Nepalese Low-skilled migrants in Portugal: Skill perception and skill gaining strategies

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to understand skill development avenues adapted by low-skilled Nepalese migrants in Portugal. With a sudden and huge inflow of low-skilled immigrants in the EU since the European migration crisis, it is necessary to understand how Portugal has adapted policies on skill development to build low-skilled immigrants' competencies in the European job market. With the changes in policies of immigration and skill development, it has also become important to analyse migrants' perception of skills and their strategies of adapting further skills to be employed on high-skill jobs. The purpose of the dissertation is about investigating integration of migrants into EU labour markets. It also explores labour migration from South Asia to continental Europe in order to find gapes in European labour migration policies, and strategies used by low-skilled labours coming from South Asia. Particular emphasis is given to the case of Nepalese low-skilled migrants in exploring migrants' understanding of their skills, their strategy in attaining available skill gaining opportunity and their decision on transnational mobility after their stay in Portugal. The dissertation is structured to show the research aim, objective and methodology. The dissertation introduces Portugal and the extent of low-skilled migrants working in Portuguese labour market. Following the literature of skill measurement and skill mismatch, the paper highlights the limited proxies used for skill measurement. With in-depth interviews with low-skilled Nepalese migrants, the research shows how migrants perceive their skills in the foreign land irrespective of their educational attainments. Finally, the analysis derived from the interviews questions the existing integration programmes and its effectiveness.

Dissertation Preface

My interest in this topic came about when I met some Nepalese immigrants working as in agricultural fields in rural areas of Portugal. My encounter with Nepalese migrants I began curious to know thousands of Nepalese, who were police officers, managers and working for lower and started to read about skills brought by low-skilled migrants to the European labour market. to learn about types of skills Nepalese workers bring with them and how have they developed their skills during their stay in Portugal. My interest grew in understanding how low-skilled labourers perceive their skills and how they categorize them while finding jobs abroad. The dissertation followed on from this, examining the extent to which they utilize their skills and methods they adapt and develop skills for the European, in particular, Portuguese labour market. Given my background and living experience, I will be able to look at the research work from the perspective of a Nepalese citizen and a master student of European Public Policy. I am able to examine the issue on basis of the skill differing from Nepal and Portugal. Through this research work, I will be able to challenge the existing policy work that assumes the skills level of migrants as a group skill. Consequently, I will be to understand what limits migrants from expressing their skill level abroad and achieving their desired level of jobs or occupation.

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| **Chapter One** | **Introduction: Research Aim and Objective, Research Question, Case Study and Methodology** |

1. Research Aim and Objective

The aim of the research is to analyze how low-skilled migrants navigate their way to gain skills within the agenda of skill integration in the European labour market. In order to find answers, the research aims to interview migrants, who are categorized as low-skilled and who have participated in EU integration programmes, received training at a workplace or joined an educational institution in the host country. The research also includes participants who have stayed in Portugal for at least 3 to 5 years and are intending on achieving permanent residence. The duration of stay makes a difference in receiving information about migrants' experience of working in the European labor market and their chances of gaining skills in Portuguese work industries. While investigating the skill accumulation process adapted by low-skilled migrants, the research also seeks to appraise migrants' uptake on learning the Portuguese language.

There are three objectives of this research. In addition to the objectives, the relationship between migrants' perception of skills, EU integration programmes and migrants' strategies in skill accumulation provide three thematic analysis.

Table 1: Dissertation Objectives and Thematic Analysis

S. No	Objectives	Thematic analysis
Objective 1	To investigate migrants' understanding of their own skill.	Their answers will challenge or accept the standardized definition of skills used in the European Union.
Objective 2	To examine how EU integration programmes have affected their skill level.	The objective of the such investigation is to understand the effectiveness of existing integration policies in enhancing skills of low-skilled migrants, in specific.
Objective 3	To explore strategies used by low-skilled migrants in accumulating skills to scale up their skill level for the European labour market	Since the participants are more concerned in long-term employment and permanent residency, their plan and actions in gaining skills will reflect effective methods of skill accumulation process to work in the competitive European labour market.

Above all, it is more interesting to find how low-skilled migrants have understood their value of work at a foreign land, and how they are participating in activities that are helping them to prepare for jobs that are skill-intensive throughout Europe.

2. Research Questions

The following research question surrounds on the themes of immigration policies, migrants' skill perception and their approach for learning new skills required for the European labour market.

With changes in low-skilled immigration policies in Portugal, how have low-skilled migrants perceived their skills and how have they engaged in developing their skills?

Sub-research question are as follows:

- How do migrants know that they have low-skill to perform jobs that require higher education, interactive environment or certified training?
- How have migrants perceived their skill development during their stay in Portugal?
- Why migrants have been or not been able to attain the skill they desired to?

3. Case Study of Nepalese migrants in Portugal

Nepal is another major migrant-sending country from South Asia. By the end of the twentieth century, more than twenty-four million South Asian migrated abroad to find better economic opportunities and sustainable lives. According to UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, India, Bangladesh and Pakistan are projected in the top ranks in the international migration of UN database (2009). Since the twentieth century, Nepalese also composed the modern diaspora of South Asian descents. Every year, large proportion of migrants leave home to find work in different parts of America, Europe, Gulf countries, Asia and Australia. Amidst various struggle of living and working as an outsider, Nepalese migrants have been seeking ways of working abroad and sending money back home. Especially, remittance has been one of the most valued reason for seeking longer-term work and

residence in foreign country (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2017). Obtaining permanent residence permit is a long-term process, which requires consistent in performing jobs, paying tax and insurances in order to maintain the status of skilled and educated migrant. Caught up in the process of maintaining the requirements of prospect lifetime residency, the migrants are often engaged in jobs that suffice their application to European residency permit. Because Nepalese low-skilled labors work in the agricultural fields and/or involved in non-technical jobs, their work in Europe is directed towards jobs that require physical labor rather than higher education or technical training. With the target of reaching Europe for residence to work and sending remittances back home, a huge influx of low-skilled migrants skill level is uncertain. It is a question of whether these labors know their skill level, and how have they enhanced their skill level while their stay in Portugal.

One of the recent and prominent examples of huge influx to Portugal exemplifies how Nepalese have been working their way out to support themselves and their family members both at home and abroad. Out of 28 EU countries, obtaining permanent residency is relatively easier in Portugal after it introduced the EU Blue card for skilled and educated workers (The European Commission, 2014). The introduction of EU Blue Card have enabled lot of immigrants to apply for permanent residency with their regular earning capacity. Unlike the Golden Residence Program, which requires a purchase a real estate worth of 500,000 Euro, the EU Blue Card allows people of varying economic status to apply for permanent resident (The EU Card Network, 2009). Within the five years of their work and stay, immigrants with varying earning status could be able to apply for the permanent residency. However, the EU Blue Card is initiated to give opportunities for "skilled and educated migrants", and it has created a debate on how low-skilled immigrants could seek for such opportunity. The Portugal citizenship regime plays a vital role in understanding low-skilled migrants' movement to Portugal. Following the Action Plan of the European Commission, the Portuguese government-initiated integration activities such as on-job training, language courses and higher education to fill the bottleneck vacancies high-tech industries. It has become important to understand whether low-skilled migrants have moved towards higher education and trainings to fill vacancies which are considered to be in short supply and/or regarded as high-skilled jobs specified by Portuguese government.

4. Disseration Outline and Methodology

In the history of labour market literature, education is regarded as a main determinant to divide skilled labour from low skilled. Especially, in Europe, the low-skilled immigrants are categorized via the educational attainments and years of formal education (International Organization for Migration, 2012). Predominantly, the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) has been approved to classify level of skills and fields of education.

In this research paper, low-skilled immigrants are defined as third-country nationals that lack competency-based education and/or have completed less than 12 years of school education. However, this research investigates how low-skilled perceive their skill in the European labour market. Research has shown that higher education increase the prospect of getting jobs of high rank as well as makes it easier to navigate in different kinds of job market (Arrow, 1973; Blackburn, et al., 1990). Since the low-skill workers strongly corresponds to activities that can scale up their knowledge for obtaining high-qualified jobs, the research focus is to find whether low-skilled migrants are involved in activities that build their skills during their residence in Portugal.

The method of data collection is Phenomenological qualitative research. The phenomenological research focus on finding out what all participants have in common in perceiving their skill set and participating in skill gaining phenomenon. In other words, the method gathers their "lived experience" as a low-skilled immigrant in Portugal. The first step in data collection involves in-depth interviews with the Nepalese migrants, who have experienced the skill-development process. This description consists of "what" they experienced and "how" they experienced skill development phenomenon. The second step develops a composite description of the skill-development experience for all of the individuals. The third step compares the participants education attainments and skills with the ISCED standardized education level. The comparison is made to check whether migrants have obtained a level of degree or training that meet the criteria specified by ISCED. However, this research is not limited to

evaluating their skill-progress. This research analyses how each participant has perceived their skill level in Portugal, and how have they made decisions to join or not to join education institutions or trainings to harness their skills. The interviews in Nepal captures the trend of Nepalese migration to Portugal. Interviewing potential migrants will give an overall understanding of how migrants perceive their skills before moving to European countries. A major number of participants are returnee, who have come to Nepal for family reunion or for good. An in-depth interview with returnees help to reveal existing policies and programmes available for low-skilled migrants in Portugal. The interviews produce an analysis of how migrants navigate themselves from low-skill jobs to higher skilled jobs abroad.

Chapter Two | Low-Skilled Migrants and Portugal
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1. Low-Skilled Migrants Coming to Portugal

Low-skilled immigration from third-country is a common phenomenon in Portugal. Traditionally, Portugal was one of the largest and longest-lived colonial empires, expanding from South America, the coast of Africa to the East of Asia. Movement within the empire was evident, however, immigration paced after decolonization and overthrown of dictatorship in 1974 Carnation Revolution. Immigration from its former colony, increasingly Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP - Países Africanos de Língua Oficial Portuguesa) found Portugal as a place of common language and economic opportunities since the 1960s (Peixoto, 2002; Sardinha, 2009). Later in the 1990s, a huge influx of former colonial members from Brazil migrated to Portugal following the prospect of permanent residency, employment opportunity, and social build up (Padilla, 2006; Feldman-Bianco, 2001). However, a recent wave of immigration does not have any link to Portugal colonial history. Movement of Eastern European and South Asian are recent phenomenon irrespective of their colonial linkage or dimensions in working competencies (Fonseca , et al., 2003; Sardinha, 2009). It is not surprising that these immigrants who came to Portugal varied in skills. Some immigrants qualified as highly professional and skilled labors while others possessed minimal knowledge for performing major types of occupation or speaking the common language (Cardoso, 2007). Migration to developed and colonial powers was always high in the past, but increasing number of low-skilled immigration in Portugal without colonial association brings a new insight to a new wave of migration in Europe. The puzzle for this research is that unexpected sets of low-skilled immigrants are entering Portuguese labor market - raising the question of why these low-skilled come to Portugal; how they perceive their skills in the Portuguese labor market and they decide to integrate their skills to work in European labor markets.

2. Low-Skilled Migrants from Nepal to Portugal

The research is centered on Nepalese low-skilled migrants, their perception of skills and the European Union (EU) skill integration policies for migrants, and their strategies in acquiring professional skills in the European Union. The interrelations between these three components play a vital role in questioning the proxy measure of skill level as well as assess policies on skill integration in the European Union. This research investigates the types and levels of skills brought by migrants when they arrive in Portugal. The research also identifies migrants' strategies on using their skills, and their approach in plugging existing skill gaps in the Portuguese labor market. Quantitative research in Kathmandu, Nepal, contributes to the discussion of their lived experience, especially, in the context of their professional growth through their skills gained in Portugal. A study shows a positive relationship between labor market demand and university courses selected by university students in developing countries of Africa and Asia, which are sending countries for international students like Nepal (Pitan & Adedeji, 2014). Interviewing participants in the capital of Nepal, Kathmandu, gives an overall understanding of the background of skills achieved before embarking on a journey of foreign employment or settlement. Moreover, interviewing participants in Kathmandu has an additional layer of aspects of skills gained in the context of Nepalese labor market. In order to meet the labor market of Nepal, most of the migrants studied in Nepal gained adequate skills for Nepalese labor market and career opportunities. Using those skills in a foreign land could be a challenge especially in the European market where the system of regulations is at EU level. The interviews and qualitative research with low-skilled migrants contribute to the discussion of how migrants perceived their skills in the EU, and what strategies they used to integrate skills into the Portuguese labor market. These areas of research are previously dominated by the literature on demand of skills in the EU rather than understanding and utilizing abundant supply of ill-adapted or 'low' level of skills in the European labor market.

3. Low-skilled migrants' perception of skills and productivity

Perception of skills and copy mechanism of low-skilled migrants is important because low-skilled migrants seek to stay longer or more permanently, and ultimately contributing to host countries' productivity. The most rigorous study from the World Bank concludes that 50% of migrants stay at most 10 years in Europe (2018). In the USA, three quarter (about 71.5%) of low-skilled migrants reside in the country for 11 years (Hanson, et al., 2017). The case of the low-skilled period of residency is more interesting in Canada, where 31% of low-migrants already became permanent residents compared to 23% of high-skilled migrants arrived between 2005 and 2009 (Lu & Hau, 2017). Furthermore, low-skilled migrants outnumber high-skilled in the world labour force as shown in the Table 1. For instance, research in the international migration by education attainment shows that World labor force with less than secondary education is 61.5% in 1990 and 59% in 2000, while the skilled migrants are significantly less in total stock, about 9.1% and 11.3% in 1990 and 2000 respectively (Docquier & Marfouk, 2006). The low-skilled migrants lack often a degree or expertise in a particular field, nevertheless, they are economically active labors to contribute income to the host country's GDP for a longer period of time. The recent report on Global Migration and Labour Market tabulates that an immigrant's contribution to the labor market is not significantly different than the natives after 7-10 years of arrival (The World Bank, 2018). Abundant evidence shows a positive correlation between migrants' years of contribution and welfare gain of the country. The research conducted from 1980 to 2005, migration has increased the supply of labor in the destination country and escalated employment rate to stimulate GDP growth both in the sending and receiving OECD countries (Francesc & Peri, 2009). Evidence from North-South migration produces sustainable gain both in the receiving country and in origin countries (van der Mensbrugghe & Roland-Holst, 2009; Anderson & Winters, 2008). In addition, migrants' understanding of their skills in a way reduced the trend of 'brain waste' (White, 2002). Psychologists suggest that perception of own job-related skills have a positive relationship between job performance and role breadth (Morgeson, et al., 2005). Understanding of own skill and abilities is essential to research for further effective integration of low-skilled migrants in the European market. Similar to other low-skilled migrants in Europe, Nepalese low-skilled migrants staying more permanently and engaging in European

Union labor market, it has become important to know how these low-skilled migrants understand their level of education, job skills and information about the European labor market. The research analysis of the self-efficacy and coping mechanism is also situated around integration policy and their lived experience in Portugal.

Table 2: International labour force and mobility by education attainments

	World labour force (independent territories only)	1990		2000	
		Total stock 2568.229	% of labour force	Total stock 3187.233	% of labour force
2.	World labour force with tertiary education	234.692	9.1%	360.614	11.3%
3.	World labour force with secondary education	755.104	29.4%	945.844	29.7%
4.	World labour force with less than secondary education	1578.433	61.5%	1880.775	59%
5.	World average emigration rate - tertiary education	5.0%	-	5.4%	-
6.	World average emigration rate - secondary education	1.4%	-	1.8%	-
7.	World average emigration rate - less than secondary education	1.2%	-	1.1%	-

Source: (Docquier and Marfouk 2006)
Note: ' - ' denotes data not available.

4. Portugal and permanent residency for low-skilled migrants

Immigration of low-skilled labors to Portugal, at least of larger scale, is more recent. Traditionally, Portugal has been a country of emigration in spite of some migration from Portugal's former colonies, the PALOP and Brazil in 1960-70s. Portugal became a new hub for low-skilled migrants after the introduction of a new national law in April 2016. According to the new law, immigrants can acquire citizenship within five years of their residence compared to 10 years in other EU countries (SEF Immigration and Border Service, 2006). Naturalizing migration status became possible for migrants planning to say more permanently. Moreover, the boom in construction industry attracted a high influx of immigrants to reside and work in the country irrespective of their language similarity or history of colonial relationship with Portugal (Padilla, 2006; Feldman-Bianco, 2001). Not only Portugal experienced supply of laborers, but shrinking demography and aging population in Portugal demand international migrants. Especially, there is a higher demand for low-skilled migrants to work on agriculture, seasonal work and less-technology industry (OSED 2017). The migrant-favored visa scheme defies temporary visa schemes followed in other EU countries, which opt for third-country nationals only from its bilateral agreement (Süssmuth, 2009). Additionally, Portuguese temporary visa is unique as it allows migrants to apply for permanent residence through five years of their stay. The citizenship regime of Portugal plays an important role to attract low-skilled or unskilled third-country nationals seeking long-term employment and a possibility of permanent residency. While members of EU are more inclined in offering a scheme of permanent residency to high skilled labors, Portugal new law on residency has increased low-skilled migrant to fulfill labor gaps in agriculture, sectors and low-tech industries (Migration Integration Policy Index, 2017).

The below Table 3 shows discrepancies between the EU Member States in providing permanent residency or citizenship. Out of 27 EU member states, 11 countries (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden) allow low-skilled migrants to apply for permanent residency after five years of their continuous stay in the country. Although these 11 countries allow working low-skilled migrants to acquire permanent residence, the likelihood is

minimal due to countries strict regulations against low-skilled migrants. For example, Denmark and Finland have provision for permanent residency for low-skilled migrants, however, the country's law is very restrictive in hiring migrants with low-level skills (Bureau of European Policy Advisers (European Commission), 2010). Other countries, such as the Netherlands, Ireland, and Slovakia, with a similar provision, either seek immigrants only from the countries with which they have a bilateral agreement. Among all 11 countries, Portugal is unique because it has a high demand for low-skilled migrants unlike Romania and Lithuania, which are itself a source of low-skilled migrants in European developed partners. Furthermore, receiving Portuguese resident permit is open to all nationals, intra-European or third nationals irrespective of their financial background. Hence, high demand for low-skilled labors and the likelihood of receiving permanent residence in Portugal makes the country favorable to economic migrants to work and unite with their family in the future.

Table 3: Information on low-skilled working criteria, first residence and work permit, and the provision of permanent residency

S. No	EU Member States	Information about low-skilled working criteria in the national labour market	First residence and work permit	Provision of permanent residency
1.	Austria	A yearly quota is set to hire low-skilled migrants.	Visa for 6 months and extension up to 12 months.	X
2.	Belgium	Only migrants from countries with bilateral agreement are accepted for seasonal/contract work.	Work permit for 1 year and extension up to 4 years.	X
3.	Bulgaria	Low-skilled migrant are discouraged because of high unemployment rate.	Work permit for 1 year and extension up to 3 years	X
4.	Cyprus	Employment of low-skilled is subject to labour market demand.	Work permit for 2 year and extension up to 2 years.	X
5.	Czech Republic	There are no specific assessment of low-skilled migrants.	Work permit for 1 year and extension up to 1 year	X
6.	Denmark	Low-skilled workers from third countries are not admitted to Denmark.	If a worker obtains permanent working contract, they can get a permanent residence.	✓
7.	Estonia	Low-skilled migrants are minority among low-skilled population.	Resident permit for 1 year and renewed up to five years	X
8.	Finland	Recruiting low-skilled workers are uncommon.	Resident permit for 2 years and extension up to 2 years for permanent residence.	✓
9.	France	Third country low-skilled labour are more than the natives.	"Paid employment" for 12 months and "Temporary work" permit is less than 12 months	X
10.	Germany	Only migrants from countries with bilateral agreements.	Residence permit for six months, nine months to two years	X
11.	Greece	Greece face severe shortage in unskilled or low-skilled migrants.	Residence permit for 1 year and extension up to 2 years	X
12.	Hungary	Do not have a well-structured assessment or policy for low-skilled migrants.	Work permit are for 2 years and extension for 2 years	X
13.	Ireland	Only specific job categories are in demand for low-skilled labours.	Employment permit for three years and unlimited extension after five years.	✓
14.	Italy	Quota based low-skilled jobs are in high demand.	Residence permit is nine months and extended up to three years.	X
15.	Latvia	Low-skilled migrants will increase in future due to its decreasing population.	Temporary residence permit can be extended for five years, and eligible to apply a permanent residence.	✓
16.	Lithuania	A work permit card with migrants' identity is issued for all low-skilled migrants.	Work permits are for two years and temporary residence permit are for one year, and each can be extended for similar periods.	✓
17.	Luxembourg	About 43.7% of its population are third-country nationals.	First, second and third stay permit can be issued for one, two and three years respectively.	X

18.	Malta	Recruitment of third-country low-skilled migrants is not common.	Third-country nationals can work with tourist visa after having an employment license to work from one to three years.	X
19.	Netherlands	Third country nationals are not admitted to Netherlands except from Romania and Bulgaria.	Work permit is granted for three years, and if a third country nationals has sufficient money, work permit is not required.	✓
20.	Poland	Major share of low-skilled migrants employment are filled by Poland's neighbouring countries.	Work permit is issued for three years and extended for three years. Residence permit is for two years, and new residence permit is granted if employment continuous.	X
21.	Portugal	Immigration of third-country low-skilled migrants is common in Portugal.	Temporary work visa, residence visa and residence permit is granted for one year and extended for two years. Low-skilled migrants can apply for permanent residence after four years.	✓
22.	Romania	Romania is the source for low-skilled migrants to EU member states.	Work permit is for one year and temporary residence permit can be extended up to four years. After four years, a low-skilled migrant can apply for permanent residency.	✓
23.	Slovakia	Low-skilled third country nationals are strictly restricted because of high unemployment rate.	Work permit and temporary residence is for two years and can be extended for maximum three years.	✓
24.	Slovenia	Nearly 80% of population are economic migrants, and there is demand for low-skilled migrants after the 2008 recession.	Three types of permit are granted: Work permit, employment permit and personal work permit. The duration of residence permit is tied with duration of work permit.	✓
25.	Spain	About 33.8% of third nationals are low-skilled workers.	Residence and work permit are one document. The initial authorization is one year and can be extended upto four years.	X
26.	Sweden	Third country low-skilled migrants are common working in the agricultural field and fishery.	Work permit and residence permit are granted for two years and can be extended for maximum four years.	✓
27.	United Kingdom	Outside EU, the UK has limited schemes to hire third country low-skilled workers.	A certificate of sponsorship is generated to hire low-skilled workers for 12 months without extension.	X

Source: (Bureau of European Policy Advisers 2010)

Note: 'X' means there is no provision of permanent residency, and '√' means there is provision of receiving permanent residency to low-skilled migrants

Chapter Three | Definition of low-skilled and Literature Review on skill measurement and mismatch

1. Definition of low-skilled

The context of research is linked with low-skilled migration studies as well as skill acquisition by low-skilled migrants in the EU. Low-skilled migrants are defined by various authors and institutions, and thus, varying both conceptually and empirically. However, the European Commission definition of low-skilled migrants is composed of three components of conceptions:

Table 4: European Commission definition of low-skilled or Semi-Skilled

Low skilled or Semi-skilled
Knowledge: "the outcome of assimilation of information through learning consisted of facts, principles, theories, and practices that are related to the field of work or studies. Within the European Qualifications Framework, it is also described as theoretical and/or factual"
Skills: "the ability to apply knowledge and use know-how to complete tasks and solve problems; it involves the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking as well as practical such as manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments"
Competence: "the proven ability to use knowledge, skills, personal, social and/or methodological abilities in situations of work, study, professional and personal development; it is also linked with the terms of responsibility and autonomy"

Source: (European Commission 2008)

In this research paper, the skill level is determined by the workers' perception of their knowledge, their opinions about skill assessment and their strategies in enhancing skills in a foreign labor market. The theory and notion of classifying foreign migrants based on their jobs and occupation, almost all seasonal workers in the EU are recognized as "low skilled" or "semi-skilled" irrespective of their past educational background (Bureau of European Policy Advisers (European Commission), 2010). The European member states, including Portugal, have adopted similar conception to define low-skilled migrants at the international level (International Organization for Migration 2012). In Portugal, seasonal workers and temporary work contract are automatically segregated as low-skilled labors (Bureau of European Policy Advisers (European Commission), 2010). In such a context, the migrants'

skills are purely determined by jobs occupied by migrants. Such research will add to the literature of skills mismatch and skill acquisition in order to design an effective integration assistance (Huber, et al., 2010). Similarly, researching low-skilled migrants' perceptions of skills and their navigation strategies in the labor market will build on policy areas to combat skill shortages and proliferate evidence-based policymaking. Low-skilled immigrants' perception of their skills categorizes existing education, their level of education attainments, and their strategy in gaining higher skills in Portugal.

2. Literature on skill measurement

One of the major researches on education attainments is the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) with two primary classification variables: levels and field of education (UNESCO, 2012). The classification of skill level and education attainments is adapted my major institutions like the United Nations, approved by UNESCO and now confirmed by the EU (International Organization for Migration 2012). For instance, level '0 - 2' in ISCED scale represents the lowest degree of education comprising primary and lower secondary education. Level '3 - 5' is classified from higher secondary to tertiary level education. High skill is reflected in level '6 - 8', which is a bachelor degree to Ph.D. level. The current study on educational attainment classifies low-skilled migrants with pre-primary and lower secondary education (International Organization for Migration 2012).

Table 5: Segregation of level of education in ISCED

Level of education in ISCED
ISCED 0: Early childhood education ('less than primary' for educational attainment)
ISCED 1: Primary education
ISCED 2: Lower secondary education
ISCED 3: Upper secondary education
ISCED 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education
ISCED 5: Short-cycle tertiary education
ISCED 6: Bachelor's or equivalent level
ISCED 7: Master's or equivalent level
ISCED 8: Doctoral or equivalent level

Source: (Eurostat 2011)

Most studies and integration programme focus on 'high-skill' as a proxy for skill measurement.

In a research analysis from 1990-1999, Paserman (2013) conducted a quantitative assessment on the

mass migration of former the Soviet Union to Israel in the 1990s. The research targeted in quantifying how high-skilled migrants affect the productivity of Israel. The results revealed that immigrants share of production negatively correlated with productivity in low-tech industries. However, the relation of immigrants' share and productivity is complementary in high-technology industries. Understanding such phenomenon of high-skill migrants for betterment, the host countries have more incentive to welcome and legalize high-skilled migrants. Likewise, several authors have encouraged high-skilled mobility into Europe. One unique study on EU migration promotes Diploma recognition policy to encourage movement and immigration of high-skilled migrants within Europe (Peixoto, 2001). Studies are specifically concentrating on skills gained from education to analyze the productivity of the nation (Huber, et al., 2010, Beine , et al., 2007). Even in the international scenario of gender migration, highly qualified women migrants contributed a large proportion to economic productivity (Iredale, 2005). In a case of Portugal, it is predicted a future hub for skilled migration inflows from European developed members. Because the income level and standard of living in Portugal are similar to other European developed partners, both high-skilled European professionals and third-country professionals are expected to enter and stay in the country. In addition, the continuous outflow of Portuguese labor created a skill gap and attracted corporate cadres from European markets since 1986 Portugal membership to the EU (Peixoto, 2001). Nevertheless, the Portuguese labor market is overcrowded with low-skilled labors with very less information on skill recognition of low-skilled migrants than compared to high-skilled immigrants (Baganha, 1998; Peixoto, 2001).

In addition to the literature on formal education as a major indicator for measuring skills, several international institutions propose other approaches to measuring skills. The European Commission promoted six skill measurements proxies: 1) Occupation, 2) Qualification, 3) Duration of education, 4) Skill tests, 5) Self-assessment, and 6) Job requirement (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2018). The International Labour Organization promotes the international categorization of jobs of occupations, commonly known as the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO). It is a statistical application adapted by authors and international organizations to evaluate the level of education and duties undertaken for a job. ISCO has been widely

used in managing the migration flow of skilled and unskilled labors as well as developing integration programmes and training (International Labour Organization, 2010). As mentioned above, qualification is another major determinant for measuring skill. The ISCED has been a universal system to standardize information on people's qualification and skill intensity in the job market (UNESCO, 2012). Similarly, the duration of years provides a complementary analogous to qualification. Although the duration of years positively correlates with qualification, it does not reflect the type or quality of skills acquired by individuals with the given qualification. Therefore, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) developed 'The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)', to study basic cognitive skills and a broad range of skills used by adults in their workplace. The programme synthesizes types of skills, adults' proficiency in information processing and their way of using skills at home, workplace or in a community (OECD, 2018a). Skill tests compare skill level across particular workers. The most common and internationally used skill test is the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for literacy and numeracy test (OECD, 2018b). Such test in practice are complicated and tedious and only provide information based on a limited range of skills. Self-assessment tends to report individuals' perception of skills, and their strategies in using such skills to perform day-to-day work through Direct Self-Assessment (DSA) approach. The DSA is internationally recognized and used by the government of Switzerland and Canada for national surveys on education and occupation discrepancy (Flisi et al. 2014). Another important yet secondary approach is Indirect Self-Assessment (ISA) that asks questions about job requirements and the skills required for such jobs. UK and European member states often use this approach to evaluate generic skill demand or work-related skill mismatch in the European labour market (Flisi et al. 2014). Above all, the six approaches are invented to combat extensive amount of skill mismatch present in the European Union. Hence, it has become important to analyse the cause and extent of skill mismatch in Europe in order to further investigate on migrants' perception of skills and their skill advancing avenues.

3. Literature on skill mismatch

The previous studies highlighted that a job designation and position classified a worker's skill level, however, the persistence and impact of skill mismatch in the European labor market have disputed these empirical studies. Often well-paid jobs reflected workers' qualification, skills and their capacity to navigate in the foreign job market (Arrow, 1973; Blackburn, et al., 1990). In the recent context, European migrants holding high education profile are doing lower level jobs in the developed countries of the EU (Jendrissek, 2013). In Chiswick's study (1978), natives receive a return of 1.5% higher than a migrant for a year of education in the USA. A similar study was done in Canada, UK, Germany, and Israel, where the results highlighted migrants performing low-scale jobs and receiving less income regardless of their educational attainments as equal as to natives (The Education Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2011). In the later research by Chiswick and Miller (2009), a theory of 'search and match' and theory of 'human capital' was developed to understand the skill mismatch in the labor market of developed countries. The 'search and match' theory suggested that migrants' lack of information about destination labor market could have pushed them to do low-scales jobs. Similarly, the theory of human capital implied migrants' difficulty in transferring their skills and experiences to a foreign land. Although it was a quite easier to transfer the educational certificates, the fast-progressing technology of developed country limited migrants' from achieving their maximum potential after their arrival. Such situation is implied by technological change theory suggesting migrants' qualification is less trusted due to an uncertainty of foreign technological knowledge (The Education Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, 2011). Hence, the recent literature on migrants' skill is ascribed to the issue of skill mismatch rather than associating skills with workers' job position.

The skill mismatch is a discrepancy between workers' qualification and the job they do. Several studies compared formal education with job descriptions and found that workers are often more qualified than required (Quintini, 2011a; Quintini 2011b; Chevalier, 2003; Groot & van den Brink, 2000). These findings are analyzed by Pellizari and Fichen stating that qualified workers have not been benefited from their formal education and that "their actual competencies are less advanced than those

would normally expect them to possess based on their formal education qualifications" (2017). Pellizari and Fichen further expands the research work of Green and McIntosh (2007) and Chevalier and Lindley (2009) to explain the strategies used by low-skilled workers to performs jobs that require a high level of formal education. On-the-job training and years of experience added work-related competencies to these low-skilled workers and made their skill comparable to skills learned from formal schooling (Pellizari & Fichen, 2017). Hence, the literature of skill mismatch suggests the need for further investigation on how low-skilled workers have navigated their way to perform jobs that are comparable to highly qualified individuals.

There exists research using self-declaration methodologies in assessing skills brought by migrant, however, skill mismatch is a central challenge for Europe due to inadequate information on migrants' skills and job requirements. A research done by Flisi and others is a comprehensive investigation using a mixed approach of understanding education mismatch and skill mismatch in Europe. Along with investigation on years of education and ISCED level, they have introduced the self-reported measure of mismatch (2014). The self-report is a form of self-assessment provided by the workers about his/her judgment on job requirements and levels of education through direct interviews or through indirection form of questionnaires related to job requirements (Flisi, et al., 2014). The method of self-evaluation or self-declaration has been used by several authors such as Chevalier (2003) in "Measuring over-education" in the UK; and Verhaest and Omey (2006) in "The Impact of Overeducation and its Measurement" among Flemish Dutch school leavers. Unfortunately, there still lacks adequate information on skills endowments by foreign-born and use of such skills in the European labor market. This dissertation research will add a unique perspective on skill mismatch by not providing a theoretical definition for skills measurement and skill usage. This paper develops information from low-skilled migrants' self-evaluation of their skills to construct a new indicator for skill endowment and utilization. This paper is anchored to provide a specific case study and data for a specific group of low-skilled migrants, and thus, it is not a general theory of skill mismatch or education integration. Nonetheless, the information gathered in this research can be used to investigate other aspects of low-migrants migrants' skill mismatch for other research sharing similar features.

Chapter Four | Low-skilled migrants' integration: Programme and Policies

1. Integration policy and programmes

The European Union has established multiple programmes to integrate and utilize skills brought by low-skilled non-EU migrants. The projects on integration accelerated during the 2015 Mediterranean crisis when more than 2.4 million arrived at the EU member states in search of safe haven, economic opportunities or family well-being (Eurostat, 2017). The flow of immigrants varied in legal status, qualifications, languages, and technical skills. For instance, out of 21 million non-EU immigrants, about 79.2% of them were categorized as low-skilled or having less than 12 years of education (Eurostat, 2017; International Organization for Migration, 2012). In order to accommodate such a huge number of low-skilled migrants, the European Commission adopted a comprehensive framework for building a cohesive society. 'The Action Plan on the Integration of Third Country Nationals' framework of integration is designed to support member states in developing and executing uniform integration policies throughout Europe (2016). The framework includes actions in providing economic opportunities, educational platforms, gaining professional experience and learning the common language (The European Commission, 2016). The key policy priorities are:

Table 6: Integration Policy Priorities and role of the European Commission and EU Members States

S. No	Key Policy Priorities	Role of the European Commission	Role of the member states
1.	Pre-departure/Pre-arrival measures	- Launch projects for pre-arrival measures - Coordinate with third-country to establish pre-departure programmes	- Promote sponsorship - Facilitate administrative task of resettlement and knowledge exchange
2.	Education	- Promote online language program and support recognition of qualification - Promote integration into higher education	- Equip teachers and staff for managing diverse group of people - Support early childhood education

3.	Labour Market Integration and Access to Vocational Training	- Develop a "Skill and Qualification Toolkit" to recognize and record qualifications of migrants. - Promote 'fast-track' approach for integration into labour market.	- Support 'fast-track' approach into the local labour market. - Provide vocational trainings and encourage entrepreneurship. - Recognize qualifications and skills of migrants.
4.	Access to basic Services	- Use the fund to provide housing, health, education and social infrastructure - Promote peer learning programmes to avoid racism and ghettoization.	- Coordinate policies of housing and social services from local to national level - Create a network of health experts through collaboration with national and international organizations
5.	Active Participation and Social Inclusion	- Launch projects for intercultural dialogues, youth engagement and voluntary services for integration - Work with European Parliament and Council for initiating anti-discriminatory directive	- Including migrants' participation into democratic structures - Organizing orientation programmes to promote EU values

Information extracted from 'Action Plan on the Integration of Third-Country Nationals'
Source: (European Commission 2016)

To address the challenge of high low-skilled immigration into the European labor market, several European Member States adopted integration policies and programmes. The most common integration programmes included job training and languages courses (European Commission, 2016). The German national authorities have prioritized establishment and execution of pre-departure language programmes to equip migrants with German language and culture before their arrival (Süssmuth, 2009). Similarly, Spain has encouraged third country youth to participate in educational and recreational activities to familiarize with the European education system and knowledge sharing (Helping Immigrant student 2015). In the case of Portugal, the unique chance to apply for permanent residency for low-skilled migrants have opened doors to naturalize their migration status as well as receive social benefits and right to participate in the local and European governing system (SEF Immigration and Border Service, 2006). Furthermore, the Portuguese government assisted in conducting higher education and training programmes for low-skilled migrants in order to fulfill the bottleneck vacancies in ICT, electronic, administrative and technical sectors (European Commission, 2014).

2. Integration policy and employment

Immigrants integration and employment are often positively correlated. The study on integration highlight the importance of skill-building programmes and vocational training in increasing employability prospect amongst low-skilled migrants in the host country (Muysken, et al., 2012). A study carried out by International Monetary Fund and International Labour Organization reveal positive aspects of immigration integration. Immigration of migrants not only increased the supply of labor in the European labor market but also influenced demand for products and services (EUR-Lex, 2007). Moreover, there are few evidences that integration of immigrants has escalated natives' unemployment rate. With the sustainable flow of immigrants, the European Union have accelerated integration programmes specially to combat the problem of demographic changes (EUR-Lex, 2007). Sometimes the effect of integration is detrimental to sending and receiving country. The developing country or sending country may suffer from the effects of the brain drain, and the receiving country could rely on immigrants for certain types of jobs. Nevertheless, the EU integration programmes have focused on devising integration policies that are neither detrimental to employment in sending country or the receiving ones. For instance, the European Commission is coordinating with Turkey for a one-for-one resettlement programme to facilitate Syrian refugees and migrants. It is a distinct example of a joint decision that benefits both origin and the destinations countries (European Commission, 2016). Furthermore, the Commission promotes collaboration between the European Member States and the sending countries in designing integration programmes for accelerating effective integration into the European labor market (2016). Henceforth, the integration policies and programmes are designed in a way to influence employment opportunities for both highly skilled and low-skilled immigrants coming to the country.

3. Integration policy and its effect on skill enhancement

The existence of the integration programme or policy, however, does not explain to what extent it affects the skill level of low-skilled migrants in Europe. Migrants are facing difficulty in accessing training and language centers (Barrett, et al., 2013). Lack of workers in the skilled occupations such as

ICT and administrative jobs in Southern Europe have questioned the effectiveness of the integration programmes. Besides migrants' accessibility in the integration programme, migrants' previous qualification, minimum wage, and employment regulations affect migrants' interest and need in participating in various types of integration programmes (Oesch, 2010; Ruhs & Anderson, 2010). Furthermore, the integration programme is not uniform in all EU member states. The newly joined EU member states are enhancing the skill level of natives rather than migrants (Barrett, et al., 2012). The limited access to a holistic skill enhancing integration programme has halted skill growth in migrants. In one way, these realities have further marginalized low-skilled migrants in the European labor market. Therefore, it is uncertain the extent to which the integration programmes are affecting the skill level and opening doors to skill utilization by low-skilled migrants in foreign lands.

Chapter Five | Low-skilled migrants' stories, perception of skills and skill accumulation strategies

1. Broader definition of Skills for understanding various types of skills

The definition of skills is categorized into three types. Each type of skill denotes specific characteristics, such as, self-management skills, transferable skills and work-content skills. Derived from an inclusive definition of skills from similar research as this, the participants' perception of skills is compared to analyse the provided information.

Table 7: Inclusive Definition of Skills

Adaptive or Self-Management Skills	Functional or Transferable Skills	Specific or Work Content Skills
• Rooted in temperament. • Acquired in early years among family, peers or in school • Related to environments, particularly demand for conformity or continuity vs. risk • Examples: Management of oneself in relation to: -authority -space & time direction moving towards, away from or against others self-pacing, self-routing - punctuality, dress care of property impulse control In everyday speech: Regularity Dependability Initiative Resourcefulness etc.	• Rooted in Aptitude • Acquired either as natural born talent; refined by experience or education or trainings • Related to people, data or things • Examples: -Tending and operating machines Comparing, compiling or analysing data - Exchanging information with or consulting / supervising people In everyday speech: Artistic talent, born problem solver ~-\ natural salesman or saleswoman; and effective with communicating with people	• Rooted in Personal experience • Acquired by private reading, apprenticeship, technical training institute, school or (often) on the job. • Related to performing job in a particular field • Examples: Detailed knowledge of various parts of a car Knowing the names of air the muscles in the human body Understanding the psychology of human motivation In everyday speech: Making radio and presentations Personnel administration etc.

Source: (Healey, 2009).

Note: The original source of this definition comes from Fine and Bolles (1994), and further emphasized by the University of Washington Centre for Career Service (2007). The definition is extracted to comprehend various types of skills rather than only considering formal education attainments or trainings.

2. Participants' Perception of Skills and take on learning professional skills

Hari (name changed) is 30 years old Nepalese citizen, who moved to the UK to study Bachelors of Business Studies in 2008. After studying for two years, his college was acclaimed to be a fake institutions, and eventually, it was shut down by the UK Government. After losing around 9000 pounds in tuition fees, he was embarrassed to be labeled as a college dropout and felt guilty to return home empty-handed. The financial loss, poor conditions of living and lack of support from the UK government compelled him to work illegally. His focus diverted from studying to earning money. Since he was fluent in English, he worked in the UK for two more years, and then moved to Germany in search of opportunities to save money to send home. Unfortunately, his illegal status allowed him to earn minimum wage, which was only enough for his survival in Berlin. In 2014, he and some of his friends learnt about the provision of getting permanent residency in Portugal. He travelled via illegal routes and arrived in Lisbon after 24 hours of journey. Working in Lisbon was difficult for him because of the language. He could speak fluent English, but learning Portuguese was a new challenge. In order to get started in processing his temporary residency, he moved to remote areas of Portugal, where labor demand was high. He applied for jobs where there were lot of immigrants who could speak English or jobs dominated by Nepalese immigrants. After working as a "Orange picker" for couple of years, he started learning Portuguese from his local friends in order to move from agricultural jobs to hotel industry. Joining Portuguese language center was burden an extra financial burden. He took cooking and hospitality trainings from his fellow Nepalese immigrants to work in restaurants. As working in restaurants could provide him a proper document to show his tax paying records, he has started learning hotel management from his fellow immigrants who had been managing and operating for a long time. In the long run, he would like to open his own bar with pool tables especially to attract tourists with whom he can communication in English or Portuguese in Lisbon.

- Story No. 2, Hari (name changed), age 30

Unfortunately, Hari's experience is common among many Nepalese migrants who have migrated to Europe for higher education as their sole purpose. The tragedy of losing all of his money and the feeling of inferior-complex have further marginalized him in the foreign labor market. His perception of his own skill is tied to his failure of dropping out of the higher education. In other words, he considers himself as a worker who can work across different sectors. However, he uses his English-speaking ability to find jobs in the UK as well as in Portugal. Alongside, his physical capacity to work in a labor-intensive industry such as agriculture and hotel industries makes him more competent amongst other immigrants. It is also clear that he took Portuguese lessons from his new friends, and his language skills have improved over time. Moreover, he does acknowledge the importance of learning the common language in order to navigate in the labor market. However, he does not acknowledge that there are free classes on Language training organized by the European Commission

not only for arriving migrants as well as for migrants staying in the country for a fair amount of time. His is afraid to use his knowledge gained from two years of Bachelor degree because he perceives himself as a college dropout. Learning technical skills and utilizing his labor seemed comfortable for him to earn money as well as move to places for jobs. Nevertheless, his take on acquiring hotel and restaurant management skills reflects his ability to learn and initiate entrepreneurship. This demonstrates his ability to communicate with people, his methods of utilizing the benefit of knowing English and his motives for working with a larger community rather than confining himself within Nepalese group. Comparing the anecdote with the inclusive definition of Skills from Table 6, the participants possess more of the functional or transferable skills as he is able to communicate in the service industries such.

Similarly, participants varied in skills and education attainments. One of the participants expressed her experience about working in a beauty salon especially targeted for Nepalese customers. She opened a beauty salon near the Lisbon city center for Nepalese women. When asked about her specific target group, she mentions:

> "I took training in beauty care in Nepal before coming to Portugal. I knew beauty care is a well-paying job in Europe, so I took three months course and even have a certificate. In Portugal, I have opened beauty parlour in Lisbon city centre. Although it is not a big parlour, I have managed to get customers who are loyal and like my work. Most of my customers are Nepalese women, who are working or studying in Lisbon. I also have some Portuguese customers. It was difficult to communicate with them before because of my poor English and Portuguese, but now I have learnt few words and I actually know what kind of service they want. Also because, they come often so I know their demands as wells."

- Story No. 2 , Sarita (name changed), Age 29

Sarita skillset is very similar to the definition of described in Adaptive or Self-Management Skills. She is aware the job demand of the foreign market. She also have a courage and capacity to open her own business in the competitive beauty industry. She acquired trainings in beauty care specially to work in Lisbon. Furthermore, her services could be a quality work, for which both Nepalese and Portuguese women seek often. Three months training in beauty salon have provided her a long-term employment opportunity. Comparing to the definition of Self-management skills of management of

oneself in an authority or a new space, Sarita possessed ability to create her own business and provide services in the new environment.

The perception of own skills was a tricky because Sarita perceive herself as a low-skilled migrant irrespective of her previous background in university education and vocational trainings in beauty care. Sarita was a student in a Nepali government university before she migrated to Portugal. She visited Portugal in tourist visa and overstayed to do her own business and earn money. When asked how does she see her skills in Portuguese labour market, she responds:

> "I studied in Nepali government school, therefore, my English is very weak. When I first came here, I felt like an alien. I did BSc [Bachelor in Science] in Nepal, but due to the ethnic and political conflict, I could not complete my study. I have basic knowledge in Science, but here I don't have to use it because I do not know where to use it. I came to Portugal with a training in beauty care, and besides, that I did not know the language, the market or the people. I felt like a scared child. If I had known the language, I could be more confident to open my business, learn Portuguese techniques and invite all people, not only Nepalese. I do not know the language yet, but I have made friends around and used my beauty care skills in doing my own business. I believe that if you can provide a quality service, you can work anywhere".

Like Hari's story, the importance of language was perceived as the utmost skills to work in a foreign country. Sarita's perception of her BSc course comes under the notion of underutilization of her skills. The theory of underutilization or skill mismatch suggests that workers cannot find jobs related to their education possess or they do not have information about the jobs compatible to their skills and knowledge (Green & McIntosh, 2009). Similar is the case with Sarita. She acknowledges that her knowledge has not been used in the Portuguese labor market. However, her skills in Science field may not be highly respected due to incomplete formal qualification or lack of practice. Such a notion resembles Green and McIntosh (2009) notion 'heterogenous worker' where the actual skills are less effective in spite of having similar qualification provided in the host country. Sarita's perception of skills might be limited to her inability to perform a job in the Science discipline, but her strategy in using her vocational training to create a business is worth noting. The 'lived experience' as a business owner in the capital of Portugal reflect her active participation in the society of the host country.

Another unique story of Ishwar resembles skills rooted in formal education and technical training received in the past. Mr. Ishwar was a police office in Nepal before he moved to Portugal. He

is 43 years old, who migrated through illegal sea routes to Italy and then to Portugal in search of a secure future for his children. He spent total of 12 years in Portugal, and finally got the Portuguese citizenship. When inquired about his journey from Nepal to Portugal and about the process of the receiving the Portuguese citizenship, he replies:

> "I was a police officer with a rank equivalent to sergeant. I joined the police force when I was twenty years old. When I heard I can receive European citizenship by working in Europe, I left my job and migrated to Italy. I worked there in few hotels as a security guard. Since I was experience in patrolling, observing or maintaining order among people, I was accepted at most jobs related to security. After two years of my stay in Italy, I moved to Portugal because working here was more demanded. As I learnt the language, I immediately got jobs as a security guards in hotels and business centre. Although, I had continuous jobs for year, getting permanent residence was not an easy process. Sometimes, the owners would make mistakes in my tax documents, and sometimes I could not maintain the insurance in the security system. Regardless of all the trouble, I kept on working as a agent of law enforcement. With years of experience, I was even hired as a security guard in one of the banks in Lisbon. After 10 years, I have now received Portuguese citizenship. I am currently working in the UK as a security guard and staying with my family altogether."

- Story No.3, Ishwar, age 43

Analysing the story of Ishwar, he has a specific work content skill. His training as a police officer has helped him to get his work-related job in abroad. In other words, the duration of working years and experience have made him a competitive labour in Portugal. Ishwar not only had the cognitive skills but also possessed technical knowledge in his field of work. Furthermore, the position, duties and value of police officer is recognized internationally. Having the detailed knowledge in the field gave him opportunity to carrying out similar jobs in Portugal. Such experience aced his access to on-the-job trainings, and hence, he could easily integrate into the Portuguese market for a long period of time. His migration to the UK also symbolizes his "pre-arrival" job experience for the British labour market. The strategies of learning the language, utilizing previous experiences in similar work, and working for similar positions in diverse companies made the integration process more successful. Furthermore, he perceived his skills as a "demand" skill, which is a form of self-assessment of skill as well as knowing the job requirement.

Table 8: Summary of the information on education attainments, language skills, perception of skills, occupation and strategies adapted by all 10 participants.

S.No	Participants	Education Attainments	English Skills	Portuguese Skills	Perception of own Skill	Occupation in Portugal	Strategies Adapted	Skills
1.	Hari	Upper secondary	Low	Low	Low-skilled	Works in a restaurant and plans to open own restaurant business in future	Gained trainings from co-workers	Transferable skill
2.	Sarita	Post secondary non-tertiary	Low	Low	Semi-skilled	Opened her own beauty salon	Practicalized vocational training	Self-management skill
3.	Ishwar	Upper secondary	Low	Medium	Semi-skilled	Became a security guard	Learnt Portuguese language	Work content skill
4.	Gyandev	Short cycle tertiary education in mobile repairing	Low	Medium	Semi-skilled	Works in a mobile shop as a salesperson	Worked in the same field	Work content skill
5.	Laxmi	Upper Secondary	Low	Medium	Semi-skilled	Worked in a Nepali restaurant as a waiter, and now she manages the accounts	Gained trainings from co-workers	Self-management skill
6.	Navraj	Bachelor (Bachelor in Businesss Studies)	Medium	Medium	Semi-skilled	Manages and operates Hair Salon in Lisbon city centre	Practicalized vocational training	Work Content skill
7.	Maya Devi	Upper secondary	Low	Low	Low-skilled	Works in a Nepali restaurant as a chef	Worked with her ethnic group	Transferable Skill
8.	Rima	Short-cycle tertiary education in Nursing	Low	Medium	Semi-skilled	Work as a care-giver in a clinic	Worked in the same field as education	Work content skill
9.	Saraswati	Post secondary non-tertiary in Teaching	Low	Low	Low-skilled	Works in a restaurant as a waiter		Transferable skill
10.	Rakesh	Upper secondary	Low	Low	Low-skilled	Works in the agricultural field as a farmer	Worked for labour intensive jobs	Transferable skill

Source: Interview Data

Note: The names of the participants are changed for the animosity.

3. Analysis of the participants' response

When thinking about the range of skills and types of works, some of the low-skilled workers perceived themselves in the category of "medium-skill" level, and vice versa. It is because the language skills play a vital role in skill evaluation. Those participants with good knowledge of Portuguese language considered themselves as a "medium-skill" worker irrespective of their previous level of education attainments. Similarly, participants who did not suffer the burden of skill mismatch also perceive themselves as medium-skill labour in spite of have low proficiency in English language. Above all, learning Portuguese language gave them confident to run their own business with vocational trainings learnt in Nepal or with their peers in Portugal. Unfortunately, participants complained that vocational training in hospitality, healthcare or beauty care was very expensive in Portugal, and hence, it took them longer time to run their business or do jobs as they had predicted. Furthermore, the comparison of migrants' strategies with the University of Washington definition of skills complemented the thematic analysis of the research. For instance, migrants were found challenging the standard definition of skills used in the European labor market; and their participation in learning Portuguese language through informal links highlighted their strategies in enhancing prospects of future jobs. Alongside all of the participants reveal that they tend to stay longer and are mostly ready to accumulate skills needed in the Portuguese labour market.

Surprisingly, the integration policy executed by the European Commission did not contribute to skill accumulation as predicted. The Pre-departure/pre-arrival programmes were specifically targeted to refugees. Low-skilled migrants from other than Syria, Afghanistan or South Sudan, had very limited accessibility in participating in such programmes. Especially, there are not any pre-departure programmes organized for Nepalese migrants in Nepal or even in any part of South Asia. Similarly, education and access to basic services are restricted for migrants with illegal status. As many of the low-skilled migrants had moved to Portugal through illegal routes, they could not receive such programmes for integration. The contradictory regulations between Portugal and the European Union marginalized migrants. Portugal accepted low-skilled migrants' application to residency irrespective of

the illegal status of the past. According to the Portuguese law, if a migrant pays the tax and has a social security insurance, he or she is eligible to apply for residence permit. Whereas, the European Union only qualifies legal low-skilled migrants for receiving the provision of permanent residency. With such conflicting regulations within the European member states, most of the low-skilled migrants were left behind without any hope for integration or jobs in the EU market.

The research of understanding migrants' perception of skills has bigger impact in designing an effective integration process. Since the integration policy and programmes are designed to combat labour shortage and skill mismatch, it is crucial to note migrants' opinions. For instance, most of the participants of this research reveal that language skills were very necessary for them to do any sort of jobs. Hence, if the integration programmes promote more language centers not only near the refugee camps, but also in the cities, all migrants could have benefitted. The benefit will have direct effect on the economy of the country. Similarly, migrants' perception of skills also reflected their take on jobs that matched their vocational trainings. The inclusion of programmes with symmetric information was also seen very crucial for low-skilled migrants to choose job opportunities that escalated their skill in a short period of time.

Chapter Six | Conclusion

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Research with low-skilled migrants is important because it lead to integration of jobs and skills. The in-depth research with 10 low-skilled migrants from Nepal reflected the thematic analysis as mentioned in Chapter One. The low-skilled migrants challenged the standardized definition of skill, participated in skill accumulation through informal channels and planned long-term actions to thrive in the competitive labour market.

Chapter Two reflected upon the number of low-skilled migrants coming to Portugal. Since the introduction of citizenship law in 2016, Portugal became a hub for low-skilled migrants to work and naturalized their status. Unlike other European countries, Portugal has a high demand for migrants and also gives migrants a unique opportunity to work in various sectors. The government of Portugal initiated programmes to fulfil the bottleneck vacancies, for which migrants have seen Portugal as a secure place to work for longer period of time. The inflow of high number of Nepalese low-skilled migrants is a new phenomenon, and it continues to be the centre of Europe for Nepalese migrants who seek permanent residency and secure work life.

Chapter Three highlights the skill measurement proxies and the literature on skill mismatch. The ISCED is regarded as the standard measure for skill through education attainment. However, several authors and international organization derived other measures, such as, occupation, years of education, self-assessment and job requirement. The diverse measurement of skills expands the definition of skills and its importance in evaluating migrants "lived experience". However, most of the research target "high-skill" as an ideal category to influence integration or economy of the country. Such notion is challenged when the total labour force of low-skilled migrant is significantly higher than the skilled-migrants to effect the country's economy and productivity.

Chapter Five is the most important part of the dissertation, which shows participants' perception of their skills and their strategies used for navigating in the Portuguese labour market. The

perception of skills varied amongst participants of different educational background, gender and work experience. Most of the participants who received language trainings in Portugal considered themselves as semi-skilled workers for the Portuguese labour force. However, almost half of the participants still struggle to accumulate skills because of inaccessibility of integration programmes. The integration programmes are mostly targeted for refugees, and hence, limiting the chances for low-skilled migrants.

Finally, chapter five analysed the low-skilled migrants' "lived experience" in Portugal. The dissertation analysed migrants 'perception of their skills, existing integration programmes and the strategies and options choose by low-skilled migrants in accumulating skills in Portuguese labour Market. The case study of Nepalese migrants provided insights on how the integration programmes are not universal, and how their experience differs than refuges while accessing the integration programmes. The dissertation contributes in understanding the importance of low-skilled migrants' voice in designing integration policies and programmes in order to avoid the risk of skill mismatch. Importantly, the standardized skill measurement proxies were incomparable with the realities, where migrants often possessed transferable skills, self-content skills or self-management skill irrespective of their level of formal education qualification.

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LOW-SKILLED IMMIGRANTS AND SKILL ACCUMULATION IN EUROPEAN LABOR MARKET

Case Study: Nepalese low-skilled immigrants in the skill competitive market of Portugal, 31.08.2017

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1. Problem specification

Every year thousands of non-EU nationals arrive to establish a residence in one of the member states of the European Union. The number of arrivals are higher in the developed member states; or in other words, the "destination" countries. Only in 2015, more than 2.4 million immigrated to settle down in countries with stable economies such as Germany, the United Kingdom and France (Eurostat, 2017). Similarly, the Mediterranean region experienced a huge influx of immigrants seeking refuge after the 2008 economic crisis and war in Syria. Every year thousands of immigrants cross the Mediterranean to enter Europe. The sea arrival counted for more than 121,735 sea arrivals in 2017 (UNHCR, 2017). The number of incoming immigrants have decreased to less than a million since 2014, however, many member states are facing hard time in accommodating migrants into existing labour market. By 2017, more than 21 millions of non-EU immigrants are in Europe, and out of which 79.2% (aged 15 to 64) do not have more than 12 years of formal education (Eurostat, 2017; International Organization for Migration, 2012). With huge and sudden inflow of low-skilled immigrants, it is necessary to understand how the European countries are changing their existing policies to provide economic opportunities to immigrants who possess lower education attainments, have minimal work experience in the European job market and do not speak the common language.

2. Focus of the MA thesis

This paper is examining the economic prospect of low-skilled immigrants in Europe. An abundant of research show a significant lower rate of economic return and higher unemployment rate among foreign-born low-skilled labors (Enchautegui, 1998; Friedberg, 2000; Capps et al., 2003). On the contrary, there are many success stories of increasing economies when low-skilled immigrants are grouped together to represent the whole economy. Barry R. Chiswick discussed that immigrants' earnings exceed than the income of natives after 10 to 15 years of experience in the host country labour market (1998). Similarly, countries that provide support for employment and education have seen a trajectory in immigrants' income (Anderson, 2015). In case of Europe, there are number of changes brought into the immigration, education and employment policies to accommodate new immigrants into the labour market.

3. Literature Review

It is necessary to notice that there are multiple factors that affect the economic prospect of low-skilled migrants in Europe. The dominant literature on integration policies have been focusing in legal minimum wages and inclusive employment regulations to improve employability of low-skilled (Oesch, 2010; Ruhs and Anderson, 2010). Several studies also focused on migrants' country of origin and their previous knowledge as a determinant for low-skilled immigrants to find jobs in the host country (Duleep and Dowhan, 2008). Henceforth, it is not assertion that only one factor affects the economic prospects of low-skilled migrants in the foreign-lands.

Nonetheless, the domain of migration studies recently shifted in understanding the skill level of newly arriving immigrants, and finding ways to accelerate immigrants' economic growth. The current literature highlight OECD countries that introduced skill-building programs have

more chances to proliferate economic growth potential of low-skilled migrants (Muysken, Vallizadeh and Ziesemer, 2012). Additionally, the European Commission adopted an Action plan to integrate third-country nationals through skill-building programs and vocational trainings for employability (2016). For instance, countries like the UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Spain, Czech Republic and others are executing employer-provided trainings and language course to equip low-skilled immigrants and bridge the gap in occupational labour shortages (ibid). The new literature and country initiative programs have drawn attention towards skill-building policies as a proven strategy to scale up the economic opportunities of low-skilled immigrants.

Indeed, multiple countries in the European Union have adapted policies that provide opportunities to scale up the skill level of lower skilled immigrants. In Germany, pre-departure language courses are conducted for low-skilled potential migrants (Sussmuth, 2009). In Spain, integration policies support young migrants to perform better in problem solving, reading and mathematics in schools (Helping Immigrant student, 2015). Recently Portugal has become a thriving place for migrants when it introduced a new nationality law on 17 April 2016. The new nationality law would allow immigrants to acquire citizenship within 6 years of resident in the country (SEF Immigration and Border Service, 2006). With the law on acquiring citizenship, the immigrants, irrespective of legal status and skill-level, are prone to move to Portugal to naturalized their migration status and seek employment. Other member states, such as Germany, France, Denmark and others require at least five years of stay to receive temporary residence (Sussmuth, 2009). However, the new citizenship law in Portugal have turned the norm upside down by allowing low-skilled migrants to receive direct permanent resident in six years. Nevertheless, the question on how the new citizenship law is more beneficial for Portugal's economy is yet to be answered. Above all, it is more interesting to find whether low-skilled migrants are involved in activities that build their skills in these six years.

4.   Case Study: Portugal

The citizenship regime plays a vital role in understanding low-skilled migrants' motives towards higher education and trainings related to high-skilled jobs. Many member states (e.g. Germany, France, Italy etc.) believe that low-skilled migrants are not well "qualified" to be the resident of the European Union, and hence, only highly-skilled immigrants are offered permanent stay (Sussmuth, 2009). With the new law of on long term residence, Portugal have made a great progress in targeting specific employment situations (Migration Integration Policy Index, 2017). Since 1980s, Portugal has become a migrant receiving state, hosting people from African continents and more recently from Brazil and the Balkans (Fonseca, Caldeira and Alina, 2002). In order to tackle the prevalence of low-skilled migrants coming from African nations, Brazil and Eastern Europe, higher education and training in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been emphasized in Portuguese labour market (European Commission, 2014). Following the Action Plan of the European Commission, the Portuguese government initiated integration activities such as on-job training, language courses and higher education to fill the bottleneck vacancies in ICT, administrative and support services and electronics and system analysis (ibid).

Although there exist policies that affect the skill level of migrants in cities of Portugal to fulfil skilled occupations, it is not guarantee that the migrants are willing and/or have access to these

opportunities. Research and recent programs in Europe Union have encouraged immigrants' participation in higher education and on-job trainings that affect the growth of lower-skilled migrants to work in competitive occupations. However, there exists examples newly EU member states where immigrants are less likely to access job-related trainings comparative to natives (Barrett et al., 2012). The disadvantage of receiving training have lowered employment prospect as well as have lower chances to be promoted within firms than the natives (ibid). Hence, it is important to know whether the immigrants are the part of skill upgrade activities that intervene in the labour market to transition the low-skill to medium or higher skill. That is why, the research question comes into play:

How do low-skilled migrants accumulate new skills for better economic prospects in Portugal?

5. Explaining the research question

In the research question, the "new skill" is dependent variable because skill accumulation does not stand alone and it can change depending on various factors and variables. However, the "low-skilled migrants" are independent variable because it is fixed irrespective of types of jobs available in the labor market.

5.1 Defining dependent and independent variable:

It is a challenge to define the skill level. Depending on the years of education level and income of the immigrants, their skill level is determined. Yet, is the imperfect because there are cases where low-skilled migrants earn higher wages, and highly educated labor is working in jobs that pay low wages. Additionally, there are abundant literature and empirical research showcasing skills mismatch and job polarization especially in Europe after the migrant crisis (Sparreboom and Tarvid, 2016; International Labour Organization, 2014). Similarly, years of schooling is an imperfect proxy to measure the skill level of a person. However, as the thesis expands there will be clearer structured on how to define the dependent and independent variables.

5.2 Correlation of Variables:

It is important to notice that the dependent variable and independent variable do not have causal claims, but they are correlated. Because the skills of a person have wide range of influence that changes overtime with experiences and education. Other factors such as informal education, sports, and family grooming also affect the relationship between the variables. Similarly, skill can be compared overtime, across demographic groups and across countries (Benton, Fratzke and Sumption, 2014). Since the low-skill workers strongly corresponds to activities that can scale up their knowledge for obtaining high-qualified jobs, it can be assumed that there exists some correlation between the dependent and independent variable.

6. Operationalization

In this research paper, low-skilled immigrants are defined as third-country nationals that lack competency-based education and/or have completed less than 12 years of school education. Research has shown that higher education serves as a channel to access well-paid jobs as well as to makes it easier to navigate in chaning job market (Arrow 1973; Blackburn, Bloom and

Freeman 1990). In the history of labour market literature, education is regarded as a main determinant to divide skilled labour from low skilled. Especially, in Europe, the low-skilled immigrants are categorized via the educational attainments, and defined as those with pre-primary and lower secondary education (ISCED 0-2) (International Organization for Migration, 2012). The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) is a variable approved by UNESCO to classify level and field of education. The number '0-2' scale from pre-primary education, primary education and to the lower secondary education (Eurostat, 2011).

It is also necessary to understand what types of activities and policies affect the skills of low-skilled immigrants in Portugal. The activities involve understanding and evaluating Portuguese government investments on education, on-job trainings and overall labor market integration programs for migrants. It is to assess Portuguese government programs on professional placements for migrants, higher education programs, ICT trainings, and language programs that have been active since the past ten years.

7.   Low-skilled migrants in Europe

The low-skilled immigrants compose the largest immigrant population in the European counties (International Organization for Migration, 2012). From 2008, the non-EU nationals of low-skilled form 12.2 present of the total workers in the European Union (Eurostat, 2008). At present, the number of low-skilled migrants have tremendously increased. With more than 20.7 million immigrants, the low-skilled immigrants account more than 79.2 of all non-EU nationals between 15 to 64 years (International Organization for Migration, 2012). In other words, out of four migrants, three are of low or medium skilled immigrants.

While the number of low-skilled immigrant is increasing, women migrant is in the rise. Since the beginning of human movement as migrants, men have been the dominant gender low-skilled labor force. Although the gender employment gap is shirking, women still have lower employment rate in any sector irrespective of their skill level. According to 2017 report on equality between women and men in the EU, less than half of migrant women population, that is 46.4%, is involved in employment. Women face barriers to access the labor market due to factors associated with domestic responsibilities and low educational attainments (European Commission, 2016). In addition, there is a significant gender gap as women are not in employment, education or training (NEET). Accordingly, low-skilled women immigrants have lower wages and employment prospects are in jeopardy. Henceforth, the research thesis will also take low-skilled woman immigrants to investigate whether gender play a role in accumulating new skills in the foreign lands.

8.   Status of low-skilled labour

According to the UNHCR, large proportion of low-skilled immigrants (both men and women) have entered Europe illegally. Even though the Europe Union have made changes in making a comprehensive European immigration policy, illegal immigration remains high. Since the legal approach to enter the country does not guarantee immigration, about 173,450 immigrants enter illegally to the European Union via the Mediterranean region (Desperate Journey 2017).

As the Mediterranean becomes one of the frequently used channel to crossing Europe, it also become the hub for low-skilled immigrants. Italy and Spain have the highest number (487,652 and 415,693 respectively) of low-skilled immigrants in the labour force. Similarly, above-average share of low-skilled migrants work in Portugal, Greece, Italy and Spain. Moreover, their employment in the Mediterranean is irregular and huge population of immigrants join the informal labour market eventually hindering their prospect of gaining skills and employability.

9.   Methodology

My research is divided into two phases of qualitative analysis conducted via interviews and human stories. The first phase is to investigate educational attainments, trainings received and expertise of the potential migrants to Europe, and Portugal. Identifying various types of daily performance such as menial or repetitive tasks would categorize the potential migrants into low-skilled labor force. The preliminary study involves interviewing migrants, migrants' family and manpower companies to understand whether the people improve their skill set in Nepal. In addition, In addition, observing family conditions would explore the rationality behind migration especially to Portugal than other European countries. At the same time, the migrants are enquired why they prefer Portugal and their journey to understand whether they choose illegal or legal mobility. For instance, interviews from the potential migrants reflect their intention to move to Portugal depend upon their income level at Nepal. Migrants from lower-income families saw Portugal as an "easy" member state to seek residence permit. They were more concerned in earning euros and sending it back to Nepal to support family back home. However, potential migrants from higher-income families thought of joining a university after they earned enough to pay the tuition fees (Interviews data). Hence, the first stage of interviews have guided the research on analyzing the motivation of migrants, who are proactively looking for opportunities to gain skills. Later, the interviews residing in Portugal could have different life-experience then predicted while moving at the first place.

The second study is investigating migrants' skill conditions in Portugal. The interviews about their education attainments and formal trainings would allow me to compare their labor conditions after migration. The research will emphasize on whether the low-skilled labors have been able to shift to high-skilled jobs at least after 5 years of their stay. Research done by Theodore W. Schultz exemplifies that skills grow with at least 3.5 years of investment in the human capital (1961). Nevertheless, this research paper will take the longitudinal approach and interview on skills accumulation of immigrants who have recently arrived, and other who have been staying in Portugal up to 10 years. Although the survey across demographic groups does not capture a panel study, however it involves repeated observation of the same independent variable (that is low-skilled immigrants).

9.1. Case Study:
Out-migration has become a problem for most of the developing countries, whereas in Portugal, in-migration of people from developing countries is tackling demographic problems resulting to ageing population. Out of many developing countries, Nepal has been one of the least developed country that push a million of young people to migrate abroad annually. The empirical research presented that Nepal's deteriorating economic and political conditions trigger out-migration (Hamada and Tiwari, 2012). Scholars highlighted the benefits of outmigration when remittances accounted 31.8% of GDP during civil conflicts (The World Bank 2016). On the other hand, experts in labor studies criticized out-migration as open door

to labor exploitation and human trafficking (Joshi, Simkhada and Prescott, 2011). The existing literature offers insights on determinants of immigration; barriers to immigration; economic and social consequences, processes and volume of migration (Bohra-Mishra 2013). However, this master thesis will build on understanding skill accumulation of low-skilled Nepalese migrants in Europe, especially Portugal. This will be an addition to the existing literature of international migration in South Asia, with a focus on skills generation in Portugal.

2.   Methods:

There are three best instruments to understand and analyze the growing skills of low-skilled migrants. Each of the instrument mentioned below will provide potential sample for other instrument.

9.2.a. Surveys:

It is relevant especially when immigrants background details affect the skill-level both in Nepal and Portugal. Survey will describe the characteristics of low-skilled immigrants, which will help in analyzing the correlation between the dependent and independent variable. Since the research is short-term, survey with low-skilled migrants are time-efficient. Most importantly, with the correct questions, survey will reveal candid answers to get the accurate data. At least 30 low-skilled immigrants will be surveyed to choose 15 migrants who are best fit for having in-depth interview. Because the Nepalese low-skilled labors work in the field outside the capital city of Portugal, the survey sample are chosen via snow-balling sampling and recommendations from manpower agencies.

9.2.b. Interviews:

As one of the good practices in conducting and reporting, interviews is conducted to understand immigrants' motives in building their skills. Through interviews, it is easier to set a standard at which the results are evaluated. For instance, interviews will show whether it is the migrants who do not feel having higher skills or it is the programs are the inaccessible to low-skilled migrants from Nepal. Moreover, interviews with both "experimental" and "control" group will elicit information for holistic understanding of the interviewee's situation and preferences. The open-ended questions are adapted from researchers and educators who suggests three basic approaches for conducting in-depth interviews: informal conversation, guided interview and the standardized open-ended interview (Patton, 1987; Blaxter, Hughes and Tight 2001).

9.2.c. Human Stories:

Narrative approaches are one of the proven strategy to collect relevant information in qualitative research (Sandelowski, 1991). This instrument will be used to understand whether the samples have built their skills through informal channels. It will reveal the extent to which the problem of not building skills is conditioned by empirical theories. The experiences as a story will unfold the patterns found across migrants with different age, work sector and education background. After analyzing in-depth interviews, approximately five immigrants are selected to understand experiences of time, order and change that affects migrant's prospect of accumulating skills in Portuguese society.

10. Measuring the skill accumulation

The skill accumulation is measured by the amount of tangible (physical assets) and intangible resources (knowledge possessed) to determine the advancement in skill level after 5 years of residence.

10.1 Coding the skills:

As mentioned above, to fulfill the bottleneck vacancies Portugal have introduced ICT trainings to migrants. Although it is not certain that low-skilled migrants have access to these ICT trainings, measuring their ICT level will help to identify the level of skill accumulation after coming to Portugal. One way to measure and code their ICT skill is to assess their ICT skills of those who might have trained in ICT. Through an online portal Education and Skills Online Assessment introduced by OECD, the newly accumulated skill in ICT could be measure. The skill accumulation measure skills in numeracy and problem solving in ICT. For education level and trainings, the skills could be coded with The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

Table 1: ISCED data collection method on migrants' education attainments (International Organization for Migration, 2012).

Description	ISCED Code
Low-skilled workers as those with pre-primary and lower secondary education	0-2
Semi skilled – workers with the upper and post-secondary education	3-4
Highly skilled – as those with tertiary education	5-6

The skill accumulation from trainings are evaluated using the evaluation forms that are included during the survey and interview questions. Learning from trainings are gradual and informal, and hence, the skill obtained from trainings are evaluated using simple regression to show the correlation between trainings and skill accumulation. The data from the interviews will be used to show the relationship of trainings and skill level.

11. Thesis contribution to migration studies and policies

The thesis will develop a new perspective on the scholarship of migration studies by assessing the skill level, which is measured through higher education opportunities and on-job trainings. The literature on human capital and migration discusses a dominant theme of brain drain (out-migration as losing human capital) and brain gain – out-migration as incentives to accumulate skills (Di Maria and Stryszowski 2009). However, the analysis is called into question when migrants are limited to low-skilled occupations or they do not return to their source countries. Similarly, several institutional and policy frameworks for integration is introduced after the recent economic crisis. The changes in policies are introduced to ease the labor market conditions and increase the employment rate of the whole European Union (European Commission, 2017). The changes in policies comprise both legal and social integration of immigrants into the labor market. The changes include better opportunities for education attainments, trainings and health benefits. However, it is yet to find whether the migrants are aware about these services; whether they are motivated to attain skill-building services; and

whether they have access to the services provided at different phases of their lives. Through these MA research, factors of skills impartation such as education, company-sponsored trainings and government subsidized education are studied realities of low-skilled migrants and opportunities of skill expansion.

At the policy level, the research will supplement the government reports on education, income and life standards of low-skilled migrants in Europe. Since the data is not only collected to see the changes in skill level, but it also generates information on the economic prospect of low-skilled migrants in Portugal. The International Labour Organization (ILO) have initiated programs such as pre-departure trainings, Guest worker program and settlement support to newly arrived migrants. With the data about the migrants' current skill level and future economic prospect would complement ILO's research on tools for the governance and protection of migration works. For instance, one of the policy that ILO could adapt is supporting migrants to access the education opportunities irrespective of their legal status.

With the immigration escalating by a million per year, it is important to determine whether the changing European labor market policies are creating skillful laborers. The analysis of the research would bring a new dimension to the existing immigration policies by highlighting the current economic status and economic prospect of low-skilled immigrants in the European market policies. The MA research would allow the European Commission to indulge on operational initiative on skill-building migration. The thesis would recommend the framework that have been affecting the skill-level of migrant workers. The research on third-country nationals' skill and their intention towards skill-building activities would open a door for the European Commission to create a realistic integration of immigrations.

12.   Year plan for thesis continuation

The year plan is adapted to make a holistic approach on studying immigrants' skill level, and writing an well-researched thesis for policy recommendation in Portugal as well as in Nepal.

Table 2: Work plan of developing the MA thesis

Months	Topics covered	Deliverables
September 2017	Methodology	Producing a concrete methodology that lay out the sample size, sample frame and the tools used to collect the data.
October 2017	Literature Review	Reading more materials on
November 2017	Coding	Formulate the codes to analyze the data collected from interviews
December 2017	Interviews	Conducting the interviews with low-skilled migrants in Portugal
January 2017	Translate and Transcribe	Transcribing interviews to select quotes and analyze patterns found in interviews and human stories

February 2017	First draft – Abstract, Introduction and Methodology	Specifying the problem; providing sufficient background information; adding to the previous knowledge that the thesis is building; summarizing the main results; and explaining the scope of the MA thesis
March 2017	Results found and Discussion	Re-editing the methodology for everyone to understand and conduct the interviews if need be. Stating the results that is analyzed using qualitative tool also the regression analysis done for coding trainings.
April 2017	Conclusion and Recommendations	
May 2017	Editing	Editing the content of the thesis as well as copy editing
June 2017	Editing and Submitting	Consulting the superviosors for final check and submitting the thesis report
July 2017	(Publishing)	Finding journal website and conferences to publish the thesis
September 2018	Dissertation	Defending the thesis, and making it as an academic degree that present the research work and findings

13. Conclusion

The thesis report has presented the research topic, research question and the methodology. The research is qualitative based on the interviews of the immigrant workers in Portugal. The immigrants will be interviewed about their education attainments, trainings received at the work place, and their income status. . If a migrant possesses less than 12 years of education and their current income level is lower than 500 euros per month, they are considered as low-skilled. The sample immigrants are the resident in Portugal for at least 5 years to evaluate their transition in from low-skill to higher, if experienced. The information will be evaluated using OECD code to evaluate the education level of the migrations. Trainings and other activities are analyzed through in-depth interviews and human stories. All the information are recorded and transcribed in English for future use. Finally, the report will be used as base to develop full thesis with extensive research and data.

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