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Erasmus

**Educated Rural Youth Leaving the Countryside,
a Development Failure?
Investigating the (dis)connection between rural development,
youth transitions and scholarship programme in
Sindhupalchok district, Nepal**

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Disclaimer:

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List of Acronyms

CCU-S	Coffee Cooperative Union-Sindhupalchok
DV	Diverse Visa
ECD	Early Childhood Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HCT	Human Capital Theory
JTA	Junior Technical Assistant
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PRA	Practical Rural Assistant
PCC	Primary Coffee Cooperative
RP	Research Paper
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
ToC	Theory of Change
TPO	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
TSLT	Technical School Leaving Certificate
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education Training

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Abstract

This research explores the interaction between educated rural youths' mobilities and community development by following the twelve JTA (Junior Technical Assistant) Scholarship receivers' life trajectories. The study centres on the main research question: *Why did they not return to the Sindhupalchok district?* The analytical framework is used to dissect the diverse dimensions of receivers' mobilities within the youth and agrarian studies. I employ the ethnographic approach to analyse twelve receivers' life trajectories in-depth through participant observation. It shows their diverse decision-making, from applying for the scholarship to the lives after graduation. The findings reveal the societal elements behind the mobilities, generally considered an 'individual phenomenon'.

Drawing on the framework of the youth transition, I analyse their education-to-work transitions as life pathways. The factors that shape their pathways are socially generated aspirations. Also, they are affected by the uncertainties derived from unstable circumstances. Consequently, mobilities do not simply arise by individual willings but are created by social dimensions, which comprise complicated elements depending on one's caste, gender, socio-economic situation, etc. And they seek a destination that provides them with sufficient income. In this context, the rural communities cannot be the youths' pathways' destination – not because of conflict of the resource redistribution, but because the present capacities of rural communities cannot provide appropriate income sources. However, the receivers who left the Sindhupalchok district have not found their destination yet.

Consequently, the paper argues the JTA scholarship receivers' youth transitions are not finished yet because they have not reached their destination, the sufficient income to maintain their lives. Namely, they can repeat returning and leaving in their pathways like previous community returnees. Hence, their mobilities should not be judged a 'failure' of rural development; instead, it is significant to find a way to make them participate in rural development by considering their youth transition.

Relevance to Development Studies

This research is relevant to development studies by analysing rural youths' mobilities with youth transition and the social factors that shaped it. This research shows the different approaches from the dominant development that the youth should stay in their regions to contribute to local development. Youths' education-to-work transition cannot be a linear process due to their socially produced aspirations and confronting uncertainty derived from their social circumstances. In this context, mobility is their negotiation to overcome the situation. This study applied the ethnographic approach to dissect JTA scholarship receivers' life pathways and interaction with community development. Finally, the conclusion of this research suggests changing the perspective on the rural youths' mobilities.

Keywords

Rural Youth; Scholarship; Youth Transition; Aspiration; Uncertainty; Generation Problem; Nepal

Chapter 1

Introduction: The Twelve Youths' Stories

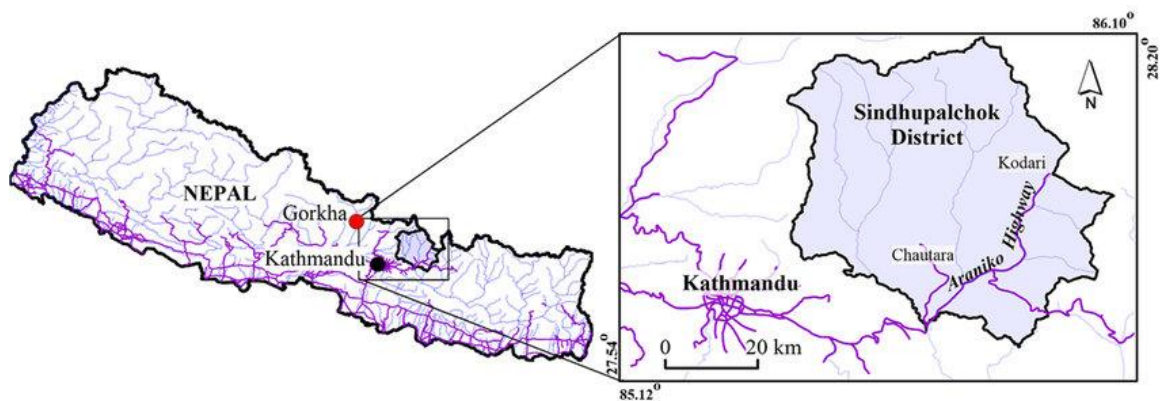
1.1 The Scholarship Programme: From Community Recovery to Mobility Trajectories

“Asha¹, we were so satisfied with the scholarship programme at first because our children could study with it, but now... oho... They did not return. You said they would return. We expected they would return here and work with us in the cooperative. But still, it did not happen. I am so frustrated with it.” (Dhan Bahadur Pandit, 50, Chair of Ichok PCC)

"We know they would not return, although they agreed to the condition in the selection interview. But we cannot blame them because there is no job here for life management. Also, we think if they moved somewhere and did their farming or got a job in the other area's government, it would be no problem." (Mundu Thapa, 38, Chair of Coffee Cooperative Union Sindhupalchok)

The two quotes highlight significant differences in how two community leaders evaluated the development intervention that has a central place in this research paper, namely, the Junior Technical Assistant (JTA) scholarship programme. Following the intervention's stated aim, indeed, it failed because most receivers did not return. However, as Mundu said, the scholarship programme still had social effects, impacting individual recipients, their families and arguable the community at large. Moreover, it would be wrong to consider these effects as mere 'failure'. In both opinions, the most significant matter was the receivers' mobilities. However, merely distinguishing the receivers' mobilities was insufficient to explain the interaction between youths and community development. Thus, this research will explore the leaving of scholarship receivers and its impacts on community development, focusing on the reasons for their mobility. Furthermore, it would seek to develop the rural community with a changed youth context. To find the reasons for the receivers' leaving, reviewing the JTA scholarship programme is necessary.

Map 1
Map of Sindhupalchok district



Source: Namaste Sindhupalchowk October 01, 2022²

¹ My Nepali name, means 'hope'

² <https://www.namastesindhupalchowk.com/blog/sindhupalchowk-district-profile>

On April 25, 2015, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.6 broke out in Nepal. It struck 35 districts, with around 8,790 casualties and 22,300 injuries, with around NRS 706 billion (USD 7 billion) value losses. According to the government of Nepal, the damages and losses were one-third of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 2013-14. Also, the expected amount required to recover losses and damages over several years was USD 6.7 billion. (National Planning Commission, 2015, pp. XI-XXII). Sindhupalchok district recorded the most severe damage and losses in Nepal, with 2,071 casualties, 1,608 injuries, and 100 per cent of houses destroyed (Shakya, 2016, p.77).

The Fair Trade partner of the Coffee Cooperative Union-Sindhupalchok (CCU-S), Beautiful Coffee Korea and Nepal supported recovery projects implemented in the aftermath of the earthquake starting from July 2015. CCU-S itself was also hard hit. 62 deaths and 133 injuries out of 503 members were recorded. There was the loss of 4,058 livestock, 5T of coffee and all coffee-producing and processing facilities (Beautiful Coffee Korea, 2016).

Figure 1
Earthquake Damages in Sindhupalchok



Source: Beautiful Coffee Korea, 2015

Given Sindhupalchok district's vulnerability to natural disasters like landslides, floods and other acute crises, the partners of CCU-S implemented a host of recovery projects, including a JTA scholarship programme, which is the focus of this research paper. I was Head of the Nepal Centre of Beautiful Coffee Korea and was in charge of the recovery projects from September 2015 to April 2019. The JTA scholarship programme was supported by the private Babonnum Foundation in Korea and implemented from 2017 to 2019 with twelve receivers over two batches (the second batch graduated in 2020).

As the manager, my technical goal for the scholarship programme - the last programme of the recovery project - was to continue the outcomes of the previous activities. At first, our team listened to the opinions of CCU-S on the last programme. They strongly recommended the scholarship programme, which could allow their children to continue their studies despite the economic difficulties after the earthquake. Following the members' recommendations, we decided to support a scholarship for the JTA course at Jiri Technical School, Nepal's highest-level agricultural technical school in Jiri municipality, Dolaka district.

When our team designed the programme, the main concern was how scholarships granted youth to contribute to the coffee community. Because we recognised the significant role of government officers in community development through the earthquake recovery process, we set the programme's goal as 'fostering the scholarship receivers as government technical officers to contribute to community development'. We contemplated it could be the long-term solution for earthquake recovery. Moreover, at that time, village-level government offices generally had 5-6 agricultural technicians; therefore, we assumed the twelve village-level government offices could hire them when they returned. Also, we supposed if

receivers would not become government officers, they could at least become agriculture experts who could contribute to the coffee community. Consequently, we put the condition for the grant: *all recipients must return to the Sindhupalchok district after graduation* (Beautiful Coffee Korea, 2019).

The Jiri Technical School's course had eighteen months for each batch, comprising one year of study and six months of on-the-job training (OJT). The scholarship comprehensively supported the receivers, including all school fees, study materials, living expenses, and organising OJT places. As a result, all twelve scholarship receivers passed the course and obtained a JTA certificate. Therefore, I expected they would return to the Sindhupalchok district with their highly qualified skills to contribute to the community as promised in the selection process.

In April 2023, three years after the second batch's graduation, I traced their lives for this research. I found none of them had become government technical officials, and eight had left the district for work and/or marriage, including overseas migration. In addition, only two scholarship recipients ended up working in agriculture.

1.2 Unpacking the Intervention

Based on the intervention's Theory of Change (ToC), the scholarship programme could be considered a failure. However, as Mosse(2006) argued, this binary of the success and failure of the development hid the 'local social effects of development interventions'. He added it kept misleading and prevented revealing socially valued outcomes (Mosse, 2006, p. 940). Indeed, a simple diagnosis of 'intervention failure' for the scholarship programme excludes investigating the impact of their mobilities on their community. Also, the research shows that their not returning was wrongly translated as an aversion to farming or living in rural areas. Moreover, it ignored the effects of their mobilities, like individual growth and indirect contributions to the community through their families. Consequently, in-depth analysis, which would be out of the binary evaluations for the scholarship programme, is required to explore not for the superficial mobilities themselves but for the reasons behind them intertwined with social circumstances.

The scholarship programme is based on a number of assumptions that are common in development interventions targeting youth. First, the scholarship programme was based on the linear approach to the youth transition, 'education to work'. The scholarship programme assumed investing in academically capable youth through supporting scholarship would raise their human capital further, which was assumed to be sufficient for receivers to enter their desired labour market. Thus, the programme treated receivers as resources for community development, following Human Capital Theory (HCT) (World Bank, 2006). However, education could not ensure jobs due to the oversupply of higher education and vocational training (Ansell et al., 2020, pp.21-22). It was the same as the scholarship: it could not ensure the employment of the receivers.

In addition, the scholarship programme assumed a stable, predictable and localised social environment. However, the social context changed, and the receivers encountered uncertainty in their transition. Most notably, the imagined government jobs were abolished. Johnson-Hanks(2005) explained that when people encounter uncertainty from social circumstances that individuals cannot control, they choose to respond effectively rather than make a good plan and follow it (Johnson-Hanks, 2005, p.376). For the receivers, these choices changed their transition from a linear process. Simultaneously, the social circumstances generated the aspirations which reshaped their transitions to achieve their goals. Namely, the aspirations were socially produced, not simply from individuals (Appadurai, 2004, p.67).

Hence, the scholarship programme should have considered the receivers' flux social circumstances.

Lastly, the scholarship programme had the spatially limited condition that one 'must return to the Sindhupalchok district'. It only focused on the Sindhupalchok district, not acknowledging that many households and youths' horizons were trans-local. Korzenevica and Agergeerd(2017) argued about 'multi-local household' in Nepal's context. They argued that increasing mobilities changed the Nepali traditions regarding migration. It changed by breaking the line between the migrants and stayers and admitting that the household could exist in multiple locations - reflecting the situation of exchanging and negotiating family positions regarding mobilities (Korzenevica and Agergaard, 2017, pp. 135-136). However, the programme employed a binary view that only returning receivers could contribute to community development. Despite existing external contributions like remittances and other support from the migrated community members, the programme only admitted physical locations.

The JTA scholarship programme had planned to foster local agricultural leaders to contribute to community development. However, the programme's assumptions overlooked the social elements and its generating aspirations, which could reshape the scholarship receivers' education to work transitions. As a result, it was disconnected from the diverse social dimensions of the communities due to the overall structure ignoring the programme's social factors. Hence, this research will analyse the twelve scholarship receivers' life pathways, focusing on their mobility trajectories to reveal the interactions between their youth transitions and community development.

1.3 Research Questions

This research will follow the twelve receivers' life pathways to analyse the JTA scholarship programme and related factors with the following questions.

Why did scholarship receivers not return to Sindhupalchok?

- a. How does scholarship produce aspirations, and how do these shape mobilities' trajectory (spatially, temporarily and occupationally) of receivers, and what are the impacts of mobilities on receivers and their families?
- b. What futures do scholarship receivers view as desirable, and how are spaces intertwined with them?
- c. What are villagers' opinions on receivers' mobilities, and what are the differences between the views of villagers and receivers?

1.4 Structure

Having introduced the background of the JTA scholarship programme, unpacked its assumptions and introduced the questions guiding this research paper. Chapter 2 provides the analytical framework to dissect the twelve scholarship receivers' life pathways. Notably, the framework will focus on answering the reasons for their mobilities and their effect on themselves, their families, and their communities. Chapter 3 shows the methodology and method used in this research. It also provides the basic information of the twelve scholarship receivers. Chapter 4 analyses the twelve receivers' first aspirations for the scholarship, emphasising how social circumstances generated them. Chapter 5 shares the stories of migrated and returned receivers to show the effectiveness of societal factors on their life pathways. Chapter 6 presents diverse opinions of community members regarding the receivers' mobilities and shares ideas about community development. Chapter 7 concludes the study by answering the research questions and summarising the findings, including reflections.

Chapter 2

Introducing Analytical Lenses

This chapter introduces the key building blocks which underpin the analytical framework. The framework presents comprises four major analytical lenses in this research: youth transition, aspiration, uncertainty and generation problem. First, this chapter presents the youth transition from education to work as the pathway, which differs from the JTA scholarship programme's assumption, 'the linear process'. I will explain why the transitions are close to the shape of pathways with a theoretical argument. Second, aspiration is presented as the key concept that translates the motivations of receivers' decisions. Notably, this lens emphasises socially generated aspirations. Third, uncertainty explains why the receivers' aspirations and their decisions were not easy to predict in their pathways. The key theories explain why uncertainty is not fatalism by explaining the factors that make individuals confront it. Lastly, the generation problem introduced the lens to dissect relations between the receivers and the community. The theory shows how their mobilities are analysed from the rural communities' perspectives. The four lenses lay across the questions and will guide the twelve receivers' life trajectories.

2.1 Youth Transition- Life Pathway

This research uses the idea of 'youth transition' analytically. Wyn and White(1997) explained that 'transition' is a metaphor for youth becoming adults. They presented the tension between different forms, demonstrating the situations of youths from education to work. The first form was getting structured opportunities to transition smoothly from education to profession. In this case, the shape of the transition was linear. On the other hand, the others experienced failures and encountered negotiations derived from their circumstances – their transition could not be linear (Wyn and White, 1997).

It is difficult for the youth in developing countries to have a linear transition. Firstly, the employment market, considered a transition destination, has grown 'uncertainty, precarity and ambivalence under the neo-liberal global economy' (Cuzzocrea, 2020, p.64). Remarkably, in Nepal, the complicated education system '10+2+BA' (ten years of secondary education + two years of higher education + three or four years for a Bachelor's degree) reduced the rural youths' accessibility to higher education because there is no higher school in remote areas. Also, the education quality was not appropriate for formal work. Maoist conflicts, which lasted around thirty years, worsened the situation (Basnet, Timmerman and van der Linden, 2021, p.4). Also, for rural youths in developing countries, vocational training was the option for entering the employment market under unstable economic conditions. However, Chea and Huijsman(2018) showed how problematic technical and vocational education training (TVET) can be for rural youths. They pointed out the mismatch between government policies and practical professions, notably the informal economy-centred training in Cambodia and Laos. (Chea and Huijsmans, 2018). Namely, the restriction of approaching education and poor vocational training for decent work in the fluid employment market increased rural youths' uncertainty. It bothered their youth transition.

Additionally, the linear transition could not demonstrate youths' 'encompassing fears, dilemmas, anxieties, and hidden costs' to adulthood (Cuzzocrea, 2020, p.62). It could not explain the unexpectancy derived from societal elements such as 'social inequalities, poverty, racial discrimination, and socio-cultural factors. Thus, the youth transition could not be linear (Basnet, Timmerman and van der Linden, 2021, p.2).

Consequently, explaining the Nepal scholarship receivers' transition would require a 'life pathway' rather than a linear process. Wyn and White(1997) demonstrated the metaphor of 'pathway' as an explanation of 'roads' with 'maps' towards the 'destination'(Wyn and White, 1997b, p.99). The receivers encountered various unexpected events and variables from their surroundings on the roads heading to their destination, 'stable lives'. Thus, the pathways would be more appropriate for analysing their lives. Also, their mobilities were non-linear but close to roundabout and discontinuous ways. Notably, it could not be judged as success or failure due to its continuity derived from transitions' diverse forms (Basnet, Timmerman and van der Linden, 2021, pp.2-3, refer to Wood, 2017). In Nepal's context, mobilities were closer to 'embedding positioning between classes and life-course stages' rather than leaving or staying (Korzenevica and Agergaard, 2017, p. 126, referred to Young and Jeffrey, 2012). Thus, multi-local households were also possible due to the family members' mobilities. In other words, the varied forms of mobility depended on their agencies, not forming the linear or fixed. (Korzenevica and Agergaard, 2017). Hence, I will apply the life pathway in this research for analysing scholarship receivers' mobilities.

2.2 Aspiration – Shaping Life Pathways

The twelve scholarship receivers' life pathways were affected by and generative of diverse aspirations. Although all of them were from the same district and were children of farmers, their aspirations were shaped differently by their social conditions \. To explain scholarship receivers' mobilities, I will analyse their life pathways with the frame of aspirations.

In this study, I build on the premise that aspirations are socially produced and cannot be reduced to individual properties or characteristics. Appadurai(2004) defined aspirations as 'certainly have something to do with wants, preferences, choices, and calculations'. He emphasised that aspirations are not 'simply individual' - they interact with the 'thick of social life'. He described this interaction with 'no self outside a social frame, setting, and mirror'. (Appadurai, 2004, p.67). Along the same line, he explored in all societies that aspirations are about universal desires: good life, health and happiness. Namely, individuals desire a good life, but different social circumstances create gaps. He described it as the 'cultural capacity to aspire'. However, it did not mean 'poor cannot wish', but the poverty derived from the social context and circumstances interrupted individuals' opportunity to practice.(Appadurai, 2004, pp.68-69). Consequently, the different social circumstances create different ranges of aspirations.

Zipin et al.(2015) theorised that socially produced aspirations with the concept of doxic, habituated and emergent aspiration. (Zipin et al., 2015). In this research, I apply the concept of doxic and habituated aspirations to analyse the youths' life pathways. Zipin et al.(2015) explained doxic aspiration 'grounded in populist—ideological mediations'(Zipin et al., 2015, p. 231). Government policies, programmes and practices could be the medium of doxic aspirations. Specifically, the 'low socioeconomic status(SES)' groups could raise their aspirations arising from the social apparatus and be frustrated due to lacking capacities. Education takes a role here by not solving the inequality that caused the frustration but consolidating it through making them dream, and if they fail to achieve, the responsibility is taken on by the individual (Zipin et al., 2015, pp.227-231). In Nepal's context, doxic aspiration operated that the education policies support marginalised groups to aspire; however, they were frustrated by the inequalities structured by their ingrained societies' stratified system (Pradhan, Wallenius and Valentin, 2023, p. 14).

Regarding habituated aspirations, Zipin et al. (2015) argued habitus aspirations are 'grounded in biographic—historical legacies, embedded as 'habitus' ' (Zipin et al., 2015a, p. 231). Habituated aspirations are emanated from someone's social-structural position. It is

different from doxic aspirations; the habituated aspirations emphasise the limitations. Thus, the two kinds of aspirations clashed in the individuals' lives (Zipin et al., 2015a, pp.233-236). Because Nepal has a robust caste system, habituated aspirations could significantly affect the youths' life pathways. Indeed, Appadurai (2004) singled out the 'fate, rebirth, caste duty, and sacred social hierarchies' as the elements comprising discriminated society (Appadurai, 2004, p.65). In Nepal, these elements restrict youths and their families from aspiring for their future. It was related to the economic capacities but closer to cultural capacities to aspire (Appadurai, 2004).

Additionally, it is necessary to analyse the rural youth's aspirations intertwined with places. Depending on the situation, the place could be considered as the aspiration itself. In the context of Nepal, Pigg (1992) argued that the cities were considered 'development' and villages were 'opaque' because of Nepal's development context following westernisation - namely, the urban and rural areas were considered 'social spaces' (Pigg, 1992). Remarkably, she argued that education reinforced this discriminated perspective; Pigg (1992) summarised it as 'elites are already in the future because they are more *bikasi* (developed), while villagers remain in the past or, at best, an inadequate present' (Pigg, 1992, p.501). She emphasised that these villagers' ignorance was from considering them as a minimalised culture (Pigg, 1992, p. 505, referred from Appadurai, 1988). In other words, for educated scholarship receivers, the cities or other countries out of Sindhupalchok district could be where they developed dreams of having a Westernised job.

Doxic and habituated aspirations were created by social interactions. They included the youths' 'a will to believe and act' or 'wane' (Huijsmans, Ansell and Froerer, 2021, p.4, referred Zipin et al. 2020, p. 2). The spatiality of the aspirations created by dominant discrimination catalysed youths' mobilities by devaluing the 'villages'. Eventually, considering their complex social dynamics, the youths decided whether to follow particular aspirations.

In this research, aspiration would be pivotal in exploring why the receivers decided to leave or return and what they desired. I will focus on how their socially produced aspirations impact individuals' life pathways and how they could be related to community development.

2.3 Uncertainty – Negotiation to Keep Aspiration

The uncertainty was a variable in the youths' life pathways. It could transform one's life direction, and mobilities could accompany it. When youths encountered uncertainty, they tried to find a way to negotiate to keep their aspiration. Various global reasons and regional contexts provoked uncertainty. The youths considered diverse strategies to encounter it.

Johnson-Hanks (2005) explained that extreme uncertainty generated a particular pre-structure to not acting recklessly. According to her, the reason for this chronic experience of uncertainty creates habitus, and it makes one avoid the choice required to commit an unclear, notably closer to impossible, future (Johnson-Hanks, 2005). Generally, the reasons for uncertainty were derived from social and economic unsustainability. However, it was also affected by regional context. Indeed, Johnson-Hanks also pointed out the ambivalence across the legitimacy, viability, and even morality in Cameroon's regional context (Johnson-Hanks, 2005, p. 366). Specifically, Cameroon's crisis created unstable circumstances which could not predict the future for planning or aspiring.

Jeffery and McDowell (2004) described the reasons for the current youths' uncertainty, primarily describing neoliberal economics and social change (Jeffrey and McDowell, 2004, p.131). They explained government disinvestment in welfare measures, transnational economic competition, high unemployment rates, and economic recession that pushed youths and their families. Consequently, it expanded the youth period through the delay in entering

a profession or shortened due to responding to the family's economic needs (Jeffrey and Mcdowell, 2004, pp.135-136). Global economic recession and neo-liberal economic structures generated uncertainties in youths' lives, and, as Johnson-Hanks(2005) analysed in Cameroon's case, they encounter it with their present available resources.

The uncertainty required youth to make choices. The youths choose depending on their circumstances and conditions. Johnson-Hanks(2005) pointed it out as 'judicious opportunism'. She demonstrated that 'judicious opportunism' could distinguish the promising and unpromising to adopt the moment with flexible actions (Johnson-Hanks, 2005, p.370). However, she added that in particular cases with higher uncertainty, 'judicious opportunism' could not be applied, and in this case, people followed the situation without choice. She emphasised it was not fatalistic (Johnson-Hanks, 2005, p. 377). Namely, the youths would set their negotiations when they encountered uncertainty; however, when they were not allowed to choose, they followed their conditions and surroundings.

On the other hand, Jhonson and West (2022) argued that in a particular context, uncertainty could operate positively. He examined Nepal's and Ethiopia's youths who left their countries for better living conditions. He found that the uncertain situation that made youths leave gave them a chance to be the actors in development (Johnson and West, 2022,p. 865-866). Specifically, in the case of a youth in Nepal, she aspired to leave the village and go to the Philippines to become a nurse. She was Dalit, the lowest caste and encountered discrimination. However, in the recovery programme from the earthquake, she found herself an independent actor, encouraging herself to aspire for the future(Johnson and West, 2022, pp. 871-872). The case differed from Cameroon, where the crisis level was more complicated and continued longer. Still, Jhonson and West(2022) showed how certain negotiations use uncertainty positively for their future.

The uncertainty is derived from the global socioeconomic situations and regional context. When youths encountered it, they tried to negotiate it, like gathering all available resources to find ways. In this research, uncertainty will be the framework for analysing the youths' ways to overcome unexpected situations.

2.4 Generation – The Future of Rural Communities

To find the answer to the question, 'Why did scholarship receivers not return?', it would be required to understand not only the receivers' life pathways but also the interactions between receivers and communities. To reveal the impacts of their relationship, I apply the 'generation problem' (White, 2020) as the analytical framework.

The outflow of rural youths from the communities is increasing worldwide, projected until 2050 (IFAD, 2019, p.156). Development agencies and scholars examined its diverse reasons: lack of an income source, youth's aversion to farming and longing for urban life, etc. However, White's (2020) approach was more towards structural analysis. He diagnosed that rural youth outmigration originated from a generational problem. He argued that the young generation's lack of accessibility to agricultural resources catalysed their aversion to farming. Hence, he emphasised that the condition for the youngster's return was redistributing the resources. (White, 2020, p.2). In his other literature, he showed examples of Burundi, where the young farmers struggled with structural problems despite their aspirations to do farming. (Berckmoes and White, 2016). Mwaura(2017) also showed Kenya youths' diverse forms of farming according to their available resources, including farming as the 'last resort' after migration (Mwaura, 2017).

The redistribution of the resources faced difficulties like increasing the life span of the farmers.. In such cases, the youngsters were required to wait. Thereby, it extended the

distance between youngsters and farming. White argued the waiting for resources, notably land, caused their mobilities (White, 2020, p.104), and the youngsters strongly aspired to be independent with their own resources (White, 2021, p.16). Additionally, gender issues were found in the process of inheritance. Huijsman et al. (2021) showed that the differences in the meaning of farming depend on gender. In the case of the women, they did not have the right to inherit the lands and resources. Notably, marriage operated disadvantageously because they had to remain in the region and farm; the other opportunities for women were closed. On the other hand, men had the right to inherit the resources, and it was easier to choose to do farming or migrate work after marriage. Consequently, the inequality of inheritance affected the gender difference in the range of aspirations of farming (Huijsmans et al., 2021, pp. 82-85).

Also, White emphasised neo-liberalised education and its impact on farming. He critiqued the dominant education, which degraded the value of farming and treated rural youths as human capital (White, 2020, 2021). Expressly, education based on HCT set the goal of getting a higher-income profession, and the rural youths were considered 'defectology', resulting from individual lack of capacity, not structural matters (White, 2021, p.54-56). Also, he critiqued the failed education policies for rural youth, including vocational training. According to him, vocational training for rural youths was targeted to reduce the unemployment rate, but indeed, it contributes to increasing it due to implementation without appropriate job creation (White, 2021, p.59).

Lastly, in the leam of the future of farming, White(2020) argued for the redistribution of resources like access to unused or public land at low cost or finding a way to transfer the resources to the youngsters. Specifically, he argued that support for young farmers should include all dimensions of farming. Notably, consider youths' life course intertwined with 'multidirectional mobilities' and 'pluriactive livelihoods combining farm and non-farm incomes' (White, 2020, pp.130-134). On the other hand, Rigg(2006) suggested a different future for rural communities. He emphasised that land no longer took the central role in rural income, and land distribution alone could not ensure the continuity of generating income. Thus, he argued providing the skills to escape from poverty would be required. Basically, he was sceptical about the redistribution of resources because he believed it could not extend to the redistribution of wealth. Therefore, he suggested considering farmers as 'agrarian entrepreneurs'(Rigg, 2006, p.196).

It is evident that the mobility of scholarship receivers was intertwined with socially derived aspirations and community development. I will comprehensively utilise the four frameworks – youth transition, aspiration, uncertainty, and generation- to analyse the reasons for their mobilities and related social elements.

Chapter 3

Methodology: Research with Scholarship Receivers

This research employed qualitative methodology with multi-sited ethnography. The research analysed the JTA scholarship receivers' life trajectories in Sindhupalchok district, Jiri municipality Dolakha district and Kathmandu. The primary data was collected through qualitative unstructured interviews with simple participatory drawings. For the secondary data collection, I reviewed the project-related documents and scholarship applications. Also, I encountered a challenge derived from my positionality, which has changed over time.

3.1 Overall Methodology – Multi-sited Ethnography

"Ahsa, why do you want to know it? As the research sample, the number of them is so small, only twelve!" (Prachanda Man Shereasta, 71, Beautiful Coffee Nepal Senior advisor, Assistant of my research)

It was true that the number of samples in this research was small, as my assistant pointed out. And indeed, this does not allow for making statistically representative claims. Instead, in small 'n' research, it is important to reflect on the particularities of the sample. In this research, the scholarship receivers were not 'average' rural youth but highly educated in the context of rural Nepal. My aim for the research was not to reveal the general reason for rural youths' mobilities. Rather, this research aims to understand their mobilities better and unpack the interactions between their transition and community development. Therefore, an in-depth analysis that could show the individuals' specific dimensions of their life pathways was required to answer the research questions.

Through this in-depth analysis, I firmly believed that the twelve scholarship receivers showed a particular trend of skilful and educated youths in rural areas of Nepal. Notably, considering the youth migration rate is increasing and has become a social issue (Khanal, Paudel and Kandel, 2019, p.254), the JTA scholarship case supposedly could present one of the reasons for that. Hence, an ethnographic approach was required to show the relations between individuals and societal factors according to time and spatial changes.

Consequently, I employed qualitative research with a multi-sited ethnographic approach to analyse twelve scholarship receivers' life pathways. As Marcus(1995) stated about multi-sited ethnography, I designed my research by putting the twelve receivers in the centre and tried to explain the reason for their mobilities intertwined with surrounding conditions and aspirations (Marcus, 1995). As a researcher, I also wanted to 'tack' through the data on scholarship receivers' life pathways and theories, notably focusing on youth transition (Cerwonka and To, 2007, p.15). Specifically, I employed the method that Marcus(1995) introduced as 'follow the life'. As he explained, I tried to explore Nepal's social context that influences Nepal's educated youth's choice to leave their regions by examining the lives of the twelve receivers. (Marcus, 1995, p.110).

Additionally, I referred to Xiang's (2013) multi-scalar ethnography. He added the concept of the scale to the multi-sited ethnography. He defined the scale as 'the spatial reach of actions' (Xiang, 2013, p.284). In my research, the receivers' spatial changes created new capacities for their lives (Xiang, 2013, p.284). It was qualifications of skills from education, and then, depending on the individual, it was another degree, visa, experience, and money. Also, consequently, the capacities became their object to change the spaces, affecting their families

and communities. Hence, when I followed their lives, his concept of the scale was significant in explaining their mobilities and impacts.

3.2 Positionality and Reflexivity- Practitioner vs Researcher

I was the head of the Nepal Centre in Beautiful Coffee Korea from 2015 to 2019 and was in charge of the JTA scholarship programme. Also, I was their most prominent donor for CCU-S member, notably supporting their livelihood recovery from the earthquake and buying their coffee as the Fair Trade organisation. We had an asymmetric relationship as practitioner and beneficiaries (Morarji, 2014, p.177). Naturally, I perceived they were the 'subject of the development' (Morarji, 2014); however, I did not apply it to the project I managed. This research allowed me to reflect on my positionality in the project.

Rose(1997) explained that the positions in the research are a matter of 'power', which contains knowledge (Rose, 1997, p. 308). Regarding the scholarship programme, I had the power to select receivers for the scholarship, which was helpful in the long term for their other opportunities. It created power asymmetry, and I used that power to create criteria for selecting and comprising the programme alongside the ToC. In contrast, as a researcher, I tried to observe the scholarship receivers' life pathways to find the reasons for their mobilities without any links to the support programmes. Additionally, Beautiful Coffee Nepal also finished their project in the Sindhupalchok district. Therefore, it anticipated that the relations between them and me would undergo a dramatic change; there would no longer be power asymmetry. The expectation was half right and half wrong.

Evidently, the students, families, community leaders and members were more confident in revealing their opinions and ideas. They were inexorable in expressing their disappointment about the programme and sometimes blamed me for steering it in the wrong direction. It was different from our previous relationship. I could obtain more data from their actual situation through a more equitable relationship. On the other hand, the gap between them and me still existed. For them, although I quit my job, and my current position was a researcher who was requesting information, I was still a foreigner from a rich country studying in Europe. Also, in their view, I was a person who could return to the previous position of 'donor' whenever I wanted. This distance made the conversation either hostile or made it come to a halt. Crossa(2012) called it relational positionality: the emerging relation that did not form the previous created a new connection and set the power relations (Crossa, 2012, p.115). This new relational positionality made me reflect on my position in my research again.

Consequently, I decided to change my attitude in the fieldwork. In the early stage of my observation, I revealed my previous identity as a practitioner. Although I urged my participants to consider the interview as a conversation and emphasised that I would not evaluate their lives, I unconsciously judged their lives based on factors indicators like employment. However, I changed midway and tried to reduce any unbalanced attitude. In my writing, I reflected on the terms for the Research Paper (RP). I stopped using the term 'beneficiaries' and altered it to a more neutral phrase 'scholarship receivers'. Simultaneously, I redirected the focus of my RP from a programme perspective to being more focused on my participants. Specifically, I recognised my relational positionality, particularly the new power asymmetry, and tried to avoid reproducing it in my research.

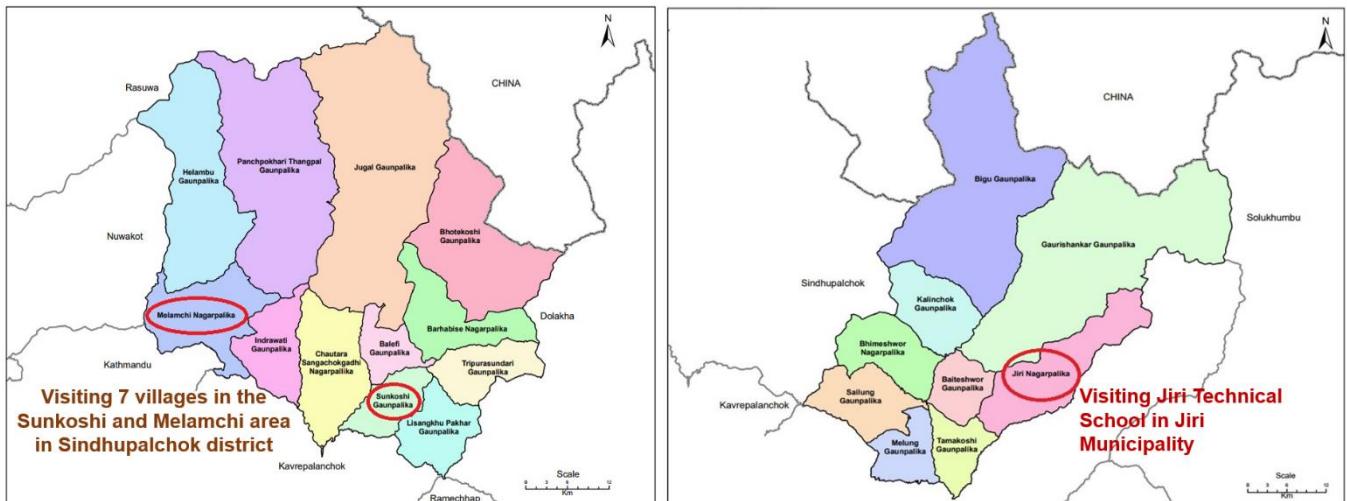
3.3 Listening to Twelve Receivers Life Pathways

To follow the lives of the JTA scholarship receivers, families and communities, I conducted participant observation. Boellstorff(2015) emphasised the 'everyday context' of participant

observation. He explained that ethnographers could be distinguished from the investigators because they tried to see beyond the investigation through everyday interactions, which could be considered as minor happenings (Boellstorff Tom, 2015, pp. 71-72). Along the same line, I captured the moments which could be clues for the mobilities of receivers and communities.

3.3.1 Data Collection – Participant Observation

Map 2
Map of Fieldwork



Source: Revised from Nepal in Data <https://nepalindata.com/>

I conducted my participant observation in three regions related to the scholarship programme. I observed the receivers and other related actors in the communities through the interviews and conversations.

I conducted thirty interviews and conversations. I used Nepali without a translator because I had learned it while working in Nepal. Additionally, all participants, except Jiri's school teacher, I knew each other due to previous work, which fostered a comfortable communication environment. The assistants' primary roles were organising the interviews and gathering the data I could not access: pre-information about the receivers' current status, Nepali script documents, etc. Also, after the activities, we had a debriefing meeting to exchange opinions regarding the findings.

The limitation of the short, two-week fieldwork duration, occurring after a four-year gap, naturally restricted the possibility for in-depth participant observation. Indeed, two weeks was insufficient for conducting thirty in-depth conversations across three regions and observing their everyday context in nine different locations. However, I was able to overcome it due to my previous relations with participants and experience. I managed all processes of the scholarship program and was familiar with the geographical and cultural context of related regions. The close connection with participants was also helpful for intensive communication. Another significant factor was that I could still speak Nepali – the participants and other villagers who provided me with informal information welcomed it. Certainly, a four-year gap existed between the participants and me. Nevertheless, the time gap and changing positions facilitated maintaining the distance possible, as Boellstorff (2015) mentioned, 'ethical yet critical engagement' (Boellstorff Tom, 2015, pp.71-72): be free from the donor-recipient relationship, instead more equal status to exchange ideas. It was possible, especially because Beautiful Coffee Nepal, the programme's organiser, did not work in the Sindhupalchok district anymore.

I had an interview and conversation with the twelve scholarship receivers. I met four of them in their home in the Sindhupalchok district and six in the Beautiful Coffee Nepal office in Kathmandu. Also, I took an online interview with one person in the Nuwakot district, Nepal, and one in New York, USA. All the participants (including families, communities and school) allowed me to use their names in my RP. The information related to the twelve receivers' mobility, which connected to my research question, was as follows;

Table 1
Scholarship Receivers' Information

Batch	Name(Sex/Age)	Current Location/Profession
1st Batch (2017-2019)	Kamal Pandit (M/29)	New York, USA / Kitchen crew, fast food store
	Susmita Paudel (F/24)	Nuwakot district / Running AgroVAT store
	Dipesh Acharya (M/23)	Siraha District / Military Police
	Sunita Lama (F/26)	Bhaktapur / Running Snack Bar
	Ranju Nepali (F/21)	Home Village / Local NGO worker
2nd Batch (2018-2020)	Rasila Pandit(F/21)	Jiri Municipality / Diploma student
	Sangita Pandit (F/23)	Home Village / ECD Teacher, B.Ed student
	Lila BK(F/21)	Kathmandu / Preparation for moving to Japan
	Sushmita Thapa Magar (F/20)	Kathmandu / Preparation for moving to Japan
	Rajendra Nepali (M/23)	Kathmandu / Working at the sawing factory
	Susmita Nepali (F/22)	Home Village / ECD Teacher, B.Ed student
	Sabina Nepali (F/21)	HomeVillage / Preparing B.Ed course

Source: Fieldwork 2023

Eight of the twelve receivers migrated, and the other four returned to their village after studying at Jiri Technical School. One of the migrants went to the USA after winning a Diverse Visa(DV) lottery³. The other seven moved domestically: two for work, two for preparation to move to Japan, two for marriage and the other one for further study. I focused my interviews on their reasons to move or return. Creating a comfortable environment was required for them to articulate their answer. Thus, I emphasised that the 'interview' was not structured or an evaluation of whether their lives were successful. Also, I only jotted down the keywords during the interview and took memos⁴ for significant words with short explanations for the situations without dictating the whole conversation to preserve verbatim terms (Spradley, 1980, p.67). Moreover, I got permission from all the participants to record the interviews and use their real names and photos.

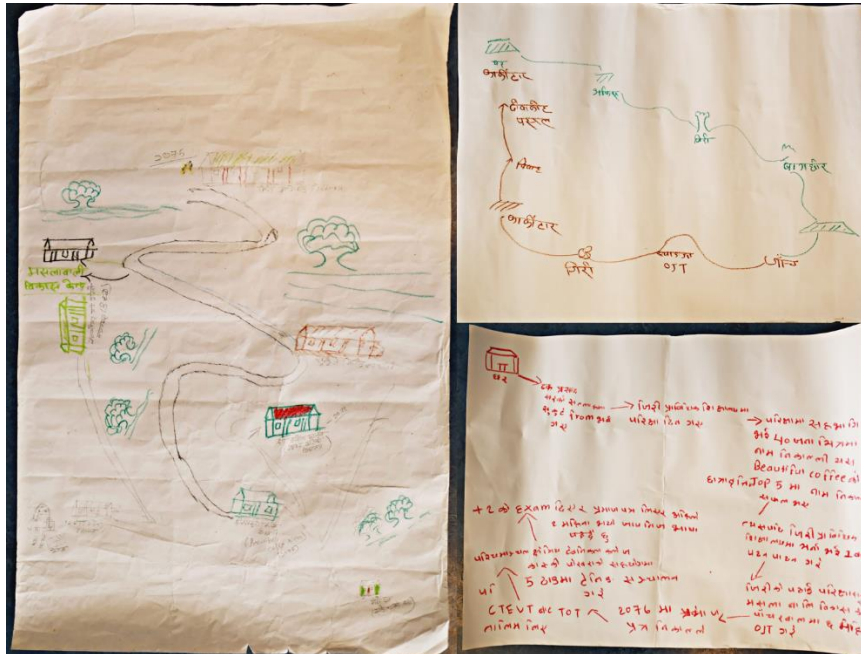
When I interviewed receivers, I asked them to draw up their life pathways from the point of applying for the scholarship until now(except for online interviews). I also drew my life pathways in the same ways. I used it to start the conversation smoothly and reduce the emotional distance caused by the four years time gap. The drawing followed their own way without any form. They started by selecting the colours which they liked. I had no fixed questions because all twelve receivers had different life pathways. The drawing showed the significant events in their life pathways, and I implemented the interview based on them. Initially, the participants were not familiar with drawing (because in Nepal, drawing

³ The information of DV: <https://www.usa.gov/dv-lottery-eligibility#:~:text=The%20Diversity%20Immigrant%20Visa%20Program,qualify%20and%20how%20to%20apply>.

⁴ I cannot write Nepali, therefore, I took a memo the Nepali words in Korean letters.

something is uncommon except for artists); however, after explaining the purpose of it and the way to express it, almost all of them enjoyed it and expressed their lives in diverse ways.

Figure 2
JTA Scholarship Receivers' Drawing (Selected)



Source: Fieldwork 2023

Figure 3
Interview with JTA Scholarship Receivers' families



Source: Fieldwork 2023

Regarding the interviews with families, I conducted the interviews with the families of eleven receivers, except for one family who declined the interview due to unwillingness to manage the schedule. I divided the interviews into two parts. First, my assistants asked them about their socioeconomic conditions with semi-structured questions, and then I continued the conversation unstructured. Mainly, I asked the questions following their children's

timeline after the scholarship applications. I changed the questions flexibly depending on their castes, education levels, etc. Through the interview, I could figure out the apparent differences in the circumstances for the receivers depending on the caste.

The conversations with community groups were also significant due to the expression of opinions about the receivers' mobilities. I took the interview with CCU-S, Primary Coffee Cooperative(PCC)⁵ leaders and members, Beautiful Coffee Nepal staff, and the teacher who took the responsibility to care for receivers at the Jiri Technical School. The interviews closely resembled conversations. Lastly, regarding the secondary data, I reviewed the related documents. The proposal and the reports I made were the major sources that reminded me of the project's structure. My review focused on these project reports because the scholarship applications consisted mainly of personal information, recommendation letters, and simple answers for the after-plan of the scholarship.

Figure 4
Conversation with community members



Source: Fieldwork 2023

3.3.2 Data Analysis – Open Coding

I brought all interviews and conversation recordings, including field notes, memos, and photos taken during the interviews and conversations. The recordings were Nepali, and the field notes and memos were a mix of Korean and English. Following Spradley(1980), I tried to keep it verbatim, carefully distinguishing between the native words and my explanation or reactions (Spradley, 1980, p.66). I processed data by transferring these raw materials into scripts in English. Afterwards, 'coding' was crucial to find the meaning of analysing within the analytical framework.

Spradley(1980) mentioned ethnographers re-created the 'cultural scene' picture by composing languages and referring to others. (Spradley, 1980, p.66). For me, the 'cultural scene' was the surroundings which made receivers aspire to mobility. I did 'open coding' (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011, p.175) to analyse the surroundings from the processed data. Emerson et al. (2011) explained that the ethnographer could categorise to find the meanings between

⁵ PCC is the local coffee cooperative union which is under CCU-S

the lines and texts. The categorised information could be connected to the generic issues. Therefore, they suggested open coding to 'identify' and 'formulate' ideas (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2011, pp.172-177). Hence, I conducted open coding with processed data to find the affecting elements to the receivers' mobilities hidden between lines and cause and effect relationships.

The impressive findings through the coding that I did not realise in the fieldwork were the impacts of societal factors like gender and caste on mobilities. When I asked the participants directly, they did not explain the factors. However, after the coding, I found between their mentions that societal factors shaped the participants' aspirations more vividly.

Chapter 4

Heading to Jiri Technical School

Figure 5
Jiri Technical School



Source: Fieldwork 2023

Wyn and White(1997) argued that youth transition has two dimensions: horizontal and vertical. According to them, the horizontal plane referred to the common character the youths shared, like age and youth culture, whereas the vertical plane included their social division because of class and caste, for example (Wyn and White, 1997, p.97). The twelve students also have commonalities and, simultaneously, distinctions in terms of social background.

If the youth's horizontal and vertical panels structured the twelve receivers' transitions, the aspirations shape it as the pathways. Also, the caste affected the aspirations by restricting the capacities depending on high and low levels. Appadurai(2004) called it the cultural capacity to aspire (Appadurai, 2004). The caste was a significant element comprising the social lives of the twelve students and their families. It limited accessibility to socioeconomic resources and caused differences in recognising the scholarship and study at Jiri Technical School. As Appadurai (2004) emphasised, the gap in the capacities to aspire, namely, navigational capacities, created a disparity between the low and high-caste receivers and students (Appadurai, 2004, p.69). However, simultaneously, it is observed that the difference in capacities depends on the generations in the same castes. It continued and impacted the receivers' decision-making.

In this chapter, as the first stage of tracing their life pathways, I will show the receivers' motivation to apply for the scholarship: raising social status, satisfying parents' expectations, and continuing the study. I will analyse the receivers and their families' aspirations that made them apply for the scholarship by exploring the roles and impact of the caste.

4.1 Lifting the Living Conditions

The first aspiration was to lift their social status through further study. The receivers who had this aspiration had dreamed of pursuing something in the agricultural sector even before the scholarship programme. Thus, their approach to the scholarship was more strategic than that of others with different aspirations. However, their aspirations were formed differently depending on their surroundings, notably the caste. Caste not only meant social status but also appeared with differences in socioeconomic conditions. It affected how students and their families understood the scholarship and planned further after graduation.

Lila BK(21) was a JTA scholarship receiver from a lower caste group. When I interviewed her, she explained her motivation to apply for the scholarship;

"At first, Mr. Dakha of CCU-S gave my uncle scholarship information. Before that, I did not know about the Jiri JTA course and the jobs after studying there. In my case, I have been interested in agriculture since my School Leaving Certificate (SLC). But I did not know where and how I could study it. So, the scholarship was a significant opportunity for me. I applied for it by myself with my willingness. My parents supported it, too."

She has dreamed of working in the agricultural sector for a long time, and the scholarship provided her a chance to realise it. She completely understood the possible role of the scholarship in her life pathway and structured the possible future through it. That was the primary reason for applying for the scholarship. However, compared to others receives, in her case, she got it from outside of the family. It derived from her parents' condition, which was affected by the caste.

"At first, we did not know what it meant, the scholarship. After understanding the meaning, we conveyed the information to Lila, and she decided to apply. We also strongly support her decision to study. She was right after SLC then, so it was the proper time for further study." (Karna Bahadur BK(53), Lila BK's Father)

Lila's father described the situation when he got the information for the first time. He could not understand the meaning of the scholarship. Also, he explained his permission for her to study because there was no other work for her then. It was different from Lila's aspiration, which has continued previously. He did not realise she had a specific dream in the agricultural sector. Their disparity emanated from their educational capacities. Specifically, at that time, Lila finished her 10th grade; however, her father completed an adult literacy course. The gap between them generated a difference in the capacity to understand the scholarship. Additionally, he did farming and worked as a daily labourer, far different from dealing with a scholarship. Namely, her father's different capacity, which is more affected by caste than his daughter, generated the disparity in understanding and related aspirations regarding the scholarship.

The differences were observed more transparently in comparison with the higher caste families. The other three students with the same motivation were Rasila Pandit(21), Kamal Pandit(29) and Susmita Paudel(24). They had information about studying at the Jiri school and dreamed of more details before applying for the scholarship. Compared to Lila, they were commonly provided information by family members. Notably, Rasila's parents had the same education level as Lila's parents with an 'adult literacy course'; however, Rasila had a highly educated elder brother. Also, Kamal had a brother who completed higher education than the SLC, and Susmita's father was an agricultural technician. Lila had four elder sisters who worked in Kathmandu to support the family. However, they were not aware of the scholarship earlier than Lila. Although Lila overcame her caste restrictions through the scholarship, which did not have treatment differentiation depending on the caste, the support from the families was different. It affected her planning for the future.

On the other hand, although from different castes, common aspirations were observed.

"I expected her to get an agricultural job after graduation. We did not worry about her when we dispatched Lila to Jiri. Because studying means a benefit for the future, it was not a thing to fear." (Karna Bahadur BK(53), Lila BK's Father)

"My plan when I applied for the scholarship was to get a job in the agricultural field. It was also my dream from my childhood. In the interview, I mentioned my plan, 'I will have my agricultural business after graduation.'. Specifically, I wanted to increase the production of vegetables and crops to sales for making money for the people." (Lila BK, 21)

"When I conveyed the information to Rasila, she decided to go to the Jiri. And I happily supported her. I thought maintaining life would not be difficult if she learned the technique." (Lila Pandit(45), Rasila Pandit's mother)

"For the first time, I wanted to have a job in line ministry as the technical officer." (Rasila Pandit, 21)

All the respondents revealed their aspirations that receivers could improve their life condition and status through the scholarship. Lila and Rasila had specific positions and plan for their future dream. In the parents' case, both recognised the scholarship could empower their children's capacities. However, their answers revealed the difference in their understanding of the programme. Lila's father's response was vague. He vaguely understood that the scholarship could provide advantages for his daughter's life; however, he did not express it specifically.

On the other hand, Rasila's mother mentioned the technique possibly obtained from the school and its expected impacts. They had the same educational level. However, under the higher caste's common education surroundings, Rasila's mother had the experience of spending her elder son for his studies to Kathmandu. From this, she comprehended the effect of further study. She mentioned their economic condition was difficult, and it was the same as what Lila's parents said; however, Lila's four elder sisters chose to work instead of studying. It showed the caste functioned differently under similar conditions. In other words, the difference depending on the caste appeared in the expectations. However, the parents' group was distinct, while it disappeared in their children's group through common capacities for aspirations, which were assumed to be from general education.

The caste functioned, generating information and recognition disparity in this group. However, the children presented similar capacities even in the different castes, although their parents showed distinct differences depending on it. Namely, the children's generation overcame the restriction of the caste with their capacities and further desired to improve life conditions through a scholarship, which gave them a chance depending on their study capability, not on the caste.

4.2 Fulfilling Family Expectation

The other motivation to apply for the scholarship was fulfilling the family's requirements. In the case of Rajendra Nepali(23), he described his motivation to apply for the scholarship as follows;

"Getting the information on the scholarship from Ms. Topi and the chair of the PCC. I decided to study in Jiri by my mom's recommendation; she expected me to get a good job after graduation. At that time, I had nothing to do after the SLC, so my mother strongly recommended it. After graduation, I expected to open my own farm with knowledge from there.

I was not willing to study agriculture when I heard about the scholarship for the first time. I made my final decision after the conversation with Ranju (a receiver in the first batch). Also, because agriculture has been familiar to me and my family has done that for a long time, I applied for the scholarship."

He clearly explained his lack of willingness to apply for the scholarship. The suggestion from family and friends made him apply for the scholarship. Hence, at the first stage, he had no aspirations regarding studying agriculture.

On the other hand, his mother's aspiration was clear.

" I recommended Rajendra to apply for the scholarship. Afterwards, he decided by himself to apply for it. The expectation for the scholarship was not huge; I just hoped he would get a job after graduation. Although his current job is unrelated to agriculture, he got a free education thanks to a scholarship; therefore, I am satisfied with the programme." (Kamala Nepali, 50, Rajendra Nepali's mother)

Her aspiration for her son was simple but vital: he would be able to get a job after the free education. As part of the lowest caste family, his mother's aspiration was for her son to get another chance to do something different from the family (farming and labouring in Kathmandu). Due to the restriction of her capacity, she did not mention the 'chance' specifically. However, she clearly expressed 'free education' by scholarship, which could connect to the 'chance'. Namely, Rajendra headed to the Jiri Technical School to fulfil his mother's aspiration for her son to improve his social position.

However, parents' expectations for their children differed depending on the caste. The following is the case of Dipesh Acharya(23), who was in the high caste group.

"At first, I got the information about the scholarship from my father, the PCC leader of Talarang. At that time, nobody was interested in scholarships in Talarang. But my father was positive about it, and I wanted to do something after SLC, so I applied for it. I was really interested in the veterinarian course, but Beautiful Coffee Nepal supported only agriculture, so I applied for the agriculture major.

I finished 11th grade in Kathmandu and was living with my elder sister. She studied pharmacy and is now working at the pharmacy. Basically, my father wanted us to study hard for a further degree. Also, he welcomed the opportunity supported by a scholarship because he thought studying technical subjects would make it easier for me to get a job after graduation. My sister also recommended that I apply for it and study more. I dreamed of farming at home after graduation. However, at the same time, I thought probably it would be better to get a job than farming" (Dipesh Acharya, 23)

Compared to Rajendra's mother, Dipesh's father expected specific qualifications and a practical outcome, a 'degree' through the scholarship. According to the interview, his father required it for all children. Therefore, his sister graduated from pharmacy school with a degree, and his younger brother is pursuing an engineering degree. For his father, acquiring the degrees through further education was a helpful tool for reproducing the family's status. And his aspirations included two dimensions.

The first aspect was to keep his given status, caste. The Dipesh family was one of the highest castes. Their village, Talarang, was the place for the same caste. And Dipesh's family had a high position in their community. Thus, Dipesh's father required his children to keep their socially high status through higher education. His aspiration was from the dispositional habituated structures that Zipin et al.(2015) argued - Dipesh's father's desire was from a socially structured caste (Zipin et al., 2015, p. 234). He desired for his children to have the capacities suitable for the high caste and his high positions. Hence, the scholarship was a proper chance to sustain his aspirations without his financial support.

The second aspiration that Dipesh's father tried to keep with the scholarship was socioeconomic status. Compared to the caste, the socioeconomic status was something he obtained by himself. He was the school's principal and had the financial capacity to send all his children to study in Kathmandu. For him, it was significant to maintain these socioeconomic statuses. Thus, he required his children to get a practical degree. Indeed, he strongly recommended Dipesh to study at Jiri school because the course was for technicians. Although he recognised that his son preferred a career as a veterinarian to agriculture, he made him apply. His aspirations impacted Dipesh's plan for the future. Indeed, Dipesh first desired to return

home and do farming; however, he began to think vaguely that 'a job' would be more appropriate for his future than farming.

Rajendra and Dipes applied for the scholarship following their parents' aspirations to make their children study more and get good job opportunities. However, depending on their caste, the sort of aspirations presented differently. In the case of the low caste, the mother aspired her child to live differently through the scholarship. Meanwhile, in the high caste, the father emphasised obtaining qualifications through further study to sustain their social and economic status. Although the format differed, it was evident that parent's aspirations could be a significant motivation for applying for the scholarship.

4.3 Keeping Study for the Future

The JTA scholarship provided comprehensive support, covering school fees and living expenses for its receivers. Therefore, the scholarship was a remarkable opportunity for students forced to stop their studies due to financial constraints. They were different from the receivers who desired agricultural study. Because, they began to have aspirations of studying agriculture due to the scholarship programme. Susmita Nepali(20) was one of them.

"The reason for applying was that I thought it was a good chance to continue my studies and get a job. So, I decided to apply for the scholarship. However, I was not interested in agriculture before, but due to the scholarship, I considered studying agriculture and became interested in agricultural study at Jiri school." (Susmita Nepali, 22)

"We got the information for the scholarship from Mr. Mahat, the leader of the PCC. Susmita discussed this with us but had decided to apply herself. We supported it because it was an excellent chance to continue the study. Also, the Jiri school is famous for its quality, so there was no reason for opposition. After the study, we expected her to get a stable job and a high salary-especially in the government." (Resham Nepali, 50, Susmita Nepali's father)

According to the interviews with Susmita and her father, the motivation for applying was the promised future with a good profession through continuing study. She was in the lowest caste with no affluent economic conditions to continue her studies. Her parents did not have enough land; they rented the land five times bigger than theirs. Thus, for her, the scholarship programme was the only way to keep studying and, further, the tools to get a job. That was why she applied for the scholarship despite not being interested in agricultural study.

The caste also functioned in her decisions. She and her family changed their religion from Hindu to Christian.

"We got lots of support from the Korean missionary group. Particularly when I was sick, they prayed for me, and after two months, I recovered perfectly. Therefore, I decided to change my religion to Christianity ten years ago." (Maina Nepali, 42, Susmita's mother)

When I asked Susmita about the discrimination arising from the caste, she denied it; however, changing the religion showed that the low caste and related elements like socioeconomic conditions have restricted the family's activities. Compared to other low-caste families, they were active in breaking down social boundaries by altering their religion. Also, the parents recognised the impact of further education. Susmita's elder brother, who was in Croatia as a migrant labourer, completed 12th grade. It had been difficult for them to support their son's education beyond 10th grade due to the shortage of their finances. However, they supported him in continuing his study, and he got a job through foreign country migration. From their successful experience, they used scholarship as the prominent strategy for their

daughter to keep her studies with the expectation of a bright future. Namely, their efforts to overcome the given social status constructed Susmita's aspiration to go beyond her caste.

The other receivers' cases were similar to Susmita's. Although Sagita Pandit (21) was in a high caste, the economic limitations were a challenge to her, and it caused her to keep studying to get a job with an appropriate income for her livelihood. Like other high-caste families, her elder sister passed 12th grade; therefore, for her, it was not an exceptional experience to keep studying. Thus, her mother allowed her daughter to apply for the scholarship. For her, continuing studying was the opportunity for her daughter to attain stable income sources. In other words, the common aspiration to keep studying guided Sangita to the Jiri Technical School.

The motivation of this group's receivers and families for applying for the scholarship was to continue their studies regardless of the subjects to ensure their future professions. They commonly chose scholarship as their strategy to deal with their socioeconomic problems.

In shaping their life pathways, the vertical dimension, the 'caste', made significant differences among the receivers' aspirations (Wyn and White, 1997). The caste affected receivers and their families' capacities to aspire through the scholarship (Appadurai, 2004). Notably, it affected the parents more than the receivers, but their families influenced the receivers' decisions. In other words, the effect of the caste continued, although the receiver generations tried not to be contained within it.

Chapter 5

Returning and Leaving

After graduation, twelve receivers' life pathways were shaped differently according to their aspirations and situations - eight of the twelve scholarship recipients left the Sindhupalchok district, and the other four receivers returned. Depending on the individuals, the reason for their locationality was diverse. However, the common navigating medium for their life pathways was the desire for a high income and the perception that this could not be realised in the Sindhupalchok district.

The receivers followed the opportunity to ensure their income. Societal elements like caste, gender and social status affected their aspirations to shape their life pathway. Also, they tried to use all their available resources to manage uncertainty, reduce the fluidity of the future, and sustain their livelihood (Johnson-Hanks, 2005, p.366). Namely, the twelve youths' life pathways comprised opportunities to sustain their lives and choices. Depending on their decisions, their life pathways were formed differently.

In this chapter, I will trace the receivers' life pathways centred on the income sources, namely money, to sustain the life that they consider most significant.

5.1 As the Remaining ones

Susmita Nepali(22) and Sagita Pandit(23) had the same professions in their home villages; they were teachers for Early Childhood Development (ECD) and were studying at the colleges to get licences. ⁶

"The most important reason for choosing teaching was I needed a job. The highest priority was the government agricultural officer, but the local government had discontinued hiring the JTA-graduated people. Indeed, only one position remained, but an acquaintance of the officer got the position. Therefore, I chose a job as a teacher, which I could approach easily. Also, I am doing a Bachelor of Education(B.Ed) to get a promotion.

I am not satisfied with my job due to the small salary. And I am not sure about my parent's satisfaction with me because my job is not that much support for my family. However, I am also pleased to do it compared to my friends who are married or prepared to migrate - at least I am doing something! However, I am also considering going abroad. My elder brother strongly recommends that I come to Croatia. If there is a good-conditioned place for work, I will leave. But I can stay if I can get a job with a better salary here. All my friends are similar - life is hard in the countryside, but the primary reason for leaving is income." (Susmita Nepali, 22)

"When I applied for the scholarship, I expected I could get an agriculture job here in Sindhupalachok. But there was no position in the government office, so I studied again B. Ed and teaching in the school. The reason for choosing to teach was to cover the B.Ed fee, and it was much better than staying home without any jobs. However, anyway, I like to teach. I am trying to become a teacher who is like a friend, not an authoritarian one. I expect my salary to be higher when I get a license.

Indeed, I prefer to do something in the agricultural field. If I can go abroad, I will do it, learn new skills, and return to Nepal. But now, I cannot afford to focus on preparing to

⁶ In Nepal, they could teach at the ECD level after completing the 11th and 12th grades with an education major

go overseas. If I can get the chance to go abroad, I want to stay there for 3-4 years to make money and come back here to work in the agricultural field." (Sangita Pandit, 23)

Susmita and Sangita had similar conditions: current profession and study, child order(middle), family migrant condition(one of the members in a foreign country), and willingness to migrate abroad. They chose the teacher as a job because it was impossible to get a government position. Indeed, all the receivers' answers were the same. However, nobody considered farming as a job. Although Sangita described her aspirations to work in the agricultural sector, she did not consider participating in farming. Instead, she expressed that after returning from the foreign country, she wanted to have a farm with massive production. From this point, it was evident that farming on their families' land could not satisfy them due to the lack of income from it. For them, the salary was the most significant criterion for selecting the job. Their parents also had the same ideas.

"After the study, we expected her to get a stable job and a high salary-especially in government. Her current job as a school teacher is stable, so we are satisfied with it, but the salary is too small. Therefore, if she can get a job in Sindhupalchok with a good salary after her B.Ed, it would be the best." (Resham Nepali, 50, Susmita Nepali's father)

"For the first time, the expectation was simple: after graduation, get a good job to make a proper living income (NRS 30,000-35,000/month) here in Sindhupalchok. But I am satisfied with her current job as a teacher." (Ranju Pandit, 48, Sangita Pandit's mother)

The parents describe their satisfaction with their children's status as teachers and doing something for the family; however, they had aspirations of better income for their children. Notably, in the case of Sangita, she enjoyed her job for reasons other than money; however, she and her mother felt disappointed due to the lack of money. Although Susmita and Sangita chose the job to make money first, they still tried to find more income sources by preparing for another degree and contemplating migration. Eventually, money was the most significant motivation for their decision to do something for their current situation and future. And it shaped their life pathway.

Along the same lines, migration was a viable option for them. In the case of Susmita, she had an elder brother who was in Croatia who kept persuading her to come. She and her parents considered it positively because of the unsatisfied salary in Sindhupalchok. Still, simultaneously, she and her family hesitated, too, because if Susmita would leave, only the elders would remain. Also, because of her gender, she and her parents were more concerned about the condition of migration. In the case of Sangita, her father was in India, and her younger brother was preparing to go to Qatar. In her case, her mother was more strict on opposing her migration because if Sangita left, only her mother would remain alone. Her mother did not think of her staying with her brother. However, she emphasised that Sangita should be there. Thus, Sangita expressed her aspirations to go abroad but also hesitated. Consequently, the aspirations for migration derived from the desire to make money while simultaneously being restricted by family dynamics, gender, and the parents' ambivalent desire to make more money but stay with them.

The returnees of the programme encountered a lack of salaries and restrictions to mobilities. However, their mobility was fluid. Since they could decide depending on the amount of income, their decisions could be changed in the future – and these changes, depending on the money, shape their life pathways.

5.2 Marriage as a Turning Point in Life Pathway

Susmita Paudel(23) and Sunita Lama(26) moved from Sindhupalchik district due to their marriage. Nepal has a tradition of marriage that the parents arrange. However, four married ones in scholarship receivers chose their spouses based on their own relationships, not following the arranged marriage tradition. They even decided the timing of the wedding themselves. Although the marriage trend is changing from 'arranged' to 'love' marriage following expanding formal education and Western culture(Ghimire et al., 2006, p.1213), their choices were uncommon in Nepal. However, all married students met with the same caste person. Namely, their aspiration for marriage followed a progressive trend, but the caste system still influenced their choices.

In the case of Susmita, she had been interested in agriculture for a long time before the scholarship. She mentioned in her selection interview that she wanted to become an agricultural businesswoman. She maintained her aspirations while studying at the Jiri Technical School. However, she could not launch her business right after graduation.

" After graduation, I wanted to study further for a diploma, but it was impossible due to my family situation (she is the eldest and has seven younger siblings). While at home after graduation, I tried to do whatever I could. I worked for Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) Nepal (NGO) while I did B.Ed. Also, I worked for the local government as a temporary agricultural officer. I got a part-time job only, but because of COVID-19, there was no place for a permanent position then. All the time, I spent my expenses, and then all remaining I supported to home."

She had to support her family after the graduation. This responsibility guided her to the employment market. She chose an additional degree to get a job and simultaneously searched for agricultural jobs despite it being temporary. This differed from Susmita and Sagita; she did not work for the school even after getting the degree because she kept her aspiration to work in the agricultural sector. Notably, although her father wished for her to return home and do farming with him, she continued to consider an agricultural job for future business.

This aspiration made her search for a way to start a business instead of working as a teacher in Sindhupalchok district. Afterwards, she chose marriage. Consequently, marriage allowed her to realise her dream and generate her own income source. This could be possible because of Nepali culture, where married daughters could stop supporting the original family. It differed from Kamal's brother, who supported his younger sibling after the marriage.

For Susmita, marriage was a new aspiration she had not had before. Also, it was not planned. She did not expect to find her future husband in Jiri. However, it had happened, and she chose to keep the relationship after graduation. Then, four years later, she married him. However, the marriage did not stop her aspirations; instead, it catalysed her to realise her dreams.

"I met my husband at Jiri school. He studied veterinarian at the same school. We had a relationship. We planned together to start the business- firstly, my husband gave the idea, and we developed it together. He will take responsibility for the veterinarian part, and I will take the agricultural part. The parents-in-law helped us, and we also took a bank loan."

Marriage provided her with the opportunity to start her business. She got a husband and simultaneously gained a business partner through marriage. They planned the business together and divided the work depending on their capacities. Also, they made the seed money together through a bank loan and shared the same aspiration for the future. In essence, her marriage was an unexpected event in her life, but she leveraged it as an opportunity to realise her dream.

Although the reason for mobility was the same as marriage, Sunita had a different life pathway from Susmita.

"I married three months after the graduation. I hurried to marry because managing my husband's work schedule was difficult in Dubai. My husband and I had known each other since the SLC. We were friends for a long time. After the wedding, he worked in Dubai for three more years. I also wanted to go with him, but it was too difficult to get a visa. So, I stayed at his home with my mother-in-law until he returned. At that time, I did farming with her. Sometimes neighbours have come to get my advice for farming."

She did not search for a job in Nepal after graduation. Because as she mentioned, she married her husband three months after graduation. Also, there was no pressure from her family to support other family members. Her husband worked in Dubai as a cook then; therefore, she had to manage her schedule to have a wedding following her husband's schedule. The surrounding conditions that followed her marriage made her move from her village. Her mobility arose from her husband's plan. She did farming, but it was not to generate income. Also, the advice given to the neighbours was not a business. In other words, for her, marriage was not an opportunity to do something new; instead, it was the way to secure an everyday life. She did not have any aspirations for life after the marriage. The following shows her character.

Four months ago, from the interview, they opened their mobile snack bar in Bhaktapur. After graduation, she had two mobilities: moving to her husband's village in Sindhupalchok district and Backtapur to open their snack bar. I asked for the details, "Your husband is a cook, so are you doing the cashier's role?" she did not answer for seconds and finally mentioned, "I move here and there in the bar". In the last part of the interview, I asked about her future, "Sunita, so what kind of plan do you have for your future?" she just smiled. I changed the question to, "How to grow the mobile snack bar? You mentioned your husband will return to Dubai, so what is your plan?". She hesitated again, and after some seconds, she answered, "I plan to work in the snack bar. I should do it because I am married. I do not have a separate plan. I will cook when he leaves. I will learn."

According to her answer, she had no specific plan. She wanted to follow her husband. Her way of encountering uncertain situations differed from other migrated receivers': getting a profession and generating income. She chose to marry and was accustomed to the position marriage gave her. Her case showed the function of the marriage: ensuring security, including livelihood. It was a different shape from Susmita. For Susmita, marriage was also an unplanned event; however, she shaped it as she aspired. Meanwhile, Sunita followed the format of marriage that others made. Hence, although both were intertwined with livelihood, Susmita's and Sunita's impacts of marriage in their life pathways differed.

5.3 Unexpected Life – Uncertainty

Kamal Pandit(29) was the scholarship receiver who moved to New York, USA, in April 2023. During the selection interview, he strongly showed his plan of becoming an agricultural businessman after the study. Kamal got high scores in both entrance exams in Sindhupalchok district and Jiri and got first place in the graduation exam. He studied at Jiri Technical School before the scholarship programme but quit due to health issues. The scholarship was an opportunity to revive his aspiration. According to the other students' interviews, his life in Jiri was successful; they mentioned he always took the role of the leader of all students. Indeed, he was confident when he shared his life pathway with us in the interview.

"While studying in Jiri, I decided to do my own agricultural business in the future. Still, I got the knowledge and skills related to agricultural business in the JTA course in Jiri.

I am satisfied with the scholarship because it supported the school fees and helped me plan for my future. It would have been challenging to keep studying new skills without a scholarship. Also, when I was in the company, many others studied agriculture for five years with a diploma and bachelor's. But my position was higher than theirs. Also, I operated my business successfully for eighteen months with the knowledge I got from the JTA course."

His aspirations were strong. It did not change from the first time and guided him toward becoming a businessman. Also, skills learning from Jiri enhanced his capacity, which influenced him when he chose his work after graduation. However, his strong willingness was not the only factor in constructing his life pathway.

The network he obtained from the Jiri Technical School was another element in the decisions he made for his life. Beautiful Coffee Nepal supported him in finding a position in the Golyan group through their previous staff. Kamal was promoted rapidly there and successfully moved to the Muktinath company. At the Muktinath company, he took the responsibility of training with new agricultural technology, and as the trainer, he could generate a government network. He used the skills he learned and obtained a government network when running his business.

Until his business started operating, his life pathway was shaped as the typical transition from education to work; however, migration to the USA shaped it differently. It was an unexpected chance for him. The US government regularly announces the DV, and they do a lottery for selecting migrants. In the case of Kamal, he applied for it due to his wife's recommendation. Finally, he won the lottery in 2023 and left Nepal at the end of April.

Because the DV was announced as broadly as possible, ensuring as many Nepalese applied for it, it was luck that led him to win the lottery. However, beyond his luck, he had the financial capacity to use his luck to migrate to the USA. Specifically, he had savings from his career and support from his parents-in-law and elder brother. Notably, because he was the youngest, lost his parents, and his elder sisters married and moved earlier, his elder brother, Jhahal Pandit(32), supported Kamal from the SLC to Jiri Technical School. In the process, Jhahal gave up his studying further. Notably, Jhahal took the loan to support Kamal's migration. Jhahal mentioned in his interview that he did not expect Kamal's repayment. Indeed, Jhahal had already paid back all his loans. It was possible due to his financial capacities, including running a mobile phone store and cultivating his own lands. Namely, Kamal's circumstances enabled him to create his new aspirations.

After migration, Kamal worked for Taco Bell, a Mexican fast-food store. He was satisfied with his situation in setting up in the USA, but he expressed his disappointment regarding discontinuing his agricultural career.

" Here, they did not admit my previous career, so I am not working in agriculture. I am working in Taco Bell, the line in the kitchen and packing. Now, I do not have a long-term plan. Because, under the regulation of DV, I need to work for a year to pay the tax. And here in New York, I think there is no place to work as an agricultural expert. So I think, after making some money, I will study to become an electrician. Also, I am considering moving to other states where I can conduct farming or work related to agriculture. However, now I need to consider working for one year with a stable salary to follow the regulations.

My other goal is to get the Green Card which I can get after working for five years here in the USA. I wanted to return to Nepal after that, but it might take time. My wife mentioned she wants to return to Nepal after getting her Green Card, but I think at least ten

years is required. If I returned before that, what would I do in Nepal? But I cannot make a long-term plan now. Now, I am at a totally zero level."

His migration to the USA was the objection of admiration by people in Sindhupalchok district. Because, for them, migration to the USA was the passage to make a big money. On the other hand, Kamal encountered uncertainty derived from his unstable social status. His legal status was stable, but he could not work in a familiar field with his qualified skills. Compared to his previous life, which was well planned and went through effective strategy generated by the capacity he was in, as he said, on 'zero level'. He could not plan anything there, and as he mentioned, he could not go back to Nepal before pursuing a stable life in the USA because he removed all his bases in Nepal. Hence, he struggled with the situation. He tried to find better working conditions and considered moving to other states where his skills could be used. Namely, he set the goal of getting a Green Card and did his best to achieve it. For him, getting a Green Card was the most significant thing to accomplish in negotiating with the current uncertainty that he faced.

In the case of Kamal, it was unexpected that he received a scholarship and migrated to the USA. He used the scholarship to manage his life strategically with his capacity. He encountered uncertain situations during his studies and career, and his negotiation was successful due to his capability. However, his situation in the USA was more complicated and unfamiliar. He considered diverse ways to improve his skills for surviving. In other words, the mobilities caused by the unexpected chances changed his life pathway, and he shaped his life by strengthening his capacity to negotiate uncertainty.

The scholarship receivers' objectives for mobilities were resources of income. The mobilities were shaped differently by gender, family dynamics and socioeconomic status. However, it was not fixed. Even the families supported the mobilities due to their aspirations for income. Indeed, the early migration of family members realised the multilocal household in the returnees' families. Also, returnees' mobilities were expected to be flexible due to their social circumstances (Huijsmans, 2014; Korzenevica and Agergaard, 2017). Namely, the Sindhupalchok district was not the place to fulfil their aspirations to become someone or gain money (Pigg, 1992), and inappropriate conditions catalysed the receiver's mobilities. In the process of mobilities, the receivers tried to negotiate against the uncertainty with their available resources to achieve their goals (Johnson-Hanks, 2005); reversely, they also used uncertainty as a chance to realise their aspirations (Johnson and West, 2022).

Chapter 6

The Next Generation of Farmers

The scholarship receivers strongly aspired to have a high and stable income for a good life. It emerged as a key reason for leaving Sindhupalchok district. Even among the returnees, they considered the migration due to the limited income opportunities locally. The scholarship receivers wanted an income source with sufficient money to satisfy them. However, the farming that their parents did could not meet their desires. Thus, nobody considered farming for their future 'job'. It differed from what Ben White(2020) argued about the generation problem. He argued that leaving youths from the rural community is caused by structural problems, like late resource redistribution and the tension caused by it (White, 2020, p.91-99).

However, although the receivers could have possibly inherited the lands and other resources, they did not consider farming as their livelihood. It was not the aversion to farming, but they saw little income opportunities in smallholder farming. They often mentioned, "If there is a job in Sindhupalchok district, I would stay there". It showed them farming was not the job. That was why eight of twelve youths left their home to earn money. On the other hand, many revealed they would like to return to the Sindhupalchok district when they have savings. Indeed, some migrants returned to the Sindhupalchok district after some years of work abroad.

Based on the result of observation, this chapter argues the importance of considering individuals' transition to discuss the future of farming.

6.1 Farming, Not as the 'Job' – Perspective from Educated Youths

" I think youngsters are leaving because there are no job opportunities. Therefore, in my opinion, agricultural education and policy should focus on how to industrialise and strengthen the capacity of the business in agriculture. Also, education should change to focus more on fostering entrepreneurs. Specifically, the major crops in the class should change to industrial crops, which can support businesses- from production to marketing. Jiri Technical School has already researched how to generate a strategy for managing the subjects and classes for industrial and commercial crops such as coffee, tea, and cardamoms. So, cash crops should become the main crops in the curriculum. It will be helpful to make Nepali youngsters stay in Nepal instead of leaving for jobs abroad." (Hariram Kandal, 45, Teacher at Jiri Technical School)

Hariram Kandal was in charge of the scholarship programmes at Jiri Technical School. During his interview, he emphasised the significance of expanding commercial and industrial crops in Nepali agriculture. Also, he insisted generating income sources could be a durable solution for the future of agriculture in Nepal. Indeed, the Jiri Technical School curriculum focused on applied agricultural skills and fostering entrepreneurs. The scholarship receivers studied in the ' Technical School Leaving Certificate (TSLC) in Agriculture (Plant Science)', which comprised of a year with eleven theory classes and six months of OJT. As Hariram mentioned, the curriculums focused on new skills for industrial agriculture and basic skills of the business. Specifically, their education objectives were 'Fulfill the demand of junior level manpower in the field of agriculture (plant science) of the country.' and to 'Start own

business in the field of agriculture (plant science)' (Curriculum Development Division, 2016, p.3).

The twelve receivers were affected by curricula. According to their interviews, they mentioned that their interest subjects were business, horticulture and plantation crops. Also, their other primary preferences were advanced scientific knowledge like soil chemistry and analysis. Attending Jiri Technical School changed the receivers' status. The Sindhupalchok district government asked the high-marked student in advanced science to test the community's soil during their vacation. Also, their neighbours came and asked them for advice on cultivation. When we interviewed receivers, they were proud of it. They knew their changed status in the community as the exceptional ones who got the new knowledge and expertise. The sense of accomplishment made them expect to continue their outcomes after graduation.

Moreover, during the theoretical classes, the receivers conducted the Practical Rural Assistant (PRA) for two weeks each semester in the village near the school. They advised the farmers about cultivation. According to Hariram, it was a practical class for the students who could become professional trainers. It was along the same line as the school's objective of fostering experts. And simultaneously, the receivers' first official experience in advising farmers. Indeed, all the twelve receivers replied that PRA was the best curriculum during the theoretical classes; notably, they mentioned they enjoyed assisting other farmers with their knowledge.

The experiences and learning arouse new aspirations or strengthen their previous aspirations in the agricultural sector. Indeed, they all tried to get a job in the agricultural government offices or launch their new business. Namely, learning in the school affected shaping the receivers' aspirations. Specifically, systemic learning about new crops and detailed skills expanded receivers' understanding of the range of agriculture. Also, the willingness of the school to apply their objectives to students contributed to their dreams. Namely, it was a 'doxic aspiration' (Zipin et al., 2015) generated by the official programme, which tried to foster certain experts. Eventually, all the receivers aspired and expected they could become government officers or businessmen when they graduated from school.

However, it was difficult for the skills from the school to apply to their parents' scale of farming. Because the cash crops, except for coffee, were not appropriate for the Sindhupalchok district's climate, and their families' main production crops were rice and maize. Remarkably, the cash crops required a large production scale for market sharing. In contrast, their parents' cultivating lands were only an average of 0.2ha. Also, regarding becoming government officials, they faced government hiring policy changes with reduced numbers and increased academic qualifications from JTA to Diploma. In the leam of opening their business, accumulating capital was fundamental. However, it was challenging for almost all of them to make it. Eventually, only four students could experience working in the agricultural sector. However, it was significant that nobody, including students and parents, considered farming their families' land after graduation. In other words, general farming was not considered a 'job' because it differed from what they aspired to through higher education.

6.2 The Reason for Losing Youths – Perspectives from the Community

"Our real expectation was that they could find a way to manage life."

Mundu Thapa(38), the Chair of the CCU-S, said in the meeting. She was the one who made the scholarship programme together with Beautiful Coffee Korea/Nepal and established the conditions for students' return to quality for scholarships.

" We cannot force them to return without an exact job option. And we, CCU-S, do not have any projects. It means we cannot ensure them the jobs. Previously, we gave them temporary jobs(like inspector), but we cannot do it now."

According to her, their leaving was inevitable because the community could not create jobs for the youth. She was convinced that the current farming in the Sindhupalchok district community could not be the youth's income source. In the CCU-S's opinion, the primary reason for youths' leaving was a lack of jobs. These were the same as what receivers answered in their interview. Namely, both agreed that farming could not be a job for the receivers.

The conversation with PCC members revealed in more detail why farming could not be a job for the receivers. Purna Pandit(50) was the leader of the Ichok PCC. When we talked about youth leaving the community, he emphasised the generation gap regarding income.

"The most important matters are money and a job. Because the village has no jobs, youngsters do not want to stay here. Let us think about our farming. There is no possibility of making it bigger and more profitable for the business. We still struggle to find the market for every crop, and our farming size is so small. Because of that, living in the village is not attractive for them.

If they come back, we can give them land –tenant farming or selling the lands at low prices because there are not enough people to cultivate all the lands. And we can support them in cultivating. But it is not attractive for them to live and farm here. Why? Their expected income is much higher than we have. So, they can only come when we can make a place/position/condition to satisfy them. The appropriate question for young ones is, "How much do you want to earn?". Not "What do you want to do?" "

He thought the youth's departure stemmed from the generation gap, particularly regarding income. Compared to the receivers' interview, it was correct. The receivers moved depending on the income. As mentioned above, farming in their families' lands could not be considered a job due to the lack of profit generation. It was primarily because of their small size of the farm. Nevertheless, from their interview, all the students who left home wanted to return to the Sindhupalchok district. Indeed, all the students tried to get a job in Sindhupalchok district first after graduation, and then, in case of failure, they migrated. But they dreamed of returning to Sindhupalchok with high savings. In essence, they left to find 'proper' income for their lives, not because they preferred leaving.

Another significant point from the conversation was resource sharing. In the conversation, Purna mentioned the community could provide land to cultivate if the youth returned. According to him, i due to Ichok's ageing and decreasing population. It was a different case from what White(2020) argued. In the Ichok community, the older generation preferred the youths to stay in the community, and they were ready to share the resources. It was a reliable assurance considering Ichok's previous support for the common benefit and preparation of the lands for the coffee production facilities.

Naturally, their certainty emanated from their community's socioeconomic conditions. Ichok was a high-caste community. However, in the lower caste community, the situation was different.

"Regarding the leaving of youngsters, I cannot complain. We do not have enough land even for current residents to do agriculture. We cannot provide them with lands to cultivate. Thus, they can not manage their life here." (Netra Nepali, 51, the chair of Pragatishil PCC)

The Pragatishil PCC members were all from the lowest caste group. According to the socioeconomic survey results among the receivers, the higher caste's average income was 1.4 times more than that of low and indigenous groups. Hence, Netra could not ensure the

redistribution of the resources for the returnees. However, as mentioned above, the receivers left not because it was impossible to obtain the land or other resources. The issue was that even if communities would distribute the resources, it would still be small-holding farming; however, receivers were unsatisfied with the income from small-holding farming. Their leaving could not be avoided by redistributing the certainly small size of previous generations' land (remember, the receivers' families' average land size was 0.2ha) and resources.

The communities' leaders and receivers recognised that the current CCU-S's members' small farming could not generate enough income for youngsters. They argued the young generation's cultural trend changed closer to income - their main concern was, "How much do you want to earn?" Not "What do you want to do?". The community leaders understood the youths' situation, but they critiqued it at the same time. However, all of them had more than one family member in their families leave the village, and they were satisfied with their family members' activities in the newly moved area – it was their ambivalence. Additionally, the parents of the receivers also wanted their children to take a job to generate more income than their farming. It reflected their aspirations for their children's lives. Namely, the strongest reason for decision-making regarding mobility was income, regardless of the aversion to farming or the region.

6.3 Continuing Transition – From Receivers to Returnees

“From the first time, I wanted to go to a foreign country, and I think that when I return, I can live without others’ support in the future. When I return, I hope to have my own vegetable sales business.” (Lila BK, 23)

Lila prepared to migrate to Japan to make money. As she mentioned, she planned to return to the Sindhupalchok district after making the money to realise her dream. The transition from studying and working would not permanently stop at a certain point but continue as a shaping pathway. It was observed in other community members’ life pathways. Indeed, some cooperative members in Ichok who migrated returned.

"I worked in Malaysia for ten years. My goal was to return to Ichok with money and support my family properly. And now I have realised my dream, so I am happy to live here. It is more stable than in Malaysia. Also, nowadays, I am teaching Wushu, a Chinese martial art that I learned in Malaysia, to the children in the school, too. So, I enjoy my life here a lot." (Dhana Bahadur Tamang, 44, 10 years Malaysia)

" I was a principal at Ichok School. But the salary was insufficient to support my family – four members with parents. Therefore, I moved to Qatar first and then changed to UAE. After COVID-19, I returned because I feared dying without medical service. I am so happy I am here with my family, but regarding income, I am not sure I can live here for my entire life. The income difference between working abroad and farming here is so huge. That was why 2011, after returning to Ichok, I decided to go abroad again. I am having the same issue as that time now." (Jun Bahadur Tapa, 44, 2 years, Qatar/ 11 years, UAE)

Two PCC members had the experience of migrating to foreign countries and returning to their home village. They both had the same aspiration: to make money to support their family and return. And they realised their dream through migration. The mobilities were found more than once in their life pathways. Rather, it could be continued. In the case of Jun, he changed countries depending on the working environment and repeatedly came and went to find better conditions to make money. As Wyn and White(1997) mentioned, they underwent multiple transitions through the processing of arrival and departure (Wyn and White, 1997, p.97). Additionally, for Jun, the transition was ongoing. In the interview, he described the hardship of managing his livelihood in the Sindhupalchok district; thus, it could

be possible to migrate again. Namely, his transition to the destination as 'the stable livelihood' continued. His youth transition did not finish but shaped a pathway toward his goal (Wyn and White, 1997, p.99).

The migrated receivers could follow the returnees' transition in Ichok. Remarkably, the receivers' mobilities were already more diverse than those of the returnees due to their moves for education – all of them already experienced going and returning. The transition from education to work continued to the destination of 'sustainable livelihood and appropriate income'. Hence, their lives shaped the pathways with the processing outcomes to achieve the goals through chosen roads (Wyn and White, 1997, p.99). Returning to Sindhupalchok district meant returning to farming with a high possibility. Indeed, in the case of the receivers, their forms of farming could vary, managing extended ranges of farming with their more qualified skills than the previous returnees. Because their dreams were in agriculture, farming could be the 'last resort', changing their life trajectories by their abilities (Mwaura, 2017, p.1313).

On the other hand, Susmita and Sunita, who were married women, differed from other receivers. Their reason for mobility was marriage. Naturally, their mobilities were subordinated to their husbands. The vital difference in mobility was that they could not choose their 'road'. This point was different from the married male in the group. In the case of Rajendra, who was prepared to move to Europe and Kamal, who was in the USA, they led their mobilities by themselves. They did not follow their wives moving, while their wives followed them. In the case of the wives of previous returnees, they were in Sindhupalchok district and remained in farming while their husbands worked abroad. Namely, the power asymmetry in gender could affect the shaping of female migrated receivers' life pathways.

The cases of previous returnees in Ichok showed that their transition was not halted when they reached foreign countries. Instead, it continued or unceasingly changed for them to shape their life pathways. Likewise, the transition of receivers, which started from attending Jiri Technical School, was expected to continue. It could apply to both returnees and the existing migrants. Also, other elements like marriage and gender could impact their further transition.

6.4 Future Farming and Development?

The mobilities of the scholarship receivers were powerfully intertwined with the income source. For them, farming was inappropriate due to its lack of income generation. The communities realised it, but restrictions on their resource, like small land size, made them leave Sindhupalchok district. However, the case of previous returnees showed migrants' mobilities would not be fixed - their transition continued depending on the situation.

The unfixed returnees' transition affected the community. They affected potential youth migration. Also, they were the new energy source for the community to work and sustain. Hence, communities must consider how returning farmers can resettle in the regions and participate in the community. The scholarship receivers' transitions were also fluid, depending on their circumstances. They experienced a non-linear transition process through returning and leaving the community. According to their current plan, they intend to return with savings to do something in the community. In other words, the individuals' transitions and community interact, affecting community development.

As Mwaura(2017) argued, rural youth migrations or attempts at diverse forms of farming are survival strategies for them. Namely, in their transitions, they would try diverse forms of farming. However, it also has high risks due to a lack of proper welfare and market policies (Mwaura, 2017, p.1331-1332). Hence, it was significant to establish proper policies for

communities and individuals. The community leaders and teacher in the Jiri Technical School argued for more direct support from the government to vitalise the market for the small-holders. The receivers requested enough stable agricultural positions at various government office levels for both their future and effective support for the farmers. Two directions for the suggestions from communities and youths pursued one goal: the sources of income.

Eventually, finding the way for future farming and community development is considering the youths' transitions and the new surroundings they make. The key to community development is how to make income sources through the various forms of farming and how to make youth participate in it considering their youth transition.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: The Unfinished Stories

This research started with the question: *Why did scholarship receivers not return to Sindhupalchok?* According to the study, the receivers aspired to stable income sources and chose mobility as their strategy to realise their aspirations. However, the intuitive answer could not explain the complicated social dimensions behind their mobilities. Thus, it is insufficient to judge their mobility from a development perspective with a binary view, ‘success or failure’, because the binary judgement would not explain the intertwined societal elements that could continue to affect community development, the ultimate goal of the scholarship programme.

This research employed the youth transition to explore the scholarship receivers’ reasons for the mobilities and unpacked the surrounding factors. The twelve receivers’ transitions did not follow a linear process but formed pathways due to socially generated aspirations. The scholarship and the subsequent experiences strengthened the receivers’ ‘capacity to aspire’. Specifically, social factors like caste, gender, and socioeconomic status limited the receivers’ capacities; however, the scholarship gave them an opportunity for higher education in different region from their home to expand their capacities to aspire. The aspirations derived from social elements catalysed receivers to cross spatial barriers – moving to places where they could achieve their goal of a ‘stable income’. Here, mobility was used as a tool for negotiation against uncertainty.

Namely, their mobilities were not because of the generation problem but because the communities could not provide the opportunities to generate the desired income. Their desire for income stemmed from social circumstances, simultaneously affected by their higher technical education. Thus, it could not be sufficient with income from smallholding farming. In communities, some were frustrated by the receivers’ mobilities and stipulated that the scholarship programme had failed. On the other hand, others accepted their mobilities as their transition. Indeed, some previously migrated ones returned to the communities in their transition. Likewise, all migrated and prepared to migrate receivers aspired to return after making sufficient money through working in other regions and countries. Hence, it is necessary to imagine community development while considering rural youths’ life pathways. Notably, it is required to contemplate youths’ mobility not as a failure of development but as a fluid process.

Consequently, the social dimensions like individuals’ social circumstances and communities’ situations shaped the receivers’ life pathways by creating aspirations. Like previous returnees in Sindhupalchok communities, the receivers’ transitions have not finished yet. The transitions will continue until they find their ‘destination’, their satisfied income sources for their livelihood – and the community development will continue interacting with them.

Appendices

Appendix 1
Interview Participants List: Scholarship Receivers and Family Members

Name (Sex/Age)	Home Address	Current Location/Profession	Family Members (Sex/Age)	Information (Relation/Profession/Residence)
1st Batch (2017-2019)				
Kamal Pandit (M/29)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	New York, USA / Kitchen crew, fast food store	Jhalak Pandit (M/32)	Elder brother/Farmer, running mobile phone shop/ home village
Susmita Paudel (F/24)	Namuna PCC, Bahrabise	Nuwakot district / Running AgroVAT store	Bed Prasad Paudel (M/55)	Father/Farmer, Agricultural technician/ home village
Dipesh Acharya (M/23)	Panchakanya PCC Talamarang	Siraha District / Military Police	-	Did not have an interview
Sunita Lama (F/26)	Kalidevi PCC, Karkitar	Bhaktapur / Running Snack Bar	Karna Bahadur Tamang (M/54)	Father/Farmer, Running a small store in the vil- lage/ home village
Ranju Nepali (F/21)	Kalidevi PCC, Kotgaon	Home Village / Local NGO worker	Jaya Ram Nepali (M/40) Nanu Nepali (F/40)	Parents/ Farmer/Home village
2nd Batch (2018-2020)				
Rasila Pandit(F/21)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Jiri Municipality / Diploma student	Rasila Pandit (F/42)	Mother/Farmer/Home village
Sangita Pandit (F/23)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok;	Home Village / ECD Teacher, B.Ed student	Ranju Pandit (F/45)	Mother/Farmer/Home village
Lila BK(F/21)	Pragatishil PCC, Ukhubari;	Kathmandu / Preparation for moving to Japan	Karna Bahadur BK (M/53) Khadka Kumari BK (F/50)	Parents/ Farmer, Casual labourer/Home village
Sushmita Thapa Magar (F/20)	Pragatishil PCC, Puranakot;	Kathmandu / Preparation for moving to Japan	Lila Kumari Thapa Magar (F/43) Sangita Thapa Magar (F/23)	Mother, sister / Farmer, working for healthpost/ Home village
Rajendra Nepali (M/23)	Pragatishil, PCC,Thokarpa;	Kathmandu / Working at the sawing factory	Kamala Nepali (F/50)	Mother/Farmer/Home village
Susmita Nepali (F/22)	Kalidevi PCC, Karkitar	Home Village / ECD Teacher, B.Ed student	Resham Nepali (M/50) Maina Nepali (F/42)	Parent/Farmer/Home village
Sabina Nepali (F/21)	Kalidevi PCC,Karkitar	HomeVillage / Preparing B.Ed course	Shiva Nepali (M/37)	Father/ Farmer, Casual labourer/Home village

Appendix 2

Interview Participants List: Cooperatives, School, Organisation

Name (Sex/Age)	Home Address	Designation
Coffee Cooperative Union Sindhupalchok		
Mundu Thapa (F/38)	Sukute, Sangachok	Chair
Dhaka Prasad Pyakurel (M/40)	Pragatishil PCC, Ukhubari;	Secretary
Primary Coffee Cooperative		
Mahat Yam Bahadur (M/65)	Kalidevi PCC, Karkitar	Chair
Netra Bahadur Nepali (M/50)	Kalidevi PCC, Kotgaon	Chair
Dhan Bahadur Pandit (M/48)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Chair
Pakd Bahadur Pandit (M/52)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Member
Purna Pandit (M/50)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Member
Rom Bahadur Pandit (M/64)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Member
Jun Bahadur Tapa (M/44)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Member
Dhana Bahadur Tamang (M/44)	Annapurna PCC, Ichok	Member
Jiri Technical School		
Hariram Khanal (M/45)	Jiri Municipality, Dolaka District	Teacher / Coordinator of scholarship
Beautiful Coffee Nepal		
Prachanda Man Sherestha (M/71)	Lalitpur Municipality	Senior Advisor
Bal Bahadur KC (M/50)	Lalitpur Municipality	Secretary

* The other eight PCC members attended the informal conversation in Ichok, but it was not an organised interview. Therefore, here are the participants who attended the first session only.

Appendix 3

Questions for Socioeconomic Status: For Families

Category	Detail
Family Relations	What is the relation with the recipients?
	How many children/ siblings do you have?
	Who are the family members?
Property	Do you have your own residence for your family? Or are you a tenant?
	Do you have your own land? How many ha?
	Or are you doing tenant farming? How many ha?
	Do you have any loans?
Income source	Do you have any livestock?
	What are you growing?
	Do you have any other source of income?
Income	Do you have any support from the organisation?
	How much are you earning from farming in a month?
	How much are you earning from livestock in a month?
Education	How much are you earning from the activity besides farming?
	Until which grade did you study?

	Are your children going to school? Which grade?
Social Welfare	Do you have crop insurance?
	Do you have health insurance?
Social Position	What is your position in your cooperative? Or do you have any other place in any local committee?

Appendix 4

Jiri Technical School Curriculum

	Name of the subjects
1	Agriculture Extension and Community Development
2	Entrepreneurship Development
3	Crop and crop seed Production
4	Plant propagation and Ornamental Horticulture
5	Vegetable and Vegetable Seed Production
6	Fruit Cultivation, Post-Harvest Horticulture and Plantation Crop
7	Agriculture Ecology and Sustainable Soil Management
8	Plant Protection and IPM FFS
9	Apiculture, Sericulture, Mushroom and Lac culture
10	Farm Machinery, Structure and Irrigation
11	Aquaculture

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