non-government agency, travel agency, media agency, airport staffs, event management agencies, who were involved to make loopholes that facilitated human smuggling. They were the assistants of the interviewee's journey to Portugal, but due to ethical reasons related to safety of both interviewees and researcher, the names are not specified. During my ethnography and participant observation, I saw how increasing the trend was. People at cafes and organizations in Portugal actively taking part in discussing smuggling of Nepalese from Nepal by lying and deceiving, even establishing companies which have led to abuse in the future. Some of their statements are given below:

I was sponsored by some Nepali guy; who lived in Netherlands. But I did not know the guy who sent me the sponsorship as it was arranged with the help of my agent (Devendra, male, 32).

I was on a tourist visa, I spent 14 lakhs NPR (11,000 Euros). If I thought of going abroad on student visa, I can't as I do not have higher education and because of my age. So many students go to Denmark, Norway, London but eventually end up here, so I thought it was okay (Shreejana, female, 38).

I was given information that it takes 6 months to receive temporary residence and in 5-6 years we get a Portuguese Passport. I used the help of an agent for 10, 000 euros. He was my friend and he also ran his agency for several years. I trusted him and paid for the travel, with the cost of travel included, we had to pay the sponsor who sponsored for our visit visa to Belgium. I brought some money as it was planned that getting a job can be difficult in the beginning (Kishor, male, 40).

One unexpected finding was that none of the migrants showed any remorse against the smugglers, although they realize that they were deceived and lied to. They tended to conceal it up as if smuggling was a job and the smugglers did their 'best' to bring them to Portugal. In a way, they were thankful and respectful when mentioning the smuggler.

In addition, some interlocutors keep wanting to take support of those smugglers to bring their spouses to Portugal in an irregular manner. In fact, this study did find a significant difference between their recommendations and future goals. While they did not recommend people to migrate and suffer, they still wanted to choose the same path for their partners. There are several possible explanations for this result which will unveil towards the end of the research.

As discussed above, most of the participants mentioned that they were suggested by other friends with the paid support of an agent to go to Portugal, as we may read in the following excerpts.

Most of my friends were also setting off for the journey to Portugal and I decided to join them with mutual discussion and agreement at home (Kishor, male, 40)

My life completely turned after I got divorced. I was mostly all by myself. My ex-husband took responsibility of paying for the schooling and education of the girls. However, my salary alone was not enough to sustain the whole family and needs. So, I decided to migrate. First, I thought I would go to the Gulf countries, it is cheaper to get there and the salary is also higher than Nepal. Then my family members did not agree to it saying that going to “Gulf” countries is not considered acceptable for educated people and it is not safe for women there (Mahima, female, 42)

Then I agreed to the journey and my parents, my daughters also were very understanding thinking that it is a European country. My parents gave me around 4,000 Euros and I had some savings and borrowed some money from my relative around 1,800 euros. But I will have to pay my parents and relatives (Mahima, female, 42).

We ate from the trash bins, sometimes water and biscuit on the journey to Italy for about a month. There were gangs and fighting almost all the time. Then we reached Tripoli and started working there. It was a very chaotic city. I wore dirty clothes; I was working as a painter (Amrit, male, 32).

From these excerpts, it is evident that they have had precarious migration trajectories, as well as a great desire to get a passport and freedom to move, and a better life for themselves and their children. Amrit discloses further about his risky journey from Libya on a boat. Mahima revealed that certain costs were involved to mark her journey as it happened with the paid support of an agent and how she managed to gather the costs. She reflects on her marital status and the responsibilities back in the home country, when she described about her reasons for migrating.

This section was focused on how they decided to migrate, managed money to move abroad and how their journey was. The theory of migration leads us to reflect that families and friends at destination countries could assist in providing information on the opportunities, risks and challenges related with migration, narrating not only the successful stories, but also the unsuccessful ones. Furthermore, the existence of some family members, friends, and people of the same country at destination country made the emotional cost of moving to a new country lesser. Therefore, migration turn out to be more striking for people with networks at host countries. Networks at diverse level are central for any form of migration and to a greater extent, when added uncertainties and complications are involved. For international migration, social network is significant if migration is irregular and includes complex risk. Nonetheless, Many of such systems point toward high charges for the person’s migration (Ya, 2016).

#### *Living with debt after migrating*

Smuggling has various impacts in the interlocutor’ life. They are now in a cycle of debt and share a feeling of being deceived by smugglers, who lured and lied to them about the ‘golden’ life in Portugal. Most of the participants were indebted to their family members in one way or another. Some have taken help from their family or friends for their journey and agent

costs to travel to Portugal. In the excerpts of the interviewees below we may read their struggles with debt, which have been causing stress in their daily life and family life.

We had some savings from my husband's previous travel and did seek financial support from friends and family. I came via France on a tourist visa. To be precise, it was a plan of an event management company and I was designated as a choreographer by the agent. We were very excited and nervous at the same time (Deepika, female, 25).

My journey has not been simple and I have some debt after my migration journey and I had to sell my jewelry and my mother's jewelry. I owe her money and some of my relatives. I would be stress free if I pay all my debts because my mother understands, but my relatives think that I have plenty of money but I am choosing not to pay them (Mahima, female, 42).

I work hard and save as much as possible. I manage to send 200-250 euros in a month. However, there are some debts that need to be cleared and I hope I will clear soon (Kishor, male, 40)

I also have taken loans, but it will take a very long time to recover the cost I gave to come here. My husband is also making money to get rid of some debts we have at home. I hope God will bless us. (Shreejana, female, 38)

## 5.2.2 Transformation of expectations

All interlocutors reported that initially they had exciting feelings that all their problems would vanish after being in Portugal, and enjoying their first days in Europe. However, the hopes started falling apart and their expectations of a great life started diminishing. The themes below highlight their transformations of expectations.

### *Disappointing jobs*

All the interviewees, regardless of education, age or previous profession are being smuggled, and are motivated to solve the issue of debt (in one way or another to pay to their smugglers). The first thing they assumed was that they would find a job immediately for them to sustain and not use all the money they had at hand. But, the initial days in finding a job and meeting with the expectations were discouraging. The migrants had problems going to a country, not speaking their language, not having the skills, and not having their education recognized. It accelerated more problems in immigrant's lives and they fell back to their own Nepalese groups who could help them find jobs with their own contacts and networks. Most participants did not get jobs during first days in Lisbon. One of the interlocutors remember how stressful it was as he did not get in the job market as easily as expected.

I didn't get a job as soon as I came here. I tried my best to work in Lisbon and be based in Lisbon but there were no jobs for me. Things were tough in the beginning, the money I brought was being used up and I desperately needed a job". "It wasn't a pleasant



situation for me. It took 8 months for me to get a job and then with the help of my friends I went to work in an agricultural farm to pick strawberries (Devendra, male, 32).

The positive side of living there was that I could make some Nepalese friends who had lived here for many years. That place also helped me find a job in Portugal (Mahima, female, 42).

Getting a job was easy with the help of some Nepalese here. But, I could not help myself and broke down into tears every night. I used to lie to my parents and family about my job here. I told them I worked as a waitress and they still thought it was very odd and showed dissatisfaction until one day I broke down and told them I was a dishwasher in a restaurant. I made regular contacts because the guilt of leaving my daughter worries me and I did hear my in-laws scolding me about my choices, which only added salt to the wound (Deepika, female, 28).

I did not have problems in finding a job but doing the job was the biggest challenge in Portugal. I felt uneasy to work in the agriculture field because it was never my plan. I thought I would get a job with my education background and experience. The nature of work is not easy. (Kishor, male, 40).

I start work at 9 in the morning and come home at almost midnight. (Amrit, male, 32)

The above given statement evidence that it wasn't easy for immigrants to be active in the job market from the beginning and it was the migrant Nepalese networks that made their job seeking and employment easier. However, the jobs they got involved in weren't what they expected as they got employed as farm workers, cleaners, dish washers. Nurses, engineers, educational professionals working in menial jobs are also common, as I observed during micro ethnography and participant observation. Most of the interlocutors interviewed are highly qualified and are doing menial jobs as a cleaner, dishwasher, berry pickers, showing anguish in the job they were currently involved in. However, they not only have jobs considered by them of 'lower level' but had long working hours for a minimum wage

The migrants were not only moving to a different country, disposed to cultural shocks and newness, but were also undocumented in their status. This further blocked their roads to get a good job. They already had agony, pile of expectations and debt in their part topped with unemployment in the initial months. Most of the Nepalese workers I interacted during participant observation, were working from 9 in the morning to midnight (with a 3-hour break in between). Moreover, they also did not have Portuguese language skills, in which "The barriers of language and lack of documentation may cause them to be intermittently or underemployed, incurring continued poverty and related risk factors." (Zuniga, 2002). We may confirm this in the own words of the interlocutors below.

Language is a great challenge even when I go shopping, when I go to a restaurant or even look for work. Portuguese society takes so much importance in their language and its good for them. (Shreejana, female, 38)

He thinks the reason behind feeling discriminated is also mainly because of Portuguese language. [...] I wish I knew Portuguese and express myself at times. We can't risk tax gaps and are scared if papers don't come after so many struggles, maybe government will act against such cases. Thus, we remain calm and accept any kind of discrimination. (Amrit, male, 32)

### *Adapting to new housing conditions*

Mahima recalls her first week as an awful experience related to housing conditions and the 'support' she received from her agent in terms of settling.

I went to live in a house which was suggested by the agent. The house was in central Lisbon and that was a big apartment with 6 rooms. But, we were 14 people living in that apartment and there was only one toilet. There used to be a queue to use the toilet, people knocking on the door of the toilet in the mornings, it was just awful. I had a very gut-wrenching moment when I arrived here. At first, it looked nice but when I went to live there I was shocked. So, I had to share a room with 2 other young girls. I had to pay 100 euros for the room and the room was empty and there was no bed or closet. I had no option at all and then I went to buy a mattress that was all I could afford since I did not even have a job or anything. Also, I knew that I wasn't going to live there for very long. [...] I lived there for almost a year as it was the cheapest option available and finding rooms in Lisbon is very difficult.

Living and housing conditions were very poor. The researcher herself went to three of the respondent's houses and when invited to see the rooms, they were sharing their rooms with at least two other people even when the room was only for one person. They would have single bed, mattresses without beds and they would live in one room at least two people.

As the researcher also lives with Nepalese in a rented apartment, there were similar cases with people in her apartment as well, there were three girls who were sleeping in a small room in order to save money. She slowly figured that it was a normal tendency to share room with roommates as a strategy to save money. Most of other participants shared their rooms to lessen the cost of living.

Migrants often face descendant mobility and financial straining when living in the destination country. For the new comers', opportunities for finding work are often only available in certain low-paid sectors. Not being able to speak the new language, with their qualifications not being recognized, not having a work permit, and exposed to discrimination, are compounding issues. The uncertain and strict works migrants are regularly employed in, are further demanding and creates stressful situations. It becomes very time consuming and energy draining which affects their overall well-being and basic rights (Haagsman, 2017).

### *Uncertainty about legal status*

The participants were all living in an irregular situation and have had strategies on making the regularization process faster and easier. This section discusses in detail their legal status and pathways to achieve regularization and current legal status. There was great uncertainty about their regularization and the waiting has been prolonged for a very long time. They have feelings of frustration as they did not have any permit to stay, still, they took certain level of pride in being taxpayers although they are living in an irregular way. The Portuguese government regularizes the taxpayers and the ones that are active in the job market, according to them. Most of the participants described their legal status by saying they were 'illegal' here, some are waiting to receive residence permit still this year, as we may read in the following excerpts of interviews.

I came on a Schengen tourist visa. Now I am illegal as my visa has already expired. I don't know when will I ever get legal.

I worked for 4 months but did not get a contract and instead got fired. [...] I demanded my boss for a valid contract and help in the legalization process, but she instead asked me to leave. In the beginning, they promised to give me a contract after they liked my work and they started telling my other Nepali colleague that I don't understand her language or English. [...] The visa and legal status is very frustrating. Every day I feel awful. Although it's safe to go around while the police do not ask you questions or nobody really but I just want to do something rather than staying idle. [...] Contract and tax numbers are tricky. When I look for work they say do you have tax number? But without contract you can't have a tax number (Shreejana, female, 38).

I had a Schengen visa which expired in 2016. Now I am working and I have applied for residency in Portugal. [...] I am working here and I don't think I am entitled to social security. I pay tax every month and I keep monitoring my taxes online as soon as my salary is given. My employer does not give my salary on time and the taxes don't go on time. Thus, I think my residency is not granted because of the delays in taxes, probably (Deepika, female, 28).

I am living in an irregular way since my visa expired at the end of 2015 but I have already received an appointment for leaving 'fingerprints'. Let's see what happens. Nowadays people who came along with me are slowly receiving dates and appointments from SEF (Devendra, male, 32).

I have understood that people who can wait for several years to get a visa will surely get it. I have applied 33 months ago and I am still waiting. (Amrit, male, 32)

The micro-ethnography and participant observation allowed to observe that families are separated for a longer period than expected. All six participants in the study are not allowed to leave Portugal if they want to come back, which blocks them from going back home for visits. This means that if the irregular parents left the country, the visa policies and restriction would

not enable them to enter Europe again. Undocumented parents researched in other countries also struggled with not being able to travel back to visit their home country for fear they would be caught by authorities and be unable to return to the receiving-country (Merry et al., 2017).

An undocumented status of migrants, progressively common among various migrant groups around the world, limits the scope of nurturing and caring options existing to people who parent from a distance. Nepali migrants in Japan (Yamanaka 2005), regularly separate from their children either because they have no visa and are undocumented migrants or because it is almost impossible to bring their children with the help family reunification policies to reunite in host countries (as cited in Carling et al., 2012a).

### **5.3 Long distance parenting roles and experiences**

This section considers the long-distance parenting experiences and roles they acquired in delivering care from distance. The main point of departure is their dependency on communication technology, remittances, and caregiver arrangement. It is important to understand how they experience parenting as their flexibility to visit children back in home is blocked due to their irregular status.

#### *Perception of their role as parents*

Most parents said that they were aware that their view on parenting has changed after coming to Portugal. When asked about what kind of role they incorporate as a parent living in Portugal, it is pertinent to read the interlocutor's perspectives in their own words.

I am very friendly. I want to be very accepting just like a friend. I am like that with my parents and in-laws. We are not strict. I will let him do what he wants to do in life and in career. [...] My husband even says that our son and he are friends and we never pressurize or threaten him. We have never used force and punishment with beating. We love him and want to understand him. I tell my husband also about it that disciplining should be taken care of. (Shreejana, female, 38).

I am so far from my family and it is only because of my paperwork. I am a father and should be there to teach them and motivate my children's life. It is a bit painful to be so far away and not being able to pass wisdom. It's less meaningful to discipline and guide them virtually. I have felt it different from a distance (Kishor, male, 40).

My daughter is only 7 years old. I have tried to give her everything I could and she asked for. I will treat her with love and she will get great education in her life. She can choose her own career and I will not force her to pursue anything like other parents when she grows up (Deepika, female, 28).

Additionally, Amrit and Deepika reflect to their past and their own upbringing. Amrit says that he was a very understanding father. His father was very strict and abusive and did not want to

be too strict with his own children. He believes he is very soft, kind and understanding. Decision making on right and wrong is a mutual decision between husband and wife.

I ask my wife not to hit the children even if they make mistakes and make them happy as much as possible. I ask her to give them everything and fulfil their needs even if we have to sacrifice our own needs (Amrit, male, 32).

My mother abandoned me and went on with another man. I have never been able to forgive her. I was left with my father and my step mother who was only 10 years older than me. [...]I went to boarding school on scholarship and lived in Kathmandu most of the years for education. I had a broken family and my father was an alcoholic and my stepmother was very arrogant. When I came home from school in holidays they would be fighting and I think I was mostly ignored (Deepika, female, 28)

The participants did feel the difference of parenting from a distance. They felt like they cannot perform parenting roles as expected from a distance. Some participants looked back into their own childhood and strived to become better parents as they had difficult childhood with neglect and very strict parents, which they do not want to incorporate in their parenting style. They tend to be friendly and more giving. Some considered that parents are the best teachers and when they are so far away from their children, it made them feel very dissatisfied and know it has impacts in their lives as well.

#### *Pain in separation from children and desire for better future*

In this theme, some parents with smaller children felt that the pain was very intense but others with older children considered that it was not as painful. Mothers specially felt guilty and had terrible time getting over the guilt. Whereas, fathers tend to look at the separation as a painful experience, but feel more responsible to do the traditional 'breadwinner' role, compared to mothers who did seem to believe more in the traditional motherhood 'emotional nurturing' role.

The pain felt in parting of undocumented parents parallels with the idea that migrant mothers accept the pain of missing important family events and the childhood years of their children; this pain continues even after regularization of their status, haunting in period in their universe of sentiments. Indeed, migration policies affect the transnational family life of migrants and those with undocumented status get the major setback (Fresnoza Flot, 2009).

The pain and suffering of the interviewees being away from their children was covered by their deep desire to have a better future and give the best to their children. Some parents also acknowledged that it was tougher to guide and it almost felt like they were powerless. They felt that communicating through technology does not match up with the real parenting. The upcoming themes will evidence further on their experiences.

The role of a long-distance father is beyond explanation. My son was 8 months old when I left home. My daughter was also very small. Now he goes to school in grade

one. Looks at me in the photos and calls me father, I am not sure if he has the kind of affection. All communications are on the phone. My first daughter also had no idea where I was going or anything. It's very easy to fool kids. My daughter now understands that I am abroad. But they keep complaining saying that other people's fathers come home on big festivals and holidays, when will our father come and why he doesn't come? I feel very depressed but I am in no position to say anything to the children (Amrit, male, 32).

There are uncountable missed moments and experiences of our child growing up. I think it is the choices we have made that have resulted in all of this. I dearly miss my daughter. The first month for me was not easy at all. I used to cry at night looking at her pictures (Deepika, female, 28).

It was revealing how Kishor expressed his children's perception saying that they think it is a matter of great pride for the fathers to be abroad.

My children knew I was going abroad for a long time. As you know it is very common for Nepalese to go abroad. It is more like a sign of economic prosperity and privilege. Thus, my children are proud that their father is abroad. It is a matter of great pride for my children and are very positive about their life. I think it's because of their age. My other family members are in Europe who are having a prosperous life thus they are very excited (Kishor, male, 40).

### 5.3.1 Communication practices with support of technology

All participants maintain family life by communicating frequently with people at home, from every day to once a week basis. Migrant parents allocate responsibilities from afar, discuss daily life, analyze their accomplishment, and pass values, care and sometimes negotiate monetary rewards. The mobile phones are the most preferred form of communication along with internet and several apps. The participants are extremely grateful to the advent of technology and without it cannot imagine being so far away from their children. The dependency of the participants on technology is predominant. It is interesting how they mention that their relationship dimension has somehow changed and technology alone cannot fill in the gap.

It is evident that some participants have easier access to communicate with their children, while for some there is time constrain and dependability on care giver's assistance. New communication technologies that help transnational families to communicate more frequently, as well as a verification of parent child relationship. Even though findings confirm that technology does not solely substitute physical interaction, still communication is fundamental in transnational families. In addition to this, remittances are a method of keeping connection and is also of great importance to maintaining family relationships (Parreñas, 2005; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012 as cited in Carling et al., 2012).

The responses in the discourses below also highlights the mixed feelings relating to the help of technology. Mahima's communication with her daughters is facilitated with the help of technology. She feels very happy that her daughters can contact her whenever they want and it is easy for her to be in touch with them.

Both my daughters have smart phones and have access to internet which makes it easier to communicate with them. They tell me about their day, their school, and the activities they do. We talk about what we ate for lunch, dinner etc.... just basic everyday conversations (Mahima, female, 42).

Shreejana talks about the role of technology in long distance parenting, which is very crucial but admits that it is not be sufficient.

I talk to my son and husband every day on the phone. When I was working I could not really communicate so much. If sometimes, there is problem with internet, you know in Nepal sometimes it rains and the power cuts. [...]I can see my boy dance and sing online. He shows me all that he has learnt at school, even a new poem or rhymes. It's just so nice but when I turn it off it's all gone. I really miss him very much (Shreejana, female, 38).

Deepika communicates with her child and caregivers daily with use of Facebook, Viber, and her mobile phone. She feels like she initiates more contact than her husband.

We talk every day on the phone. My child is still small to initiate contact. It's different from how it used to be in Nepal as I can't hold, talk, hug my child. It is very different. I think our dedication to talk to them is a very important aspect of our life. (Deepika, female, 28)

Most of the participants, except the one who was unemployed, mentioned that they are having comparatively less family time due to the time difference and work schedule. It indicates that surviving is the key motivation rather than maintaining constant communication. It also shows that communication is being slower and dimmer as time go by. The parents agree that parenting is compromised due to work stress, guilt, isolation, and emptiness. They all agreed that parenting roles have changed even if they did not want it to change. They understand that virtual parenting is difficult even though they have intentions to transfer values and guidance.

They say that they have less control in their child's life, in transferring love, care, disciplining, education, values etc. The child's future is dependent on their caregivers, mostly spouses and they have the immense need for their children to get everything, be the best in studies, scared to bring them to the situation they have been hiding. It indicates that they have very high expectations from their children as they continue saying that they did all of the struggle for the children. It is arguable if the children will agree to such high expectations and they had a cost of living without their parents for very long.

Similarly, they shared that they make their children ready for moving outside of Nepal as their children always keep asking. Some participants thought that it is more tough on the children

and not fair on them. They feel like their children don't know them at all and continue to give hopes on meeting again.

It is believed that age of children can limit the maintenance of parent-child relations and weaken communication between parents and children over time. Over the course of time, transnational ties may blur and families may substitute biological mothers and fathers in the minds or hearts of youngsters. Migrant parents likewise leave adolescents, now and again youths; in these cases, different rudiments follow. These children regularly have a intense feeling of the separation, which can some of the time be horrendous, and have recollections of a period when they lived with their parent(s)(Carling et al., 2012a).

### 5.3.2 Care arrangements and challenges

Migrant parents need to ask for the help of their transnational families to give support for their children left behind while they migrate. The participants were asked to explore in detail their care arrangements in Nepal. The participants affirmed that in Nepal, caregiving has some traditional roles. In Nepal, people reside in houses together with the joint family, including parents and sister/brother in-laws., it is very easy to fall back to family members in need of help. Most of the care arrangements were done amongst the immediate family members, mostly, the mother, father, or grandparents.

Then again, arrangements in upbringing of children in a transnational manner does not always boost caregiving responsibilities and can likewise be a reason for added pressure. Transnational family studies have contended that transnational division can prompt lesser levels of well-being for transnational mothers and fathers. (Haagsman, 2017).

My wife takes care of both the children now that they moved from the village to a city area. I send money every month so that they can go to a good boarding school. I am the main bread winner and people are dependent on me (Amrit, male, 32).

My parents take care of two of my daughters. Whatever they are doing is very commendable. In Nepal, getting a divorce has a huge stigma but since my parents were open minded, it was comparatively easier for them to accept it. I moved to my maternal home with my children after my divorce and my children were already acquainted with living there. It did not take much time for them to adjust as we used to go there frequently even before I got divorced. Like when I used to go to work, my mother would take care of my children and their daily lives. My daughters also help in daily chores since they are already old enough to do everything on their own. It is nice that both grandparents and granddaughters live happily and have shared responsibilities (Mahima, female, 42).

Their mother is responsible for taking care of the children. The grandmothers are also responsible of both families. I think it is suitable for men to go abroad and migrate than



women in my society. So, since they take responsibilities, it is an added benefit for our culture and values (Kishor, male, 40).

Shreejana expresses that the care is still not like it could have been and shares dissatisfaction in not being able to be present in their life, “My husband takes care of our son with the help of his parents” (Shreejana, female, 38). In case of Amrit, the primary caregiver is the wife and secondary care givers are relatives and sisters of his wife. Since, they moved from the village to a more urban area the grandparents directly do not take part in care giving. When asked with Mahima about the arrangements of care for her children back home, she says it is done by her parents. Kishor shares that the women are responsible for caring of the children and thinks it is an expected role as a father to migrate.

Theory demonstrates that customarily children distinguish mothers as their essential parental figures, and most consider their fathers' care-giving parts as 'not so crucial'. This is the situation notwithstanding when fathers are available and mothers have migrated (Parreñas, 2005). In this way, when fathers relocate to work abroad, children feel certain level of the emotional shift, yet care giving exercises by the mother are not adjusted. However, when mothers migrate, care arrangements are markedly reorganized. When fathers migrate, the mothers who stay usually assume the role of fathers and mothers. Yet, when mothers migrate, the fathers step aside and other female relatives step in to fill in child-rearing duties (ibid).

There were also some challenges in caregiving, mostly when the mothers were not there. Two divergent and often conflicting discourses emerged. Mothers argued that the care was not sufficient for their children even during formal and informal interviews. They reveal that there were misunderstanding whereas fathers were persistent that caregiving and nurturing was immaculate in the hands of their spouses and mothers. Mahima gives a hint of what she feels about her daughters' perception on being cared by their grandparents, and brings forward that some misunderstandings do occur when making decisions on caregiving techniques.

My daughters never really complain about the way they are being raised but sometimes my mother says some things if my daughters are not being home on time and do not do everything that the grandparents say. I understand their perspective as well and at those times I get worried their misunderstandings stresses me. Sometimes, I understand there is a huge generation gap and trying to console and convince them from here is challenging (Mahima, female, 42).

My child does not listen to me or maybe she does not remember me. Our sister in law takes care of all her needs and demands. When I say now you will come to Portugal. She says I don't want to leave 'aani' that is what she calls her aunt. She is very attached to her and I wish I was with my daughter more (Deepika, female, 28).

The above given statement of Deepika resonates to a study investigating care arrangement, in which the children who have been cared for by 'other mothers' may come to consider these

women as their 'real' mothers and put in a lower hierarchical level their own biological mothers (Menjívar 2000;Schmalzbauer 2004 cited in Carling et al., 2012).

Furthermore, Deepika's statement calls attention of Schmalzbauer's proposition that when parents are absent for prolonged and uncertain periods of time, sometimes few decades, which leads children to have no tangible reminiscences of the fathers or mothers, apart from for the recreated stories and photographs that other grownups or caregivers share (Schmalzbauer, 2004). This can limit the preservation of parent-child relations and fade communication amid parents and children with time. As years pass, transnational ties may fade and families may substitute biological parents in the hearts and minds of children (ibid).

### 5.2.3 Role of remittances

The most interesting finding was the role remittances played in shaping parenthood, gender, and transnational families at large. On this theme, the participants could express how they sent remittances and the roles remittances played in their families back home. Most agreed that more than half of their salaries went in forms of gifts and remittances. They also disclosed that the reason to be in Portugal was to be able to send money back home.

Remittances are more like a way to show care and love. I think the family understands that as well. I send them gifts like phones and chocolates. It is used mainly in their education and the economic support is very important. Of course, emotional guidance is very difficult but it's more like the role of remittances that help me play the role of a parent. We don't compromise in education and their basic needs. I work hard and save as much as possible. I manage to send 200-250 euros in a month. However, there are some debts that need to be cleared and I hope I will clear soon (Kishor, male, 40)

I send money home regularly. Almost 50 percent of what I earn always goes home for my children. I do not really have responsibilities to send to the caregivers. My parents are self-sufficient but I do send gifts from time to time. The money I send home is given to my parents and that way they give it to my girls and manage expenses of their daily life. Remittances is all I can send to them from a distance. That is my way of showing them how much I care. I love them so much and I don't have any savings here, frankly. I know how much they are dependent on my income. So, that is the how it is. Sometimes, I manage to send the money in instalments which I borrowed from my family as well (Mahima, female, 42).

My daughter and my family are financially dependent on me and my husband. We assured them when we left Nepal that we would cover all the expenses at home. But of course, there are challenges in finances. [...] I work on minimum salary, pay rent and still have loans back home. On top of that living expenses, sending money home and family assistance are part of life. It is difficult as caregivers have expectations and do not really know that we are living a difficult life here. [...] I have to think about my

choices like eating out or going for movies is not an option for me. I can save almost 40 euros a month that could add up as remittances. (Deepika, female, 28).

Similarly, Deepika also elaborates how she saves money just so that it can add up to the sum of remittances being sent. She mentioned that she walks home from work so that she could save more money.

Talking about remittances, I do send money back home which goes into the groceries, school education and send it to my wife. She then manages what she does with the money. I do not ask her. (Devendra, male, 32)

Mahima also sends home remittances and views it to show affection. She also shares that she does not have any savings for herself as most of her money goes to upbringing and debt clearing. While the participants support that it is a way to show love and care. It is very clear to see how hard they work and selflessly they send their hard-earned income to their children. The participants feel well to send gifts and money, even when they have compromised on their own needs.

It will not be wrong to say that in the contemporary trends of migration, remittances are also shaping gender. It is clear to see how mothers left behind are becoming household managers, being more autonomous in managing remittances and the fathers left behind are engaged in domestic work and taking over some motherhood roles.

It is encouraging to compare the statements with that found by Castañeda (2014), who suggests that remittances can be considered a “product of love” because they are made possible by the sacrifices and physical separation that migrants must endure for the sake of family members’ economic well-being (Gil Martínez de Escobar 2006 as cited in (Castañeda, 2014). In addition to this, remittances are a method of keeping connection and is also of great importance to maintaining family relationships (Parreñas, 2005; Zentgraf & Chinchilla, 2012 as cited in Carling et al., 2012). The ability to send remittances stands out as a main reason that some migrants chose to migrate in the first place. Hence, parents expect that the remittances they send reduce the emotional costs of their migration and give their children enhanced and a better life.

As already mentioned in the literature review that remittances play an important role in Nepal’s GDP as it grew to 32 percent of country’s total GDP according to World Bank data (World Bank, 2016) . We should not forget that these are not just attractive numbers and figures but a proof of how widespread transnational families are. The remittances received by migrant-sending nations internationally add up to billions of dollars each year, forming an increasing attention in the phenomenon by development authorities and the mass media. Also, bringing consideration to the transnational families that make such large and consistent financial flows possible. However, a great inflow of remittances to a community infers that household separation has become prevalent (Castañeda, 2014). On the other hand, fathers and mothers seem delighted of sending remittances back to their families which also indicatess that their

situation to send money to their families stirs admiration and respect from their society, children, families and relatives (Dobrová, 2014).

#### **5. 4 Challenges and impact of irregular status in maintaining transnational families**

Parents often leave their families in the origin country also by choice or due to rigorous migration policies in host countries that make family migration unfeasible. Small-scale, qualitative studies have indicated that these transnational parents experience emotional and health difficulties due to separation. Some participants said that:

“I frankly have stopped seeing so much positive of the life I am living irregularly here in Portugal. Of course, it has opportunities better than Nepal but I don’t think this was all worth it. God knows when I will be able to go back. I left my only daughter behind, that itself makes me guilty, I don’t really have a friend here that I can share my feelings with and it’s basically just me and my husband” (Deepika, female, 28).

“Nobody can care for a child like a mother. In that way I feel so guilty. The first two months I would spend without sleeping at night, sometimes cried for leaving my child behind and sometimes feeling helpless in this country with no job and no visa. It was very difficult time for me” (Shreejana, female, 38).

“My son calls me father but I don’t know if he understands who a father is. Maybe he thinks it is my name.” (Devendra, male, 32).

The participants clearly mentioned some challenges that were by-product of their choice of irregular migration and factors such as debt, legal status etc., that has affected their bond with their significant other, children, families as well as their personal wellbeing. They also admitted that it is affecting many parts of their family life and the feeling of guilt is very similar to some studies where parents reported feeling guilt-ridden and divided amid their children residing in the host country and those left in the country of origin (Merry et al., 2017).

Family separation is nowadays known as some main social costs of migration touching transnational families in the “third world” countries. Associations inside transnational families rest on mainly long-distance communication (Madianou & Miller, 2011). A research with Ghanaian transnational parents demonstrates that migrant guardians who are far from their children showed more worse results in their wellbeing than their partners who live with their children in the destination nation. Significantly, these transformations were mainly due to parents’ ‘lower socio-economic and undocumented status’ (Mazzucato, & Schans, 2017).

### 5.4.1 Loneliness and self-blame

#### *Concealment of feelings*

The theme of emotional issues recurred throughout the analysis came up while interviewing most of my participants. Many different things can raise tensions within transnational families and relatives living away from them. There is a tendency of not sharing feelings or problems with their families or children. The participants seemed to portray a beautiful life and it is also understandable why they do it.

“I can’t have a voice in any kind of exploitation I face. But anyway, I can’t expect rights as it is my mistake to come here. I don’t have a visa to remain in this country. People will exploit me so I can’t say anything. I cannot even tell my family how difficult life is here. They have many expectations from me” (Shreejana, female, 38).

“I never imagined a life like this. It is a matter of shame and I don’t tell my family that I am working in the agriculture farms. However, now it is fine and I am getting used to it.” (Devendra, male, 32)

“My husband was very passive in finding a job and was being negative about my decision. He used to taunt me and blame me for the decision even jokingly and sometimes seriously. He would tell people we met here when we shared our stories and mostly blamed me and accuse me of wasting his life savings by coming to Portugal in front of them. I know I made a mistake but when he insults me, I feel detached and alone.” (Deepika, female, 28)

Every respondent reported that they were lonely and ashamed of living irregularly, employed in mediocre jobs being mistreated. The stress and uncertainty of regularization adds up in more uncertainty of what they have planned and their children. They think that the need to stay irregular is also because of their children so that they can have a better future and even said that they were only in this situation because they had responsibilities to their children. One of the major challenges was stress, when they received blame from family members whose dreams were of joining the one that migrated as those dreams weren’t met. They had to have several problems explaining how they were lured and the reality was completely different. As most of them had debts it created more tension for the family left behind as the debts were not paid on time.

It was like a study done between Honduran transnational families, Schmalzbauer (2008) ensuing that Honduran children who have one or both parents working in the US have slight information on their parents’ lives. Most assume their parents are doing well, even though their parents are struggling. Some of the common discussions were conflicts with family (lack of trust, shaming, blame game, hiding feelings and reality).

Transnational family scholars have reasoned that while transnational parenting can deliver more monetary security to their families, transnational parent–child separation can also have adverse consequences for both parents and children (Haagsman, 2017). It has, for instance, been found that parents and children are negatively affected in their emotional well-being and health, and children in their educational performance or aspirations (Salazar Parreñas, 2005). They also denied sharing their position and status with their family members feeling ashamed of their decision. The tendency of blaming oneself for their status is equally prominent.

The researcher feels that the interviewees' struggles and feelings were also expressed when they were given a question to express recommendations for future aspiring migrants and they said:

“My suggestion is try not to leave Nepal. It is painful to be abroad. There is everything in Nepal but the government and rule of law is lacking. There are opportunities in Nepal and I would recommend younger generation to think of Nepal as a land of opportunities. The money we spend to come to Europe can be invested there itself.” (Kishor, Male, 40)

“If one has a happy family, migration and the separation is not a great idea. That is my belief. If I had a happy family and we were living in peace, I wouldn't have opted to come here. One will have to overcome any kinds of challenged and should be ready for it. You will find exploitation and oppression when you are working for someone else.” (Mahima, female, 42)

For future migrants, I think going abroad by giving up on their education is not a very commendable choice. We risked a lot to be where we are right now and we sometimes feel like it was a wrong decision.” (Deepika, female, 28)

On a different note, during micro ethnography, the researcher had an opportunity to be involved in the happenings of Nepalese society in Portugal with the help of social media, events, news websites and blogposts. She also found out that there have been some notable suicide cases mostly among the youth group. A Nepali journalist working in Portugal reported that the person who committed suicide was also an irregular immigrant. In the news article, it has been mentioned that 18 other Nepalese have lost their lives in Portugal (Chhantyal, 2018).

#### 5.4.2 Gender

There were three males and three female participants in this study and five out of six of my participants have migrated alone to Portugal. The experience as a parent in terms of loving their children is the same even though gender roles gave escalation to several other sub themes. Studies make it apparent that transnational parenthood is affected in gender-specific ways. Both mothers and fathers send gifts and money and maintain communication, but mothers are expected also to continue providing emotional care to their children. Likewise, mothers continue to be embarrassed by care-giving expectations and responsibilities, whereas, fathers

are not much expected as mothers to maintain gender expectations, and desertion possibly will be further common (Carling et al., 2012a).

Furthermore, while migrant mothers develop strategies for nurturing from a distance, some researcher argued that migrant fathers do not alter or adjust their fathering practices to put up with distance and instead, “perform a heightened version of conventional fathering”, verified over the appearance of authority and power, and therefore uphold gender-normative understandings of parenting (Graham et al., 2012).

## Transnational motherhood

All the women participants agreed to feel that they were more empowered by leaving Nepal, which reflect the benefits of migration. However, they shared the feeling of guilt and shame while leaving their children behind and insecurities attached to this freedom. These findings suggest a need to reassess the findings in the review, which suggests that; families agonize from emotional detachment, still, “migrant men do not accordingly adjust their performance of fathering to accommodate the needs created by distance; and fathers insist on maintaining gender-normative views of parenting compared to the mothers” (Parreñas, 2008).

“I see how women are empowering and being independent. I also want to be self-dependent. As a mother, I should not just be traditional and play role of a mother. We are very strong women and I was raised feeling like being a woman is not an obstruction for progress. You know still in Nepal they don’t send females abroad but I broke the boundaries. (Shreejana, female, 38)

### *Defamed as a mother*

Deepika still looks back at her desperation and feels like her decision might have affected many lives. She had a very hard feeling about leaving her child but knew it was only for the best. She also feels like the society she lived in did not quite approve of her migration decision “I knew I would be judged by society as being a bad mother leaving behind my daughter, but I have always been independent and do not want any financial problems ever in life for my family.” (Deepika, female, 28)

Mahima elaborates on her single status and herself feeling more responsible to her children. She feels she has difficulties trusting people and overcoming the stigma attached to divorce “I really feel sad and like any parent being away is not a pleasant feeling. I think I feel more responsible for my children since I raised them as a single mother for a very long time. It has almost been 5 years now since the divorce and I feel responsible for their happiness. I want to give them everything that they want. I send them phones of their choice but they are not very demanding. They know the struggle that their mother has gone through.” “I don’t tell many people that I am divorced here. There is a huge community here where most people know most people. It is still a

stigma that a woman is divorced and on her own. The Nepalese men do look for chances and think when a woman is divorced it is okay to approach.” (Mahima, female, 42)

Shreejana, after saying she felt guilty, also looked at her migration with a positive lens and related it with empowerment, “Then I see how women are empowering and being independent. I also want to be self-dependent. So, in a way long distance parenting is not a big problem.” “As a mother, I should not just be traditional and play role of a mother. We are very strong women and I was raised feeling like being a woman is not an obstruction for progress” (Shreejana, female, 38)

## Transnational fatherhood

All fathers shared that their role was primarily of a breadwinner and as a man it was their responsibility to provide for their children and family. They have also tried to put into words how they feel to be separated and sometimes feel deeply sad. They agreed that they did not have enough contact and conversations, seldom ended in asking them to be good in their studies and stay disciplined etc. The all stood to the point when they perceived mothers to be primary caregivers and it was their role to bring up the child whereas, it is their role to financially support the family. Moreover, the participants think that being undocumented has put them and their children in a very uncomfortable position. Some of them understood and empathized with the desperation of the children living without a father next to them.

With regard to this, Graham (2012) has mentioned when fathers drift away from `home' for work, children distinguish it to be an extension of their breadwinner role, while they view their mothers as being compelled to work abroad because of poverty(Graham et al., 2012).

“As a father, I am the one who must be the breadwinner of the family. In my community, the women are still supposed to be home and are away from economic opportunities. So, in a way I am relieved that I have taken a step to overcome difficulties and our collective society has also helped me be at ease here knowing that my wife and mother are taking care of the children.” (Kishor, male, 40)

### *Honored as a father*

All three male participants agreed that there was a certain degree of pride felt by their family members back in the country of origin. The viewpoint of the society about male members migration is associated with prestige and higher status. To elaborate further, below are the excerpts from all three participants.

“I have to go through any struggles in life and be the provider. If I don't do it and go through all this, my family will be miserable. Everything I have done is worth it.” Amrit believes the wife has the duty of providing care. He also says, “She is a housewife and is not involved in farming or agriculture, her only primary duty is to take care of children”. “I feel horrible when I hear the kids say things about their friends and school, I feel like there is a gap that mobile phone conversations can't fulfil. My son has only



seen me in pictures and says I am the father. Emotionally, I feel it's more difficult for them". On the other hand, he also thinks it was his own choice and he knew that going home anytime soon would not be an option. (Amrit, male, 32)

Kishor reflects more to his past roles as a parent and his overall parenting practice. "I believe that parents should play the role of giving them great space to grow and build their capabilities. Me as a teacher myself, tend to pass values in my children and give them many opportunities to grow. I want them to be great in education and my approach is more for them to be smart, intelligent with ton of knowledge. I have always tried to give them the best. The whole society looks at me as a teacher. They follow us and look up to us. My behavior was more of a motivator and now it is difficult to transfer." "As a father, I am the one who must be the breadwinner of the family. In my community, the women are still supposed to be home and are away from economic opportunities. So, in a way I am relieved that I have taken a step to overcome difficulties and our collective society has also helped me be at ease here knowing that my wife and mother are taking care of the children" (Kishor, male, 40).

Devendra mentions that long distance family life was a reason to make him sad and says they don't communicate so much. He expressed difficulties in practicing parenting from a distance and realizes his absence in their lives. "I feel very sad to be away and leave my family behind. I don't think anybody would be happy without their family or wish to be far from them. Everything is dependent on the phone and you know with mobile phones its only "hello, hi". Very basic like how they day went and every day stuff. It's nothing like it used to be. However, we talk for about an hour or two a few times in a week" (Devendra, male, 32).

It is evident that fathers highlighted the issues they faced as parenting from afar. They talked about their breadwinner roles, struggles and emotions as parents. It makes the researcher think that it is not just the family members that are affected by this prolonged absence but the immigrants themselves. Their mentioned challenges are proof that they too are vulnerable to the consequences of being away from families. This also counters the conception that the unpleasant feeling of "hopelessness, guilt and distress" are repeatedly experienced by mothers when they leave their children behind and supports the opinion that transnational fathers agonize as well (as cited in Carling et al., 2012a)

#### 5.4.3 Discrimination as undocumented immigrant at workplace

Most of my participants felt discriminated occasionally at work. Most of them feel like people are racist and the behavior towards the Portuguese and the Nepalese differs. All agreed that if they stood up against the discrimination, they would jeopardize their paperwork process and lose their jobs instead. There is much greater risk for suppression and abuse for irregular immigrants. Thus, they choose to remain quiet and follow commands of their bosses and managers. They have had regular problems with their salaries, holidays, and payment of taxes. One participant mentions:

“We have to keep quiet and work hard without even bringing our rights. I don’t want to risk the job and my boss is okay in many ways as well. I am not very satisfied with the behaviors and discrimination even when I am giving my ultimate best.” (Amrit, male, 32).

“I demanded my boss for a valid contract and help in the legalization process, but she instead asked me to leave. In the beginning, they promised to give me a contract after they liked my work and they started telling my other Nepali colleague that I don’t understand her language or English.” (Shreejana, female, 38).

“I think we don’t really have rights or anything. The job is usually unstable and it requires a lot of physical work and labor. We don’t have rights or benefits like the Portuguese people. We are paperless and situation is worse because they take benefit of our situation” (Devendra, male, 32).

Most of the participants briefly shared the discrimination they have faced at their work place. Prior studies have notices that circumstantial risks are also linked with undocumented status comprising low wages, labor exploitation and poverty, which have straight consequences for immigrants and their children. Research has shown that even though undocumented immigrants are likely to be employed, they face a substantial incomes drawback compared to lawful immigrants (Menjívar & Cervantes, 2016). Since undocumented workers lack rights to unionize and often work in unskilled labor positions, job unpredictability is common. And it can get more complex on the side of transnational families of undocumented migrants who are separated by law and whose children are in hands of caregivers

Most of the interviewees are currently working as laborers in restaurants and farms and are earning a relatively minimum salary in Portugal ranging from 500 to 650 euros monthly. However, comparing the salaries they received in Nepal is still higher, although they are overqualified for the jobs they are currently doing. The participants have left deprived and frugally low labor markets in pursuit of higher-paying works to care for family members left behind. Even though undocumented labor migrants are usually downgraded to the least desirable jobs and to the lowermost paying jobs in host countries, their wages are substantially higher than their own countries (Semyonov and Gorodzeisky, 2004; Go, 1998; King, 1997; Jasso and Rosenzweig, 1990; Semyonov, 1986 as cited in (Semyonov & Gorodzeisky, 2005).

The participants also indicate that not knowing Portuguese and English language has been one of the major challenges and factors for being discriminated here in Portugal. Talking about this an interviewee said:

“Language is a great challenge even when I go shopping, when I go to a restaurant or even look for work. Portuguese society takes so much importance in their language and its good for them. I even think we should do that in Nepal” (Shreejana, female, 38).

Amrit thinks the reason behind feeling discriminated is also mainly because of Portuguese language. “I wish I knew Portuguese and express myself at times. We can’t risk tax gaps and are scared if papers don’t come after so many struggles, maybe government will act against such cases. Thus, we remain calm and accept any kind of discrimination. “Also, he goes to some government services and interacts with people, they instruct a lot in Portuguese and he finds it difficult. (Amrit, male, 32)

Kishor also talked about his struggles due to the fact he is not skilled/able to speak in Portuguese language “I don’t speak Portuguese and I have some challenges in let’s say in offices while doing official work, communicating with people and daily life sometimes. However, my work did not require me to speak Portuguese so I am fine.” (Kishor, male, 40)

When asked why they aren’t learning, Deepika replied “I don’t really speak Portuguese and work mostly inside the kitchen. My boss and workmates all speak some English with me and they are my everyday contacts.” (Deepika, female, 28)

Likewise, interviewees also said that Portugal was not their final destination country and did not feel the need to learn Portuguese language, while, some found that Portuguese language training was not important until they had a legal right to stay and was a requirement only for a passport. They also report that there were few options to learn Portuguese as only one Nepali was teaching it in Central Lisbon. Some said that they were costly and did not have time to attend classes as they had difficulty with work-private life balance.

This shows that the participants had limited knowledge on the current offers in Portuguese languages to adult migrants which are sometimes even free. They were limited to the idea of learning from another Nepali teacher who taught Portuguese and did not seem aware or keen in learning the language, even though they realized the importance of being able to learn the language. It could be that these languages are not accessible to the selected profile of the participants of this research since they are in an irregular situation.

During the research, I also found that Portuguese For All <sup>14</sup>is a program only open for people with legal residency permit. Although, people can attend classes, they cannot receive a certificate because of their undocumented situation (Matias, Oliveira, & Ortiz, 2016). Many participants seemed unaware of that and were not motivated to attend class without right to receive a certificate.

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<sup>14</sup> The PPT Program (Portuguese for All) – It aims to make accessible to the immigrant populace, and without any expenses to the learners, Portuguese courses of certified, that will enable the access to nationality, permanent residence (level A2) and furthermore courses of specialized Portuguese for the sectors of retail, hospitality, care, civil construction, that will support a better access and integration in the labor market.

## 5.5 Coping mechanisms and socialization

Almost all participants wanted to keep up their national values and participated in celebration of festivals. The presence of many Nepalese living in similar situation has also made them normalize to the 'irregular situation.' Likewise, the ones who were employed in the labor market were confident that their situation as tax payers would enable them to be in the 'process of legalization'. Reflecting on this, the researcher feels like, it was one of the reasons they decided to participate in the study.

Undoubtedly, the participants are very resilient and the strong force that keeps them motivated to keep going is a brighter future for themselves or their children or their family in general. Despite challenges, they view their children as a source of motivation and strength who will further have a great life abroad and fulfill their expectations. Regarding their support systems, it seemed that they had close ties with friends, family back home. In Portugal, they had some acquaintances who were there for them at times of help.

“The close friends are usually Nepalese in Portugal who guides me through problems in Portugal who mostly help me in times of financial struggles and have monetary exchanges from time to time” (Amrit, male, 32).

“My support system is still my friends and family back in Nepal with who I communicate on social media and my main support is my husband.” (Deepika, female, 28)

In socialization, men and women had different approaches. Male participants seemed to be very active in forming organizations and getting to know more Nepalese people. For instance, a participant was a dedicated supporter of Nepalese traditions and culture. Kishor's mode of socialization is mainly by taking membership of Nepalese organizations here in Portugal. He feels a level of dignity and respect being part of the Nepalese groups and associations.

It was interesting when asked women about their socialization in Portugal. Although Shreejana said that she was very positive and felt empowered as a woman but she wanted to stick to the orthodox values, which prohibit her in being very social or making connections outside the family. In case of Deepika she was also more attached to ties back home and for other two female participants, socializing is not possible in terms of her time management and work obligations.

“I work actively to protect and conserve our traditions. Thus, I am involved in so many organizations to save our identity and not completely favor westernization. I am involved in many organizations but I have offers from many different since I just came to Lisbon from berry picking job. I want to work for the welfare of people and people in problems” (Kishor, male, 40). When asked about his support systems he brought the context of his age, which helps him cope with things better. “With my age, I am mature enough so it is easier to cope with challenges and difficulties here. Sometimes it is also friends and family that help us cope with issues” (Kishor, male, 40).

Many participants viewed Nepalese in Portugal as a clustered group with countless groups of people according to caste, class, region in Nepal, “The segregation of Nepalese societies is quite challenging, everybody is busy with work which does not allow us to stay very much in touch.” (Kishor, male, 40).

I live with my brother and sister. I went to the Portuguese class and met some Nepalese. Since I am a mother, a wife, I can’t go everywhere. I get scared being a woman going around alone.” Shreejana also indicates that her gender roles do not allow her to go out and socialize more other than her limited family members. She adds further about her perception of general Nepalese, “People will talk about me and my character since I came here leaving everything behind. I haven’t seen much or met many people. The society here is also very dangerous. I have heard that many people are married back home but here are living with other people’s husbands or wives. I better not know anybody or anything (Shreejana, female, 38).

“I used to be a member of the woman’s association in Portugal but since I had a strict schedule and due to time constraints, I could not be there in meetings and gatherings all the time. I was very active in the beginning. Maybe it was the energy of coming to Portugal and wanting to do something. Now, I am very busy in my own life work- home etc. So, I don’t really socialize so very much and I agree that it gets lonely, but I think it’s a story of most parents living without their families abroad” (Mahima, female, 42).

We can see how socialization is linked with creating a sense of dignity and identity. For some participants community organizations and acquaintances were two important parts of living in a foreign country. It was interesting that they felt proud to be board members of small organization which helped them to build up self-esteem and I think it is more for men that seek validation and power in society. They were proud to be continuing the traditions and culture of Nepal. It was also a way for them to escape from the status decrease they have in the labor market, and be in higher positions in the community organizations. Reflecting on discussions in literature, Jackson also gives light to culture and identity as the immigrant community forms their own associations and cluster institutions to stay connected. He mainly sheds light on the status change with spatial mobility of immigrants (Jackson, 1986). However, women viewed migration with an empowerment lens which helped them to see the world. The friends and acquaintances were also very helpful as their support in Portugal.

### **Organizations dedicated to help irregular immigrants and human trafficking victims**

The irregular immigrants are a vulnerable population in the host country and since social workers work with vulnerable section is society, the researcher asked if they had every received help from social workers. The researcher has found that they hadn’t received any sort of help but they mentioned an organization named “Solidariedade Imigrante’ frequently that works for advocating of the immigrants’ rights and human. They seemed happy with the work this organization was doing but they would have liked to see more organization like those. The main challenges of irregular immigrants with a lack of legal status in Portugal, were mainly,

exploitation at work with delayed taxes and wage payment, and lack of information regarding their regularization and future. When the researcher enquired interviewees about using help of social workers who can becoming informed, knowing our rights, or helping those in need, many are clueless and deceived in name of contract. One of the participants said that they were reluctant to take help from social workers because of their legal situation and they did not know where to find them.

“They could probably suggest and assist the person on how to make paperwork. They could also link the individual to any services available or make them aware about the options they can have if they want to go home. They can reach the associations we have here and other than that on a legal level, they wouldn’t be able to help us.” (Amrit, male, 32)

“I am not sure how they can help. More than that, I am not sure if we have any right to seek help at all.” (Mahima, female, 42)

### *Representative from Solidariedade Imigrante*

Key informant interviews were conducted to better understand the situation of irregular immigrants in the Portuguese society. They helped and comprehended the current matters and concerns in the community. The reason for key informants’ interviews in this research is to gather data from an extensive variety of individuals; including professionals, experts, or residents - who have direct and in-depth information about the people living in an irregular situation.

Solidariedade Imigrante is a national, non- profit association set up in 2001 to advocate for the rights of immigrants in Portugal. They help in process of regularization, counselling, tax problems, company contract problems, pressurizing government. They run with the funds collected by members of the association. This association is more like a pressure group and believe in solidarity between the citizens. They have immigrant members from over 80 different countries and work for the rights of the immigrants. According to the resource person it can be said that the interviewees could get into the process of legalization in Portugal only by working with a valid job contract, paying taxed and cashing out for social security.

“We assist immigrants in their steps to regularization. Restrictive policies that criminalise the entry and permanence of immigrants in Europe only contribute to putting men and women “in the dark”, insecurity and instability, with people being subject to tougher exploitation and human trafficking networks.”

When asked about his experience in working with Nepalese irregular immigrants, he said that, “I have worked with many Nepalese. Many are here from the UK on trucks etc, some people who are without visas from other European countries. There is also a growing smuggling among Nepalese who come on different visas around Schengen zone. Their first employment destination is agricultural field and restaurants. Some

have worked here for more than 36 months but still haven't had papers. They help the country, pay taxes here but are not recognized. They are condemned to live in hiding and pushed to labour exploitation. Portugal has become a 'prison' for many immigrants like them and they are stuck."

"Even though salary is low and domination is high. They are still struggling only to be regularized. I keep updating about paperwork and rule changes during my interaction with the immigrants. Nepalese started to come in Portugal roughly around 2014-2015 in a maximum number. Nepalese arrived here with many illicit means and have also been trapped in networks of traffickers in the agricultural farms here in Portugal. Before, people used to get visa in 1 year, it was easier but now the waiting is longer and uncertain. There are many single people here and many with families back in the country of origin or elsewhere. But for some irregular immigrants, there is no channel for regularization and reunification."

When asked about who are more prone to be smuggled, he further mentions his experience in working with irregular migrants from Asia and Africa, thus answers, "People with lower economic status are most prone to come here as irregular migrants. Especially for Asians, they take debt and all, but want a better life. Whereas, for some Africans, as we do theatre groups, their reasons are war, starvation, and take debts for their families and children's future to enter Europe."

"The situation for these immigrants are pitiful, they have immigrated looking for better life and good intentions, active tax contributors, but several are being expelled and asked to leave the country. They are not seemed worthy of human rights and dignity"

The representative also linked that there are many cases of human trafficking as well and when asked if they were at the association, he answered, "People are very scared. The victims do not come. Even if they are irregular or trafficked, people hesitate to come to our organization. We try to aware them that it is an organization for them and for their voices to be heard. We explain more if they are truthful but they hide a lot of their reality from us. Even now many Nepalese are part of such rackets. They want to hide details and do not share true stories fearing that it could have negative consequences."

### *Director of the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings, Ministry of Internal Affairs*

The researcher, being a part of a project, had access to plenty of information about trafficking of human beings. Being a participant observer and during micro ethnography as well, the researcher got to understand that Nepalese were also victims of human trafficking in Portugal. Likewise, she got to interview Rita Penedo, Director of the Observatory on Trafficking in Human Beings, Ministry of Internal Affairs who shares:

“The observatory does not have data on irregular migrants but have feedback when they have registered record. However, in 2016, they had 23 cases of trafficked Nepalese victims in Portugal and many more from South Asia keep recurring, mainly from Bangladesh and India were here.”

When asked about some legislation relief for Nepalese victims of trafficking she replied, “With help of law enforcements and investigators after being identified, they were compensated with rights to residence permit if they cooperated in the investigation identification of criminals. They are entitled to go in shelter, translators, and legal, psychological assistance rights. They can apply for a permanent residency after renewing their residency permits. (...) They also have a right to family reunification just like any other immigrant. They also have a right to voluntary assistance return by IOM. They check and assess if it is safe to return. Nevertheless, the 23 Nepalese victims of trafficking desired to stay in the country, and received their rights.”

She also shared her personal insight of how human trafficking and irregular situation may be related, “Vulnerable irregular population people are prone to trafficking. Victims of trafficking, if goes unidentified and the exploitation period is over, they may fall into the category of irregular immigrants.”

The interviews with the key informants unravelled the links between smuggling and human trafficking among Nepalese which has been significant in the past few years. Many information was shared about the lives of irregular immigrants and survivors of trafficking. Both the informants have suggested that the irregular immigrants are vulnerable and have faced exploitation due to the nature of their migration patterns. It is alarming how the tendency seems to be growing among the immigrants in Portugal and special attention is needed to be able to curb smuggling and trafficking from the very roots.

## **5.6 Future plans**

### *Plans of Reunification*

In this section, there was a considerable mix of emotions while describing future for their children. All the participants said that their motivation and intention to reside in Portugal was for their children’s future and a greater standard of living. However, some parents did not want the reunification quickly because of their financial difficulty as well as housing situation here in Portugal.

Most parents demonstrated a fear of what they perceived as ‘western culture’<sup>15</sup> that could influence and affect the traditional Nepali norms and values in their children. Only one of the interviewee, Deepika, wanted to reunite very soon. Parents had concerns for their children’s future and the uncertainty of risking to bring them in Portugal would hamper their education and overall performance. They started giving examples of other families who had children in Portugal.

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<sup>15</sup> Western culture according to the interviewees meant drinking, smoking, bad manners and negative influence.



Amrit shared “The children here in their teenage years suffer, they don’t understand any Portuguese and it is expensive to send them to international schools. I have seen many children quitting studies and getting in bad behavior being influenced with western culture of drinking, smoking etc.” (Amrit, male, 32).

Overall, they wanted their children to receive outstanding education, choice of profession, transfer of traditional values. The participants were asked about their plans of family reunification and they expressed what they wanted for the children and the future. One interviewee explained about her future ideas for her children while being unsure about them reuniting with her in Portugal.

“I have lived here for the past two and a half years. I do not know yet what I want for future. My children may be able to come here but with the legal documentation procedure and due to age restrictions, I do not know how it will be possible” (Mahima, female, 42).

“For my child my situation right now and living arrangements is not perfect even if I have paperwork. The income is not enough for being able to sustain a family. Thus, being an agricultural worker has more challenges than being based in Lisbon. After I get my paperwork, I will find try to find a job in Lisbon and a better housing condition” (Devendra, male, 32).

The above given excerpts are related to Carling’s statement which suggested; “Initially, separations between parents and children are meant to be temporary, but they become long-term and indefinite because, in efforts to decrease or stop further immigration, immigrant-receiving countries have implemented more-restrictive immigration policies.” (Carling et al., 2012a). The parents occasionally migrate with provisional visa permissions and when they expire, the immigrants turn out to be irregular/undocumented. At times, parents migrate lacking a valid visa and link in the lines of the irregular population. (Carling et al., 2012a).

When asked for their own prospects some wanted to retire in Nepal, some wanted to become entrepreneurs and some viewed Portugal as a transit country. The primary motivation of single migrants was to reunite with their spouses/partners and some said that the reunification would hamper their child’s education. Most of them thought that Portugal was not their destination country as they were here to regularize with a Portuguese passport and then move to other countries with higher pay.

“I want to reunite with my husband because I do have a fear that if this distance elongates we will have problems. I fear that he may find somebody else or the in-laws would make him change his mind” (Shreejana, female, 38).

“I want to be able to open my own business in the future. When I first came here, I started work from nine in the morning till eleven PM. I used to get so tired and it has brought numerous stress in your body and life in as well. I don’t want to work under

anybody anymore. I have the skills now and I may open a Nepalese restaurant here in the future” (Mahima, female, 42).

Many participants like Shreejana wanted to reunite with their spouses first so that things can go steady in terms of their relationship and finances. On the other hand, the only participant who was separated wanted to share her future business endeavors. The above discourses of the participants can also be seen in the context of their most urgent needs, which is to save and secure their marital life and the need to strengthen their economic situation and overall lifestyle even for a better future.

## **5.7 Synthesis of findings and analysis**

This chapter presented analysis and findings of data obtained from six in-depth interviews, observation during interviews and informal interactions. It also aspired to explain how transnational parents were managing their families back in Nepal even while being in an undocumented situation. Outcomes produced in this study substantiate with the findings of previous work in this field related mostly to the impacts of irregular status have on transnational families and parenting. It not only impacts the children and families left behind but the ones living here in uncertainty. The interviewees seemed to be living with a web of problems but still hopeful for a wonderful future.

## 6. Conclusion

The present study aims to contribute to the growing literature of migrants and their families in Portugal. The purpose of the current study was to characterise transnational parenthood of undocumented Nepalese immigrants living in Portugal. Former Master thesis on Nepalese in Portugal contributed to the state of art in current research on Nepalese migration and families. The topic of this research, on undocumented immigrants and transnational parenthood, is still under researched. The absence of profuse literature was not only found in the Portuguese context but internationally, as well. On the contrary, there were some notable work done on transnational families and on the undocumented migrants, their migration networks (meso level) and overall decision to migrate. In addition, different concepts and central themes in transnational parenting from previous studied contributed to shape the research (Goldin, Cameron, & Balarajan, 2011; Carling et al., 2012).

To analyses the researched empirical data, the researched made use of key theoretical concepts that revealed to be useful in going deeper in the reflection. Goldin (2011) reflects on the decision-making processes of the migrants and the system perspective structure of micro, meso and macro levels. The third concept is retrieved by transnational parenting of refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, carried out by Merry and co-authors (2017). One of the major references was also on status mobility of immigrants by Jackson (Jackson, 1986). Similarly, discussions on how migration control policies in southern European countries may inadvertently shape the migrant smuggling phenomenon and the smuggling ‘business’ (Triandafyllidou & Maroukis, 2012).

The articulation of findings with the previous work of Merry and co-authors (2017) provides some support for the conceptual premise on refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants, which has a broad range but does not clarify exclusively the practice of parenthood among undocumented migrants. Researchers have not treated irregular migration in much detail as all three statuses are considerably different. It is commonly assumed that all these legal status fall under the same category but in fact we find significant dissimilarities.

Carling’s (Carling et al., 2012a) argument depend profoundly on present literature but not so full of empirical and qualitative analysis of undocumented parent’s parenting from distance; also for the reason that it was not their focal purpose of the study. For example, debt, smuggling and the vicious cycle of the migration procedures have been still under-researched, considering how transnational ties impact parenthood with children in the new country.

Most of the existing accounts fail to resolve the contradiction between migration, in an “economic” sense, to migration, in a “sociological” sense, in general. Therefore, more systematic, and theoretical framework is required to integrate the “best of both worlds”. Together, these studies outline that transnational parenting is a very common phenomenon but still have not addressed transnational parenting of undocumented migrants. When we think of migration, the literature has been based generally on economic theories, demography, cost-benefit analysis, labor market, remittances, and so forth. When we think of irregular migration,

we find articles related to border controls, regulations, detention centers and so on, as the mainstay of the topics but after all, the migrants are persons in the system. The person-in-environment perspective in social work is a practice-guiding principle that highlights the importance of understanding an individual and individual behaviour considering the environmental contexts in which that person lives and acts mainly social, political, familial, temporal, spiritual, economic, and physical (Teater, 2014) . Thus, it is undeniable that migration has been affecting families in complex ways. This study tried to comprehend the surrounding reality of migration and transnational families, looking closely to the impact of migration on the ones that have migrated and left the children behind. It also sheds light to social work attention on vulnerability and protection of human rights of the irregular immigrants.

The understanding of irregular migration, which is limited to unlawful migratory, should be expanded as it is affecting various systems of society. Irregular migration has stemmed out to touch families, societies, and economy. The idea of criminalization of such people should be looked more into detail and this research has opened in international literature review, and in Portugal specifically.

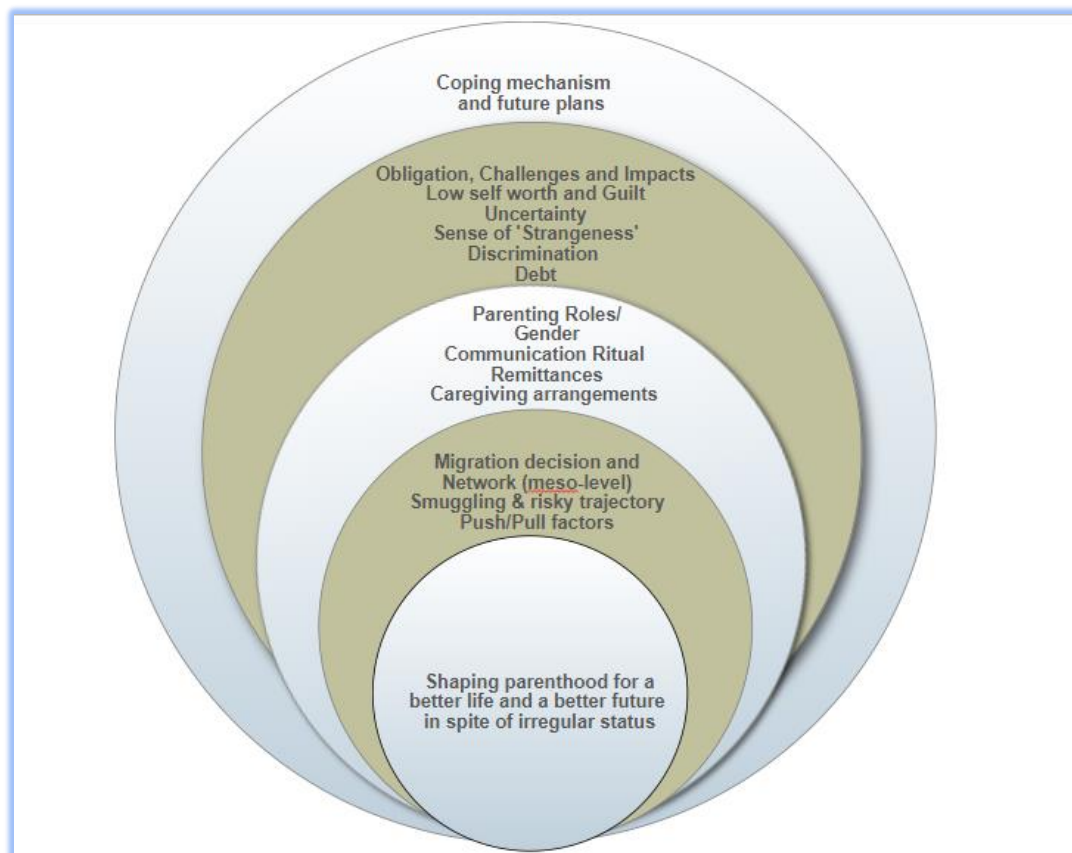
The methodology employed for the research was qualitative in nature. According to Bryman (2012), a qualitative study is to characterize the phenomenon, whereas a quantitative is to test hypothesis and measure the dimension. The research has been carried out through micro-ethnography, by using in-depth interviews and participant observation. To capture different aspects and dimensions of the participants' lives, the researcher lived in a rented apartment shared with Nepalese (with the previous knowledge of the ones sharing the household). The method of analysis of the empirical data was thematic analysis. There are some explanations in employing this method, it was easier to recognise patterned association through the data and helped in "pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns (or themes) in data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It further helped to analyse, structure, and generate subthemes from the massive amount of data collected and to provide understanding of the contents. The secondary data for this research, as already mentioned, was collected through SEF (Portugal), World Bank, United Nations, and the Office for Education Statistics and Planning, Ministry of Education, and Department of Foreign Employment (Nepal). The data for Nepalese migrants were also extracted by previous research work done by students in ISCTE-IUL who did their research on Nepalese migration.

The purpose of the current study was to determine transnational parenthood of undocumented Nepalese immigrants living in Portugal. The interviewees were the parents of left behind children in Nepal who have entered Portugal and are undocumented in their right to stay in the country. The interviewees were eight in total, three men and three women, who are Nepalese immigrants; and additionally, the researcher also interviewed two key informants. In methodology, one of the weaknesses were that there was a very limited time to finish the research. Similarly, getting access to interviewees were also difficult and subsequently, the translation of interviewees from Nepali to English was carefully done so that no meaning was lost while translating.

Long distance parenting seemed to have considerable impacts on immigrants' life and well-being. The separation coupled with irregular living status appeared to affect more negatively families than optimistically. However, the resilience in people was found in an admirable measure. The study has found that there are both cost and benefits in their decision to migrate. However, the researcher argues if there are more costs than benefits. Benefits being women feeling empowered and men taking roles of domestic helps as well. Economic status being uplifted and parents being able to provide for their children and trace their future. Female migrants have felt a sense of emancipation; however, male migrants have also gained status and respect in their community back home.

The researcher places confidence that the research questions posed in the commencement of the research were efficiently addressed. The main research question was: "how transnational parents were perceiving and practicing parenting while being undocumented?". During the process of analysis themes were developed with well-illustrated excerpts from the raw data. The figure below reflects a synopsis of basic themes that emerged and are defined in the research.

Figure 8: Themes emerged in studying transnational parenthood of irregular immigrants



This research brought up several interesting and unexpected results. The participants had numerous challenges but despite all their hardships, they remained resilient. It was interesting

how gender played an important role in parenting and the empowerment of women and men. Likewise, the issue of how remittances are playing a major role also caught my attention. The main reasons for the interviewees to remain undocumented for years even though the Portuguese legal framework allotted regularization were mainly because of administrative (SEF) delays, lack of sufficient paperwork, workplace exploitation etc. There was a tendency of concealing the struggles of their life in Portugal. Similarly, in case of irregular immigrants, they had several challenges, which not only limited to their risky and precarious migration trajectory, but promoted a vicious cycle of debt and management of remittances. Reflecting on their pre-decision of migration, their situations back in Nepal also were not so sound. In the final part of the interview, participants were asked to give recommendations and plans for their children's future. They did not really recommend people to migrate to Portugal with the help of smugglers but still wanted to reunite with their spouses through illicit means.

There were fears underlying in transnational couples if their partners would not be loyal to them. However, they tackle it with the use of technology. Parents also are dissatisfied with their parenting from a distance and reflect more on how it was in the past and what they want in the future, but for now, wounds are more shielded with the help of remittances and gifts. The uncertainty of separation is a major stress factor in all the interviewees and their future did not include going back to the home country.

In the chapter of findings, the researcher tried a combination of finding with the knowledge gathered from valuable literature review and the theoretical framework. The connection with the literature and concepts helped the researcher to answer questions based on evidence. Review of literature and theoretical concepts were also extensively implied to link, differentiate, and assess along with the finding of the present study for arguments and discussion.

On a different stance, Jackson (Jackson, 1986), talks about the classic push and pull factors for migration. Social change and transformation in identity of immigrants and their social status. He explains how migrants in destination countries form their own clubs and groups to support itself and for the migration process. Jackson states that some international migration is highly selective if skilled manpower needed in the developing countries. He proposed model of mobility which extends from capital cities to most remote areas (Jackson, 1986). His concepts of mobility status change and positional change of social mobility have been very significant during this research. It was found that the 'white-collar' job in Nepal of the participants don't have much significance here in Portugal as the status is overlaid with lack of recognition of their educational qualification and symbolic values of being Asian or living with irregular status in a Portuguese society.

Jackson (1986), also shares the drift of the migrant's migration process is institutionalized by previous migrations, for instance, there were few Nepalese until 2004-2005 but it significantly enlarged during the previous years. He speaks on migration decisions as the routes to destination countries are known with the help relatives and friends who help them to join in the destination countries which has been significant in some of the interviewees in this research as

well. Likewise, economic links of remittances sent home to family members help in many advances but also for a family member to join them in the respective countries. Jackson also gives light to culture and identity as the immigrant community forms their own associations and cluster institutions to stay connected.

The researcher believes that a positive contribution was then made to the growing field of irregular migration and families literature. The researcher has also highlighted the criminalization of irregular migration and how undocumented individuals are excluded from social rights and services even though they have duties. Social work is a profession based on principles of human rights. The IFSW has also acknowledged that social work is a human rights profession and historical assessment also explores social work contributions to human rights (Healy, 2008). In this research, it has been found that there are some agencies working for the rights of the undocumented immigrants and has been really engaged in the lives of the irregular immigrants. Also, Healy (2008) argues that social work has been put more effort into the vulnerable and marginalized groups' needs with little attention to human rights (Healy, 2008). The discovers advise that there has been abuse of rights of the irregular immigrants. They have been exploited and trapped in the macro, meso and micro level of ecosystems.

Returning to the main question posed at the beginning of this study, it is now possible to state that transnational parents have maintained parenting in numerous ways. Novelty of this research would be the finding on smuggling, the intermediary network, debt, psycho-social-emotional disturbances, and hope. Exploitation and transformation of expectation was also very significant. The study has shown that most migrants in the research entered Portugal with the paid support of agents or smugglers to be precise.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that all my participants have 'naturalized' to the idea of smuggling. If we turn to how it has impacted parents, the parents indicated various gender differences but the common feelings among them were loneliness, guilt, and self-blame for the situation they are living in. To maintain parenting, there was acute dependency on communication technology. Although, communication technology was a great relief, the parents still felt like they couldn't influence and take part in their children's lives. The main guiding force was their hopes and expectations for their children's future and several fears of family breakdown also seemed to surround their daily life. Likewise, Remittances was a way to show love and affection. They made several compromises just for their families back home. The participants feel great to send gifts and money, even when they have compromised on their own needs. It will not be wrong to say that in the contemporary trends of migration, remittances are also shaping gender. It is clear to see how mothers left behind are becoming household managers, being more autonomous in managing remittances and the fathers left behind are engaged in domestic work and taking over some motherhood roles.

As already mentioned in the literature review, remittances play an important role in Nepal's GDP as it grew to 32 percent of the country's total GDP, according to World Bank data (World Bank, 2016). We should not forget that these are not just attractive numbers and figures but a proof of how widespread transnational families are. Also, remittances collected by countries, whose citizens are wide-reaching, lead to billions of dollars annually. The aforementioned

factors are further developing increasing attention in the paradox by development specialists as well as international mass media. It is bringing attention to the transnational families that make these large and consistent financial flows possible. However, a large in flow of remittances to a locality implies that family separation has become widespread (Castañeda, 2014). One of the most interesting parts of the finding was their gender roles. Mothers and fathers had various opinions and perceptions of parenting. Mothers felt defamed to have left their children behind but at the same time felt empowered to be taking responsibilities as a 'breadwinner'. The remittances also played a part in shaping traditional gender roles.

The findings from this research also mentioned that the parents want to delay bringing their children to Portugal due to the fear that their children will not be able to attain educational excellence. Therefore, a line of research for the future could be a study on Nepalese children left behind to understand their experiences and perception of transnational families. It can be drawn from the findings that transnational families live in turbulent times with uncertain separation periods due to irregular situation. Future research could study the resilience in parents and children left behind or even social work theories application while working with people in an irregular situation.



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# Appendices

# Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Date:

Area of Interview:

Interview Duration:

Time of Interview:

## SOCIOECONOMICAL CHARACTERIZATION

For the socio demographic characterisation:

- Region/district of residence in Nepal
- Name:
- Age:
- Gender:
- Marital status:
- Education level:
- Occupation in Nepal:
- Occupation in Portugal:
- Occupation of Partner (if applicable):

## FAMILY INFORMATION

1. Do you have any family in Nepal? Can you tell me how many close family members are there in Nepal and in Portugal?
2. Are there any children of yours? How old are they? Boys or girls? Are they in Nepal, Portugal or in another country?
3. If they are not in the same country as the interview, who is responsible for providing care in your absence?
4. Are your children at the age of going to school? If yes, which kind of school do they go to (government or private school)? The aim is because government schools do not have quality education.
5. Do you have family/relatives here in Portugal?
6. Do you have a partner?
7. If yes, where does your partner live (Portugal or Nepal)?
8. Would you mind sharing information about your partner? (education, occupation)

## MIGRATION TRAJECTORY

### PREPARATION FOR MIGRATION

1. How was life in Nepal?
2. Were you employed? (family, education)
3. How did you have the idea to come to Portugal?
4. Was anything promised/ agreed to come to Portugal? Or was it more open for you to see when you arrive?
5. Do you ever people in your family who have migrated?

## **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

When did you first leave Nepal?

What was your primary motivation to leave Nepal?

How did you organize your departure? (Alone or with help of family or others)

(If the interview had been in other countries before coming to Portugal)

Did you experience going to other countries before going to Portugal? or Was Portugal your first country of arrival?

- What countries were they?
- What were your reasons to live in those countries?
- Who were you with when you went there?

## **ARRIVAL IN PORTUGAL**

- 1) When did you arrive to Portugal? Did you come to Portugal alone?
- 2) Did you take help of consultancies and recruitment agency of any type? (When coming to Portugal or any other country). If yes, what kind of help, visa assistance, or expenses was involved?
- 3) What were the difficulties during your preliminary stay in Portugal?
- 4) Who was your initial contact person?
- 5) Did you know about the legal systems and policies here in Portugal?
- 6) Who were your immediate support group when you were here?
- 7) What were your initial feelings (joy, happiness, fear, guilt, tension, sadness, excitement) when you first arrived in Portugal?

## **SETTLING IN PORTUGAL**

1. Did you know about the rules and immigration laws in Portugal?
2. What kind of visa did you first have?
3. What is the status of your visa?
4. What you have in concrete in Portugal? (Transformation of expectation)
  - a. Anything (or not)?
  - b. Housing? If so, any concrete?
  - c. Contract (or not)?
  - d. Visa (valid or not)?
  - e. Social security access? Regular?
5. Did you apply for a residence permit? If yes, what type of residence visa have you applied for and if not, what are your reasons for not applying?
6. How long has it been since you applied for your paperwork?
7. What are the positive aspects of being here? Do you think you have got something that was not there in your homeland?

## **LEGAL STATUS AND LABOUR CONDITIONS**

1. Are you currently employed? Please give me a brief impression if you are paying taxes or entitled to social security. If yes, for how long?
  - Is it ongoing or sometimes interrupted?
  - Are you getting paid on time?
  - Do you hold a job contract in Portugal, if yes type of contract?
  - Are you paying social security in Portugal: yes or no?

- Are you paying taxes: yes/no?
2. What are the reasons that you are now in an undocumented situation in Portugal?

## **PERCEPTIONS AND PREPARATIONS**

1. How do you feel about the long-distance parenting?
2. Did your views and roles about parenting change after arriving in Portugal? Could you explain how?
3. Do you believe in traditional gender roles of parenthood? (mother being the primary care giver and father being the bread winner)
4. Being exposed to Portuguese community and culture, does this influence your own way of parenting roles? If yes, how?
5. How long has it been since you have last seen your children?
6. How old were your children at the time you left Nepal?
7. Were you mentally ready that you were going to be separated with your family for an extended/uncertain time?
8. Can you give me an instance of a circumstance when parenting from a distance was difficult to you?
9. How do they perceive this separation?

## **PARENTAL ROLES/ PERFORMANCE**

- 1) Could you describe the daily contacts/routines/relationships you have with your children?
- 2) Tell me about your previous parenting roles when you were still in the Nepal?
- 3) Since you are in Portugal, are you able to maintain the same roles? How?
- 4) What do you think is the most major role that considerably helps your child/children now that you are here in Portugal?
- 5) Do you think you would be better functioning with your family and kids living with you in Portugal?
- 6) Do you have any financial challenges?
- 7) Are your children dependent on you financially?

## **INTEGRATION IN THE PORTUGUESE SOCIETY**

- 8) How do you consider your own integration in the Portuguese Society?
- 9) Ever faced any kind of inequity?
- 10) Have you experienced any kind of cultural shock? If yes, please describe.
- 11) Have you learnt Portuguese language and know of integration programs by the government or organizations?
- 12) Do you seek legal support?
- 13) Do you think learning Portuguese language would or has helped you cope and integrate in the society?
- 14) Have you had challenges in learning the language/finding a job/seeking education?
- 15) Do you have good access to healthcare?
- 16) What is your relationship with the Nepalese community in Portugal?
- 17) Are you associated with Nepalese associations here?

## **CHALLENGES**

- 1) Briefly describe what you consider as the main challenges of parenting from afar?
- 2) What are the reasons/factors that contribute to the existence of those challenges you identified?
- 3) What are the major challenges you face when you are undocumented?
- 4) Ever approached or received help from NGOs or social workers?

## **TIES BACK HOME AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

- 1) Have you visited Nepal ever since you left Nepal?
- 2) How do you now perceive your journey until today's date? What are your current feelings?
- 3) What or who helps you overcome identified challenges?
- 4) Are you satisfied with your caregiver or partner's caring?
- 5) How do you guide the caregiver and handle misunderstandings if they occur?
- 6) How do you take the important decisions in the family? Does the child participate?

## **FUTURE PROSPECTS**

- 1) Do you believe that you will achieve a legal status in Portugal?
- 2) What are your expectations as you achieve a legal status in Portugal?
- 3) What are your hopes and aspirations on the coming days for your children?
- 4) Do you plan to bring them here in Portugal?
- 5) If yes, what are your thoughts about their integration in this society?  
If not, what would be the main reasons?

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) What advice do you give for those who also have the same situation as you have concerning long distance parenting?
- 2) What is the feedback you would want to give to future aspiring migrants to Portugal?

*If you have any comments or questions for me, please feel free to ask.*

## Appendix 2: Interview Guide in Nepali

### अन्तरक्रियाको प्रश्नहरू

मिति:

साक्षात्कारको क्षेत्र:

साक्षात्कार अवधि:

साक्षात्कारको समय:

सामाजिक जनसांख्यिकीय विशेषताको लागि:

- नेपालमा क्षेत्र / क्षेत्रको निवास
- नाम:
- आयु:
- लिंग:
- वैवाहिक स्थिति:
- शिक्षा स्तर:
- नेपालमा व्यवसाय:
- पोर्चुगलमा व्यवसाय:
- पार्टनरको व्यवसाय (यदि लागू भएमा) :

पारिवारिक जानकारी

1. तपाईंसँग नेपालमा कुनै परिवार छ? क्या तपाईं मलाई बता सकते हो नेपाल र पोर्चुगल मा कति परिवार को करीबी सदस्यहरु छन्?
2. तपाईंको त्यहाँ कुनै बच्चाहरु छन्? उनी कति उमेरका हुन्? केटाहरु या केटीहरु? के उनीहरु नेपाली, पोर्चुगलमा वा अर्को देशमा छन्?
3. यदि उनीहरु साक्षात्कारको रूपमा एउटै देशमा छैनन् भने, तपाईंको अनुपस्थितिमा हेरविचार प्रदान गर्ने जिम्मेवारी कसले गर्छ?
4. तपाईंको बच्चाहरु विद्यालय जाने उमेरको हुनुहुन्छ? यदि हो, उनी कुन किसिमको विद्यालय जान्छन् (सरकार वा निजी विद्यालय)? उद्देश्य हो किन भने सरकारी विद्यालयहरूसँग गुणस्तर शिक्षा छैन।
5. तपाईंसँग पोर्चुगलमा यहाँ परिवार / आफन्तहरु छन्?
6. के तपाईंसँग साझेदार छ?
7. यदि हो भने, तपाईंको साझेदार कहाँ बस्छ (पोर्चुगल वा नेपाल)?
8. के तपाईं आफ्नो साझेदारको बारेमा साझा जानकारीको बारेमा मनपर्छ? (शिक्षा, व्यवसाय)

माइग्रेसनको लागि तयारी

1. नेपालको जीवन कसरी थियो?
2. के तपाईंले रोजगारी गर्नुभयो? (परिवार, शिक्षा)
3. तपाईंसँग कस्तो पोर्चुगलमा आइपुगेको विचार छ?



4. कुनै पनि प्रतिज्ञा / पोर्तुगलमा आउन सहमत भए? वा तपाईं यो खुल्ला थियो जब तपाईं भेट्नुहुन्छ?

5. तपाईंको परिवारमा तपाईंका मानि पोर्चुगल भन्दा अगाडिको अनुभवहरू तपाईं पहिले कहिले नेपाल छोड्नु भयो?

नेपाल छोड्ने तपाईंको प्राथमिक प्रेरणा के थियो?

तपाईंले आफ्नो प्रस्थान कसरी व्यवस्थित गर्नुभयो? (एक्लो वा परिवारको साथ वा अरूको साथ)

(यदि पोर्चुगल आइपुगे अघि साक्षात्कार अन्य देशहरूमा भएको थियो)

के तपाईंले पोर्चुगल जान अघि अन्य देशहरूमा जाँदै हुनुहुन्छ? अथवा पोर्चुगलको आगमनको पहिलो देश हो?

- कस्ता देशहरू थिए?
- ती देशहरूमा बाँच्नका कारणहरू के हुन्?
- तपाईं त्यहाँ जानु भएको बेलामा के थिए?

### पोर्चुगलमा □□□

1) तपाईं पोर्चुगलमा कहिले आउनुभयो? के तपाईं पोर्चुगल मात्र एकलै आउनुभयो?

2) के तपाईं कुनै पनि प्रकारको परामर्श र भर्ती एजेन्सीको सहयोग लिनुभयो? (पोर्चुगल वा कुनै अन्य देशमा आउँदा) । यदि हो भने, कस्तो प्रकारको सहयोग, भिसा सहयोग, वा खर्च समावेश गरिएको थियो?

3) पोर्चुगलमा तपाईंको प्रारम्भिक अवस्थित हुँदा कस्ता समस्याहरू थिए?

4) तपाईंको प्रारम्भिक सम्पर्क व्यक्ति को हो?

5) के तपाईंलाई पोर्चुगलमा कानूनी प्रणाली र नीतिहरूको बारेमा थाहा पाउनुभयो?

6) जब तपाईं यहाँ हुनुहुन्थ्यो तपाईंको तुरुन्तै समर्थन समूह को थिए?

7) पहिलो पटक पोर्चुगलमा आइपुगेको बेलामा तपाईंको प्रारम्भिक भावनाहरू (आनन्द, खुशी, डर, अपराध, तनाव, उदासी) के थियो?

सहरू जुन माइग्रेट भएका छन्?

### पोर्तुगलमा बसोबास

1. तपाईं पोर्चुगलमा नियम र आप्रवासन कानूनको बारेमा थाहा पाउनुभयो?

2. तपाईंले कस्तो किसिमको भिसा गर्नुभयो?

3. तपाईंको भिसाको स्थिति के हो?

4. तपाईंसँग पोर्चुगलमा कंक्रीटमा के छ? (आशाको परिवर्तन)

a। केहि (वा होइन)?

बी। आवास? यदि छ भने, कुनै पनि कंक्रीट?

c। अनुबंध (वा होइन)?

घ। भिसा (मान्य वा होइन)?

ई। सामाजिक सुरक्षा पहुँच? नियमित?

5. तपाईंले निवासको अनुमतिको लागि आवेदन गर्नुभयो? यदि हो भने, तपाईंका लागि कस्तो किसिमको निवास भिसा आवेदन छ र यदि छैन भने, आवेदन नगर्ने तपाईंको कारणहरू के हो?

6. तपाईंले आफ्नो कागजी कार्यका लागि आवेदन गर्नु भएकोले कति लामो भएको छ?

7. यहाँ हुने सकारात्मक पक्षहरू के हो? के तपाईं सोच्नु भएको छ कि तपाईंको देशमा त्यहाँ थिएन?

### कानूनी र श्रम शर्तहरू

1. तपाईं हाल मा कार्यरत हुनुहुन्छ? यदि तपाईं कर भुक्तानी गर्दै हुनुहुन्छ वा सामाजिक सुरक्षाको लागि कृपया कृपया मलाई छोटो छाप दिनुहोस्। यदि हो, कति लामोको लागि?
  - के यो निरन्तर वा कहिलेकाहीं बाधा छ?
  - तपाईं समय मा भुक्तान गर्दै हुनुहुन्छ?
  - के तपाईंले पोर्चुगलमा नौकरी सम्झौता राख्नुहुन्छ भने हो भने अनुबंधको प्रकार?
  - तपाईं पोर्चुगलमा सामाजिक सुरक्षा भुक्तानी गर्दै हुनुहुन्छ: हो वा होइन?
  - तपाईं कर भुक्तानी गर्दै हुनुहुन्छ: हो / होइन?
2. अब तपाईं पोर्टलमा एक अस्थायी स्थितिमा के कारणहरू छन्?

### अभिभावक (□□□□□ □ □□□□□□□□)

1. तपाईं लामो दूरीको अभिभावकको बारेमा कस्तो महसुस गर्नुहुन्छ?
2. पोर्चुगलमा आइपुग्दा आमाबाबुको परिवर्तनको बारेमा तपाईंको हेराई र भूमिका के थियो? के तपाईं व्याख्या गर्न सक्नुहुन्छ?
3. के तपाईं आमाबाबुको परम्परागत लिंग भूमिकामा विश्वास गर्नुहुन्छ? (आमाले प्राथमिक हेरचाह गर्ने व्यक्ति र बुबा रोटी विजेता हुनुहुन्थ्यो)
4. पोर्चुगल समुदाय र संस्कृतिलाई उजागर गर्दै, यसले यसले आमाबाबुको भूमिकाको आफ्नै तरिकालाई असर गर्छ? यदि हो, कसरी?
5. तपाईंले आफ्नो छोराछोरीलाई देख्नुभन्दा कति लामो भएको छ?
6. तपाईंले नेपाल छोडेपछि तपाईंको बच्चा कति उमेरका थिए?
7. के तपाईं मानसिक तवरमा तयार हुनुभयो कि तपाईं आफ्नो विस्तारित / अनिश्चित समयको लागि आफ्नो परिवारसँग अलग हुनु भएको थियो?
8. तपाईं मलाई एक परिस्थितिको उदाहरण दिनुहुन्छ जब दूरी बाट आमाबाबु तपाईंसँग गाह्रो थियो?
- 9 तिनीहरूले यो अलगाव कसरी बुझ्छन्?

### अभिभावकीय भूमिका / कार्यक्षमता

- 1) के तपाईं आफ्नो बच्चाहरू संग दैनिक सम्पर्क / routines / सम्बन्ध सम्बन्धी वर्णन गर्न सक्नुहुन्छ?
- 2) मलाई तपाईंको अघिल्लो पेन्डिङ भूमिकाको बारेमा बताउनुहुन्छ जब तपाईं अझै नेपालमा हुनुहुन्थ्यो?
- 3) तपाईं पुर्तगालमा हुनुहुन्छ किनकि, तपाईं समान भूमिकाहरू कायम राख्न सक्षम हुनुहुन्छ? कसरी?
- 4) तपाईं के सोच्नुहुन्छ कि सबैभन्दा ठूलो भूमिका हो जसले तपाईंको छोराछोरी / छोराछोरीलाई मद्दत गर्दछ कि अहिले पोर्चुगलमा हुनुहुन्छ?
- 5) के तपाईं आफ्नो परिवार र पोर्चुगलमा तपाईंको साथ रहने बच्चाहरू संग राम्रो काम गर्ने हो भन्ने लाग्छ?
- 6) के तपाईंसँग कुनै आर्थिक चुनौती छ?
- 7) के तपाईंका छोराछोरीहरू तपाईंसित निर्भर छन् त?

### पोर्चुगल समाजमा परिचय

- 8) पोर्चुगल सोसायटीमा तपाईंले आफ्नै एकीकरण कसरी विचार गर्नुहुन्छ?
- 9) कहिलेकाहीं कुनै पनि किसिमको असमानताको सामना गर्नु पर्यो?
- 10) के तपाईं कुनै पनि प्रकारको सांस्कृतिक झटका अनुभव गर्नुभयो? यदि हो भने, कृपया वर्णन गर्नुहोस्।
- 11) के तपाईं पुर्तगाली भाषालाई पक्का गर्नुहुन्छ र सरकार वा संस्थाहरूले एकीकरण कार्यक्रमको बारेमा थाहा पाउनुहुन्छ?
- 12) के तपाईं कानुनी सहयोग खोज्नुहुन्छ?
- 13) के तपाईं सोच्नुहुन्छ कि पोर्चुगल भाषाले तपाईंलाई सामना गर्न र समाजमा एकीकृत गर्न मद्दत गरेको छ?
- 14) के तपाईं भाषा सिक्ने / एक नौकरी खोज्ने / शिक्षा खोज्ने चुनौतीहरू छन्?
- 15) के तपाईंसँग स्वास्थ्य सेवाको राम्रो पहुँच छ?
- 16) पोर्चुगलमा नेपाली समुदायसँग तिम्रो सम्बन्ध कस्तो छ?
- 17) के तपाईं नेपाली संघसँग सम्बन्धित हुनुहुन्छ?

### चुनौतीहरू

- 1) संक्षेपबाट आमाबाबुको मुख्य चुनौतीको रूपमा के तपाईंलाई सोच्नुको वर्णन गर्नुहोला?
- 2) तपाईंले पहिचान गर्नुभएको ती चुनौतीहरूको अस्तित्वमा योगदान गर्ने कारणहरू / कारकहरू के हुन्?
- 3) जब तपाईं अपलेखित हुनुहुन्छ भने तपाईंले सामना गर्नु पर्ने प्रमुख चुनौतीहरू के हो?
- 4) कहिलेकाहीं गैर सरकारी संस्थाहरू वा सामाजिक कर्मचारीहरू बाट सम्पर्क प्राप्त वा प्राप्त भए?

### समर्थन प्रणाली

- 1) के तपाईंले Nepal छोड्नु भएको छ तपाईंले नेपाल भ्रमण गर्नुभएको छ?
- 2) आज तपाईं कसरी आजको मिति सम्म आफ्नो यात्रा बुझ्नुहुन्छ? तपाईंको वर्तमान भावनाहरू के हो?
- 3) कुन कुराले तपाईंलाई मदत गर्छ र कुन कुराले तपाईंलाई चिन्ताजनक चुनौतीहरू हटाउँछ?
- 4) के तपाईं आफ्नो हेरचाहकर्ता वा साथीको हेरचाहसँग सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ?
- 5) तपाईं हेरविचार कसरी निर्देशित गर्नुहुन्छ र यदि गलत हुन्छ भने गलत फौजदारीहरू हटाउनुहुन्छ?
- 6) तपाईं परिवारमा महत्त्वपूर्ण निर्णय कसरी लिनुहुन्छ? के बच्चा भाग लिनुहुन्छ?

### भविष्यका प्रस्तावहरू

- 1) के तपाईं विश्वास गर्नुहुन्छ कि तपाईंले पोर्चुगलमा कानूनी स्थिति प्राप्त गर्नुहुनेछ?
- 2) तपाईं पोर्चुगलमा कानूनी स्थिति हासिल गर्दा तपाईंको अपेक्षाहरू के हो?
- 3) तपाईंको छोराछोरीको लागि आगामी दिनमा तिम्रो आशा र आशा के हो?
- 4) के तपाईं पोर्चुगलमा यहाँ ल्याउन योजना बनाउनुहुन्छ?
- 5) हो, हो यो समाजमा उनीहरूको एकीकरणको बारेमा के हो? यदि होइन भने, मुख्य कारणहरू के हुनेछ?

### अनुमोदन

- 1) तपाईं को लागि सल्लाह दिनुहुन्छ जो तपाईंसँग यस्तै स्थिति हो किनकि तपाईं लामो दूरीको अभिभावकको बारेमा छ?
- 2) तपाईंलाई कस्तो प्रतिक्रिया दिइन्छ तपाईं पोर्चुगलमा भविष्य इच्छुक आवासीयहरूलाई दिने चाहानुहुन्छ?

यदि तपाईंसँग मेरो कुनै टिप्पणी वा प्रश्नहरू छन् भने, कृपया □□□□□।

## Appendix 3: Consent Form for the interviews

**Project title:** Paperless Reality: Transnational Parenthood and illegal Nepalese in Portugal

**Name of Researcher:** Aashima Budal

**Institution/Address:** CIES-IUL, Edifício ISCTE, Av. das Forças Armadas, 1649-026 Lisboa

**Contact Details:** Tel – email:

### Description of research project (Please refer to information sheet)

The information I supply will be kept confidential unless I give permission for my name to be used. The material will be preserved as a permanent research resource for use in research and publication under a set of terms and conditions.

- I have been given information about the research project and the way in which my contribution to the project will be used.
- I give my permission for use of the information in teaching.
- I agree to take part in the above study.

My contribution will be kept safely and securely with access only to those with permission from the researcher.

I understand that I can withdraw my consent at any time by contacting the researcher.

I hereby assign the copyright in my contribution to XX [name of researcher].

Please *tick either*: I give my permission for the information I am about to give/have given to be used for research purposes only (including research publications and reports) with strict preservation of anonymity.

I give my permission for the images collected during fieldwork to be used for research purposes only (including research publications and reports) with strict preservation of anonymity.

Signed respondent.....Date.....

Address.....

Signed Researcher..... Date.....

**This information will be retained separately and securely from the information given.**

## Appendix 4: Consent form in Nepali

साक्षात्कारको लागि सहमति फारम

परियोजना शीर्षक: पेपरलेस रियल्टी:

नामक शोधकर्ता: अशिमा बुडल

संस्था / ठेगाना: CIES-IUL, Edificio ISCTE, Avl दास फॉरस आर्माडास, 1649-026 लिस्बा

सम्पर्क विवरणहरू: टेलिफोन: इमेल:

अनुसन्धान परियोजनाको विवरण (कृपया सूचना पानालाई बुझाउनुहोस्)

मैले आपूर्ति गरेको जानकारी गोप्य राखिनेछ जबसम्म मेरो नाम प्रयोग गर्न अनुमति नदिइनेछ। सामग्री नियम र सर्तहरूको सेट अन्तर्गत अनुसन्धान र प्रकाशनमा प्रयोगको लागि एक स्थायी अनुसन्धान स्रोतको रूपमा संरक्षित गरिनेछ।

• मलाई अनुसन्धान परियोजनाको बारेमा जानकारी दिइएको छ र जसमा यो परियोजनामा मेरो योगदान प्रयोग गरिनेछ।

• मैले शिक्षणमा सूचनाको प्रयोगको लागि मेरो अनुमति दिन्छु।

• म माथिको अध्ययनमा भाग लिन सहमत छु।

मेरो योगदान सुरक्षित र सुरक्षित रूपमा केवल शोधकर्ताको अनुमति संग पहुँच संग राखिएको छ।

मैले बुझेको छु कि म कुनै पनि समयमा शोधकर्तालाई सम्पर्क गरेर मेरो सहमति फिर्ता लिन सक्छु।

म यसैले XX [शोधकर्ताको नाम] मा मेरो योगदानमा प्रतिलिपि अधिकार प्रदान गर्दछु।

कृपया या तो टिकनुहोस: म उन जानकारी को लागि दिइयो / जसको बारे मा मलाई दिए / केवल शोध उद्देश्यों को लागि उपयोग को लागी दिइयो छ (अनुसन्धान प्रकाशनहरू र रिपोर्ट सहित) को नाम को नाम मा अचानक संरक्षण संग।

म फील्डवर्क को समयमा एकत्रित को सख्त संरक्षण संग केवल अनुसन्धान प्रयोजनों (अनुसन्धान प्रकाशन र रिपोर्ट सहित) को लागी एकत्रित छवियों को लागि मेरो अनुमति दिनुहोस।

चिन्हित उत्तरदाता .....

.. मिति ..... ठेगाना .....

.....

हस्ताक्षर अनुसन्धानकर्ता

..... मिति

.....

यो जानकारी अलग र सुरक्षित राखिएको जानकारीबाट दिइनेछ।

## Appendix 5: Grid Analysis of all participants

### 1. Amrit

#### Demographic Information:

**Pseudonym:** Amrit

Gender: Male

Education: School Leaving certificate (Grade 10)

Current Occupation: Dish washer

Previous Occupation: Nepal Police

Age: 32 years

#### Summary of the fieldwork

*The researcher's first interview and the interviewee were one of the first people who showed interest in the research project and was willing to assist me in finding leads to associations and key informants. The interview took place in a living room of his residence on 3<sup>rd</sup> of March at the presence of his trusted friend, counsellor and advisor from Solidariedade Imigrante. It was indeed a bit difficult to manage time since the interviewee only had Sundays off. He had allocated the time at 3:00 PM but since we first met in a café for coffee and then it was crowded and the interviewee asked if we could move to a place quieter. Then we moved to a Nepalese Restaurant where they had an underground space but since it was closed we decided to conduct the interview at home. He lived with a couple in an apartment in Lisbon. I got to know the person by living in the apartment with Nepalese. I discussed with them about my research topic and they suggested that he would be very helpful person in this research.*

*The interview took place in a relaxed atmosphere. Total interview time was 50 minutes.*

#### **INDIVIDUAL PROFILES OF THE INTERVIEWEE AND FAMILY INFORMATION**

My first interviewee's name is Amrit, he is 32 years old. He is married and has a wife in Nepal. He has two children, one boy and one girl aged 5 years and 11 years old respectively. The children are taken care of with the help of his wife. He also has his mother and father, who are ageing and live in the village far away from the capital city of Nepal.

#### **LENGTH OF SEPARATION FROM FAMILY**

The interviewee's family can be regarded as a transnational family as they are living apart from each other for several years. The couple has been separated for over 5 years now since the legislation and immigration laws bar the families to reunite as the husband is living in an irregular situation without a valid visa or residence permit.

#### **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

He had previous experiences of migration as he was working and living in Qatar in a construction company. *"I had travelled to Qatar in 2006 for work and I was married right before going to Qatar"*. The primary motivation was because he dropped out of high school very early, had resigned from the army and the family was worried because he was unemployed but involved in selfless community service. *"I joined Nepal police during the civil war in Nepal. My family got very scared since a lot of people were dying during the insurgency. I quit my job and then was spending my time as community worker and my family got frustrated of me inviting people at home, talking about building roads, schools. This led to use of the*

*resources at home like tea, sugar, snacks etc*". He lived in poverty and had to think about managing basic needs for the family as he was the only son to be the provider for the family.

After coming back from Qatar, his family started facing some financial crunch as he was again unemployed in Nepal. He did not have an intention to migrate but his second migration was also a result of fulfilling his family needs. He also had issues in his relationship with his wife and a lot of dissatisfaction prevailed in the family. *"My wife started comparing me with other men from our community who were earning a lot of money and sending children to good schools. That's when I decided it was time for me to go to Qatar and start a life"*.

## **MIGRATION TRAJECTORY**

### **PREPARATION**

He had no idea about Portugal. He had heard of Europe, but he had never thought he would go there. He was promised initially a visa to go to Israel but apparently his visa was for Libya. He was shocked and confused but when he was already in India to receive his visa and to start the journey from the airport in India. There was no turning back for him. *"I was not looking forward to go to Africa but still thought it would help me overcome problems as a salary of 800 dollars was promised. But the reality was that I didn't get any salary for the first two months. Then the months passed by and the supervisor showed us papers in Arabic that the signing amount was 200 dollars. I was shattered and confused."*

He also mentioned that the company was looking for skilled migrants but they were 45 people in total from Nepal and the group of Nepalese did not have any skills related to the job which further led to conflicts at work. *"The contractor came and we had a big brawl. There was no law for us and we had no rights. Then 30-people left for Nepal but I still stayed. Then an incident happened, a colleague died in an accident while working"*. He was working in risky situation as a painter and when he witnessed a few accidents at his workplace, which made him very scared and uncertain about his own life. Then, along with his friends decided to migrate."

*"People feared and then started finding agents and two other Nepalese went to Italy. It was 2014, we paid 1000 Euros to get on a boat to Italy but the boat got wrecked and we went back. I was robbed on the trip. even the police; were involved in the trafficking along with the agents. There was nobody who could help me.. Then I went back to Libya living in the desert for 3 days. We were abused and scared and then I tried again."* His journey to get to Portugal was very risky and life threatening as well. *"I was at gunpoint several times and the hooligans wanted to rob me, they took all the money, even a broken phone."*

He discloses further about his risky journey. *"We ate from the trash bins, sometimes water and biscuit on the journey to Italy for about a month. There were gangs and fighting with tanks almost all the time. Then we reached Tripoli and started working there. It was a very chaotic city. I wore dirty clothes; I was working as a painter"*.

After the failed attempt, he once again tried to move forward in his journey to Portugal. *"My boss was scared for me. It was fearful and insecure. He also asked me to leave for Europe and promised to help me. "*

*"The next boat to Italy was a fishing boat and it also got stuck in the middle. I thought I was going to die... Then a helicopter rescued us, I think it was the European Union, and then came a ship for the rescue and we finally arrived. The border became strict to come to Portugal in France."* He lived in the camps in Italy for 22 days and then found an agent who suggested



taking the road of a meat van who was owned by some Moroccans. *“There were alive animals inside. They said it was France but it was still Italy. Then again, we were put into a van with no doors and windows and were further delivered to Nice, France.”*

Then an Indian helped by taking them to his home and then to Paris, France. *“That was the only time I took a shower. We took a taxi from Paris via Spain and reached Portugal and paid 400 Euros each. I arrived on March of 2015.”*

## **ARRIVAL IN PORTUGAL**

The initial feelings when he reached Portugal were; *“I felt extreme joy and finally was happy that I survived the life-threatening journey to get here and my dreams would finally come true.”*

The interviewee had some relatives to help him on his arrival but it was a stranger who helped him on his first few days before his relative came up. *“I had an uncle who worked in a restaurant in Lisbon but I met a random Nepali because of the help of the taxi driver. He gave me food, shelter for a few days. Then my uncle came to pick me and made me stay with him for a month. There was a vacancy at the place he used to work and I got the job. Till today I work in the same restaurant. I start work at 9 in the morning and come home at almost midnight.”*

The interviewee did not have any trouble with Portuguese language at work or daily life. He lived and worked with Nepalese people and understood some English which made it easier for him to work. *“Most of my workmates are Nepalese in the kitchen and I understand little English and with the things I don’t understand, my workmates help me out.”* He thinks other people often have problems with not knowing the Portuguese language. When asked about his knowledge on the process of legalization, he said that he did not know much about the policies or how to become legalized in this country. Later, one of his uncles who lived in Lisbon told him about the steps to regularization.

## **SETTLING AND LEGAL STATUS IN PORTUGAL**

His housing conditions were not very good in the beginning. He shared his room with 3 other men and was not able to afford his own room until he found a job. When asked about his current situation with housing and job contract he answered: *“I don’t own a house but I have a housing contract now of an apartment which I have rented from a Portuguese person.”* He seemed satisfied with his job *“I have a stable job contract and the company pays regular taxes to the government and social security as well.”*

He is on a process to achieve a temporary stay visa. He is waiting to receive temporary residency and has a work contract. When asked about contracts and taxes he also answered that it makes him confused why the taxations are legal and the people are considered ‘illegal’. *“I have understood that people who can wait for several years to get a visa will surely get it. I have applied 33 months ago and I am still waiting.”* He also elaborates on his case situation. *“I came on a boat and came with no passport or any papers. I must show police reports from every single country I have ever been in. My case is more complicated but I am going to wait.”*

He takes most of his legal support from Solidariedade Imigrante. *“The right to receive benefits and social security without legalization is almost impossible. It is only provided if you are in a severe health-risk etc.”*

## **PREVIOUS EXPECTATIONS**

He had very high hopes about his life in Europe. He even thought all his troubles would go away with his entry in Portugal. *“I thought my life would change completely if I could arrive to a European country and become an European. I thought it was the gateway to solve all my*

*family problems and was the step of my life for my children's brighter future."* Although, he has had a life-threatening trajectory, he still seems hopeful for a stable future.

### **CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND ROLE OF REMITTANCES**

The primary caregiver is the wife and secondary care givers are some relatives and his sister in law. Since they moved from the village to a more urban area, the grandparents of the children directly do not take part in care giving. *"My wife takes care of both the children now that they moved from the village to a city area. I send money every month so that they can go to a good boarding school. I am the main bread winner and people are dependent on me."* He has never received any services from Nepalese NGOS or social workers for the family and children in Nepal or Portugal.

*"I am actually here for paperwork, with that I do get some money which is sufficient to meet daily expenses, education of my children and living expenses for the whole family. I send about 250 Euros a month and it is enough for my family. I am here very attached to Nepalese people in the society who help me in borrowing money at times when I don't have it. We exchange and help each other."*

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH SPOUSE**

This theme came up with conversations related to families even though it wasn't part of the interview guide. He talks to his wife almost every day through Facebook. He also realizes that she has taken over full responsibility on her own without much support. *"I am very satisfied with her caregiving and understanding"* He believes if the wife comes here they would be more economically sound. He is trying to apply for her visa so that she can come to Europe. *"We have lived away for five years now. Even when I was in Qatar after getting married I could only spend 3 months with her. It was an arranged marriage. The only time I spent with her was before going to Libya."*

He has not visited Nepal since he left for Libya in 2012. He has no chance of going to Nepal until his residency is accepted. However, he mentions that he has difficulties in his relationship with his wife because of the distance and uncertainty. He supports her in every possible way and send gifts such as mobile phones and clothes which makes her happy.

### **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

When asked about his roles as a parent he replies *"The role of a long-distance father is beyond explanation. My son was 8 months old when I left home. My daughter was also very small. Now he goes to school in grade one. Looks at me in the photos and calls me father, I am not sure if he has the kind of affection. All communications are on the phone. My first daughter also had no idea where I was going or anything. It's very easy to fool kids. My daughter now understands that I am abroad. But they keep complaining saying that other people's fathers come home on big festivals and holidays, when will our father come and why he doesn't come? I feel very depressed but I am in no position to say anything to the children"*.

He feels like as a male member of the family,' it is his responsibility to earn and be the breadwinner for the family. *"I have to go through any struggles in life and be the provider. If I don't do it and go through all this, my family will be miserable. Everything I have done is worth it."* He believes the wife has the duty of providing care. He also says, *"She is a housewife and is not involved in farming or agriculture, her only primary duty is to take care of children"*. And he is very satisfied and proud of her care giving.

He thinks that being undocumented has put him and his children in a very uncomfortable position. He also says that the family separation sometimes becomes unbearable and he tends to understand the desperation of the children living without a father. *“I feel horrible when I hear the kids say things about their friends and school, I feel like there is a gap that mobile phone conversations can’t fulfil. My son has only seen me in pictures and says I am the father. Emotionally, I feel it’s more difficult for them”*. On the other hand, he also thinks it was his own choice and he knew that going home anytime soon would not be an option.

He also reflects to transnational parenting experience in Libya, it was more difficult for him to be a parent from distance because often he had to be contactless for days and sometimes weeks which create misunderstandings and problems with his family in Nepal. He feels that he has been able to be together more while he is here in Portugal.

### **PARENTING STYLE**

He believes he is a very understanding father. His father was very strict and was abusive as a child, due to his childhood experiences, he did not want to be too strict. He has faced many problems of life thus he does not want his kids to suffer life that. He believes he is very soft, kind and understanding. Decision making on right and wrong is a mutual decision between husband and wife. *“I ask my wife not to hit the children even if they make mistakes and make them happy as much as possible. I ask her to give them everything and fulfil their needs even if we have to sacrifice our own needs.”*

After coming to Portugal, he feels that he has had positive changes regarding the way he thinks about women and how he treats his wife. *“I have been more open-minded and respectful to my wife. I was very soft with the children always but my perspective has changed that women are very important, fighting is not the solution and respect is important. That also has helped me understand and avoid problems with her.”*

### **SOCIALIZATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEM**

He is more involved with Nepalese people and does not really have Portuguese friends or friends who are not Nepalese. He has some the Portuguese colleagues he meets at work. He thinks the Nepalese friends and acquaintances have been motivating and encouraging during his journey. He also feels like the Nepalese people are inspiring and share similar life stories. He thinks that his friends circle outside of the Nepalese community is only limited at work space. *“The close friends are usually Nepalese in Portugal who guides me through problems in Portugal”*. They mostly help him in times of financial struggles and have monetary exchanges from time to time. However, he hasn’t had permanent friendship bonds as he left his home country since the countries he has lived in have been transit countries and even in Portugal he adds that people tend to leave once their paper works are ready.

He also takes great part in being part of a Nepalese cultural association and being able to contribute voluntarily whenever he is needed. *“I like to keep myself active, being in associations and being active in community gives me a great sense of satisfaction. It makes me closer to the small Nepalese community we have here and feel like I have a good social standing”*.

### **CHALLENGES**

He believes that there are a range of challenges here living with an undocumented situation. If he was a single man with no responsibilities he says that there was no point for him to stay in

Portugal. *“At times I do want to give up but thinking about my wife and children and the future they can have, I feel compelled to keep moving. At least for them they never have to face struggles like I do so I keep the pain and suffering inside me and live every passing day”.*

He feels discriminated at work sometimes. He shares that people are racist and the behaviour with Portuguese and with Nepalese is very different. *“We have to keep quiet and work hard without even bringing our rights. I don’t want to risk the job and my boss is okay in many ways as well. I am not very satisfied with the behaviours and discrimination even when I am giving my ultimate best.”* He thinks the reason behind feeling discriminated is also mainly because of Portuguese language. *“I wish I knew Portuguese and express myself at times. We can’t risk tax gaps and are scared if papers don’t come after so many struggles, maybe government will act against such cases. Thus, we remain calm and accept any kind of discrimination.”*

When he goes to some government services and interacts with people, they instruct a lot in Portuguese and he finds it difficult. He has had no problems in health services as he hasn’t been severely sick. For basic cold and cough when he visited the hospital and the visits were satisfactory. *“I think when I get a legal status, I will be able to access services that I have been paying all the taxes for.”*

#### **FUTURE GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

When asked if he would be happier with his family here he said that he would and the future plans were to bring his wife in Portugal but not the children. *“Of course, I would have been very happy if my family were here with me and been well functioning. I want to bring my wife here but I am not sure if I want to bring children here.”*

He seemed to have a fear of the ‘western culture’ *“I am not very impressed with the society and culture in the west. At a young age, they are out of control, you cannot beat the child or even scold them ...the teachers let them free. I am asking people and understanding from other people’s point of view... ..The students and youth are very undisciplined here even when I look at my other friends’ children I feel that. I have my mother and father living in Nepal who will be best future caregivers of our children”.*

He also sees his relationship with his wife getting better and reflects on how long distance had brought problems in his relationship, *“Now I am making her happy and she is satisfied that our life is getting better. Maybe we can make a good life here in Portugal if she enters Europe legally. I arrived here without a visa which makes it more difficult for me to achieve legalization.”* However, if the paperwork does not work out here in Portugal, he thinks he will move to another country but going back to Nepal is still not an option for him.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

When asked about his personal feelings he states that he has mixed feelings and seems quite unsure about his feelings. *“On today’s date I am left with mixed feelings. How can I say I am happy, I have waited 3 years and there is no sign of any papers? And I don’t know how I can say I am unhappy because I chose this path and it is a mistake that I made and I am part of the law. So, they make me wait I am paying so many taxes. The paperwork is uncertain and there is no real benefit. It’s all about waiting. But I am okay with waiting, my life was far worse back in Libya and I am okay to wait.”*

His recommendations to aspiring migrants were also based on his own experience and suggested varied outcomes from people using some examples as well. *“It’s not too big of a*

*struggle but yes, this is a country where you will have to face difficulties. I don't want to encourage or discourage anyone. There is no formula for a life here. Some people say ...it's great but turns opposite, for some people this place is great for some it's not. So, it's a highly personal matter"*

The researcher asked if he could suggest what social workers can do for the irregular immigrants, he said, "Social workers could probably link the person to any services available or make them aware about the options they can have if they want to go home. They can reach the associations we have here and other than that on a legal level, they wouldn't be able to help us."

## **2. Deepika**

### **Demographic Information:**

**Pseudonym: Deepika**

Gender: Female

Education: Bachelor's in Civil Engineering (Dropout)

Current Occupation: Cook

Previous Occupation: Primary School Teacher

Age: 28 years

*I first met the interviewee at a dinner party organized by a Nepalese person. He got a response from his lawyer saying that he will be legalized soon and got dates for further processing of residency. The dinner party was a personal affair where some close Nepalese were invited and the researcher got an opportunity to connect with this woman. The researcher briefly discussed about her research topic and asked if she would be interested in being interviewed. The interviewee was willing to be interviewed and asked the researcher to visit her home on 9<sup>th</sup> of March, Saturday. We started the interview in the kitchen. Since it was Friday her flatmates and husband were at work and she was at home all by herself. It was a bit difficult to talk about personal matters right from the beginning but as time went by the rapport became stronger and she started to share more information. It made the situation more comfortable and we had ample space to talk freely. She later asked me to join her for dinner.*

*We also got together for another follow up interview which also made us very familiar to each other and could disclose more deeply into her migration decisions and reasons. She offered me to go shopping with her one day so she could buy her daughter some clothes as gifts, in which, I voluntarily participated.*

### **PROFILES OF THE UNDOCUMENTED and FAMILY INFORMATION**

My second interviewee's name is Deepika, she is 28 years old. She was born and raised in a rural village in the eastern part of Nepal but was sponsored and educated in one of the top schools of Nepal. She was pursuing her Bachelor's in engineering while in Nepal. She was married at a young age and migrated with her husband to Portugal in February of 2016. She has a young daughter who is 7 years old and she was only 5 years old when they left her in Nepal. The daughter is taken care of with the help of the grandparents and the husband's younger sister who is unmarried.

### **LENGTH OF SEPARATION FROM FAMILY**

The interviewee's family can be regarded as transnational families as they are living apart from each other for two years. The couple has been separated from their child for 2 years now since the legislation and immigration laws bar the families to reunite as the couple is living in an irregular situation without a valid visa or residence permit.

## **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

The interviewee has never been out of Nepal before moving to Portugal. However, her route was via France to enter Portugal and she stayed there only for a week.

## **MIGRATION TRAJECTORY**

On questioning the reasons to choose Portugal as destination country she said *“I was working as a school teacher when I was in Nepal while I was also studying. Me and my husband had two families to take care of including my daughter, my parents, and husband’s parents. We were not very poor but it was difficult to manage everybody’s expectations after marriage. I got married quite early on terms to help my family. All my friends were abroad.... They were living the dream and I felt like it was time for me to go earn a better living and life.”*

She also shared about her educational background when asked what she was doing in Nepal before migrating to Portugal. *“I was doing my undergraduate in civil engineering but I saw my seniors failing to find nice jobs. They were only being paid 100 Euros a month, if they got a job...which somehow made me lose interest in my education as well and I was driven to go abroad”.*

Her husband had previously worked in Afghanistan, South Africa and Dubai. The couple had some savings from the previous work and the husband had been back in Nepal to look for business entrepreneurship opportunities. She feels like she insisted on going abroad and settling abroad even when her husband was not really willing to do so. *“He was fixated on doing business in Nepal like hydropower and Eco resort since we live close to the mountains. I on the other hand, have seen how the businesses have failed for people and insisted on travelling alone.”* It was because of her in-laws, parents and husband who weren’t supporting the idea of leaving the country alone. That is why they migrated together. *“My in-laws stepped up to take care of our daughter and my sister in law was also willing to take care of our daughter.”*

She still looks back at her desperation and feels like her decision might have affected many lives. She had a very hard feeling about leaving her child but knew it was only for the best. She also feels like the society she lived in did not quite approve of her migration decision. *“I knew I would be judged by society as being a bad mother leaving behind my daughter, but I have always been independent and do not want any financial problems ever in life for my family.”*

## **PREPARATION FOR MIGRATION**

*“I was first applying for a Canadian permanent residency program from Nepal and had waited almost 2 years with the help of a migration agent.”* She was frustrated and irritated with no answer from the Canadian side and the agent advised her that Portugal would be a much better choice to get a job easily and permanent residence. *“My consulting agent asked me about my future plans on settling in any country abroad and I said that I planned on settling abroad for good. He then proposed an idea for me to go to Portugal on an event as a choreographer on some cultural festival”.* She was told that Portugal was the best country which could help her get a passport in just 2-3 years and could go to any other country later in the future. She feels like whatever was said was not entirely true. The event was supposed to be a cultural festival and they invited the crew from Nepal. However, she was not a ‘choreographer’ but was smuggled with false papers and identification.

They said that the pay was good and living was cheap. So, she did not really think much and agreed to apply for a tourist visa. The intermediaries mentioned that it was a very common phenomenon and she was really looking forward to living her dream. *“We had negotiations and bargained with the agent and agreed at an amount of 17,000 Euros for us two people. I came via France on a tourist visa. To be precise, it was a plan of an event management company and I was designated as a choreographer by the agent. We were very excited and nervous at the same time.”*

### **ARRIVAL IN PORTUGAL**

She recalls her arrival days as *“When we first came here from France it was lovely just like in the pictures. I was excited to live and start a new chapter of my life. But, we did not know where to do and we were traveling with 4 bags! And we asked a random person about where to find cheap hotels and he gave us an address.”*

Then when they came to Portugal they did not really know anybody here but the agent had given them contacts of the Nepalese flatmates. *“I believe we were overly charged because now we have our own housing contract and the prices are reasonable. The bills were too much and it was not transparent. The rent was 250 Euros for a small room but we sometimes had to pay 130 Euros extra only as utility bills as electricity, internet bills for a month.”*

The legal systems that were explained to her by the agent were far from reality. *“We thought the legalization was a simple process and should not have a very long waiting. We don't really own anything. I and my husband both work. I found my job very easily with help of my roommates contact but my husband was jobless for almost 7 months. We were using our savings and I had many problems with the contract. My previous employer did not fill in the taxes on time and we had disputes because of that. By the way, I used to work 12 hours a day”.*

She was mentally prepared that going abroad she may have to wash dishes and do odd jobs. But when reality hit her, she was recruited as a dish washer. *“I could not help myself and broke down into tears every night. I used to lie to my parents and family about my job here. I told them I worked as a waitress and they still thought it was very odd and showed dissatisfaction until one day I broke down and told them I was a dishwasher in a restaurant.” I made regular contacts because the guilt of leaving my daughter worries me and I did hear my in-laws scolding me about my choices, which only added salt to the wound.”*

### **SETTLING AND LEGAL STATUS IN PORTUGAL**

*“I had a Schengen visa which expired in 2016. Now I am working and I have applied for residency in Portugal.”* It has been two years now since she applied here for residency and living with an undocumented status but until today she hasn't received any answer.

She also highlights the positive aspect of living in Portugal by saying: *“I like Portuguese policies because they give us at least right to live in this country. We can make a decent living here.”* However, she instantly contradicted with her statement while looking at her social life and thinking of her child behind. *“I frankly have stopped seeing so much positive of the life I am living here in Portugal. Of course, it has opportunities better than Nepal but I don't think this was all worth it. I don't really have a friend here that I can share my feelings with and it's basically just me and my husband.”*

When asked about her tax situation and social security she replied: *“I am working here and I don't think I am entitled to social security. I pay tax every month and I keep monitoring my*



*taxes online as soon as my salary is given. My employer does not give my salary on time and the taxes don't go on time. Thus, I think my residency is not granted because of the delays in taxes, probably."*

### **CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND ROLE OF REMITTANCES**

She was very assured that the child would receive great care and deep inside she knew that it wouldn't be the same. *"I am very thankful to my parents and my husband's parents. They take good care of her and with mobile phones it is easy to communicate. But as a mother, I feel very sad to leave my daughter behind. "*

She also seemed concerned about the child's performance at school. *"It becomes definitely difficult when you can't participate in their school progress. The grandparents do not well assist their homework's and education because they are not educated. We depend on the husband's sister for our daughter's education. If my daughter fails to get good results, I won't be able to blame anybody for that or question anyone."*

She has plans on bringing her child so her goal can be achieved however, she did not quite know when exactly: *"I will bring my child here if I get my residency permit. I have heard that it is easier to relocate children after legal status when we have our papers."*

The conversations also led to her financial status and she mentioned that she and her husband were suffering in meeting the needs of the entire family. *"My daughter and my family are financially dependent on me and my husband. We assured them when we left Nepal that we would cover all the expenses at home. But of course, there are challenges in finances."* She then elaborated on her expenses *"I work on minimum salary, pay rent and still have loans back home. On top of that living expenses, sending money home and family assistance are part of life. It is difficult as caregivers have expectations and do not really know that we are living a difficult life here."*

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH SPOUSE**

This theme came up with conversations related to families even though it wasn't part of the interview guide. She has been giving hints during the interview that it was mostly her decision to migrate and not really her husband's wish. She shares *"As I said I found a job as soon as I got here, my husband did not find a job until 7 months. He was very passive and was being negative about my decision. He used to taunt me and blame me for the decision even jokingly and sometimes seriously. He would tell people we met here when we shared our stories and mostly blamed me and accuse me of wasting his life income in front of them."* She does understand that it was a lot of money and she herself is not proud of that. It also came to researcher's attention during dinner time that the interviewee's husband did jokingly blame her when I told him about my research topic and objective of interviewing his wife by saying. *"You know it was entirely her decision to come here, I had nothing to do with this"*.

She also shared about how being a woman and being the only one earning created some problems in her relationship. *"I don't know if I should share this but you know Nepali men, no matter what generation or age group are so egoistic if they don't earn or are living on our income. I felt it for the first seven months. It created some tension in our relationship."*

However, she now talks about her relationship getting more positive and her husband being her biggest support.

## **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

She communicates with her child and caregivers daily with use of Facebook, Viber and her mobile phone. She feels like she initiates more contact than her husband. *“We talk everyday on the phone. My child is still small to initiate contact. It’s different from how it used to be in Nepal as I can’t hold, talk, hug my child. It is very different. I think our dedication to talk to them is a very important aspect of our life.”*

It was visible that she missed her child and her motive was to reunite as a family for now. *“I would definitely be happier if I could live with my child but it would be difficult to bring her here in this uncertainty as well.”*

When asked about if her life in Europe changed her perception on parenting she agreed that it did. *“My views did change about the teenagers who have so much freedom and children here are treated with much love and respect. Fathers also seem to be very participating in the child rearing.”*

## **PARENTING STYLES**

She believes that this new generation children need understanding and love. She recalls her difficult childhood and says *“My mother abandoned me and went on with another man. I have never been able to forgive her. I was left with my father and my step mother who was only 10 years older than me.”* She also explained her life growing up and schooling *“I went to boarding school on scholarship and lived in Kathmandu most of the years for education. I had a broken family and my father was an alcoholic and my stepmother was very arrogant. When I came home from school in holidays they would be fighting and I think I was mostly ignored.”*

She further explained that she was a loving mother and was very understanding of her child’s needs. She thinks she will continue being understanding and not too strict but also finds this question to be applied more in the future. *“My daughter is only 7 years old. I have tried to give her everything I could and she asked for. I will treat her with love and she will get great education in her life. She can choose her own career and I will not force her to pursue anything like other parents when she grows up”.*

## **SOCIALICATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

She talked about her language proficiency and seemed positive when asked about her socialization in Portuguese society. *“I don’t really speak Portuguese and work mostly inside the kitchen. My boss and workmates all speak some English with me and they are my everyday contacts. I don’t have Portuguese friends other than the ones I work with and some are very friendly. I do celebrate Natal and new year(laughs) with them.”*

She has Nepalese acquaintances but also has mixed feelings about the Nepalese society. *“I am not very close to the Nepalese society and sometimes meet some Nepalese when I have time. The programs to attend are usually time consuming and have tickets to enter. In terms of finances, I really have to think twice to participate in those events. It’s good to have associations but sometimes people gossip too much.”* She also thinks the Nepalese society is not uniform and are segregated by class, caste, and culture.

Her support system is still her friends and family back in Nepal who she communicates immensely on social media. However, her main support in her struggles is her husband. She

does not miss a chance to be thankful to her family members for taking care of the child. *“I receive help from my husband and I am very thankful to the caregivers that give my daughter the care she needs. It’s not that difficult when the caregivers are your own family members. They know the best for the daughter and the grandparents are doing their very best and we think she is very happy with them as well.”*

## **CHALLENGES**

She has a few challenges and the major challenge for her was about the separation between her and her child. *“There are uncountable missed moments and experiences of our child growing up. I think it is the choices we have made that have resulted in all of this. The thing here is people do recommend that life abroad is not easy. But often we fail to understand and even our own Nepalese people sometimes use us and try to take advantages.”* The researcher asked further about ‘taking advantage’ she said *“Well, when you are new in Portugal, your own Nepalese people come to you asking to loan them money, or offer to help find a job. They charge or take some money and then are nowhere to be seen.”*

She also compared her life in Nepal with her life now in Portugal. *“It is a difficult life here to live without papers but if I look at life 2 years back it was worst but now I am being well adapted and understand the life here. I still make more money than I would as an engineer in Nepal (laughs)”*

She thinks her challenges would have been uncountable if she travelled alone to Portugal as a woman. *“I thank god that I travelled here with my husband. I can’t imagine how difficult life is for people coming here alone. You know we share expenses. Two people can survive for the price of one because we are a couple. We have each other and I have seen so many couples breaking up these days because of the distance.”*

## **FUTURE GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

Her plans are to go back to Nepal on a very long break after acquiring her residence permit. She is determined that her trip to Nepal will happen after she has achieved a legal status she worked hard for in Portugal. *“Once I achieve legal status I am going to take a long break and go to Nepal and be with my daughter. I would really like to have my daughter back here with me in Portugal as soon as possible. I want to support my family in every possible way.”*

She believes her daughter will be able to blend in with the Portuguese society. *“I think my daughter can integrate well in the society as I believe she is smart and I have seen other people’s children adapt easily in the society.”*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

When asked for suggestions, she says: *“Well, I feel like it is one of the things we do for our children but we should pay attention to our daughter’s wellbeing as well as our own personal wellbeing. It is not easy to be a mother from so far away.”*

She also has some suggestion for future migrants. *“For future migrants, I think going abroad by giving up on their education is not a very commendable choice. We risked a lot to be where we are right now and we sometimes feel like it was a wrong decision.”*

### **Demographic Information:**

3. Pseudonym: Devendra  
Gender: M  
Education: Bachelor's degree in Business studies  
Current Occupation: Agricultural worker  
Previous Occupation: Accounting and administration  
Age: 32 Years  
Age of child: 5 years  
Gender of child: Male

### **PROFILES OF THE UNDOCUMENTED and FAMILY INFORMATION**

He has a wife and one son back in Nepal. His family is a joint family type where his mother, father, brother, sister in law, wife and son live together in the same house.

### **LENGTH OF SEPARATION FROM FAMILY**

He left his child at the age of 2. He left Nepal in 2015 and it has now been 3 years that he has lived separately from the family.

### **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

Does not apply here since Portugal is his first country of migration.

### **MIGRATION TRAJECTORY**

#### **REASON FOR MIGRATION**

When asked why he chose to migrate to Portugal he replied, *"I had an idea and expectation of a Portuguese passport which would open my doors to success in life. Being a Nepali there is ton of hassle in getting visas to any country and once we get a visa we want to make the best of the situation. It is a matter of honour to have permanent residency of a developed country which gives freedom to travel across borders and a feeling of being able to do anything with a strong passport."*

*He states that Nepal is very poor and there were numerous problems in Nepal, so in search of better opportunities he decided to migrate. "I have always heard positive things about Europe and how people have had life changing experiences. Nepal does not have many opportunities and even after education I wasn't getting a satisfying job. I was employed in a school as administration and finance assistant but it wasn't paying me enough. That is where I met my wife." "Then, most of my friends were also setting off for the journey to Portugal and I decided to join them with mutual discussion and agreement at home."*

#### **Preparation**

When asked about how he planned to migrate to Portugal, he mentioned, *"It was my own decision supported by my wife. She was also my motivation to go abroad, so that we, as a family, could have a better life."* He arrived in Portugal in 2015. He was in Holland as a tourist and then marked his journey to Portugal. He had paid an amount of 6500 euros to the agent only to get to Holland excluding the tickets/personal costs. *"I was sponsored by another Nepali, in Netherlands. But I did not know the guy who sent me the sponsorship as it was arranged with the help of my agent."*

He stayed in Netherlands for only a week and started his journey to the capital city Lisbon in Portugal. He further shares his motivation for migrating more acutely which started building up after getting married and having a child, *“My life was great 6 years before. I fell in love and after many complications of disagreements in the family, we finally got married. Then we had a baby and expenses started going up and expectations for child’s future were also very primary.”*

### **Arrival**

His first days in Lisbon were stressful as he did not get in the job market immediately. *“I didn’t get a job as soon as I came here. I tried my best to work in Lisbon and be based in Lisbon but there were no jobs for me. Things were tough in the beginning, the money I brought was being used up and I desperately needed a job. He also shared that he stayed unemployed in Lisbon for the first 8 months and chose to work in the farm, “It wasn’t a pleasant situation for me. It took 8 months for me to get a job and then with the help of my friends I went to Beja to work in an agricultural farm to pick strawberries.”*

He said that living conditions were not upright compared to Lisbon. He said that he shared his room with a friend in Lisbon but conditions on the farms were adverse. He is living in the accommodation provided by the recruitment agency. *“I live in a room and share my room with 7 other people from different countries. We sleep on bunk beds and it is just like a hostel.”*

### **Settling**

He did not seem satisfied with the job he is doing right now. He says *“The work I am involved in is entirely different that I thought. I had never done any agricultural work in my life before. In Nepal, only uneducated and poor people get involved in farm work unless it is their own farms.”*

He also recalled his first day experience in the work location. *“I remember my first time travelling with my big luggage that had wheels on it but the walk after the bus was so long on a rugged road that I lost all the four wheels of the bag, and then had to carry it all along (laughs). Maybe because my bag was made in China (he jokes). It was very far from any grocery store; transportation facilities. I was first put in a home with other farm workers. I wasn’t happy as it was nothing like Lisbon but we must do everything for survival and responsibilities to the family.”*

He hides his current job position to his family and only his wife knows that he works in a farm. *“I never imagined a life like this. It is a matter of shame and I don’t tell my family that I am working in the agriculture farms. However, now it is fine and I am getting used to it.”*

### **LEGAL STATUS**

He is living in an irregular situation and is hoping to receive his paperwork this year. *“I am living in an irregular way since my visa expired at the end of 2015, but I have already received an appointment for leaving ‘fingerprints’. Let’s see what happens. Nowadays people who came along with me are slowly receiving dates and appointments from SEF.”*

### **EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION**

He also briefly shared the discrimination he has faced at his work place. *“I think we don’t really have rights or anything. The job is usually unstable and it requires a lot of physical work and labor. It is a tough job and one of the things that make me feel okay is that there are people from Thailand, Morocco and even Europe. We don’t have rights or benefits like the Portuguese*

*people. We are paperless and situation is worse because they take benefit of our situation.” His comparison with workers from other countries made him feel like not only Nepalese were poor. He previously thought people from other countries*

*“We can’t say anything about how they treat us or anything because if I get fired, it will jeopardize my hard work. So, I just do as they tell me.”*

### **CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND ROLE OF REMITTANCES**

When asked about care arrangements, he indicated that his wife and his mother are more responsible in taking care of their child and the household. *“My wife takes care of our child. She is 28 years old and is a working woman. She handles the job and parenting very well. My mother also helps in upbringing of our child while my wife is at work. She works as a receptionist in a school. It is not easy for her to manage both her responsibilities but I am so proud of her, of what she does.”*

*every month, which helps in the household and child rearing. “Talking about remittances, I do send money back home which goes into the groceries, school education and send it to my wife. She then manages what she does with the money. I do not ask her.”*

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH SPOUSE**

He reveals that he has a harmonious relationship with his wife and reflects on the decision of having a child under pressure. *“We sometimes talk about how having a child could have been delayed and we could have travelled together. But it was because of pressure from family that they wanted a grandchild, so we had to have a baby to make their wish come true.*

He shares personal detail about his perception on how the marriage and distance has affected his wife. *“We were still young and she could not continue her studies after high school because of our marriage and the child. This is the time she needs me the most but I am not there for her.”*

(Note: this shows how immigration has somehow fractured families)

### **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

He mentions that long distance family life was a reason to make him sad and says they don’t communicate so much. *“I feel very sad to be away and leave my family behind. I don’t think anybody would be happy without their family or wish to be far from them. Everything is dependent on the phone and you know with mobile phones its only “hello, hi”. Very basic like how they day went and every day stuff. It’s nothing like it used to be. However, we talk for about an hour or two a few times in a week.”*

He also shared issues of privacy in a shared room and said he usually talks when he is out of his room. *“I use telephone and video chat sometimes when I am in the market or out of my room. I don’t want my family to see that my living conditions are so unusual. There is not much privacy in our accommodation and it’s usually filled with people.”*

### **SOCIALICATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

When asked about social contact he said it was very limited. *“Social contacts are very limited as I am living in Beja. There is a few Nepalese here and I do have colleagues at work that I talk to on everyday basis. That’s it.”*

According to him, his support system would consist of his friends and family back Lisbon and in Nepal.

## **TRANSFORMATION**

He also mentioned that his life was different than how it used to be and describes isolation here. *“My life here is transformed completely. I am left here living alone without my family, parents, friends, relatives. Frankly, there are few people you can trust abroad. There is a feeling of loneliness that I cannot explain. However, economically, and socially life has transformed. I am now more deeply attached to my family and my country. I keep up with all the social, political happenings with the use of social media.”*

## **CHALLENGES**

When asked about challenges he focuses more on his present job and the lifestyle he has currently. *“I don’t think my life is so challenging other than the work I am doing here. I started working since the beginning of 2016 and it is a very difficult job. I must be out in the sun all day. Eating, drinking and quality of life is not satisfactory. Sometimes my whole body hurts at the end of the day even though I am young now and can handle the physical load. I am worried if I will always be involved in agriculture work.”*

*“Living arrangements are very unequipped and there are few facilities which is not very good. The room right now is in a temporary house made of tin and we are 8 people living in a room. It gets very stinky and the room heats up during summer. It becomes awful at the end of the day. Transportation was also an issue. It was very difficult to go anywhere. Life is basically work and home, that’s it.”*

He shares that there was no privacy which also hinders communication with family and his financial status as well. *“If you don’t feel great on the inside, it is hard to feel great on the outside. I tell my wife about my problems and we manage with both our expenses but my parents have more expectations from me.”*

He also indicated a sense of regret and hope for the future. *“Sometimes I think it was a bad idea that I decided to move to Portugal while I already had a bachelor’s degree back in Nepal. When I think of what I had and could have had, it makes me feel very low and lose my self-worth but I console myself thinking about the future.”*

He did not hesitate to compare his life with other people in terms of job and paperwork. *“My other friends have more challenges and problems working in this sector. I have not yet received my permit and I am working for it. The rules keep changing and it is not like before. My friends who came after me already have their papers but I have no response until now. It’s all in the SEF’s hands; they chose who gets it and who doesn’t. I have given my application and I will wait for my next results. I am hoping maybe this year I will get a reply.”*

## **DECEPTION/ LIES**

He also shared how he was told back in Nepal that he felt like he was lied to. *“I feel deceived and cheated when they said that in one year I will get a permanent residency in Portugal. It felt unbelievable, then I asked some of my friends in Poland and they said that it is easy to get residency in Portugal. But the reality is actually different.”*

## **FUTURE GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

When asked about his future goals he felt unsure and did not have a concrete plan. *“In future, I haven’t really thought. Maybe after paperwork I will go to Nepal, it has been too long. Then with family and ideas I will think further. I don’t have plans and exact idea of what to do.”*

When asked about his plan for reunification, he says *“For my child my situation right now and living arrangements is not perfect even if I have paperwork. The income is not enough for being able to sustain a family. Thus, being an agricultural worker has more challenges than being based in Lisbon. After I get my paperwork, I will find try to find a job in Lisbon and a better housing condition.”*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

His recommendation was focused more on how to ‘make it’ here in Portugal and steps to take before migrating. *“I think Portugal is a place for tourism and adventure. It is not a place for migrating and living a life. If people believe that they want to live in Portugal, I suggest that they learn skills and language before coming here... Know what job market is like and where they can be involved, the tendency of Nepalese is that they just travel thinking that life is going to be very easy and they will learn skills whenever they enter job market. But that is not the way and not the case. There is competition in the job market and without skills it is not possible to earn good money in this country.”*

He also shares a general overview of life here, *“It is a life of struggle, and still it is a matter of perception. My advice for upcoming migrants is not fall trap of advertisements and false promises of better life in any country. There are many examples that such tempting ideas that has given rise to exploitation and discrimination.”*



## **Demographic Information:**

4. Pseudonym: Kishor  
Gender: M  
Education: Master's degree  
Current Occupation: Dish Washing  
Previous Occupation: Lecturer  
Age: 40  
Age of daughters: 16/14 studying in Nepal

## **PROFILES OF THE UNDOCUMENTED and FAMILY INFORMATION**

His name is Kishor. He comes from western part of Nepal looking for opportunities in Europe. The composition of his family in Nepal is an extended type and he lived with his parents, brothers, his wife and two daughters.

## **LENGTH OF SEPARATION FROM FAMILY**

He is living in Portugal since the last 3.5 years alone without his family. He doesn't feel complete being here but ignores such feelings.

## **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

Not any. *"I have travelled to India for travelling purposes."*

## **MIGRATION TRAJECTORY**

### **Preparation**

When asked about his reasons to migrate to Portugal he answered, *"I think my reasons are not very different than any other Nepali person's reason. Leaving Nepal was for economic difficulties. There is no social security, employment opportunities, and economic growth. I also migrated in search of those opportunities and better future."*

He talked about his desire to be in Europe and have a permanent right to stay in Europe. *"The dream of an European life and lifestyle made me focus to come to Europe anyhow. I needed a legal and permanent residency also as it was not only planning aimlessly. The political unrest, hopelessness for business endeavours. It was initially my own idea to exit the suffering and then discussed further with my wife and family. I was a teacher for 5 years in high school and then 3 years for under graduate students."*

*"We had to take help from agents and here in Portugal I had many people from my village. The agent was my friend and they run 'consultancies' to send students and workers abroad. They had a lot of experience with sending people abroad. I used to live in Kathmandu for work as I taught in a university in Kathmandu. And all the processing started from there."*

He decided to migrate with the help of his friend. He also said that people from his village were also living in Portugal. *"I was given information that it takes 6 months to receive temporary residence and in 5-6 years we get a Portuguese Passport. I used the help of an agent for 10000 euros. He was my friend and he also ran his agency for several years. I trusted him and paid for the travel, with the cost of travel included, we had to pay the sponsor who sponsored for our visit visa to Belgium. I brought some money as it was planned that getting a job can be difficult in the beginning."*

When asked if he felt deceived he replied, *“I felt that I was lied to but I later realized that the easy paperwork was a trend in Portugal in the previous years. I don’t blame him, he was only doing his job.”*

### **Arrival**

When he first arrived here he was very excited and he met his friends from the village. *“I was very excited and happy to step foot in Portugal when friends from my village came to receive me in Portugal. I was in Belgium then I went to Netherlands with some friends. Then we took a flight from Netherlands to come to Portugal. We all wanted to travel to Portugal together and that was the same route from Nepal for all of us.”*

He talks about where he stayed upon his arrival. *“As my friends received me, we went to their house. For almost a week I stayed at a friend’s place. Then I had to start looking for a job and everything.”*

### **Settling**

The only motivation for him being in Portugal was to get a residence permit but it has been over 3 years he hasn’t even received a temporary residence. He adds *“Expectations were not really met with the reality. Portugal being economically weaker than other major European countries. Native Portuguese society looked satisfactory as I had learnt before in European civilization. I had higher expectations from Portugal related to my economic growth. When I entered I thought in Portugal my dreams would come true with a very high income.”*

He says that he got the job very quickly upon his arrival but it was not the kind of job he had expected before. *“I did not have problems in finding a job but doing the job was the biggest challenge in Portugal. I felt uneasy to work in the agriculture field because it was never my plan. I thought I would get a job with my education background and experience. The nature of work is not easy.”*

*“The way agricultural farms work here is mostly through agents. It was ‘jhanjhatilo.’ (frustrating process) to work as agencies take the guarantee of the workers. They send workers from agencies and when they do, the services and benefits do not match up and are not adequate.”*

He said that there was also a big problem of transportation while going to and from work. *“I had to wait and travel 1.5 to 2 hours only to get to work. Of course, they said that we can do agricultural work but I wasn’t ready to do such work. I had physical pain and it was psychologically stressful. The work was seasonal and it was not paying my taxes on time.”*

### **LEGAL STATUS**

When asked about his legal status here in Portugal he said that he was on a process of regularization and took assistance from a legal advisor in each step, *“I took legal support for my legal status from a lawyer. I have applied for a temporary residence permit and I had one appointment already. I am on the process of gaining residency. I feel like it was a wrong time for me to be here, before it was different, we were told that paperwork for legalization will be sorted in 6 months. It makes me very sad as I also feel cheated and deceived by my own friend. I am working here and paying taxes regularly but in agriculture field it is sometimes difficult since my job is seasonal which was also the reason for irregular taxes.”*

## **CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND ROLE OF REMITTANCES**

He shares that the women are responsible for caring of the children and thinks it is an expected role as a father to migrate. *“Their mother is responsible for taking care of the children. The grandmothers are also responsible of both families. I think it is suitable for men to go abroad and migrate than women in my society. So, since they take responsibilities, it is an added benefit because of our collective culture and values.”*

He views remittances also to show affection and feels responsible in a proper upbringing of his children. *“Remittances are more like a way to show care and love. I think the family understands that as well. I send them gifts like phones and chocolates. It is used mainly in their education and the economic support is very important. Of course, emotional guidance is very difficult but it’s more like the role of remittances that help me play the role of a parent. We don’t compromise in education and their basic needs. I work hard and save as much as possible. I manage to send 200-250 euros in a month. However, there are some debts that need to be cleared and I hope I will clear soon”*

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH SPOUSE**

He discussed that he had a good relationship with his wife and distance hasn’t changed his relationship dynamic. *“I have a very understanding wife. She is very hopeful for a bright future and is doing a great job as a parent. Even though, there is distance between us, she is very patient and encouraging”*

*He also mentioned need for empowerment in mothers for the sake of effective parenting. “I now want to empower my wife to be more motivating for our children. I think children also learn more.”*

## **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

He does feel the difference of parenting from a distance. He feels like he cannot perform his parenting roles as expected from a distance. *“I am so far from my family and it is only because of my paperwork. I am a father and should be there to teach them and motivate my children’s life. As a parent who is supposed to guide them, at all times is so far away from them which makes me feel very dissatisfied and I know it has impacts in their lives as well. It is a bit painful to be so far away and not being able to pass wisdom. It’s less meaningful to discipline and guide them virtually. I have felt it different from a distance.”*

When asked about his communication routine he mentioned. *“We communicate almost every day with my family. My work hours match very well with Nepalese time. Parenting is very much possible and technology is a helpful tool to stay in touch with family.”*

He also mentions how he has learnt and adapted the parenting culture here in Portugal, how children are raised by saying *“I have observed many things that I can learn as a parent while living in Europe compared to Nepal. I have transferred values of our traditions and that is what I want them to learn mainly.”*

## **PARENTING STYLES**

He reflects more to his past roles as a parent and his overall parenting practice. He expressed difficulties in practising parenting from a distance and realizes his absence in their lives. *“I believe that parents should play the role of giving them great space to grow and build their capabilities. Me as a teacher myself, tend to pass values in my children and give them many opportunities to grow. I want them to be great in education and my approach is more for them*

*to be smart, intelligent with ton of knowledge. I have always tried to give them the best. The whole society looks at me as a teacher. They follow us and look up to us. My behaviour was more of a motivator and now it is difficult to transfer.”*

## **GENDER**

He believes that his migration decision is very pertinent as a male or as a father.

*“As a father, I am the one who must be the breadwinner of the family. In my community, the women are still supposed to be home and are away from economic opportunities. So, in a way I am relieved that I have taken a step to overcome difficulties and our collective society has also helped me be at ease here knowing that my wife and mother are taking care of the children.”*

## **CHILDS PERCEPTION ON PARENTS ABROAD**

It was interesting how he revealed his children’s perception saying that they think it is a matter of great pride for the father to be abroad. *“My children knew I was going abroad for a long time. As you know it is very common for Nepalese to go abroad. It is more like a sign of economic prosperity and privilege. Thus, my children are proud that their father is abroad. It is a matter of great pride for my children and are very positive about their life. I think it’s because of their age. My other family members are in Europe who are having a prosperous life thus they are very excited.”*

## **SOCIALICATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

He appeared like a dedicated supporter of Nepalese traditions and culture. His way of socialization is mainly by being part of organizations here in Portugal. He feels a level of dignity and respect being part of the Nepalese groups and associations. *“I work actively to protect and conserve our traditions. Thus, I am involved in so many organization to save our identity and not completely favour westernization. I am involved in many organizations but I have offers from many different since I just came to Lisbon from berry picking job. I want to work for the welfare of people and people in problems.”*

He also views Nepalese in Portugal as a clustered group, *“The segregation of Nepalese societies is quite challenging, everybody is busy with work which does not allow us to stay very much in touch.”*

When asked about his support systems he brought the context of his age which helps him cope with things better. *“With my age, I am mature enough so it is easier to cope with challenges and difficulties here. Sometimes it is also friends and family that help us cope with issues.”*

## **CHALLENGES**

He openly shares details about the challenges he has faced in Portugal and also combines problems of other Nepalese who worked with him in the agricultural farms.

*“Nepalese are mostly in raspberry, strawberry and olive picking. There are many Nepalese in the agricultural field. I think 60-70 percent of people that are employed in the agricultural sector. There is a lot of exploitation in the field of agriculture and are used for their benefits. Most people are paperless and desperate. The agency knows it very well:*

- 1. They do not have registration and do not abide by the rules and laws of the nation*
- 2. They do not give ‘natal’, ‘ferias’ and fooding, lodging. That is basic criteria of government*

3. *They do not pay salary on time. I have faced that on my own which is the main reason for the delay in my paperwork. Mostly in companies from Nepalese, there is major exploitation.*”

He also talked about his struggles with not knowing the Portuguese language *“I don’t speak Portuguese and I have some challenges in let’s say in offices while doing official work, communicating with people and daily life sometimes. However, my work did not require me to speak Portuguese so I am fine.”*

### **FUTURE GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

When asked about future, his first step will be to go back to Nepal if there is an economic/social security. *“In future, I think I would not go back to Nepal until I have a better economic standing. If Nepal have a stable politics and more job opportunities then I would like to go back. That is also an option but for now its economic development and prosperity. I don’t really have a fixed plan on what I really want to do.”*

Yet, for his children he wants to let them have a future in Europe itself. *“After my paperwork is sorted, I would also like to bring my children here since there is few opportunities for jobs. I want my children to settle here but me and my wife want to live here until we are economically sustained.”*

### **RECOMMENDATION**

When asked on his recommendations to future aspiring migrants he was against the idea of migration and critically discussed his own journey and the Nepalese government. *“My suggestion is try not to leave Nepal. It is painful to be abroad. There is everything in Nepal but the government and rule of law is lacking. There are opportunities in Nepal and I would recommend younger generation to think of Nepal as a land of opportunities. The money we spend to come to Europe can be invested there itself.”*

*“Still, I think my suggestion is more for the government. The government should change things for the younger generation so that they do not get frustrated and depressed. They must bring programs and projects that help the youth to be empowered.”*

## **Demographic Information:**

5. Pseudonym: Mahima  
Gender: F  
Education: Diploma in Hotel Management  
Current Occupation: Kitchen Helper  
Previous Occupation: Hotel manager in a resort hotel.  
Age: 42  
Marital Status: Separated  
Age of daughters: 16/14

## **PROFILES OF THE UNDOCUMENTED and FAMILY INFORMATION**

Mahima is a 42 years old woman. She migrated to Portugal alone on a visit visa with the help of consultancies. She was arranged to be part of a conference in France which was a 'set up' by her intermediaries. It was a series of false documentation regarding employment and bank statements to get to Portugal. She paid a staggering amount of 9,000 Euros for her journey to Portugal.

She was married when she was only 16 years old in Nepal but got divorced since the past 5 years. She stayed married for almost 20 years. She then moved to Kathmandu in her new home and got her education in Kathmandu. She was employed in a Resort Hotel as operational manager in Kathmandu. After her divorce, she got the custody of her daughters since the husband got married with someone else. Since then, her mother and father look after her daughters and she is responsible for the upbringing and economic support in the family

## **LENGTH OF SEPARATION FROM FAMILY**

She has been away from her family for 2.5 years now.

## **REASON FOR MIGRATION**

She said that she was not happy with her economic situation there *"I used to work in a hotel in Nepal. My salary was about 20,000 Nepali Rupees (156 Euros). I had the responsibility of raising my two daughters with that salary. My parents did help me in the process of raising my children for the past 5 years. You know Nepal, how it is and how people say so many things. I am not the only daughter in my family. I have two other sisters and both are married. My mother and father own a shop in Nepal and my father is a retired public servant so he also gets his pension."*

## **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

Does not apply here.

## **MIGRATION TRAJECTORY**

### **Preparation**

She reflects on her marital status and the responsibilities at hand back then when she described about her reasons for migrating. *"My life completely turned after I got divorced. I was mostly all by myself. My ex-husband took responsibility of paying for the schooling and education of the girls. However, my salary alone was not enough to sustain the whole family and needs. So, I decided to migrate. First, I thought I would go to the Gulf countries, it is cheaper to get there and the salary is also higher than Nepal. Then my family members did not agree to it saying*

*that going to “gulf” countries is not considered acceptable for educated people and it is not safe for women there.”*

She opened further about her choices of countries and how she got to know about Portugal. *“Then I thought I would go to Germany on a work visa as an Au pair and that is how I met the agents who suggested that Portugal is a great country for getting passports and very good pay. I was very convinced. It was almost the same amount to get to Germany or Portugal. I talked to some other friends who lived in Europe and they said that Portugal is like the major destination of many Nepalese who want to live permanently in Europe.”*

She revealed that certain costs were involved to mark her journey as it happened with the help of an agent and how she managed to gather the costs. *“Then I agreed to the journey and my parents, my daughters also were very understanding thinking that it is an European country. My parents gave me around 4000 Euros and I had some savings and borrowed some money from my relative around 1800 euros. But I will have to pay my parents and relatives.”*

### **Arrival**

She recollects her memories concerning her arriving at the Airport in France, being all nervous because she was sent there with the help of an ‘agent’. *“When I arrived in France my body was shaking. I was nervous and scared thinking what if my documents get caught and if they figure out they were fake. I carried all my CVs in my bag and my education degree. I came here as a reporter for a news agency but my degree was on hotel management. It made me scared but I finally got through the border control and everything. The woman smiled and asked me where I was going and then I said Paris and she wished me well.”*

She memorizes her initial feelings in France and how delighted she was. *“After that I was in France with other people that came with me and it was beautiful. I just wanted to live there (laughs). Then we took a flight to Lisbon and there was no questioning or anything which was quite relieving.”*

She recalls her first week as an awful experience related to housing conditions and the ‘help’ she received from her agent in terms of settling. *“Then, I went to live in a house which was suggested by the agent. The house was in Anjos area and that was a big apartment with 6 rooms. But, we were 14 people living in that apartment and there was only one toilet. There used to be a queue to use the toilet, people knocking on the door of the toilet in the mornings, it was just awful. I had a very gut-wrenching moment when I arrived here. At first, it looked nice but when I went to live there I was shocked. So, I had to share a room with 2 other young girls. I had to pay 100 euros for the room and the room was empty and there was no bed or closet. I had no option at all and then I went to buy a mattress that was all I could afford since I did not even have a job or anything. Also, I knew that I wasn’t going to live there for very long.”*

She then also reflected on how she was there for about a year and some positive aspects of living there. *“I lived there for almost a year as it was the cheapest option available, finding rooms in Lisbon is very difficult. The positive side of living there was that I could make some Nepalese friends who had lived here for many years. That place also helped me find a job in Portugal.”*

### **Settling**

She started her job as a cleaner and then applied for her permit. She said that settling was not a difficult as there were many Nepalese living in the city and sometimes felt like she was in Nepal. *“I was prepared for any kind of job. So, I first started working as a cleaner in a*

restaurant and now I work in the same restaurant. That is where I got in the process of legalization. I got my “social security number” and my job contract. Life in Portugal started changing and I started meeting many people from Nepal who had families back home and were here just like me in search of opportunities. It was easy to adjust since you will meet Nepalese in the parts of Intendente, Alameda, Anjos, Martim Moniz. I feel like I am walking in the streets of Nepal. So many Nepalese restaurants and organizations that always celebrate most of our festivals. There is also a Hindu temple and I love to go there.”

She also said that she got involved in a business entrepreneurship opportunity, while being employed, but it did not work very well for her, adding more financial burden. “Then a friend of mine offered to start a business and he wanted to take care of the business while I worked so with some money I invested in a fruit store. Well that’s a complete different story, let’s not go there.”

### **LEGAL STATUS**

She has applied for a residence permit and is now living in an irregular situation. She also mentions her financial conditions here and her hopes in regularizing her status. “I have applied for a permit and I am now waiting for my papers. This is my only hope as I am almost in the state of bankruptcy while I used all the money to get here and getting a legal status is my only hope to work with the allocated income and have a better future. My legal procedure is also taking time because I started a business with a Nepali friend here by investing 2000 Euros in a Fruit shop, they call in ‘Frutaria’ here. But we could not do good here and that way I lost a lot of money.”

### **CARE ARRANGEMENTS**

When asked about the arrangements of care for her children back home, she says it is done by her parents. “My parents take care of two of my daughters. Whatever they are doing is very commendable. In Nepal, getting a divorce has a huge stigma but since my parents were open minded, it was comparatively easier for them to accept it. I moved to my maternal home with my children after my divorce and my children were already acquainted with living there. It did not take much time for them to adjust as we used to go there frequently even before I got divorced. Like when I used to go to work, my mother would take care of my children and their daily lives. My daughters also help in daily chores since they are already old enough to do everything on their own. It is nice that both grandparents and granddaughters live happily and have shared responsibilities.”

She also gives a hint of what she feels about one of her daughter’s perception on being cared by their grandparents, and brings forward that some misunderstandings do occur when making decisions on caregiving techniques. “My daughters never really complain about the way they are being raised but sometimes my mother says some things if my daughters are not being home on time and do not do everything that the grandparents say. I understand their perspective as well and at those times I get worried their misunderstandings stresses me sometimes. I understand there is a huge generation gap and trying to console and convince them from here is challenging.”

### **ROLE OF REMITTANCES**

She sends home remittances and views it as a form to show affection. She also shares that she does not have any savings for herself as most of her money goes to upbringing and debt clearing. “I send money home regularly. Almost 50 percent of what I earn always goes home



*for my children. I do not really have responsibilities to send to the caregivers. My parents are self-sufficient but I do send gifts from time to time. The money I send home is given to my parents and that way they give it to my girls and manage expenses of their daily life. Remittances is all I can send to them from a distance. That is my way of showing them how much I care. I love them so much and I don't have any savings here, frankly. I know how much they are dependent on my income. So, that is the how it is. Sometimes, I manage to send the money in instalments which I borrowed from my family as well."*

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH SPOUSE**

She is divorced so it does not really apply here. *"My children have a relationship with him when there are festivals and holidays. They go to their father's house. He is now married to another woman and has a child."*

### **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

She feels like it has been more difficult for her children than herself. She believes it was because of the age of her children that makes her feel that long distance parenting isn't all a painful experience. *"I think it is very hard on my children that I am so far away and they are under the care of my parents. They tell me they miss me every day and they have seen all the struggles I have had in life. They are mature and very understanding, which makes it easy."*

She discussed about her daughter's education plans and their dedication to studies. She highlights that life is challenging as a single mother. *"My elder one is in high school and wants to pursue Chartered Accountancy. My younger one is not very good in studies and her future worries me since I am so far away. I think all us parents that migrate do so only for the wellbeing of our children. It's not like single people free of responsibilities but being divorced is like double the responsibility and have a different lifestyle. I think twice before I do unnecessary spending thinking about how it will impact my economic situation."*

She also elaborates on her single status and herself feeling more responsible to her children. *"I really feel sad and like any parent being away is not a pleasant feeling. I think I feel more responsible for my children since I raised them as a single mother for a very long time. It has almost been 5 years now since the divorce and I feel responsible for their happiness. I want to give them everything that they want. I send them phones of their choice but they are not very demanding. They know the struggle that their mother has gone through."*

Her communication with her daughters is facilitated with the help of technology. She feels very happy that her daughters can contact her whenever they want and it is easy for her to be in touch with them. *"Both my daughters have smart phones and have access to internet which makes it easier to communicate with them. They tell me about their day, their school, and the activities they do. We talk about what we ate for lunch, dinner etc... just basic everyday conversations."*

*"They know about my schedule so we talk when I am not at work and it is nice to spend time on the phone with them. I do feel very sorry for our situation. Being a mother, it is more challenging and tough but the only thing that keeps me going is that if I am not going to do this nobody is going to help me and my family out. I am young and capable. I also look at it as a very good opportunity for me as a person. I am away from the bondages and I am free to make life choices. It is not easy to handle and raise two young girls from so far away but I feel like this is the best time I can do anything for the family."*

## **PARENTING STYLES and DISCIPLINING**

She elaborates on her child's age and her friendly behaviour. *"I do feel good about the age I left them at, because it would be very hard for me if they were still little kids and needed the mother. Now they understand, I think as girls they do get very emotional at time and often put my pictures on their Facebook and tag me. But they are also supportive and we are more like friends."*

She also reveals some disagreements with the caregivers and supports the current generation and their needs. *"I do not stand with the idea that woman should be this and that. I often fall in conflicting situations with my parents because they have a way of raising children but now times are changing. I want my girls to grow up as independent and educated individuals. I tell them how to live and as a parent I give them good suggestions in life like respecting elders, making good friends, being in discipline, coming home on time, helping their grandparents, and mostly being focused on studies. I think my elder daughter plays more of my role to discipline the younger daughter and I am very proud of her."*

She also thinks girls in their teenage are very fragile and her parents help them in adapting good behaviours and respect the children.

## **SOCIALICATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

Her socialization depends in terms of her time management and work obligations. *"I used to be a member of the woman's association in Portugal but since I had a strict schedule and due to time constraints, I could not be there in meetings and gatherings all the time. I was very active in the beginning. Maybe it was the energy of coming to Portugal and wanting to do something. Now, I am very busy in my own life work- home etc. So, I don't really socialize so very much and I agree that it gets lonely, but I think it's a story of most parents living without their families abroad."*

She highlights that her mother is one of her main support even while being far. *"The only support system is my mother because I really get along with her. I was the eldest daughter in the family and since she takes care of my children, I am very grateful to her."*

## **CHALLENGES**

She feels she has difficulties trusting people and overcoming the stigma attached to divorce, *"I don't tell many people that I am divorced here. There is a huge community here where most people know most people. It is still a stigma that a woman is divorced and on her own. The Nepalese men do look for chances and think when a woman is divorced it is okay to approach."*

She also shares her struggles with debt which has caused stress in her life and family life. *"I try to stay away from many Nepalese people and only get along with my close friends group who understand me and do not judge me. My journey has not been simple and I have some debt after my migration journey and I had to sell my jewellery and my mother's jewellery. I owe her and some of my relatives. I would be stress free if I pay all my debts because my mother understands but my relatives think that I have plenty of money but I am choosing not to pay them."*

She also explains further on her experience with fellow Nepalese here which has been challenging for her. *"Sometimes, I don't even feel like I am in Portugal, the way this society is, people sit down and backbite about another person. They talk about the person's jobs,*

*background, income, caste, relationship status etc. It is sometimes depressing to see how we are in a progressive society but still are stuck with our same ways. Nepalese here cannot really stand the other person progressing, I have had problems because of the competitive attitude of people but I am still friendly and generous to people here.”*

### **FUTURE GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

She explained about her future ideas for her children while being unsure about them reuniting with her in Portugal. *“I have lived here for the past two and a half years. I do not know yet what I want for future. My children may be able to come here but with the legal documentation procedure and due to age restrictions, I do not know how it will be possible.”*

*“The eldest daughter wants to be a Chartered Accountant and my younger one is still in grade 9. I would not bring my elder one here since she has no interest in moving to Europe but maybe my younger daughter would have some interest in coming here.”*

She also wanted to share her future business endeavours. *“I want to be able to open my own business in the future. When I first came here, I started work from 9 in the morning till 11 pm. I used to get so tired and it has brought numerous stress in your body and life in as well. I don’t want to work under anybody anymore. I have the skills now and I may open a Nepalese restaurant here in the future.”*

When asked about remarriage she answered. *“Maybe if there is understanding and somebody of my choice. I can think about it.”*

### **RECOMMENDATION**

She was very open about what she wanted to recommend for future aspiring immigrants, *“I don’t have anything to say. It is not a dream city and there is no other place like your own motherland. If one has a happy family, migration and the separation is not a great idea. That is my belief. If I had a happy family and we were living in peace, I wouldn’t have opted to come here. One will have to overcome any kinds of challenged and should be ready for it. You will find exploitation and oppression when you are working for someone else.”*

When asked how social workers could possibly help, she answered *“I am not sure how they can help. More than that, I am not sure if we have any right to seek help at all.”*

## **Demographic Information:**

6. Pseudonym: Shreejana  
Gender: F  
Education: High School Graduate  
Current Occupation: Unemployed  
Previous Occupation: Housewife  
Age: 38  
Age of son: 7 years

## **PROFILES OF THE UNDOCUMENTED and FAMILY INFORMATION**

My interviewee's name is Shreejana and she is 38 years old. She is married and has a husband living in Nepal. She has a son who is 7 years old. He is taken care by her husband and the in-laws who live in the same house back in Nepal.

## **LENGTH OF SEPARATION FROM FAMILY**

The interviewee's family can be regarded as a transnational family as they are living apart from each other. The family has been separated for over a year because the legislation and immigration laws bar the families to reunite. She is living in an irregular situation without a valid visa or permit.

## **REASON FOR MIGRATION**

The interviewee mentions that her life in Nepal became quite difficult once her husband came back from a country where he was working. The expenses started getting too much and child bearing? was expensive in Kathmandu. She wanted the best for her child and his future. Thus, she decided to migrate.

## **MIGRATING EXPERIENCES BEFORE PORTUGAL**

When asked about her own experiences she said that she hasn't migrated anywhere before coming to Europe, but has been to Denmark as she came on a tourist visa to Denmark. *"I first came to Denmark on a tourist visa but that only to make an entry in Europe to come to Portugal."*

She also mentioned how migration was a trend in her family and many family members have migrated before. *"I haven't travelled but my husband and my own siblings have migrated. My husband has been and lived in 2 different countries. Most of my family members are abroad."*

## **MIGRATION TRAJECTORY**

### **Preparation**

When asked about her preparation she mentions that she was curious and was looking up to her sibling's lifestyle which looked very beautiful. *"I was curious. My brothers and sisters used to live here and they were living a very prosperous life and had everything they wanted."* Her family also supported her decision-making process. *"My in-laws and husband also thought that Portugal is a good destination since it is a European country and mostly because I had my siblings living in Portugal."*

She mentioned her further motivations to migrate by saying: *"I was on a tourist visa, I spent 14 lakhs NPR (11000\* Euros). If I thought of going abroad on student visa, I can't as I do not*

*have higher education and because of my age. So many students go to Denmark, Norway, London but eventually end up here, so I thought it was okay.”*

### **Arrival**

She arrived in Copenhagen, Denmark, in the beginning and then marked her journey to Portugal. *“I arrived in Copenhagen last year and it was beautiful. People were so good looking and the weather was not the best but I was ready for it. My agent helped me to find a place to stay and I did not understand everything. However, we were a group of 5 people together on our journey to Portugal. It was easier. But, I travelled to Switzerland to meet my sister in law.”*

She spent her first two months travelling and meeting her relatives. She then came to Portugal in 2017 and reunited with her siblings. *“I was very happy to see my siblings after many years. They are also living in an irregular way and they aren’t married yet.”*

When asked about her feelings when she first arrived in Lisbon, she said. *“I was delighted and my happiness knew no bounds. Then we went to my brother’s house and I saw that the house was very old and rooms were full of cracks.”* She also mentioned that many other people shared the house. She had to share her room with her sister, who made the room vacant for her arrival. Which means, she was sharing her room with some other roommate before she got there. *“I expected that the housing would be luxurious and beautiful but it is very expensive that what I had imagined.”* But she also thinks that it may be because of the cost of living here is high.

### **Settling**

When asked questions related to settling she mentioned that she was jobless for a month and the money she brought from Nepal was almost expended after she came from Switzerland and Denmark to Portugal. Her agent was no longer part of their settlement/paperwork process. *“I was on my own once I came here. It is because of my brother and sister that I got employed only after a month of arriving here. I worked for 4 months but did not get a contract and instead got fired.”*

When asked further on her reasons to get fired, she said *“I demanded my boss for a valid contract and help in the legalization process, but she instead asked me to leave. In the beginning, they promised to give me a contract after they liked my work and they started telling my other Nepali colleague that I don’t understand her language or English.”*

She is currently looking for a job and understands that her language skills are barriers for her to be in the job market. *“Now I am looking for a job. I get offers because I know so many people here but I don’t understand English or Portuguese. I am from the village and I passed school leaving certificate from a government school where the language of training was Nepalese. That is why I have problems with English language.”* When asked about her interest in learning Portuguese she answered, *“I took Portuguese lesson for 15 days in my initial days. Then, I got a job at the restaurant and I was working from 10 in the morning until 11 PM. Then I did not have any time to attend the classes.”*

She said that she was prepared for the paperwork necessary for the legalization to be made here in Portugal, but still felt a huge difference in relation to what was previously mentioned. She is baffled with the idea of contract and social security number. She says *“Contract...social...at work they say do you have social? But without contract you can’t have a social. My brother used to say different things in the beginning but currently everyone is asking me for social*

security. *Isn't it all jumbled up?*" It was clear that she was frustrated and irritated with her situation.

### **LEGAL STATUS**

She described her legal status by saying she was 'illegal' here. *"I came on a Schengen tourist visa. Now I am illegal as my visa has already expired. I don't know when will I ever get legal. I worked for 4 months and did not get a contract."*

She also shared her dilemma with the social security and job contract *"As I told you they promised me a contract in the beginning but later wanted me to continue without a valid contract, so now I am looking for a job that I can at least enter the legal system."*

She is trying to get in the process of legalization but not a single step has been taken which delays her process of receiving legal residence permit. *"I have a problem of language...I do get job offers but I don't speak any English or Portuguese."*

### **CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND ROLE OF REMITTANCES**

The main care takers at home are her in-laws and her husband. *"My husband takes care of our son with the help of his parents."* She says that the care is still not like it could have been and expresses dissatisfaction in not being able to be present in their life. She hasn't been able to send money back home and there wasn't any role of remittances in her case. *"I haven't been able to work thus there is no chance of remittances sending. I have used our savings to settle here without a job and the money I received while I was working is spent on the living expenses."*

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH SPOUSE**

She shares that her husband is supportive but does not want to move to Portugal. *"My husband does not want to join me in Portugal and I am trying to convince him to come here."* It shows that her period of separation is unknown and she shared that she is having some conflicting decision making in her marital life.

*"He is very supportive. I don't have to send remittances since back home they have a side income. We have a home and we have a side income with a small grocery shop. My heart is in Nepal with my family. I am not pressured so thanks to my husband."*

She thinks that gender plays a role in her struggling days. She shares *"If I was a man it would be far more frustrating in terms of sending money back home. But you know even as a woman there is more flexibility, I also have taken loans but it will take a very long time to recover the cost I gave to come here. My husband is also making money to get rid of some debts we have at home. I hope god will bless us."*

### **LONG DISTANCE PARENTING AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

She believes that she could have come here in her younger years so she could have her paperwork by now. *"I am thinking I took a lot of time to come here. I see so many parents abroad and I wish I did it 2-3 years ago. I would have been stable enough by now."*

She shared her experience of long distance parenting and expressed that she felt guilty as a mother by leaving her child behind, she said: *"Nobody can care for a child like a mother. In that way I feel so guilty. The first two months I would spend without sleeping at night,*

*sometimes cried for leaving my child behind and sometimes feeling helpless in this country. It was very difficult time for me.”*

She then also looked at her migration with a positive lens and related it with empowerment, *“Then I see how women are empowering and being independent. I also want to be self-dependent. So, in a way long distance parenting is not a big problem.” “As a mother, I should not just be traditional and play role of a mother. We are very strong women and I was raised feeling like being a woman is not an obstruction for progress. You know still in Nepal they don’t send females abroad but I broke the boundaries. People who went to school with me are still in villages, at least going to Kathmandu and now coming to Portugal is great.”* She also gave instances of other women. *“Some women have left kids when they are 3-4 months old you know? At least I have been with my son ever since he was born and now he is 6 years old.”*

She mentions that her efforts are solely for her son’s bright future and the desire to provide him. *“I may work hard now but my son will have a great future. These days, after the kids graduate from high school, their main target is to go abroad. Life in Nepal is so tough, I could not maintain a good standard for raising my child in Nepal. I could not educate my child in a quality school. You know how new techniques in education and schools are coming.”*

She reminiscence her past days and says. *“Before I came to Portugal, I thought it would take at least 3 years that I will not see him. Of course, his father can take care of him but even when I prepared back there. I started crying from the airport. He did not know anything. I had never taken an airplane before. I was stressed...I felt like this is it...the separation is real and uncertain.” “First few months I was very sad and lonely but when I got a job I got busy and bringing my child here would be possible. So, I consoled myself.”*

*“I always gave my son the best from the very base, I pay 70 euros a month for my child. But our income was about 200 euros. Then I calculated the cost when he finished high schools. The admission fees and everything crosses 200 euros. I think it is positive that I am here and situation will get better when I will start earning.”*

Then she talks about the role of technology in long distance parenting, which is very crucial but admits that it does not sufficient. *“Of course, use of technology is good. Without messenger, viber and video chat it would be so difficult. He knows I am abroad and happy to be here. I talk to my son and husband every day on the phone. When I was working I could not really communicate so much. If sometimes, there is problem with internet, you know in Nepal sometimes it rains and the power cuts.”*

She adds, *“I can see my boy dance and sing online. He shows me all that he has learnt at school, even a new poem or rhymes. It’s just so nice but when I turn it off it’s all gone. I really miss him very much.”*

## **PARENTING STYLES**

When asked about what kind of role she incorporates as a mother, she says *“I am very friendly. I want to be very accepting just like a friend. I am like that with my parents and in-laws. We are not strict. I will let him do what he wants to do in life and in career.”*

She also shares that her husband has similar thoughts regarding parenting: *“My husband even says that our son and he are friends and we never pressurize or threaten him. We have never*

*used force and punishment with beating. We love him and want to understand him. I tell my husband also about it that disciplining should be taken care of.”*

She also reflects on what kind of parent she will be in the future. *“In the future, we can’t leave him entirely free, just making friends. I would motivate him to make good friends who can motivate him and won’t push him to bad habits. When I say friendly behaviour, it’s not like extreme freedom. I would want to know all that he does with internet and mobile.”*

### **SOCIALIZATION AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

When asked about her socialization and affiliating with Nepalese associations, she replied; *“I don’t know who is NRN or Nepalese society. I live with my brother and sister. I went to the Portuguese class and met some Nepalese. Since I am a mother, a wife, I can’t go everywhere. I get scared being a woman going around alone.”* She also indicates that her gender roles do not allow her to go out and socialize more other than her limited family members.

She adds further about her perception of general Nepalese, *“People will talk about me and my character since I came here leaving everything behind. I haven’t seen much or met many people. The society here is also very dangerous. I have heard that many people are married back home but here are living with other people’s husbands or wives. I better not know anybody or anything.”* Which clearly shows that she had no interest in mingling with people and making friends.

Although she said that she was very positive and felt empowered as a woman but she wanted to stick to the orthodox values which prohibit her in being very social or making connections outside the family.

### **CHALLENGES**

She indicates that not knowing Portuguese and English language has been one of the major challenges here in Portugal. *“Language is a great challenge even when I go shopping, when I go to a restaurant or even look for work. Portuguese society takes so much importance in their language and its good for them. I even think we should do that in Nepal.”*

She further mentions that the classes are also packed which makes learning difficult for her. *“I suffer and feel ashamed that I don’t know English. The classes are also so packed and the trainer gives more priority to the ones that are regular and faster. I feel shy to ask questions that I don’t understand.”*

She thinks that her unemployment and paperwork issues are her main worries *“The visa and legal status is very frustrating. Every day I feel bizarre. Although it’s safe to go around while the police do not ask you questions or nobody really but I just want to do something rather than staying idle.”* She also adds by blaming her own decision to migrate concerning her current situation; *“I can’t have a voice in any kind of exploitation I face. But anyway, I can’t expect rights as it is my mistake to come here. I don’t have a visa to remain in this country. People will exploit me so I can’t say anything.”*

She does have slight knowledge of her rights as well when she indicates; *“I have heard that SEF takes actions when they find you red-handed working illegally and being abused by the business owners. I wished SEF would come for cross check and see me working like that. I have heard we do have some rights.”*



She feels deceived and exploited by her previous employer *“I was told that I would be given a work contract but in fact I was given false promise. The owners were very old and they would scold me almost every day. I could understand by the way they would talk to me that they were rude. So, I understood in the beginning that it was because they were ageing and stayed quiet as our values don’t make us object our bosses.”*

### **FUTURE GOALS AND PROSPECTS**

She feels stressed and anxious of her present and future. *“I have great tension and pain in my heart. Everyone has a price to come to Europe so there is no point in separation. More doors will open for opportunities. The future for my child is important. We’ve been married 9 years, hearts change you never know the world is changing. It is very important to save my relationship in my family. I am only left with tension and imaginations so it is too much.”*

She wants to reunite with her husband first so that things can go steady in terms of her relationship and finances. *“I want to reunite with my husband because I do have a fear that if this distance elongates we will have problems. I fear that he may find somebody else or the in-laws would make him change his mind.”*

Her main agenda is for now to have her husband to migrate in Portugal. *“For my husband to come here, we have to find more money. He will also use tourist visa because family migration won’t be possible. If I have single income, it is impossible to make a decent life. This time we will keep our land in bank so that the process can go on. If I cannot make paper by myself then at least with his skills we can make papers. You know family is the most important and money shouldn’t be a problem. It’s not so great in Nepal. We can be together and in peace in times of troubles”*

She wants to keep the child back in Nepal even until she receives her paperwork. *“I will let my kid be with my in-laws and my family. We both can earn together and put the kid in school as a day borders so my parents are not pressured and he can be guided by teachers. He will be busy with activities at school since my parents won’t have so much time and energy for activities.”*

*“I don’t want to keep my kid in a hostel but he should grow with family environment and care. I don’t know how long this will be with so much of uncertainty. I think it will be 3-4 more years at least. I think my son will catch up with the education when he comes. He will almost be 10 years old.”*

### **RECOMMENDATION**

She has positive recommendations for upcoming migrants. She shares her positive perception of living in Portugal *“People in Nepal are also becoming successful and have a great future. For me, living here has been a better experience than living in Nepal because sometimes Nepal isn’t a place to make a living. The income is better than Nepal and there is a great environment. We can wear what we want, there is freedom, not much discrimination and everything is modern. I would say that it is a great place and people will really make it if they have some skills or know the language.”*