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Conflict and Internal Displacement in Nepal: Socio-Economic Query

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Abstract

This study investigates empirically what is conflict induced displacement in Nepal from 1996 to 2004 after the conflict led by the rebellion (Maoist). We use econometric model based on Consumption Econometric Model. The econometric model estimation provides higher consumption demand than average consumption per capita of the displaced people in five development regions of Nepal. The result indicates critical living standard in urban areas because of unguaranteed nonagricultural income.

Key Words: *Conflict, Internal Displacement, rebel, vulnerability, violence etc.*

1. Introduction

Nepal experienced ever bitter bloodshed conflict during 1996 – 2006. The conflict was kicked off by Maoist in the rural areas of Nepal by attacking and looting the police stations of Rukum, Rolpa and Salyan in 1996. It was small fire having symbolical war against the democratic government in the parliamentary democracy system. Over 10 years conflict, Nepal lost more than 16,000 people. It was supplemented displacement of more than 0.1 million people from the conflict zone areas. Therefore, large section of rural population was vulnerability because of physical infrastructure destruction, crimes, extortion, displacement and human casualty. Except internal displacement, the peace deal between Seven Alliance Parties in 2006 in Delhi could address all these reasons of vulnerability. Due to its size, nature and characteristics, internal displacement has been interesting issue in economics of migration in the post peace deal.

Internal displacement refers to the forceful displacement of nationals within the country. Deng (1998) observes it as the person or group of persons are forced to leave their home in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human

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rights, etc. Wikipedia (www.wikipedia.com) acknowledges internally displacement due to violence. Cases of Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, Nepal etc. are good examples.

So far this issue, there are large literatures in which most studies of CES (2003), EU (2003), GTZ *et al.* (2003) and INSEC (2004) carried on human right and humanitarian aspects. However, there are rare literatures to examine this issue from economic perspective, although internally displaced people are sources of labor. In Nepal, large people were internally displaced. In the village, labor became shortage in agriculture and almost agriculture land was left barren by the land owner (Bista, 2008, Bista, 2011 & Bista, 2016). Village economy might be badly disrupted in terms of production and resource utilization (Bista, 2008, Bista, 2011 & Bista, 2016). Urban economy might have a problem of overutilization of the scarce resources (infrastructure) and of pollution (Bista, 2008, Bista, 2011 & Bista, 2016). Cost of these internally displaced people is still unknown. Thus, the study is relevant to examine this dimension for effective management of internally displaced people.

An objective of this paper is to investigate internal displacement in Nepal. Its specific objectives are to review internal displacement status and situation, to find socio-economic characteristics of internally displaced people, to assess consumption cost of internally displaced people and to suggest policy implication.

2. The coverage of the study

This study is concerned with internal displacement. Geographical diversity of Nepal leads heterogeneous displacements. In simple, heterogeneity can be categorized into internal and external displacement. Internally displaced people from the conflict areas (Rolpa, Rukum, Salyan etc.) migrated in District Headquarters of 75 districts of Nepal and in Kathmandu. There is difficult yet to figure out data of the internally displaced people. Therefore, the published data of internally displaced people is only our population of this study across the country and across population heterogeneity.

3. Method

3.1. Econometric Model

Household character of internally displaced people in new location due to the conflict was different in several respects: income, utility, labor time allocation, health expenditure, and cost of strange, fear, waiting time and expectation of help. Household consumption (C) of displaced people (N) depends on wage labor income (Y_w) of households across age and sex, along with remittance (R) and nonfood item consumption expenditure (C_{NF}). Theory of Aggregate consumption states consumption is dependent on Income. It is as follows

$$C=f(Y, R, C_{NF}, N)------(1)$$

Regression Model

$$C= \alpha+\beta_0Y+\beta_1R+\beta_2C_{NF}+\beta_3N+e------(2)$$

Where, α , β_0 , β_1 , β_2 and β_3 are parameters and “e” is random disturbance term (error term)

$\alpha >1$ and β_0 , β_1 , β_2 and $\beta_3 <1$

3.2. Source of Data Set

This study used secondary data source of the internally displaced people and household. This data was collected by INSEC (2004). This study used secondary source for supplementary data of Consumption, Income, Remittance, Nonfood consumption and food consumption. This data was collected from Nepal Living Standard Survey 1996 and 2004 (CBS, 1996 and 2004). For supplementary, secondary data was collected from Ministry of Finance and National Planning Commission of Nepal.

3.3. Estimates

Estimates “ α ”, “ β_0 ”, “ β_1 ”, “ β_2 ” and “ β_3 ”

Data set of consumption econometric model are five variables in which total consumption per capita (C) is dependent variable and Non Agricultural Income (wage income) (Y), Remittance (R), Nonfood consumption per capita (C_{NF}) and conflict induced Displacement (N). The consumption level and living standard of conflict induced displacement (N) was curiosity. In this study, we had focused two questions

- What would the consumption pattern of the conflict induced displacement people in urban areas to measure their living standard as effects of relocation and stranger?
- What would be input share of " α ", " β_0 ", " β_1 ", " β_2 " and " β_3 " in Consumption behavior of the displaced people?

We used basically cross section data of these variables across five development regions (Eastern Development Region, Central Development Region, Far Western Development Region, Mid Far Western Development Region and Far Western Development Region). From above economic econometric model, we used to answer the first question and estimate parameters. Then, we could interpret the estimated parameters for role of independent variables for consumption behavior of the displaced people.

4. Status, Nature and Characteristics of Conflict

Nature and Character of conflict in Nepal is commented *unique*. Despite political engagement of the rebellion in the parliament elections (1992 and 1995) and using democratic rights and responsibilities, the rebellion dramatically decided to use weapon against the state and democracy in 1996. The conflict was escalated to caste, religion, class and geography, although State Machinery had strong security network. The rebellion used guerilla technique, few weapons looted from the government security and children as major intelligent and potential sources of guerilla. The conflict was looked like the strategic game of the rebellion.

The literatures of conflict discuss different reasons behind the conflict. There might be either socio-economic or political issues. Some African countries had caste issue. In Iraq, there was the conflict between Kurd and Iraqi, like as Sunni and non-Sunni Muslim. In Afghanistan, there was intense political interest of Taliban behind the civil war. In Nepal, different literatures acknowledge feudal socio-economic structure, discriminatory caste system, poverty, inequality etc. The rebellion used the assumption of large section of population oppressed and exploited from feudalism and discriminatory caste social system. This socio-economic school of thought was logical justification and propaganda tool of the rebellion for getting good Sympathy and Moral support from the people. This argument has not empirical evidences. Reversely, the political school of thought acknowledged political conflict of the rebellion with the state. That

thought based on the Maoism political ideology, interest and objectives of the rebellion and political structure and function. The rebellion used guerilla warfare and land captured as the process to be politically engaged and established in the state mechanism. Otherwise, democracy was an opportunity of political engagement for all. That argument has much empirical evidences provided by the peace agreement, behavior and activities of the rebellion and movement for political hegemony. Outcomes and Diagnosis of the conflict might be error. In that condition, there would be wrong strategic and operational treatments and policies of the government. Ineffective State actions might be a fuel to help widely spreading rebellion activities in rural areas, despite unexpectedly small size of the rebellion with respect to geography and rural population. It is clear that the conflict was politically motivated but strategically misguided by the rebellion.

Rebel and rebellion organization and behavior have interesting characters and contradiction. Brahmin who are social hegemony and feudal class having political and religion control are top rank of rebellion leaders. For example: Pushpa Kamal Dahal *Prachanda*, Baburam Bhattarai, Dina Nath Sharma, Prabhakar Sharma, etc. In 1996, these leaders had mission and action to eliminate social hegemony and feudalism of Brahmin. Structure and function of the rebellion were themselves contradictory surprising. However, the rebellion army was mostly ethnic and low caste people in which the figure was dominated by the school children and girls captured from the rural government schools of Nepal. These children were ideologically motivated in the rebellion political school and strategically trained by Ex-Army personnel. This offensive front had physical risk and cost of life, meanwhile in the strategic front; there were almost central leaders as central command having less risky but higher incentive. INSEC (2005) reported ethnic and lower caste people's death casualties in the war more than top rebellion leaders and dominated in 16 thousand figures. The cost of the war was the bloods of the oppressed people (ethnic and lower caste).

The rebellion to tackle the security circumstances of the state and attitude of the people in general uses different major warfare weapons: Guerilla, Intelligence and Propaganda. In Nepal, the rebellion that had limited war resources and small size of the rebellion adopted Mao's

Guerilla warfare in the war with the state. In 1996, they quickly and vastly attacked the police office of different Village Development in hilly regions by using propaganda. In Rukum, they killed the police and captured traditional weapons and ammunition without any causality. In addition, they were able to attack Nepal army camp in 2000. Thus, the small rebellion group was able to get the expected outcomes in the limited war resources (hardware and software).

It is said that intelligence and propaganda are important composite warfare components as well as national security for collecting and analyzing categorical information for offensive and defensive planning and decisions. Propaganda is an important tool supplementing physical war. The rebellion recruited specially school students and different local peoples from different professions for guerilla warfare. In 1997, the rebellion kept ambush to the police van in Mugalin road. The children were watching the police van's movement and activities for reporting in the command. In addition, every activities and movements in the target point of the police station was invisibly and unexpectedly collected before offensive guerilla action for identifying loopholes, weakness and careless of the state machinery particularly security forces.

Expected outcomes depend on strategy preferred by players in the war or the game. In the war of Nepal (between 1996 and 2005), strategy of the rebellion and the security determined whether the war would be extreme or not. The rebellion played strictly dominated strategy of propaganda which enforced the state to be defensive publicly, although the state had well organized intelligence and security forces. In political front, the rebellion divided the constitutional forces into the King and the democratic government. The democratic force was also further divided into Democratic Party and Communist party. Left human rights groups, lawyers and Journalists were organized and mobilized to make the rebellion's propaganda. Thus, the rebellion was successful to capture the rural villages for the establishment of the rebellion state. Subsequently, anti-rebel and higher caste and elite people were easily displaced.

5. Conflict Induced Internal Displacement

Internal Displacement is expected outcome in the different form of the conflict. Mostly conflicted countries like as Kosovo, Rwanda, Sudan, Iraq etc. had a large number of internally

displaced people. In Nepal, there were also a large number of the people displaced by the rebellion and violence. The large number of socio-economically elite and higher caste people undesirably migrated from the native villages and houses in the district headquarters only for avoiding insecurity, threats and violence. Teachers to save their own life escaped from the rebellion, like as farmers, traders, industrialists. Farmers were used as human transport to carrying arms and weapons, foods, and death bodies. Traders and Industrialists were threatened for money demands for their activities. The households to secure the future of the children from the rebellion's influence shifted in the district headquarters and Kathmandu. Almost internally displaced people wanted to avoid psychologically, physically and socio-economically torture and stress. Thus, there is positive relationship between conflict and internal displacement.

The internal displacement issue has far reaching socio-economic impacts on different segments of the society and life. Theoretically and empirically, there are a large number of literatures relating socio economic effect of internal displacement. In simple, almost displaced people of the conflicted rural areas had mental problem and physical damages. They needed medical expenditures. They had additional relocation cost for stranger's settlements. Sources of income in the new location were affected from their lower productivity and lack of employment opportunities.

The literatures acknowledge economic effects of internal displacement but we cannot reach solid conclusion for generalization in case of Nepal. Few studies have investigated economic cost of internal displaced people, the society and the country. However, there is still mystery.

6. Internal Displacement in Nepal

Internal Displacement, a term is not new phenomenon in Nepal. This theoretical argument has strong empirical evidence supported by Centre Bureau of Statistics (CBS). Studies find the displacement due to natural disasters as flooding and earth quake but its result is observed not significant in terms of statistics, effects and vulnerability. This type of displacement is annual phenomenon which is habitual and natural to the state to be managed from humanitarian and economic perspectives. There is clarity and preparedness.

So far concerning with internal displacement due to violence and conflict, Nepal and Nepalese had got new experience. There was a confusion to perceive that issue for making perspectives of the state. Human right literatures consider it humanitarian crisis and human right issue. Political literatures commented it political issue. Very few literatures talked about economic issues. There was not clear understanding about these issues so that there were unresponsive policy decisions and institutional behaviors problem.

Institutional and Policy to understand and manage CIDP issue are required. Surprisingly, Nepal had not the relevant institutional and policy deal from 1996 to 2006 because of a lack of policy perspective. In central level, there was not proper agency meanwhile village level; there was administration of the state such as police and Village Development Committee. Human right NGO and INGO had been working in that regard at local and national level during the conflict. However, the state had established the state institution and policy in the post peace deal but still, there was not rehabilitation of village level unit of police and local administration. There was identified the operational mechanism gap. Its consequence was ineffective policy and program efforts to address CIDP. So, the positive and effective policy implication would be a big issue.

There are issues of validity and reliability of information and data sets of conflict induced internal displaced people (CIDP). Institutional constraints limited the institutional tracking CIDP. A fraction of internally displaced people reported voluntarily their information in the district administration office for getting financial support. The remaining fraction was rigid and silent in that regard, despite need of financial support. In addition, the other fraction of displaced people who had information but not needy had not recorded their information. Data of CIDP if was not cross checked and properly tracked, there would be a problem of reliability and validity. Different studies of CBS, CSWC and INSEC found data inconsistent. For example: highest statistics of displaced people was 2.4 million estimated by Asian Development Bank (2004), 0.35-0.4 million in CSWC (2004) and 0.3-0.6 million estimated by Finance Ministry of Nepal (2005). Meanwhile, another statistics was 40000 estimated by ILO/CWIN (2005) and followed by 50000-70000 of IDP group (2008) and 50000 in INSEC (2004).

6.1. Nature and Characteristics of Internal Displaced People

Nature and characteristics of internal displaced people are heterogeneous. ICDP Data analysis of INSEC (2004) can be found four fractions of ICDP. The rebellion categorized the first fraction of ICDP into their first foe (higher caste, rich people, educated people, civil servant family, worker or follower of democratic forces). They dealt this fraction as intelligence of the state. They threatened often these people for extortion, killing, abduction etc. For security and safety life, these people disappeared from their own places by leaving fixed assets to district centers. Uninterested ethnic groups and low caste in the rebellion activities, the second fraction silently disappeared from the rural areas with their family and children to avoid the possible insecurity of the rebellion. In third fraction, rebellion supporters who were feared with the security personal disappeared from the village to new location because the security personal treated them badly by saying spying of the rebellion without categorical information Human Right (2004). In fourth fraction, those people who were victim of the conflict between the security and the rebellion because of location moved out from the village because of fear psychology. Heterogeneous CIDP had reached a uniform decision of relocation from the village for maximizing peace and family life cycle in the constraint of strange place, network and market.

The people who are internally displaced has many responsible variables. There are strong empirical evidences. Some literatures have listed some responsible variables. For example, Human Rights Report (2004) has identified five major variables from violence such as direct effects of the violence, effects caused by the behavior of the warring parties, the difficulties caused by the war strategies and the difficulties created in maintaining and daily life. Some literatures have listed some. In sum, we can get large number of control variables to internal displacement such as

- Violence
- Threat
- Extortion
- Abduction
- Risk of victim

- Torture
- Fear
- Destruction of house
- No work environment and social security

Internal displaced peoples to relocate themselves have heterogeneous reasons with respect to different of wealth, literacy, household size, number of children, age factors etc. It is supported by empirical evidences. For example: Case of Rebellion and Security Cross fire associates Jate Secondary School, Jate in Morang where there was incident of armed conflict between security and rebellion and school children were victims of the violence in which more than six students were injured and three students were killed. Such kind of violence was cause behind internal displacement (NayaPatrika, 2010). Case of Physical threat and torture relates with school teacher of Saraswati Primary School, Salari in Rukum where teacher NarjitBasneyat was made handicapped from hand by rebellion against his denial to be supporter of the rebellion in 1996. It controls his displacement decision and behavior (NayaPatrika, 2010). Case of rebellion tax on the local business men, entrepreneurs, teachers and civil servants relates to the rebellion strong hold places, so called base area and the rebellion's government. Then, this group of people left the village for security, safety and life. For example: Human Right (2004) reports The family of Basanta Shrestha had quit his village at 11 in the night upon failing to submit a sum of Rs 150,000 as demanded by the rebellion and fearing physical actions against him. In addition, the rebellion noticed in the village one person from one family for their rebellion militia. Then, many families had moved away from these rebellion holding areas, despite native place.

Naturally, violence controls relocation decision and behavior, along with other variables. Table No-1 provides major drivers behind it. In column one, there are indicators such as violence, threat, torture, extortion, abduction, risk of victim, no of environment, fear and destruction. In second column, probability of these individual reasons behind in the internal displacement decision, although it is hard to reach in decision to the family and households. In third column, there is preference of households in which violence, threat, torture, extortion and abduction receive more preference in rank as direct effect from the conflict.

Table No-1:Reasons and Preferences

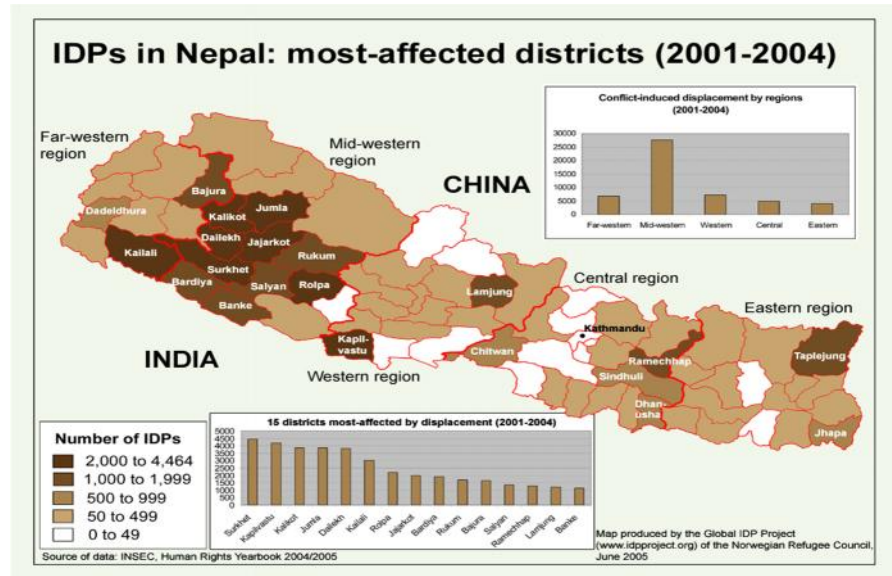
Indicators	Probability (%)	Preference
Violence	31	I
Threat	17	II
Torture	14	III
Extortion	10	IV
Abduction	7	V
Risk of victim	7	VI
No Environment	7	VII
Fear	3	VIII
Destruction	3	IX

6.2. Flow of Internal Displaced people

The internal displaced people and households behave rationally on risk aversion and moves towards strange location, where they can adverse risk from their identity through risk aversion (secrecy of identity, location, household characters etc.). Such behavior can be found in the flow of the displaced people in Nepal. These people kept the secrecy of their identity and location and strange to the two conflict players: the security and the rebellion for peace, security, safety and free from all these conflict variables. Assuming that rural areas were risk of conflict, this rational behavior was controlled by location, size of population, opportunity and security. There were left only district headquarters, Terai Urban areas and Kathmandu. We can find in this regard of risk aversion behavior of the displaced people, despite ignorance of distance and cost of risk aversion. We can find its overall picture of the displaced people flow and concentration of displaced people.

6.2.1. Displacement Origin Scenario

This picture (IDMC, 2009) provides origin of this displaced family and household in Nepal. It reveals the whole Nepal as origin places of the displaced family which also indicate intensity of the conflict in Nepal. In development region wise, Nepal can be seen five development regions unit in which Mid-Western



Development Region is the origin of the displaced people. In development regions, there are district units. In the map, we can get four colors: brown dark, brown, light brown and white color. Brown dark is major source followed by brown and light brown district units; meanwhile white color is minor sources. This concentration of displaced people origin provides intensity of the conflict because they have mutual exclusive relationship.

5.2.2. Destination of Internal Displacement

Destination is a risk aversion behavior of the displaced people. In Nepal, they preferred several destinations such as Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Sunsari, Banke, Kanchanpur, Morang, Kailai, Kaverpalanchowk, Rolpa, Kalikot, Jhapa, lamjung, Rukum and Surkhet. We can see these destinations into two groups on the basis of distances from the origin places: far destination (Kathmandu, Lalitpur) and near destination (Sunsari, Banke, Kanchanpur, Morang, Kailai, Kaverpalanchowk, Rolpa, Kalikot, Jhapa, lamjung, Rukum and Surkhet). Empirical literatures and statistics show first strong and strict choice and preference of risk aversion of the displaced people to Kathmandu in comparison with near destinations, although cost of this far and long distance risk aversion to the displaced people is higher.

7. Results

Table-2 presents mean and standard deviation of key variables in econometric model estimation. In column 1, there are presented five key variables such as Total Consumption(c) as dependent variable and Non Agricultural Income(Y), Remittance(R), Non food consumption (C_{NF}) and Displacement (N) as Independent variables. Standard Deviation of these variables from mean can be seen but it represents this cross section data.

Table No-2: Mean and Standard Deviations: Econometric Model

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Total Consumption (C)	19313.42	9804.51	5
Non Ag. Income	7047.40	608.61	5
Remittance	1688.24	761.75	5
Non food consumption	7093.68	3141.12	5
Displacement	10071.20	9881.06	5

Table-3 presents the results of multiple regression econometric model estimations of dependent variable total consumption per capita(C) on five independent variables, Y, R, C_{NF} and N. In the model there are four parameters such as “ β_0 ”(marginal change of non agricultural income), “ β_1 ”(marginal change in remittance), “ β_2 ”(marginal change in Non food consumption) and “ β_3 ”(marginal change in displacement people)

Table No-3: Results of Regression of C, Y, R, C_{NF}and N

Dependent variable: Total Consumption per capita (C)					
Repressor	1	2	3	4	5
Constant	17914.6(0.0)				
Non Ag. Income		0.148(0.0)			
Remittance			0.20(0.0)		
Non food consumption				0.907(0.0)	
Displacement					-0.006(0.0)

8. Discussion and Result

From above results of multiple regression model estimation, we get sufficient and necessary evidences on consumption pattern and livelihood situation of the displaced people across five development regions of Nepal. Initial consumption expenditure of the displaced people needs

Rs 17,914.6 per capita, when they migrate to new and strange location particularly in district headquarters and Kathmandu City. This is quiet higher than average national per capita consumption of 2004 in accordance with Nepal Living Standard Survey 1996 and 2004. Why, it would happen? Its reasons may be increasing more non food consumption expenditure for health maintenance of the displaced people instead change in food consumption and costlier nonfood consumption items such as health expenditure, room rent, travel cost and other basic utilities cost. It means possible declining utility of food consumption leading critical livelihood in the requirement of per capita consumption expenditure and changing consumption pattern. How much critical living standard is a query but it requires further study for rehabilitation and assistance policy implication.

In results of econometric models, R^2 is 0.993 which means consumption per capita of the displaced people is explained by independent variables Y, R, C_{NF} and N. Consumption of the displaced people will increase 1 when marginal change in non food consumption is 0.907. To meet 1 consumption level, the displaced people's non agricultural wage (labor wage) and remittance are needed at 0.148 and 0.20 marginal change. In case of displaced people, its marginal change is not significant.

This study raises a question about expectation of non wage income because literature provides evidence of huge cost of stranger and new location, cost of employment information access, cost of travel and waiting time. It is quiet difficult to easy access non wage income. In urban labor market, there is dominance of skilled and qualified labor but displaced people are rural, unskilled and unqualified. It is certain that inferior labor quality of the displaced people doesn't have significant shares in urban market labor. There is a question of non agricultural income in urban labor market. In addition, the conflict induced displacement people have fear problem and physical problem which don't motivate them for exploring and getting non-agricultural employment. Besides, they are also old age issue who cannot work like as young.

Remittance has contributed in the consumption of the displaced people. If not in some fraction of displaced people, living in new location and strange place indicates critical situation from several respects. This needs further study what is actual critical situation of displaced life.

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