MSc Development and International Relations - Global Refugees Studies

South Asian Students in Denmark: A qualitative study about

Nepalese students' experiences

Characters

With Spaces- 111,006

Without Spaces- 95,590

Submitted By

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Abstract

This thesis examines the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark's employing the concepts of precarity and migration infrastructure. The research is based on phenomenological research design. In-depth interview with seven respondents, demonstrates the significant effect of educational consultancies, which frequently present an excessively optimistic perspective on studying abroad, resulting in unmet expectations. Financial concerns are a major issue as students navigate precarious employment situations and align with academic duties with high living expenses. The study also highlights disparities in academic experiences across institutional types emphasizing the importance of community support and the effects of legal and regulatory barriers.

Keywords - Higher Education, Denmark, Migration Infrastructure, Precarity, Consultancies, Academic experiences, Legal barriers, Community support, Nepalese students, Financial Challenges

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1. Background and Introduction

The pursuit of international education has increased in recent years, as students around the world seek educational opportunities (Beech, 2015). According to the ICEF Monitor (2018) study, the number of international students in Denmark increased by more than 40% between 2013 and 2017, demonstrating an upward trend in global student mobility. As of January 1, 2022, Denmark has about 47,500 international students, with over 17,000 from non-EU countries (Ministry of Immigration and Integration, 2022).

According to Maury (2022), the relocation of international students is typically accompanied by financial obstacles, visa restrictions, and a sense of insecurity. Even though Denmark is known as an attractive place for education, international students, especially those from non-Western countries, may encounter considerable obstacles. The number of Nepalese students studying in Denmark increased significantly in the academic year 2022–2023. The Nepal Ministry of Education has granted 1,754 students a No Objection Certificate (NOC), who are willing to study in Denmark (Kathmandu Post, 2024). This document is essential for facilitating the transfer of funds for studying overseas via the Nepal Rastra Bank (Kathmandu Post, 2024).

Nepalese students, like numerous other international students, may face challenging work circumstances, such as restrictions on working hours, underpayment caused by visa limitations, and concerns regarding their legal status and future career opportunities (Tamang & Shrestha, 2019; Mulvey et al., 2023). The challenges present a scenario of instability, where temporary visa systems, financial uncertainties, and social isolation intensify their difficulties (Chacko, 2021).

The arrival of Nepalese students underscores the importance of examining the challenges they encounter within Denmark's educational and social landscapes. Existing literature, such as the works of Valentin (2015) and Timsina (2021), has studied on the social identities and aspirations

of Nepalese students in Denmark, while Maury (2019, 2022) has examined the precarious labor markets encountered by non-EU migrant students across Europe. Nonetheless, there is still an absence in empirical studies that specifically explore the relationship between migration infrastructure and precarity concerning Nepalese students in Denmark.

This thesis aims to address this gap by investigating the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark through the dual lenses of precarity and migration infrastructure. The concept of precarity, as defined by Standing (2011), highlights the instability and unpredictability faced by individuals, particularly those in the "precariat" class, characterized by unstable employment, income insecurity, and limited access to social benefits. Furthermore, the concept of migration infrastructure, as articulated by Xiang and Lindquist (2014), emphasizes the complex network of institutions, policies, and stakeholders that influence the migration process. This framework offers a comprehensive perspective, acknowledging the influence of various infrastructures, such as commercial, regulatory, technological, humanitarian, and social in shaping the experiences of migrants. This thesis aims to investigate the impact of migration infrastructure on the experiences of Nepalese students, examining their journey from the initial decision to pursue education abroad to their everyday lives in Denmark.

This thesis has two main goals, first to explore the challenges and experiences encountered by Nepalese students in Denmark, and second, to investigate the influence of precarity and migration infrastructure on these experiences. This study will delve into the lived experiences of these students through qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, concentrating on the challenges they encounter and the strategies they use to navigate them. The main research question guiding this thesis is: ***How do precarity and migration infrastructure shape the experiences and challenges faced by Nepalese students in Denmark?***

By answering this question, this thesis seeks to provide a detailed exploration of the difficulties encountered by Nepalese students in Denmark. The results will enhance the wider academic discussion on migration and education, especially concerning the complicated nature of international student mobility and the impact of precarity and migration infrastructure on their experiences.

Following the establishment of the research objectives and questions, the next part presents a review of the relevant literature. This review will offer an in-depth analysis of the current literature on migration, precarity, and international student mobility.

2. Literature Review

This literature review section is subdivided into four sections, each addressing distinct aspects of the international student migration and precarity. These sections include 'International Student Migration: Context and Challenges,' 'Structural Dimensions of Migration and Precarity,' 'Complexities of International Student Mobility,' 'Financial Precarity and Life Experiences,' and 'Nepalese Student Migration: Experiences and Aspirations'.

The migration of international students has emerged as a prominent focus within migration studies. Students seeking educational opportunities abroad face a multifaceted interplay of economic, social, and educational factors (Tamang & Shrestha, 2019). The intersection of education, migration, and labor market engagement among international students, especially from non-Western nations, poses distinct challenges and complexities that necessitate thorough investigation (Maurey, 2022). This literature review offers an impartial and thorough examination of current research on international student migration.

2.1. International Student Migration: Context and Challenges

Stein and Andreotti (2016) identified three prevailing tropes that characterize international students in Western higher education: cash, charity, and competition. These tropes illustrate the perception of international students within a contemporary colonial global framework centered on Western supremacy, influencing their recruitment and reception experiences. Coustere et al. (2023) introduce a fourth trope: labor, highlighting the insufficiently examined dimension of international students' academic endeavors during their studies abroad.

The labor of international students is a multifaceted phenomenon influenced by political, economic, and social dynamics (Coustere et al., 2023). Riano et al. (2018) assert that international students are frequently perceived as consumers of services rather than providers, partly due to

political motivations aimed at reducing concerns regarding labor market competition. Many countries, including Canada, that depend on immigrants, rely on the workforce of international students in the general labor market and the higher education system (Coustere et al., 2023).

International students frequently encounter difficulties and uncertainties in the labor market, despite their contributions. Legal barriers, including temporary status and visa limitations, may restrict their access to secure employment and result in unstable working conditions (Gilmartin et al., 2021). Additionally, linguistic, cultural, and relational obstacles may exacerbate their disadvantages (Myles & Cheng, 2003). These challenges underscore the necessity of deeply understanding the labor experiences of international students and the structural inequities that affect them.

2.2.Structural Dimensions of Migration and Precarity

Maury's research on non-EU/EEA student-migrant workers in Finland highlights the precariousness of their experiences in labor markets influenced by legislative constraints (Maury, 2019, 2022). Maury illustrates the widespread existence of precarious labor markets for non-EU/EEA student migrants, often characterized by underpaid hours and exploitative employment conditions. This highlights the connection between student migrant workers strategies and precarious employment, emphasizing the complexities of navigating the border regime while ensuring financial security (Maury, 2022).

Maury's study of temporal borders illustrates that one-year temporary permits in Finland creates student migrants' lives into a sequence of precarious annual projects, hindering their labor market progression and restricting opportunities for work or internships abroad (Maury, 2022). This study highlights the varying activation of temporal borders according to nationality, which enhances

hierarchies within the migrant labor force and illustrates the border regime's function in establishing geographical and temporal distinctions advantageous for capital.

The experiences of migrant laborers, particularly Nepali migrants in Malaysia, underscore the systemic dimensions of precarity (Sunam, 2023). Infrastructure, encompassing legal, regulatory, and economic frameworks affects the experiences and vulnerabilities of migrants in host countries (Sunam, 2023). Cranston and Duplan (2023) highlight the role of infrastructures in perpetuating privilege and exclusivity within mobility regimes, stressing the need for critical examination and systemic transformation.

2.3. Complexities of International Student Mobility

The experiences of international students navigating the intersection of education and migration illustrate the evolving dynamics of contemporary global mobility. The experiences of international students navigating the intersection of education and migration illustrate the evolving dynamics of contemporary global mobility. King and Raghuram (2013) and Brooks, Fuller, and Waters (2012) highlight the fluidity of the term "international student," situating them at the intersection of educational aspirations and migratory pathways. Some students have access to interesting and relevant occupations, while others are assigned to what Favell (2008) describes as '3D work' : "dull, dirty, and dangerous". This junction highlights the disparities among migrant categories and the challenges students face in seeking employment abroad.

Coustere et al. (2023) argue for a reconsideration of international students as laborers, challenging the prevailing narrative that emphasizes their status as consumers and prospective post graduate employees. The labor of international students, often neglected during their educational pursuits, has a complex connection to their temporary visa status, which exacerbates their economic and

legal vulnerabilities (Coustere et al., 2023). International students face employment challenges, including prejudice related to nationality, language barriers, and insufficient job experience.

Financial Precarity and Life Experiences

Research on the experiences of overseas students in Australia highlights the difference between financial and experiential precariousness (Mulvey et al., 2023). Contrary to the prevalent belief that international student mobility is predominantly a middle-class phenomenon, research indicates a more complicated situation characterized by financial instability and systemic precarity (Lipura & Collins, 2020). The persistent underpayment of international students resulting from work hour restrictions exacerbate their economic vulnerability, reflecting broader trends of exploitation within migration systems (Mulvey et al., 2023).

Chacko's (2021) study of international students in Singapore illustrates the increasing precarity experienced during their academic careers. Regulations related to employment and residency heighten students' anxieties regarding their post-graduation opportunities, while socially exclusionary behaviors intensify their sense of insecurity. Overseas students, while contributing to local economies and academic institutions, often encounter feelings of uncertainty and marginalization as they navigate complex sociopolitical contexts in their host countries.

2.4. Nepalese Students in Denmark: Experiences and Aspirations

Nepalese students constitute a significant number of the international student population, characterized by unique experiences and aspirations. Valentin (2015) examines the ways in which Nepalese students in Denmark manage the clash between their middle-class status in Nepal and the low-skilled employment they engage in overseas.

Timsina (2021) analyzes the aims and challenges faced by Nepalese students in Denmark, highlighting the gap between educational aspirations and professional results. These studies

illuminate the complex interplay among educational mobility, social identity, and socioeconomic factors within the Nepalese diaspora.

These studies illustrate the complexity of international student migration, emphasizing the blurred lines between educational and labor migration, along with the numerous challenges students encounter in seeking educational opportunities overseas. The literature indicates a complex interaction of legal, economic and social factors that affect the experiences of international students, especially those from non-Western nations like Nepal.

The following section examines the theoretical framework that drives this thesis, emphasizing the role of migration infrastructure and precarity in understanding the lived experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark.

3. Theoretical Framework

This section explores the theoretical framework that supports this thesis, highlighting its importance of migration infrastructure and precarity in understanding the lived experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark. Through the integration of these two concepts, I aim to shed light on the different factors that influence their academic journeys and everyday experiences in Denmark

3.1. Precarity

In the context of Nepalese students in Denmark, the concept of precarity provides an essential theoretical framework for comprehending the interplay of economic, legal, and social vulnerabilities that influence their lived experiences. Precarity, examined by various scholars (Standing, 2011; Robertson 2015; Anderson, 2010; Banki, 2014), provides an angle to analyze the complex conditions of instability, insecurity, and exclusion encountered by these students.

Precarity, according to Guy Standing (2011), denotes the economic instability and insecurity faced by individuals, particularly those who are part of the 'precariat' class. This group is defined by jobs that are temporary and unstable, accompanied by low wages and restricted access to social protections. Standing (2011) emphasizes that individuals in the precariat experience ongoing uncertainty, characterized by an absence of stable income or long-term security. This situation is exacerbated by short term contracts, underemployment, and restricted workers' rights, leading to considerable anxiety regarding their prospects (Standing, 2011).

For international students from Nepal studying in Denmark, the idea of precarity is valuable in comprehending the financial and legal vulnerabilities they face. A significant number of Nepalese students rely on part time employment to help cover their educational and living expenses; however, student visa regulations restrict the number of hours they are permitted to work.

Consequently, they frequently encounter unstable employment, receiving lower wages than required and facing challenges in sustaining a steady income, as noted by Standing (2011). Furthermore, their temporary visa status introduces an additional layer of uncertainty, limiting their long-term career opportunities and prospects for staying in Denmark.

By applying this concept, this thesis aims to examine how Nepalese students in Denmark manage the challenges of part time work, balancing their academic commitments with financial pressures while dealing with the uncertainties of their temporary legal status.

The concept of "precarity of place," as explored by Banki (2014), is essential for grasping the experiences of Nepalese students. This concept highlights the risk of forced removal or deportation that migrants encounter because of their uncertain legal status. The anxiety surrounding visa revocation of deportation significantly increases the precarious situation for Nepalese students as their continued presence in Denmark is dependent on commitment to strict immigration rules. This feeling of "not quite belonging" (Banki, 2014) generates an ongoing tension between their ambitions for education and career progression and the constant threat of legal displacement.

Anderson (2010) offers additional understanding of how immigration policies establish precarious conditions, not only by limiting entry into the country but also by regulating the terms of stay. Anderson contends that states significantly influence the vulnerability of migrants by restricting their rights and access to social security thus maintaining migrants in a condition of dependency. The regulations on work hours set by the Danish state, along with competitive and frequently exploitative labor markets, contribute to the precarious situation faced by Nepalese students. Numerous students find themselves in low paying, precarious positions that fail to match their educational credentials, resulting in what is referred to as "brain waste" (Armano & Murgia, 2015).

Precarity in higher education, as noted by Robertson (2015), further exacerbates these challenges. The temporary nature of international student visas and the absence of social safety nets require students to continually balance their academic duties with financial challenges, frequently without the assurance of stable career opportunities. For Nepalese students, this results in a scenario of "extended precarity," where the ambiguity of their legal status and future employment prospects merges with the difficulties of navigating through a foreign education system.

Furthermore, the idea of precarity facilitates an examination of how the economic priorities of these students might evolve over time. According to Anderson (2010), when migrants are in temporary and precarious situations, their employment frequently takes on a functional role, acting to achieve economic goals instead of leading to personal or professional satisfaction. Nepalese students often find themselves in a position where they must balance their academic performance with the necessity of financial survival, which can result in a preference for immediate economic benefits rather than focusing on their long-term educational and career aspirations.

The research on international student migration highlights the complex nature of these students' experiences. Researchers like Stein and Andreotti (2016) and Coustere et al. (2023) highlight that international students are frequently portrayed within Western higher education systems as either "cash cows" or prospective contributors to the labor market. Coustere et al. (2023) contend that international students are frequently perceived as laborers instead of merely students, and their employment during their studies plays a crucial role in both the economy of the host country and the operation of higher education institutions. Although these students make significant contributions, they frequently find themselves in low-wage, insecure positions, highlighting the wider structural inequalities present in global labor markets.

The structural dimensions of migration intensify the challenges faced by international students in their daily lives. Maury (2022) examines the impact of temporal borders, like one-year permits, on non-EU/EEA students in Finland, highlighting how legislative constraints lead to a persistent sense of insecurity regarding their labor market opportunities. In Denmark, similar patterns emerge, as Nepalese students encounter limited visa conditions that divide their lives into a series of uncertain endeavors, with their residency in Denmark dependent on consistently fulfilling state-mandated criteria. This highlights the unstable nature of their participation in the labor market and their overall experiences as migrants.

In conclusion, the theoretical framework of precarity offers a thorough insight into the various vulnerabilities encountered by Nepalese students in Denmark. This framework demonstrates the legal, economic, and social conditions that contribute to their precarious existence, drawing on the insights of scholars like Standing, Robertson, Anderson, and Banki, It highlights the interplay between migration policies, labor market conditions, and higher education systems, creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability that influences both the educational paths of these students and their overall experiences of social integration and well-being.

3.2. Migration Infrastructure

The concept of migration infrastructure, as articulated by Xiang and Lindquist (2014), offers a structured approach to understanding migration processes. They argue that migration extends beyond the mere movement of individuals from one location to another, being significantly shaped by a range of infrastructures that facilitate, regulate, and influence these movements. They highlight that "we cannot understand how migrants move unless we examine how they are moved by others," underscoring the significance of external actors in influencing migration experiences.

This changes the perspective from seeing migrants as solo individuals to recognizing wider systemic factors that shape their experiences.

This thesis examines the experiences of Nepalese students in Danish higher education through the lens of migration infrastructure. Xiang and Lindquist's (2014) framework provide insight into how various actors, institutions, and technologies influence these students' academic, professional, and social experiences. Their framework primarily focuses on the movement of migrants, yet it is also relevant to international students, as their experiences are influenced by these infrastructures. Recruitment agencies, universities, and Danish institutions are pivotal in shaping the mobility and integration of Nepalese students in Denmark.

Xiang and Lindquist (2014) categorize migration infrastructure into five dimensions:

- The commercial dimension encompasses recruitment agencies, educational consultants, and institutions such as universities that generate profit through migration facilitation (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). This aspect pertains to the educational consultants and institutions that Nepalese students depend on to access Danish higher education. The financial demands placed on these actors frequently exacerbate students' precarity, as fees and loans impose considerable burdens.
- The regulatory dimension encompasses government policies and regulations, including visa procedures and work permit rules, that influence the experiences of migrants (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). Nepalese students in Denmark face economic and legal challenges due to restrictions on working hours, visa limitations, and uncertainties regarding post-graduation work rights.

- The technological dimension encompasses digital tools and platforms that assist migrants in activities including job searching and maintaining connections with others (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). Technology improves resource accessibility; however, it may also create obstacles for students lacking familiarity with specific tools.

- The humanitarian dimension encompasses organizations and systems that help migrants, including non-governmental organizations and community groups (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). These entities provide legal assistance, social services, and advocacy, facilitating students' navigation of the challenges they encounter.

- The social dimension encompasses social networks, such as ethnic communities, student groups, and fellow migrants, which are essential for providing emotional and practical support to migrants (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). These networks serve as a protective mechanism for Nepalese students, mitigating feelings of isolation and helping in housing and employment matters.

Using this framework, we can examine how various aspects of migration infrastructure influence the precarity faced by Nepalese students. Their sense of vulnerability and uncertainty is exacerbated by factors such as the high cost of education, strict visa regulations, and the necessity of relying heavily on social media. These students do, however, also exhibit resilience, frequently depending on the assistance of the community to get past these obstacles. To sum up, migration infrastructure provides a thorough understanding of the real-life experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark. We can better comprehend the difficulties these students encounter and how they manage their lives in a globalized educational system by looking at the interactions between the dimensions.

3.3.Application of Theoretical Framework

Utilizing Standing's (2011) concept of the "precariat," this analysis will explore the liminal legal status of Nepalese students in Denmark, who are permitted to study yet encounter limitations regarding work rights and social benefits. This results in economic and legal instability, exacerbated by "brain waste" (Armano & Murgia, 2015), as students struggle to find employment that matches their skills. Banki's (2014) concept of "precarity of place" illustrates the impact of the persistent fear of visa revocation and deportation on individuals' daily experiences. This study will analyze the portrayal of Nepalese students, like other international students, as both "cash cows" and prospective contributors to the labor market, drawing on the research of Stein and Andreotti (2016) and Coustere et al. (2023). Scholars observe that international students significantly contribute to the economies of host countries, despite being confined to low wage, precarious employment.

The analysis of how various actors and systems influence the migration experiences of Nepalese students will be guided by Xiang and Lindquist's (2014) migration infrastructure framework. The commercial dimension reveals that recruitment agencies and universities impose financial burdens on students, thereby heightening their economic vulnerability. The regulatory framework of Danish visa policies and work restrictions constraints students' capacity for financial self-sufficiency, thereby exacerbating their precarious situation. The technological dimension reveals that digital platforms for job searching and academic resource navigation present both opportunities and challenges, particularly for students who may lack familiarity with these tools. This study examines the reliance of Nepalese students on community support networks and organizations to address their challenges and mitigate the effects of precarious living conditions.

This study integrates the frameworks of precarity and migration infrastructure to demonstrate how state policies, along with commercial and social actors, affect the vulnerabilities experienced by these students during their migration journeys. Support from community networks serves as a vital coping mechanism, highlighting the challenges and resilience of Nepalese students in Denmark.

4. Methodology

Following on to the establishment of the theoretical framework, the methodology utilized in this thesis will be discussed in this section. This study employs a phenomenological research approach to examine the lived experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, focusing on the distinct challenges and circumstances they face.

4.1. Research Design

This study is based on interpretivism, which states that reality is influenced by individual experiences and is fundamentally subjective (Pervin & Mokhtar, 2022). This approach highlights participants' perspectives, facilitating a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in their lived experiences. This research utilizes a qualitative, phenomenological methodology to examine the experiences of Nepalese students in higher education in Denmark. Phenomenology is appropriate for this study as it enables a thorough analysis of individuals' perceptions and interpretations of their experiences within a specific context (Høffding & Martiny, 2016). This method seeks to reveal the core of participants' experiences, focusing on their subjective realities and the significance they assign to those experiences (Creswell, 2016). This study aims to examine the specific obstacles and insights encountered by Nepalese students.

4.2. The Phenomenological Method

Phenomenology, as a research methodology, aims to comprehend phenomena from the viewpoint of individuals who experience them. It underscores the importance of capturing the subjective essence of experiences and revealing the underlying meanings (Creswell, 2016). This method is especially effective for examining complex and personal experiences, such as those faced by international students confronting the challenges of studying abroad. This study aims to provide

the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, influenced by the dynamics of precarity and migration infrastructure.

4.3. Motivation

The motivation for this research comes from my personal experience as a Nepalese student in Denmark. In the past seven years, I have observed the various challenges encountered by international students, particularly those from Nepal, while studying and residing in Denmark. These personal experiences provide a distinctive perspective on the issues, enhancing the relevance and significance of this study.

I have participated in community activities and engaged with fellow students via social media and community platforms. The platforms illustrate the daily challenges faced by Nepalese students, particularly in securing housing, encountering inequitable treatment from landlords or employers and managing the demands of work alongside their studies. Numerous students report challenges, especially at the beginning of the academic year when they encounter housing issues or exploitation. Simultaneously, these environments facilitate mutual support among students, which is noteworthy to observe.

Initially, I thought about focusing on migration and climate change for my master's thesis. The recent rise in the number of Nepalese students migrating to Denmark prompted a shift in my focus. I became curious about why so many Nepalese students are choosing Denmark, how they are adjusting to life here, and what their academic experiences are like.

My prior research focused on the experiences of refugees in Denmark and South Asian migrant workers in Denmark. I will now concentrate on migrant students. I take some inspiration from my previous research to conduct this thesis. The increasing population of Nepalese students presents

a significant opportunity to examine their motivations, challenges, and successes while studying in Denmark. This thesis is anticipated to provide valuable insights into the experiences of the international student community in Denmark, enhancing understanding in this area.

4.4.Scope

The experiences of current Nepalese students and recent graduates in Denmark are examined in this thesis. The study particularly looks at the difficulties these students encounter in areas like financial management, housing, work, daily life, and academic integration. It is geographically focused on Denmark however the respondents have shared some of their experience relating it to Nepal. The study investigates the ways in which precarity, and migration infrastructure impact the lives of the students by utilizing theoretical frameworks. Semi structured interviews with seven Nepalese students who represent a variety of educational and personal backgrounds were used to collect data. The study focuses on current trends in Nepalese student migration to Denmark, covering the years 2015 to the present. The study may not reflect the experiences of students in other countries, so it may not be comparable to those of students in other areas.

4.5.Methods for Data Collection

Data were collected using semi structured interviews with seven Nepalese students, including both current and former attendees of colleges affiliated with international universities and Danish public institutions. The semi structured format was chosen to facilitate an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences. A generic interview guide (Appendix 8) was created to ensure the relevance of the gathered information to the research objectives, informed by a preliminary understanding of the research area and a review of literature and theoretical concepts. The interview guide was informed by the theoretical frameworks of Migration Infrastructure (Xiang &

Lindquist, 2014) and the literature on Precarity, as examined by various scholars (Standing, 2011; Robertson 2015; Anderson, 2010; Banki, 2014).

The interviews utilized a structured set of questions designed to investigate participants' experiences with migration infrastructure, precarity, and coping strategies. This method facilitated a thorough understanding of the influence of these factors on academic and personal lives (Høffding & Martiny, 2016). Furthermore, follow up questions were asked to participants' responses to explore unexpected or noteworthy aspects in greater detail. This created opportunities to explore experiences that were not originally anticipated in the interview guide.

4.6. Selection of Participants

Participants were chosen through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling methods. Preliminary informal discussions were conducted with approximately 20 Nepalese students enrolled in diverse colleges and universities in Denmark. As a researcher I engaged in conversations that facilitated the understanding of participants' experiences and challenges without prematurely revealing the research objective. In the context of ongoing research preparation, screenshots of social media posts were captured specifically from Facebook groups, where students articulated their issues. These interactions frequently resulted in direct engagement with students to follow up on their narratives.

In addition to this, I regularly interacted with students working in different workplaces, often listening to their experiences. After some informal conversations, I informed students about the upcoming research and asked if they would be willing to participate as respondents.

Some students initially consented to participate but subsequently withdrew from their interviews. Factors included personal constraints, exemplified by a female respondent whose boyfriend

prohibited her participation and a male student engaged in approximately 350 hours of work per month, which prevented him from attending interviews. Interviews were conducted with seven respondents, aged 20 to 39, who had resided in Denmark for periods ranging from 6 months to 8 years, despite the challenges encountered. Among the respondents, two were female and five were male. The study revealed that although numerous female students recounted their experiences informally, they were reluctant to do so formally. One respondent assisted in identifying a female participant via the snowball sampling method (Christofi & Thompson, 2007).

This study involved the selection of seven respondents, encompassing a variety of educational backgrounds, lengths of stay, and experiences in Denmark. The respondents were selected to represent a diverse array of perspectives regarding the challenges encountered by Nepalese students. All names referenced in this study are pseudonyms employed to safeguard the identity and privacy of the respondents.

1. Anup, 25 (Appendix 1), who has lived in Denmark for six years, recently graduated from a public university with an MA in tourism. Along the way, he studies at both an international and a Danish university, which gives him a unique perspective on the differences between different educational systems.

2. Bijay, 33 (Appendix 2), received his master's degree from Nepal, his AP degree from and his bachelor's degree in computer science from Denmark. He has been living in Denmark for six years, and he appreciates the support that the Danish educational system offers. He is currently working towards a master's degree while he is on a post-study work permit.

3. Yasir, 27 (Appendix 3), has been studying business management at an international university while living in Denmark for the past two years. Yasir is determined to continue

his education despite facing challenging work conditions and instances of racism since leaving Nepal where he was studying chartered accountancy (CA).

4. Seela, (Appendix 4), 20-year-old girl, has spent a year living in Denmark while pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). As an international single student, she struggles and often works longer hours than is allowed to make ends meet. For a more encouraging experience, she advises prospective students to choose Danish public universities.

5. Rema, 22 (Appendix 5) has been living in Denmark for a year and is presently pursuing a BBA. After her USA visa was denied, a consultant suggested she consider moving to Denmark. For stability's sake, she registered her cousin as her spouse even though she considered getting a paper marriage.

6. Chiran, (Appendix 6) 23-year-old male has been living in Denmark for six months and is presently enrolled in a college affiliated to an international university to pursue a degree in business management. To finance his education, his family obtained a mortgage on their house, and he considers himself more of a worker than a student, working hard to meet his financial obligations.

7. Sahil, (Appendix 7) 39, has lived in Denmark for eight years and graduated from a Danish university with a master's degree in development and business. He first enrolled in a college connected to an international university, expressing concern about consultants deceiving him. Since then, he has become an important figure in the Nepalese community, leading a 12,000-member digital platform where he helps students facing comparable difficulties.

4.7. Conducting the Interviews

Interviews were conducted in environments that were accessible and comfortable for the participants. Some interviews were held in person, while others were conducted online. This decision was made to promote an environment that encourages open and honest communication (Corbin & Morse, 2003). At the participants' request, their names were not recorded. The interviews lasted from about an hour to nearly two hours.

I informed them that the recording session was about to begin. During the informal period, I focused on their comfort by discussing the research and creating a supportive environment for the interview (Høffding & Martiny, 2016). All interviews were audio recorded with the participants' permission, then transcribed and thematically analyzed in a separate section. The thematic analysis aimed to identify recurring patterns and themes related to precarity and migration infrastructure, as well as to understand how these elements influence participants' experiences.

4.8. Ethical Considerations

Following ethical guidelines is critical in research because it considers people's personal experiences and perspectives (Flick, 2018). All seven respondents in this study were given thorough information about the research objectives and how their data would be used. Before each interview, participants were given an overview of the research topic and the semi-structured interview format. They were also informed that the discussion would be recorded for transcription and analysis. Participants were given the option to withdraw from the study at any time, clarify, or modify their responses. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used, and all data was securely stored with restricted access.

4.9. Transcription

This thesis seeks to understand the lived experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, with transcriptions designed to capture the essential meanings of their narratives rather than focusing on the conversation's detailed structure. To keep the focus on the respondents' experiences, filler words ("uh," "hm"), emphases, and overlapping speech were removed because they did not contribute to a better understanding of their narratives. The goal was to analyze and communicate the fundamental significance of the information provided by respondents. Furthermore, the ethical consideration of participant anonymity was carefully maintained throughout the process, with personal details excluded from the final transcripts to protect respondents' privacy.

4.10.   Processing Primary Data

The collected data has been organized into various themes, as described in Appendix 9. Before starting to write the analysis, the analytical coding was done to ensure that the data was understandable. The transcriptions were reviewed to revisit the material and get more familiar with the data. I stay true to the essence of a phenomenological approach which requires recognizing the most important elements of the narrative, comprehending their interrelationships, and investigating the fundamental essence of the experiences presented (Creswell, 2016).

The themes will be examined to provide insights into how precarity and migration infrastructure affect participants' experiences. This analysis will be based on the participants' narratives and will fit within the study's theoretical framework. The goal is to capture the essence of participants' experiences and understand the impact of precarity and migration infrastructure on their academic and personal lives. The research design included a discussion of relevant theoretical concepts to the project. This led to the identification of the following themes for coding, which were derived

from the initial review of the narratives and the discussions surrounding the theoretical framework that guided the interview process:

- Pathway to Denmark

- Economic Vulnerabilities & Financial Strategies

- Legal and Regulatory Challenges

- Experience of Studying in College and University

- Employment Experiences

- Community, Networks and Social Support

Throughout the coding process, it became clear that some themes needed to be refined and that new themes could emerge. Each transcription was thoroughly reviewed, with the text divided into sections based on the identified themes. Finally, thoroughly examine the transcriptions and coding to ensure that narrative elements and themes are aligned. The coding scheme proved effective in structuring the primary data and identifying consistent patterns. Selected quotes will be used to support the analysis, but not all the coded data from the interview will be included.

Finally, the coding process allowed for a systematic examination of the transcriptions, resulting in the identification of significant patterns and themes relevant to the research. I hope to provide a thorough analysis of Nepalese students' complex experiences in Denmark by incorporating selected quotes. After establishing the methodological framework, I will proceed to present an analysis of the findings in relation to the research question.

5. Analysis

Having established the methodological foundation, I will now proceed to analyze the data gathered from in depth interviews. This section will examine the lived experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, focusing on how precarity and migration infrastructure shape the challenges they encounter and the strategies they utilize to address them.

This section provides an analysis of the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, emphasizing the themes identified throughout the coding process. Initially, six themes were identified, However, upon further reflection, 'Economic Vulnerabilities & Financial Strategies' and 'Employment Experiences' were merged, as these areas are closely interconnected in influencing the students' experiences. The final analysis is organized into five primary themes- 'Pathway to Denmark,' 'Economic Vulnerabilities and Employment Experiences,' 'Legal and Regulatory Challenges,' 'Experience of Studying in College and University,' and 'Community, Networks, Social, and Other Experiences.'

This analysis will examine how Nepalese students navigate the challenges of studying and working in Denmark, focusing on the impact of migration infrastructure and precarious conditions on their experiences. The analysis incorporates chosen quotes from the interviews to emphasize significant findings, supported by relevant research to provide context for the discussion.

The analysis begins with the 'Pathway to Denmark,' exploring the significant influence of consultancies and migration networks on student choices and migration experiences.

5.1. Pathway to Denmark

The journey for Nepalese students pursuing education in Denmark often begins with plans that might be hindered by visa rejections or advice from consultancies. Denmark was not a top choice for several respondents. Anup, Seela, and Rema originally planned to study abroad; however, they ultimately relocated to Denmark due to several obstacles.

Anup initially planned to study in Australia; however, after his visa was rejected, he chose Denmark as an alternative option. He shares *"Choosing to study in Denmark was a second option because I had hoped to go study in Australia, but that didn't work out as planned. Denmark was my second option"* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024). In a similar manner, Seela experienced a rejection of her Australian visa and was subsequently directed towards Denmark by her consultancy. She acknowledges, *"I didn't even know about the existence of Denmark before"* (Seela, in-person interview, 2024). The narratives indicate a recurring trend in which students, following visa rejections, seek guidance from consultancies that propose Denmark as a more accessible alternative for securing a visa and gaining admission.

Rema's experience, while somewhat distinct, followed a similar trajectory. Initially, she planned to pursue her studies in Japan following the rejection of her U.S. visa; however, her consultancy ultimately persuaded her to apply for Denmark instead. She reflects, *"Most of my friends were going abroad at that time so I thought it was a good idea to go abroad"* (Rema, in-person interview, 2024). Like Anup and Seela, Rema used the consultancy for guidance, which ultimately influenced her choice to pursue studies in Denmark, a country she had not previously thought about. In each instance, the consultancies significantly influenced the students' decisions to pursue chances in Denmark, frequently prioritizing the most straightforward options over those that best matched the students' individual preferences or career aspirations.

The dependence on consultancies aligns with the commercial aspects of migration infrastructure, as articulated by Xiang and Lindquist (2014). Consultancies generate revenue by directing students towards pathways that might facilitate visa and admission processes, yet these options may not align with the students' individual needs and aspirations. Anup's experience illustrates the potential constraints that consultancies impose on students' options, often providing suggestions that align more closely with their own business interests than with the actual needs of the students. He notes, *"The university that I ended up studying at was actually a recommendation from the consulting firm. [...] I guess the biggest factor for him not mentioning other universities and options was that it was easy for me to get admission and to get a visa to come to Denmark" (*Anup, in-person interview, 2024).

Consultancies even make profit by imposing fees on students for fundamental services, including tasks that students are fully capable of handling independently. Anup reflects, *"They were even charging just to fill a form that had my previous qualifications, my passport number, and all this stuff that I could fill out myself" (*Anup, in-person interview, 2024). This highlights the commercial exploitation encountered by certain students, as consultancies often regard them primarily as revenue sources instead of facilitating their journey towards informed decision making.

Some students, such as Anup, Seela, and Rema, faced restricted choices and were directed towards Denmark following visa rejections, whereas others opted for more strategic decisions. Bijay adopted a self-directed strategy by performing his own research prior to selecting a consultancy. He states, *"They did not provide false information. And they provided all the information that was correct "* (Bijay, in-person interview, 2024). Bijay had a more positive experience as he was made aware of the actual conditions of studying in Denmark, such as tuition fees and the difficulties associated with balancing work and study. His guidance to others underscores the importance of

conducting independent research: *"I would tell anyone coming to Denmark to do thorough research, apply to good universities, and avoid private colleges."*

However, some students do not share the same level of fortune. Yasir perceived a lack of transparency from his consultancy, leading him to feel that they sold him a dream. He recalls, *"Every piece of information was not provided in the correct way, they sell the dream. [...] They tell us only the dream part, the good part of coming to Denmark, but what they actually fail to tell us is how to manage yourself, whom to trust, how and where to find work"* (Yasir, in-person interview, 2024).This points out an increasing problem among certain consultancies that emphasize solely the advantageous aspects of studying abroad, resulting in students being inadequately equipped for the challenges they will encounter upon arrival.

In the same way, Sahil experienced disappointment due to the unfulfilled promises provided by his consultancy. He received confirmation that transferring universities upon his arrival in Denmark would be an easy process; however, the reality proved to be quite different. He remembers, *"They said there would be no problems changing universities or continuing my education after arriving. They assured me that once I reached here, I could easily switch to any university or course without restrictions."* This illustrates the tendency of certain consultancies to create unrealistic expectations for students, which can result in frustration and confusion when those promises fail to come to reality.

The trajectory for Nepalese students aiming to study in Denmark is significantly shaped by the consultancies they engage with. Some respondents, such as Bijay, reported positive experiences due to their independent research. In contrast, others, including Anup, Seela, Rema, Yasir, Chiran, and Sahil, encountered considerable difficulties. The commercial aspect of migration

infrastructure, as discussed by Xiang and Lindquist (2014), highly influences these students' experiences, with consultancies capitalizing on the provision of limited information and guiding students towards options that are convenient, yet not necessarily advantageous. The narratives highlight the necessity for increased transparency and enhanced decision-making processes in the migration journey for students seeking education overseas.

5.2. Financial Pressures and Employment Experiences of Nepalese Students in Denmark

The financial situations of Nepalese students in Denmark are influenced by numerous expenditures, economic vulnerabilities, and they are also trying to identify strategies to navigate their financial situations. Analyzing how these students confront these challenges exposes the influence of precarity on their educational experiences and overall lives.

Chiran's narrative highlights the significant expenses associated with seeking education overseas. He shares, *"I spent almost 22,000 dollars in total, including my college, visa, consultancy, tickets, and shopping fees"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024). The large sum, obtained via loans and the mortgaging of family assets, illustrates the considerable financial burden that numerous Nepalese students face prior to their arrival in Denmark. He states, *"We have to pay 96,000 DKK per year"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024), emphasizing the burden of higher tuition costs. His concern regarding work limitations can be seen when he says, *"We can't pay a fee by working just 80 hours"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024), highlighting the challenges encountered by international students who are restricted to part-time employment. This financial instability reflects the concept of "extended precarity" presented by Robertson (2015), highlighting the challenges students face in balancing academic and financial obligations amid a lack of long-term security.

The financial burden for Anup started long before he set foot in Denmark. "*The whole process took around 90 to 100,000 Danish kroner*" (Anup, in-person interview, 2024) , he recalls, explaining the expenses involved in obtaining a visa and booking a flight. His family's support was essential, much like Bijay's case, whose trip was funded by his brother, *"My trip was funded by my sponsor, that was my brother; after my father, he took on the responsibility for the family* (Bijay, in-person interview, 2024). This reliance on family finances underscores the economic challenges these students encounter. Anup's monthly expenses during his time at an international school amounted to approximately 13,000 to 14,000 DKK, with 7,500 DKK set aside for tuition fees and the remainder for living costs. Despite moving to a public university, his monthly expenses continued to be significant, around 10,000 DKK. He expresses, *"I was never financially secure"* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024) a feeling that resonates with numerous students who are perpetually saving to meet tuition deadlines. This ongoing financial insecurity reflects Guy Standing's concept of the "precariat," where people find themselves stuck in precarious jobs and uncertain income scenarios.

The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these financial challenges. Bijay recounts a notably challenging time: *"It was really difficult to pay the fees because of COVID. I was jobless, so there was no way to pay the tuition fees*" (Bijay, in-person Interview, 2024) His family, once more, stepped in to help, securing a loan to manage 55,000 DKK in expenses and living costs. Even with this assistance, the burden of debt was significant, as he was indebted to his family for around 200,000 DKK. Bijay reflected on his situation, stating, *"I felt like I was on a sinking boat"* (Bijay, in-person Interview, 2024), which highlights the feeling of entrapment that numerous students experience. His experience highlights the fragility of their circumstances, worsened by the pandemic, and the enduring debt students frequently incur, therefore.

Yasir's experience highlights how students frequently resort to informal or "*black market*" jobs to survive financially. He states plainly, "*No one can manage the funding by working 80 hours... we have to be involved in the black market or black economy in some way*" (Yasir, in-person Interview, 2024). Working long hours "*up to 50 or 60 hours per week*" (Yasir, in-person Interview, 2024), explains how he copes with the financial burden of tuition, rent, and transportation expenses, which total approximately 15,000 to 16,000 DKK each month. His experience illustrates Anderson's (2010) observation that migrants in precarious positions frequently view their work as simply instrumental, serving to an economic end. For Yasir and many others, the struggle to make ends meet overshadows personal or professional satisfaction, adding to their already unstable circumstances.

Seela's story highlights the essential importance of family support in navigating financial challenges. She explains, *"I had to ask my parents for money,"* emphasizing the ongoing dependence on family, even from a distance. Upon the arrival of her dependent, she experienced a reduction in financial pressure, expressing, *"I don't think much about it."* Seela acknowledges that financial insecurity poses a major obstacle: *"Financial challenges are one of the most significant."* The weight of long hours to maintain stability is clear: *"I feel secure if I am working a lot of hours, If I am not working, I feel like I am losing a lot of money"* (Seela, in-person interview, 2024). This highlights the precarious and transient situation of international student employment in Denmark, where individuals like Seela are compelled to work extended hours to prevent financial hardship.

Anup's experience with temp agencies highlights the informal methods students employ to navigate legal work restrictions. He explains, *"One way is if you work with some kind of temp agencies, They will give us more work than 20 hours a week, but then they pay you only allocated*

hours in your bank account" (Anup, in person Interview, 2024). These informal work arrangements, although they assist students in addressing their financial needs, put them in a precarious situation frequently working off the books without any legal safeguards. This aligns with Standing's (2011) the "precariat," where individuals are left without the security or stability necessary for a dignified existence.

Rema's narrative highlights the psychological burden that comes with financial difficulties. She shares, *"I used to be so worried about money that I couldn't focus on my studies"* (Rema, in-person interview, 2024). The ongoing struggle impacted on her academic performance and overall well-being; a feeling shared by numerous classmates. Even with her dependent now assisting with tuition, she recognizes that handling finances is still tough, *"Before my dependent arrived, managing finance was very difficult."* The dependence on family or dependents for financial stability is a prevalent aspect of many students' experiences, exposing how economic vulnerabilities influence their education and personal lives.

5.2.1. Employment Experiences: Navigating Precarity in the Job Market

Nepalese students in Denmark encounter unstable employment situations, which add to their economic challenges. Numerous individuals find themselves compelled to take positions that do not correspond with their academic credentials. Anup considers this disconnect, noting, *"The work that I do now is a little bit related to my study, but not what I was studying for"* Anup, in-person interview, 2024) His experience of working as a kitchen helper, despite his education in business and hospitality management, highlights the issue of "brain waste" (Armano & Murgia, 2015), where skilled individuals are unable to find jobs that match their qualifications.

Bijay's experience in the IT sector points out a significant challenge, the language requirement. He states, *"If I could speak Danish, maybe I could find a job easily"* (Bijay, in-person interview, 2024). His struggle highlights the wider difficulties encountered by non-Danish-speaking students, who frequently find themselves shut out from better job prospects. Although Bijay is happy with his current job, the jobs disconnect with his area of study highlights the wider challenges that international students encounter in finding work that corresponds with their qualifications and expertise.

Yasir's account exposes the troubling aspects of student employment in Denmark, extended hours, unfair conditions, and the ongoing anxiety of potential non-payment. He remembers his initial job experience, where he worked without a contract and encountered considerable stress, *"I think it was intentional, but I don't know in the beginning, He had nothing to lose but I had everything to lose", (*Yasir, in-person interview, 2024*)*. Seela and Rema's experiences as cleaning assistants highlight the reality that students frequently take on low-skilled jobs due to necessity. Seela reflects on the fatigue of juggling work and study, *"I remember sleeping for only two hours and then going to school after long work hours"* (Seela, in-person interview, 2024). Rema highlights the difficulties of juggling evening work after morning classes, pointing out that *"mostly, people here have the mindset of making money."* These experiences underscore the unstable nature of student work, where extended hours and physical fatigue become commonplace in the quest for financial security.

Chiran's views on the uncertain nature of cash jobs highlight the challenges many students encounter: *"If we are lucky, we will get the cash job; otherwise, you don't have a job"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024). The dependence on informal, frequently exploitative, work arrangements deepen students' entrapment in a cycle of economic instability. Sahil contributes to this discussion

by emphasizing the exploitation students endure from agencies and contractors, recalling instances where employers refused to pay students for their work, *"Many students have encountered problems where employers refuse to pay them"* (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024)

These narratives illustrate the challenges faced by Nepalese students in Denmark as they maneuver through a complicated and uncertain job market, where restricted legal work rights and language barriers lead them into exploitative and unstable job situations. Their experiences resonate with Standing's (2011) concept of the "precariat," where individuals encounter ongoing economic and employment instability.

5.3. Legal and Regulatory Challenges

Nepalese students studying in Denmark confront numerous legal and regulatory obstacles that lead to continuous anxiety, a lack of stability, and financial difficulties. Many students experience uncertainty about their future due to strict work-hour limitations, unequal access to benefits, and difficulty understanding the complicated Danish payment systems. These encounters highlight the vulnerable position that international students hold in Danish society as they navigate the conflicting demands of employment, education, and legal compliance. Guy Standing (2011) points out that these difficulties reflect the precariousness that defines the "precariat," a group of people caught between precarious employment and little protection.

The confusion surrounding Denmark's payment methods and the dangers of going over legal work limits are made clear by Anup's account. He explained the arrangement of payments: *"In Denmark, the calculations are weird. You're getting paid a month, like if you are getting paid August 31 you're getting paid from July 15 to August 15 on August 31, and there are 15 days, that is, you are not getting paid"* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024). Due to this confusing system, Anup received

payments during a change of employment from both his previous and new employers, which created issues with SIRI, the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration. He recalled, *"I actually got a warning from SIRI about illegal working, which I didn't do"* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024), highlighting the concern about work and visa restrictions. Additionally, Banki (2013) emphasizes how legal ambiguity can make migrants more vulnerable because they frequently find it difficult to navigate complicated bureaucratic systems.

These challenges are made worse by the strict work hour restrictions. When it came to basic living expenses, Bijay described how the previous 80-hour work limit hardly provided enough money, *"With that, I could make around 8,000/9,000 kroner, which is just enough for rent, food, transportation, and other expenses" (Bijay, in-person interview, 2024).* It was insufficient to pay for the tuition. The conflict between the demands of education and financial necessities is encapsulated in his metaphor of "*putting two legs on two boats and trying to balance both boats in a river*" *(Bijay, in-person interview, 2024).* Gilmartin et al. (2021) highlight the significant challenges that international students face in balancing work and studies, particularly in light of restrictive employment policies. Bijay and other international students are faced with an impossible balancing act that perpetuates their precarious status.

Yasir went on to discuss how stress and a sense of urgency are increased for students attending private colleges when they do not have a post-study work permit. He clarified, saying, *"We feel we have limited time because if you come to college like mine, you don't get a post study work permit"* (Yasir, in-person interview, 2024). Students are under tremendous pressure to finish their coursework and find jobs before their visas expire because of this policy. International students are frequently viewed as temporary workers whose educational contributions are subordinated to their role in bridging labor market gaps, as Stein and Andreotti (2016) suggest. Lack of long-term

opportunities makes students like Yasir more vulnerable and reduces their ability to fully integrate into Danish society.

The experiences of Seela and Rema highlight the differences in benefits between students attending public and private universities. Seela highlighted the unfair treatment of international students by saying, *"I came to know that students studying in public Danish colleges and universities get a discount on transport, but we don't have those facilities"* (Seela, in-person interview, 2024). Rema expressed her dissatisfaction with the few opportunities for legal employment following graduation by saying, *"It would be nicer if we had a post-graduate work permit after studying"* (Rema, in-person interview, 2024) These reports are consistent with Anderson's (2010) findings that migrants in precarious situations are frequently excluded from receiving the same benefits and rights as other groups, which serves to further marginalized them.

Chiran's critique of the Danish government's policy towards foreign students is indicative of a larger feeling of exploitation. He clarified, "*I think the government also knows that many South Asian people want to come abroad, and Denmark needs non-skilled people to work in different sectors for the country,"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024). His frustration with the expectation that students contribute to low skilled labor markets while receiving little in return was evident when he continued, saying, *"They just want us to work for their low-skill jobs, make money, and pay the fee back to them."* This is similar to Standing's (2011) idea of the "precariat," which is people who work in jobs that offer neither security nor the opportunity for upward mobility, reinforcing the notion of exploitation in the labor market.

The account of Sahil's housing difficulties emphasizes even more how difficult it can be for international students to understand legal systems. *"I remember my own experience in the early*

days; I had a hard time finding housing and ended up living in a basement for a month," he said (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024). Sahil decided not to call the police after his landlord threw his belongings into the street out of fear. He said, "*No, I was afraid to approach the police,*" expressing the fear that many overseas students have when speaking with law enforcement. This anxiety is in line with research by Banki (2013), which shows that a lot of migrants put off obtaining legal protection because they are worried about their immigration status or possible consequences. According to Anderson (2010), immigrants are frequently exploited because of their fear of interacting with the legal system, especially when it comes to housing and work.

Nepalese students in Denmark face a precarious existence due to various legal and regulatory challenges, including intricate payment systems, stringent work hour policies, unequal benefits, and limited post study opportunities.

5.4. Experience of Studying in College and University

This section of analysis delves into the varied educational experiences of Nepalese students studying in Denmark, with a particular emphasis regarding their experiences of studying in college affiliated to international universities and   Danish public universities. Seven respondents' insights shed light on variations in student outcomes, teaching effectiveness, and institutional support, providing a more nuanced picture of how precarity and migration infrastructure affect students' educational paths.

The migration infrastructure framework developed by Xiang and Lindquist (2014) makes clear that educational institutions have a significant impact on how students perceive their experiences, especially when it comes to the support they offer or do not offer to international students. Anup and Sahil, who studied both in a college affiliated to an international University to a public

university in Denmark, offer important perspectives on this difference. Anup recalls the difficulties he faced in the college affiliated to international University, *"The international program in college that I was studying in, there were basically no benefits. I feel like the government didn't actually want to recognize us as students when we were doing that."* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024).

This highlights what Banki (2014) refers to as the "*precarity of place*," where students encounter exclusion from vital resources and support systems, even though they are legally present. Anup emphasizes the absence of resources usually accessible to students in Danish public universities, including student housing and subsidized transportation. He further explains, *"The big deciding factors for choosing the public university later on was the benefits... Paying less every month took off some of the financial burden"* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024).

This sentiment highlights how the commercial aspect of migration infrastructure where financial obligations to private colleges increase economic vulnerability which compels students to navigate difficult choices between work and academic responsibilities (Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). These students find themselves "precariat," navigating through unstable job prospects and educational chances without the support system.

Sahil's experience highlights the disparities in teaching quality between the two types of institutions. He shares *"My experience was challenging; I was actually teaching better students in a better way than I was learning from in that college. The education quality was very low. It felt like I wasn't learning anything new"* (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024).

This resonates with Stein and Andreotti's (2016) critique of the "cash cow" model of international education, which regards students mainly as sources of revenue instead of as learners. Sahil discovered that the teaching methods at the Danish public university were notably more engaging

and intellectually stimulating, *"The way of teaching, the information provided, and the learning methods were all challenging yet interesting*" (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024).

This emphasizes how public universities in Denmark can offer a more fulfilling academic atmosphere. Bijay, having exclusively studied at a Danish public university, emphasizes the significance of institutional support, *"I have received all the support from my college because the education system here in Denmark is really nice. They assist students in reaching their objectives"* (Bijay, in-person interview, 2024).

His experience highlights the social and humanitarian aspects of migration infrastructure, illustrating how supportive networks within universities can assist students in overcoming the challenges of studying abroad (Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). However, Bijay highlights a different perspective by sharing the experiences of his friends in private colleges, *"They say that they are not getting a proper education, and they are not getting enough support from college"* (Bijay, in-person interview, 2024). This disparity highlights how the commodification of education in private institutions can lead to diminished quality and limited resources for students, intensifying their sense of precariousness (Robertson, 2015).

Other respondents, including Rema and Chiran, offer further perspectives on the difficulties encountered by students in international colleges. Rema shares her experience with the challenges of moving to English language studies, *"I struggled a bit in the beginning to understand in class but now I am used to it*" (Rema, in-person interview, 2024). Her initial struggle highlights the linguistic barriers that many international students face, as noted by Myles and Cheng (2003). It also underscores the limited support provided by these institutions. Rema acknowledges her adjustment to the new academic setting but highlights the drawbacks of her college, *"If we think*

*positively, I got to come here because of this college... but if we think in deeper terms this college is not providing all the facilities compared to public colleges "(*Rema, in-person interview, 2024)

This observation highlights the commercial aspect of migration infrastructure, where students frequently engage in programs that provide minimal advantages yet demand significant financial commitment (Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). Chiran expresses similar worries regarding the absence of acknowledgement for degrees obtained from colleges affiliated to international universities, *"The Danish government doesn't give us any facility... they mention that our college degree does not belong to their education system*" (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024).

This situation illustrates Armano and Murgia's (2015) concept of "brain waste," where students, despite pursuing higher education abroad, find their qualifications undervalued in the host country. Furthermore, Chiran expresses a feeling of separation from the wider international student community, *"Almost all people are from my country... I don't feel like I am living and studying abroad"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024). This reflects the social isolation many students experience in these settings, where the absence of diversity and integration exacerbates their vulnerable situation.

Rema and Chiran emphasize the careful coordination needed to manage academic and financial obligations. Chiran explains, *"If we focus only on study, we can't manage college fees; then if we focus more on work, we can't manage college and attendance"* (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024).This struggle is reflected by Yasir, who describes his tiring schedule, *"I go to college directly from work so I sleep like 3/4 hours after college, This kind of cycle continues sometimes"* (Yasir,in-person interview, 2024).These experiences illustrate Anderson's (2010) observation that, for

migrants in precarious positions, work frequently turns into a purely instrumental endeavor, addressing immediate financial needs while sacrificing long term educational or career goals.

This analysis reveals that Nepalese students in Denmark face a complicated environment influenced by migration infrastructure and precarity. While those in Danish public universities enjoy enhanced support and integration, students in international colleges frequently encounter considerable challenges, such as financial pressures, low educational quality, and restricted access to vital resources. These inequalities not only influence their academic experiences but also leave them in a vulnerable situation that affects their overall well-being and future opportunities.

5.5. Community, Networks, Social, and Other Experiences

Nepalese students in Denmark navigate an extensive network of community support and social interactions that significantly influence their adaptation and everyday experiences. This network offers emotional support and assists in navigating the challenges of living in a new country. Xiang and Lindquist (2014) highlight that social networks play an essential role in migration infrastructure, providing important support in situations where formal institutions may not be sufficient. For these students, community ties serve as a crucial resource for navigating precarity, like Anderson's (2010) perspective that migrants frequently depend on informal networks to address vulnerabilities in a new environment.

Anup highlights the deep sense of community among Nepalese students, noting how their common cultural and social experiences unite them. He expresses, *"I feel a sense of community because we share the same cultural and religious aspect, but also we share the same living conditions".* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024) This sense of solidarity is influenced not just by cultural connections but also by shared challenges, strengthening the idea that difficult circumstances can promote

collective resilience (Standing, 2011). Anup adds: *"I think everyone has faced almost the same problem that I've faced"* (Anup, in-person interview, 2024).This emphasizes how shared struggles contribute to the development of a resilient and caring community. According to Gilmartin et al. (2021), international students frequently encounter a range of challenges, including housing insecurity and financial stress, which can foster deeper connections within their communities.

Bijay's experience highlights how crucial these networks are for assisting students in dealing with practical challenges, like housing. He remembers: *"When I came to Denmark, I didn't know about student housing, where the state provides affordable housing for students"* (Bijay,in-person interview,2024).Bijay found accommodation through his friends, showing how informal networks often fill the gaps left by institutional support systems. This reflects Robertson's (2015) examination of the reliance of international students on peer networks to navigate local bureaucracies and housing markets, especially in the absence of reliable information.

Yasir emphasizes the crucial importance of community support, especially during critical times. He reflects on his journey of securing housing via a Facebook group, *"The only cherish able thing here in Denmark is the community from my home country......I wasn't receiving responses from people on my help post in that Facebook group. Then I expressed my problem in a highly stressful manner......He provided me with a room in his flat, and he even came to pick me up at the airport"(Yasir, in-person interview, 2024).* This example showcases the digital aspect of migration infrastructure, where social media platforms create an environment for problem solving and mutual support among students. As highlighted by Stein and Andreotti (2016), digital communities play a crucial role for international students, enabling connections and support that transcend physical limitations.

However, many students continue to face ongoing challenges when integrating into Danish society. Seela shares her heartfelt experience upon arriving in Denmark, *"I was prepared not to cry at the airport…. but when I was about to land, I got hit by emotions and felt concerned about the new life" (Seela,in-person interview, 2024)* .Even though Seela received some support from a childhood friend at first, she still faces challenges with social integration. She explains: *"I feel social life here is challenging because it is hard to integrate into Danish society"* (Seela,in-person interview, 2024).Seela's account highlights larger patterns of social isolation frequently faced by international students, as discussed by Myles and Cheng (2003). The linguistic and cultural barriers can foster a feeling of exclusion, especially for individuals trying to navigate a new environment without sufficient institutional support.

For Chiran, community support manifests through close friendships, which assist in easing the pressures of academic and personal life. He shares: *"We live like brothers; we are very close friends too... Sometimes I cook, sometimes my friend does so, and we help each other" (Chiran,in-person interview, 2024)*. This collaborative living arrangement highlights the significance of mutual support in handling daily tasks, resonating with Anderson's (2010) observation that migrants frequently establish cooperative networks to navigate through precarious living conditions. Chiran's experience shows how these informal support systems help students cope with the pressures of their academic and financial obligations.

Sahil, who manages a Facebook group for Nepalese students, highlights the strength of digital communities in tackling shared challenges. He explains, *"I have created a digital platform that allows students to help each other...It was essential to establish a place where students could support each other since no one else was providing that kind of guidance " (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024)*. The group, with almost 12,000 members, acts as an essential resource for

students in need of housing, job opportunities, and academic guidance. Sahil observes, *"Most students come to the platform looking for housing or job opportunities" (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024)*

This supports Xiang and Lindquist's (2014) perspective that digital infrastructure plays a crucial role in migration, enabling communication and resource sharing that improve students' capacity to manage precarity. Sahil's recounting of assisting two students dealing with housing exploitation is particularly touching: *'They were crying because they had to leave their apartment...The landlord had taken a deposit of around 20,000 DKK from them" (Sahil, in-person interview, 2024)*. This situation of exploitation highlights the wider structural problems encountered by international students, who frequently end up in unstable housing conditions lacking the legal or financial resources to contest unjust treatment. As Standing (2011) argues, these types of predatory practices are a common feature of the precarious class, where migrants and international students often bear exploitation in the labor and housing markets.

In conclusion, the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark highlight the vital role of community and social networks in assisting them to overcome the challenges of migration. Although numerous individuals encounter challenges in assimilating into Danish society, their strong relationships with fellow students offer both emotional and practical assistance, building a feeling of belonging and shared strength. These networks either physical or digital, provide support for immediate challenges like housing and employment while also developing a sense of unity that aids students in managing the wider precarity they face in Denmark.

The analysis has identified several significant findings concerning the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark. The 'Pathway to Denmark' underscored the influence of migration

consultancies and informal networks on students' choices regarding studying abroad. The theme of 'Economic Vulnerabilities and Employment Experiences' highlighted the precarious financial circumstances many students encounter, especially the difficulties of balancing employment with academic responsibilities while adhering to Denmark's labor regulations. Additionally, 'Legal and Regulatory Challenges' highlighted the impact of immigration laws and visa policies on students, frequently resulting in stress and uncertainty. Students in academic institutions experienced varied educational encounters, shaped by cultural and institutional disparities. Finally, 'Community, Networks, Social, and Other Experiences' demonstrated the significance of social connections, both within the Nepalese community and with the wider Danish society, in influencing students' integration and well-being.

The findings highlight the complex and diverse aspects of the student migration experience, influenced by financial pressures, legal constraints, and social networks. This discussion will further examine the implications of these findings, connecting them to existing research and theoretical frameworks to enhance our understanding of the challenges encountered by international students in Denmark.

This discussion will further explore the broader implications of the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, based on the key findings from the analysis. This study situates the findings within the theoretical frameworks of precarity and migration infrastructure to examine how systemic factors shape the challenges faced by these students. This discussion will examine the relevant research to better understand the complexities associated with studying and working abroad.

6. Discussion

This discussion focuses on the primary research question: How do precarity and migration infrastructure shape the experiences and challenges faced by Nepalese students in Denmark? Through a careful examination of the key findings from the analysis, I will discuss how these two theoretical frameworks explain the students' journeys to Denmark, their economic vulnerabilities, employment experiences, and the broader legal and social challenges they encounter. This discussion is organized into four subsections namely 'The Role of Consultancies in Shaping Student Decisions', 'Financial Pressures and Employment Experiences Among Nepalese Students in Denmark', 'Understanding Legal Complexities, Exploring the Challenges Faced by Nepalese Students in Denmark's Academic Environment', 'Influence of social networks and communities on Students lives '. This section will analyze the intersection of various factors as highlighted in the literature and participant insights, focusing on how they influence the opportunities and constraints faced by Nepalese students in Denmark.

6.1. The Role of Consultancies in Shaping Student Decisions

Consultancies play a pivotal role in the migration infrastructure, influencing the trajectory of students' experiences in Denmark. The analysis reveals that consultancies play a dual role in both facilitating the application and visa processes while also impacting decision making. Anup's and Seela's accounts illustrate the tendency of consultancies to direct students towards Denmark following visa rejections from other countries, frequently framing it as an easier alternative.

Statements like Anup's, "*The university I ended up at was recommended by the consultancy,"* and Yasir's observation, *"They sell the dream, but not the reality,"* exemplify these findings and underscore the disparity between expectations and reality. These experiences necessitate stronger

regulatory measures to guarantee that consultancies deliver precise information and equitably support international students.

The reliance on consultancies corresponds within a larger context of uncertainty, in which students find themselves in precarious situations because of a system that prioritizes profit over their well-being. The commercial aspect of migration, as highlighted by Xiang and Lindquist (2014), is evident in the way consultancies charge fees for services that students could provide on their own, taking advantage of their limited understanding and pressing needs. Yasir's dissatisfaction with the "dream" presented by consultancies highlights the gap between expectations and reality, which contributes to their precarious situation upon arrival in Denmark.

The results correspond with current scholarly work that examines the commercialization of migration and the students' mobility. Coustere et al. (2023) examine the ways in which migration intermediaries take advantage of students' aspirations by offering misleading expectations, whereas Gilmartin et al. (2021) highlight the considerable labor market obstacles that international students encounter which are often not transparently communicated to them in advance. The pattern of misinformation observed in Yasir's and Sahil's experiences reflects these critiques.

Moreover, the financial instability encountered by students such as Chiran, who dealt with significant expenses during the migration process, aligns with Guy Standing's (2011) notion of the "precariat." Students encounter economic difficulties associated with tuition and living costs, while also grappling with underemployment and exploitation within the labor market, as evidenced by their employment experiences. The employment challenges, including low wages and unpredictable job conditions, highlight the precarious nature of their positions upon arrival,

compounded by the limited support structures available to safeguard their rights as international students.

The results suggest potential suggestions for Danish educational institutions and policymakers that regulatory oversight of consultancies operating in Nepal is essential to guarantee that they deliver accurate and transparent information to prospective students. The absence of accountability has led to a significant disparity between the expectations of students and their real experiences in Denmark. Addressing this issue has an opportunity to prevent numerous students from experiencing vulnerabilities.

6.2. Financial Pressures and Employment Experiences Among Nepalese Students in Denmark

The financial challenges encountered by Nepalese students in Denmark are characterized by notable economic vulnerabilities and unstable employment situations, mirroring wider patterns of precarity as discussed by Standing (2011). A significant number of students spend considerable amounts of money prior to their arrival in Denmark. Chiran's journey commenced with a spending totaling "*almost 22,000 dollars,*" which was acquired through a combination of loans and the mortgaging of family property. In a comparable situation, Anups pre arrival costs along with continuous expenses, resulting in a state of persistent financial insecurity. The financial pressures are intensified by a scarcity of employment options, as noted by Yasir, who remarked, *"No one can manage the funding by working 80 hours... we have to be involved in the black market or black economy in some way"* (Yasir, in-person interview, 2024).

The data illustrates the ways in which students manage their challenging financial circumstances by engaging in informal work arrangements. Anup's experience with temp agencies illustrates the

strategies students employ to navigate financial challenges, as these agencies provide more hours than legally allowed while reporting fewer to the authorities. The strategies presented correspond with Anderson's (2010) perspective that migrants engage in economic activities primarily as a means of survival, lacking any long-term security considerations.

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these vulnerabilities. Bijay, who lost his job during the lockdown, articulated his experience as feeling "*like I was on a sinking boat,*" given that his family had to take out loans to manage his tuition expenses. This supports Robertson's (2015) notion of "*extended precarity,*" indicating that even minor disruptions can lead students into greater financial hardship. The dependence on family for financial security is a prevalent issue, illustrated in Seela's situation, where she sought financial assistance from her parents to ease her economic burdens.

Employment experiences demonstrate the additional dimensions of precarity. A significant number of students engage in employment that does not correspond with their academic qualifications, underscoring the problem of "*brain waste*" (Armano & Murgia, 2015). Anup's role as a kitchen helper, in contrast to his academic background in business and hospitality management, highlights a notable discrepancy. The challenges of employment are exacerbated by language barriers, as evidenced by Bijay's struggle to secure a position in IT without proficiency in Danish.

The research further emphasizes the presence of exploitative labor conditions. Yasir's description of his initial employment experience, characterized by the absence of a formal contract and concerns regarding payment, highlights significant deficiencies in legal safeguards. Seela and Rema's experiences as cleaning assistants, frequently following extensive study hours, highlight the physical fatigue these students face in their quest for financial security. The dependence on

informal cash jobs deepens the cycle of economic insecurity for students, as highlighted by Chiran:

"If we are lucky, we will get the cash job; otherwise, you don't have a job" (Chiran, in-person interview, 2024).

The findings are closely aligned with Standing's (2011) concept of the "precariat," highlighting the persistent employment insecurity and absence of protection experienced by individuals. The financial strategies and coping mechanisms employed by Nepalese students in Denmark illustrate themes of precarious migration, as they navigate various legal, financial and social constraints to ensure their survival.

6.3. Understanding Legal Complexities

The findings of this study regarding the legal and regulatory challenges encountered by Nepalese students in Denmark highlights important themes of precarity and migration infrastructure, which are integral to the theoretical framework of this research. The complex structure of Danish payment systems, coupled with precise work hour regulations, differences in benefits and restricted post study work opportunities, highlights the precarious situation faced by international students. The experiences discussed correspond with Guy Standing's (2011) notion of the "precariat" and the migration infrastructure outlined by Xiang and Lindquist (2014), showing how individuals, especially migrants, navigate systems that limit their opportunities and security.

The confusion surrounding Denmark's payment systems, as highlighted by Anup, demonstrates how complex bureaucracies generate stress and uncertainty. This relates to Banki's (2013) examination of how legal ambiguity increases the vulnerability of migrants. This confusion introduces an additional layer of uncertainty for students as the management of finances changes into a daily challenge. The findings indicate that enhancing transparency and facilitating systems

could minimize confusion which enables students to focus on their academic pursuits instead of navigating administrative obstacles.

Bijay's observations indicate that restrictive work hour limitations play a role in creating economic vulnerabilities. Gilmartin et al. (2021) emphasize the challenges that international students encounter in managing financial stability alongside academic achievement, which are intensified by the legal limitations on work hours. This has a direct effect on students' academic performance, limiting their opportunities and leaving them in a vulnerable position. The analysis indicates that easing work hour limitations can contribute to alleviating financial burdens, which can reduce the compromise of their academic pursuits to cover essential living costs.

The absence of post study work permits to students studying in colleges affiliated to International University in Denmark, as expressed by Yasir, limits the capacity of Nepalese students to establish sustainable careers in Denmark. This corresponds with the analysis presented by Stein and Andreotti (2016) regarding the classification of international students as temporary workers. The implications of this policy are noteworthy because by providing extended post study work options for students studying in colleges affiliated to International University, Denmark could integration of skilled graduates into the workforce, which can enhance the socio-economic contributions in Denmark.

The differences in treatment between students in public universities and those in private colleges, as observed by Seela and Rema, highlights more issues of inequality within migration systems. Anderson (2010) discusses how migrants in vulnerable situations frequently encounter restricted access to the rights and benefits that are accessible to other populations. This finding suggests that

implementing more equitable policies within educational institutions could enhance fairness and mitigate the marginalization experienced by international students.

Sahil's housing challenges and the fear to engage with legal authorities indicate a distrust in the existing legal protections. This situation emphasizes the critical need to enhance access to legal support for international students. This lack of confidence adds to their vulnerability, leading many students to tolerate exploitation instead of reporting wrongdoings by others. This highlights the need for stronger legal support systems establishing more defined ways for students to express concerns without the fear of adverse consequences.

The findings reveal that Denmark's existing migration infrastructure and legal framework unintentionally contribute to the precarious conditions for international students, especially those originating from Nepal.

6.4. Exploring the Challenges Faced by Nepalese Students in Denmark's Academic Environment

The experiences of Nepalese students studying in Denmark shows a multifaceted setting influenced by migration systems and instability. This discussion synthesizes findings from the analysis of their academic journeys, highlights how institutional support, teaching quality and student outcomes differs drastically between those enrolled in colleges affiliated to international universities and those in Danish public universities.

A noteworthy observation is that Nepalese students enrolled in international colleges frequently experience a lack of access to vital resources and support systems. Anup's re-calling the colleges day states that "*the government didn't actually want to recognize us as students*" highlights the complexities involved in dealing with a system that inadequately supports its constituents. This

allings with Banki's (2014) concept of the "*precarity of place*," emphasizing the marginalization of students regardless of their legal status. The financial obligations linked to private colleges forced students such as Anup to navigate difficult choices between employment and academic pursuits, thereby forming their unstable conditions in Denmark.

The quality of teaching exposes variation across different institutions. Sahil's assessment of his experience, noting the low educational quality at his college, aligns with Stein and Andreotti's (2016) critique of the *"cash cow"* model of international education. The view that international students are mainly regarded as sources of revenue which undermines the quality of their educational experiences. In contrast, Bijay's positive comments regarding the assistance he received at a public university emphasize the critical role of institutional support in promoting academic achievement, as noted by Xiang and Lindquist (2014).

Moreover, the obstacles encountered by students in international colleges impact their academic performance and the recognition of their degrees they obtain. Chiran's concern that "*The Danish government doesn't give us any facility"* highlights the frustration regarding the insufficient recognition of degrees from these institutions. This scenario illustrates the phenomenon of "*brain waste*" as described by Armano and Murgia (2015), highlighting how the undervaluation of students' qualifications restricts their employment prospects.

A crucial assessment is the difficulty students face in managing both academic and financial obligations. Chiran's observation regarding the challenges of balancing studies and work aligns with Anderson's (2010) finding that, for migrants, immediate work responsibilities frequently overshadow long term educational aspirations. The balancing act described by Yasir illustrates the significant impact that these pressures can have on students' well-being, resulting in exhaustion.

The variations in experiences among students at public universities compared to those at international colleges highlight the significance of migration infrastructure in influencing educational results. Public universities offer a more enriching academic environment; however, students in private institutions encounter considerable challenges that may worsen their already precarious circumstances. This finding aligns with the arguments presented by Stein and Andreotti (2016) and Robertson (2015) regarding the commodification of education and its effects on student well-being.

The examination of the academic experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark highlights the influence of institutional support, teaching quality, and the overarching migration infrastructure on their educational journeys. The differences in experiences underscore the necessity for policies that are more equitable to address the challenges.

6.5. Influence of social networks and communities on Students lives

The experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark presents the importance of community and social networks in overcoming the challenges and problems associated with migration. This supports the perspective of Xiang and Lindquist (2014) regarding the importance of social networks as vital resources when formal support is lacking. For students experiencing uncertainty, these community networks are crucial for navigating vulnerabilities.

Anup describes this shared experience by expressing, "*I think everyone has faced almost the same problem that I've faced*" (Anup, in-person Interview, 2024)*,* emphasizing how common struggles raise resilience. This aligns with Standing's (2011) notion that precarity can foster solidarity. In the same way, Bijay getting help from friends for housing shows how networks help to address

the deficiencies of institutions, reflecting Robertson's (2015) examination of international students relying on informal support.

Yasir's use of a Facebook group to find housing highlights the significance of digital infrastructure in modern migration which relates with the technological dimension of migration infrastructure. His expression, *"The only cherish able thing here in Denmark is the community from my home country"* (Yasir, in-person Interview, 2024), shows how digital platforms enable mutual aid, resonating with Stein and Andreotti's (2016) insights on the significance of online communities for international students.

Chiran's statement, "*We live like brothers,*" highlights the emotional and practical support that close friendships offer, reflecting Anderson's (2010) observation of how migrants create cooperative networks in challenging circumstances. Sahil's initiation of a Facebook group exemplifies how digital platforms can effectively support the community, serving as a resource for students seeking housing and job opportunities. However, the housing exploitation outlined by Sahil also shows the vulnerabilities faced by students, which resonates with Standing's (2011) examination of exploitative practices in precarious lives.

In summary, this section of discussion highlights the importance of community and social networks for Nepalese students in providing both emotional and practical assistance while navigating these challenges of migration in Denmark.

This overall discussion has explained the complex and precarious realities that Nepalese students encounter in Denmark. It reveals how financial pressures, employment challenges, legal and regulatory barriers, and social networks influence their experiences. The discussion reveals that navigating Denmark's complex migration infrastructure increases students' vulnerabilities while

also highlighting their resilience in the face of these challenges. By examining these experiences through both personal narratives and broader theoretical frameworks, this study highlights the critical need for more inclusive policies that better address the unique needs of international students.

This discussion offers valuable insights into the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark; however, it is essential to recognize the limitations that may affect the findings and its generalization. The following section explains the limitations of this thesis.

6.6. Limitations

This thesis on the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark has several limitations. Here, I employed a phenomenological approach to gain insights into the lived experiences of respondents through in-depth interviews. The selection of seven participants using purposive sampling and snowball sampling may limit the findings representation of the diverse experiences of all Nepalese students in Denmark. The outcomes may reflect perspectives rather than providing a holistic view of the greater student community.

The research is limited to Denmark which potentially restricts the applicability of the findings to other countries with varying migration policies and educational systems. The subjective nature of the interviews presents further limitations because individual perspectives may differ considerably. This variability could introduce biases in the data collection and affect the overall conclusions drawn from that. The interviews occurred within a defined time period and other factors including the socio-economic factor may have affected respondent experiences, which may reduce the relevance of the findings over time.

Moreover, my experiences as a Nepalese student in Denmark may introduce bias, despite my attempts to mitigate this through thorough reflection. My background may influence my interpretation of the data and my engagement with the findings.

Despite implementing measures to safeguard the confidentiality and emotional well-being of participants during the interviews, the discussion of personal challenges may still cause discomfort for certain respondents to express freely. This discomfort may lead to incomplete narratives, thereby restricting the depth of insights obtained from them. This thesis offers valuable insights into the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark; however, the mentioned limitations emphasize the need for further research to examine these themes more effectively, potentially including larger and more diverse participant groups.

7. Conclusion

This thesis examines the experiences of Nepalese students studying in Denmark, using the theoretical frameworks of precarity and migration infrastructure to shed light on the challenges they experienced. This study employed a qualitative approach, incorporating in depth interviews with seven participants to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing their educational journeys and the associated challenges.

This thesis reveals the high influence of consultancies on students' choices to pursue studies in Denmark. A significant number of respondents reported that their trajectories were substantially shaped by consultancies, which frequently offer an excessively positive perspective on the experience of being an international student; however, the gap between expectations and reality results in students feeling deceived and inadequately equipped for future challenges. Anup's and Rema's experiences demonstrate that these consultancies often focus on financial interests at the expense of students' well -being, which leads to the series of exploitations and discontent in new settings. This finding indicates the necessity for improvement in regulation of educational consultancies in Nepal to ensure that they are providing accurate information to prospective students and other individuals.

Financial problems emerged as a common theme in the interviews among the respondents, highlighting the effects of economic vulnerabilities on Nepalese students. Seela and Sahil highlighted the difficulty of managing academic responsibilities alongside the requirement of working extended hours in precarious employment to cover living costs and tuition fees. The financial strain impacts academic performance and contributes to the constant feelings of instability and anxiety too. Their dependence on loans and assistance from the family members

highlights the uncertain financial circumstances these students encounter which illustrates the broader notion of the "precariat."

The legal and regulatory challenges encountered by Nepalese students are hurdles to their academic achievement. Limitations on work hours associated with student visas constrain their ability to generate enough income for survival, leading to economic instability. Bijay's experiences with underemployment shows this issue as he is facing a disparity between his skills and the job opportunities available in the job market, resulting in feelings of marginalization and stress. The strict policies concerning post study work opportunities for the students studying in colleges affiliated to the International University, intensify these challenges which frequently results in students experiencing uncertainty regarding their future career. This situation highlights the need for policies which should acknowledge the distinct challenges faced by international students and facilitate pathways and opportunities to stable employment post-graduation.

The respondents' academic experiences varied significantly according to the type of institution attended. Anup, Bijay and Sahil's experiences at a Danish public university differed significantly from those who are studying in colleges associated with international universities. Respondents studying in colleges affiliated to international university frequently expressed feelings of uncertainty, problems in managing work life and education and insufficient institutional support, underscoring disparities within the educational landscape. This highlights essential issues regarding equitable access to quality education and support services for international students, emphasizing the need for universities to implement inclusive practices that address the varied needs of their students, ensuring that all students obtain the support and resources required for academic success.

The sense of community, networks, and social experiences significantly influenced the lives of respondents in Denmark. Nepalese students highlighted the significance of establishing connections with peers and local communities which has been offering them essential emotional and practical support.

This thesis offers an analysis of the experiences of Nepalese students in Denmark, highlighting the interaction between precarity and migration infrastructure in shaping their educational journey and current experience. The findings call for systemic changes to improve conditions for international students which also includes the better regulation of consultancies, supportive financial policies for internationals students, identical access to educational resources, avoid unnecessary legal barriers as well as initiatives to promote community and belonging. This study adds to the existing literature on the experiences of international students especially those from South Asia and establishes a foundation for future research in this area.

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