

From one extreme to another

By Raf Berra

Rajita Shrestha hugged her mum for the last time, feeling sad and excited. Her flight was called, and she gave her mum a final squeeze. Tears welled in her eyes as she climbed up the stairs to the plane. She looked over her shoulder and waved goodbye to her mum. She walked down the aisle and sat in her designated seat, knowing that this flight would change her life forever.

Rajita, age 25, spent the first 18 years of her life in Nepal. Nepal is a wonderfully beautiful country, but it is extremely undeveloped and full to the brim with poverty, "It's a beautiful country in the sense that we've got a great scenery, we live in different mountains, but it's not as developed as it is here." When Rajita lived in Nepal only 80% of people had electricity.

In Nepal, only males are allowed to get an education, and all the females are expected to get married and look after the kids at home, "The girls in Nepal are not allowed to study, and even if they do they have to face many difficulties and struggles." However, Rajita's wonderful parents were very open minded, so when she asked her parents if she could get an education they did not say no, "My parents aren't that close minded, so when I said that I want to study, I want to go to school to make life easier for you guys, they didn't say no." However, school was set outdoors and was not even nearly as educative as our schools in Australia. Even though her parents did not say no to Rajita's life-changing proposal, it was a big struggle getting into school and she faced many difficulties.

Rajita migrated to Australia in 2015 which greatly changed her life. It impacted her life because in Australia you do not have to stress about getting food on the table unlike Nepal, "The life here is quite good compared to Nepal because there is hardly any electricity in Nepal and my parents didn't even see electricity when they were growing up, there wasn't any good drinking water, they didn't get to go to school and many other things." It felt quite strange living in Australia at the start for Rajita because she had migrated from Nepal where there are no skyscrapers, not a lot of lights, and next to no cars. It would be like living in Australia, then time travelling into an unknown future. Rajita studied nursing at a University in Sydney and had to pay \$13,000 dollars every 6 months. But because Rajita's family had already helped her out a lot, she did not want to bother them, so Rajita did lots of work as a cleaner and a housekeeper, "I've done a cleaners job, I've done housekeeping, I've done everything." Rajita had to work very hard and would always arrive at her apartment feeling colossally exhausted. But now that she's finished university and has a great job, everything is paying off. She also sends money back to her family in Nepal which helps them phenomenally.

A message we can all take from Rajita's story is to always be grateful, because no matter how hard you have it, someone else could have it 100 times worse. Also, hard work and dedication will reward you.

Even if you think otherwise, we are extremely lucky to be living in this beautiful country.

