SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND SOCIAL CHANGE:
ACCESS TO, AND INFLUENCE OF, COMMUNITY-BASED COLLECTIVE ACTION PROGRAMS IN NEPAL

by

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DEDICATION

For
Pratik, Prabir and Priya

*As you move ahead in life please keep in mind those who you do not see……
look for them in the corner of your hearts and mind.*

and

For all those who work towards a world of equality and justice.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation first examines of how ascribed statuses of caste influence individual participation in community-based organizations within a context that is marked by hierarchy and discrimination along these social identities. Second, it analyzes how this association changes over the 1996 to 2008 period in Western Chitwan Valley, Nepal. Finally, it examines the association between individuals' participation in community-based organizations and changes in their gender- and family-related attitudes within this rapidly changing, non-industrial context.

I begin by utilizing the frameworks of social stratification and social exclusion to examine how formal and informal institutions and practices work to disconnect groups and individuals from social relations, and create barriers that prevent them from being able to fully participate in activities which would be normal and accessible for other groups. Secondly, I expand on the framework of family modes of social organization to better understand how the introduction of new institutions, opportunities and contextual experiences such as community group participation influences changes in individual gender- and family-related attitudes in a relatively more egalitarian direction. I use long-term panel data from individual and household surveys to empirically test these theoretical models.

Data from the first wave of the Chitwan Valley Family Study shows that compared to the upper caste privileged groups, all other caste/ethnic groups have significantly lower rates of participation in community groups in Western Chitwan,

even though such programs aim at supporting socially- and economically- marginalized people. These associations are robust to adjustments for socio-demographic characteristics, household wealth, parental experiences and respondent's childhood exposure. Adjusting for respondents' educational attainment, however, explains the lower rates of participation by women. When I examine changes in the rates of participation over time, the results show that rates of participation of lower caste groups are no longer statistically different than those of the upper caste group. However, the caste/ethnic group that is most marginalized within the context of the Western Chitwan in particular, the Tarai Janajati or primarily Tharu people, continues to show lower rates of participation and less likelihood of joining groups over follow up. These longitudinal analyses show that over time, women have increased their participation in community-based organizations at greater rates than men have. Additionally, an examination of intersectional caste/ethnic and gender identities reveals important insights about how rates of participation differ based on distinctive social and cultural experiences.

In examining the effect of participation in community-based organizations on changes in individual attitudes, I examine a set of four attitudes that represent gendered relations in the context of Nepal in particular and South Asia - the timing of marriage for girls, re-marriage of young widows, the role expectations for daughters-in-law, and the role of men in household decision-making. I find that participation in community groups has a strong, highly significant and independent effect on changes in these attitudes towards being more egalitarian. Potential mechanisms that are likely to explain the effect of community group participation are also discussed.

Overall this dissertation contributes to the empirical testing and expansion of theoretical models of how an individual's social identity influences participation in community-based collective action. I show evidence that the hierarchical ordering of social discrimination has to be contextualized and an intersectional perspective helps in better understanding which group is most excluded with that context. Secondly, I also demonstrate the importance of expanding our understanding of the diversity of experiences that influence changes in gender- and family-related attitudes in non-industrial rural settings that are rapidly undergoing social changes.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The study of the causes and consequences of social inequality and hierarchy has been a core element of theory building and empirical investigation in the social sciences. Sociology in particular has provided insights into how inequalities based on race, gender, caste, ethnicity, class, religion and other dimensions are experienced differently across a variety of settings, often cumulating across an individual's life course and being transmitted across generations. While these factors contribute towards maintaining and reproducing inequalities, the dynamic nature of changes in the macro context have also led to changes in human behavior and attitudes that play an important part in influencing the structures and ideologies of the basis of inequalities.

Globally, many resources and efforts have been invested in understanding the causes of economic inequalities, and in putting in measures to reduce poverty. Yet the often overlapping nature of economic, social and political inequalities and marginalization of groups of people have made the efforts at poverty reduction, social equity and justice consistently challenging. In non-industrialized poor countries across Asia and Africa, new organizational structures have been created that use the approach of mobilizing individuals into various collectives or groups within communities to try to reduce poverty and inequality. These community-based organizations are widely used by government and non-government agencies as an entry point by livelihood improvement programs that aim at creating opportunities for poor and marginalized people to improve

their life conditions. Such programs offer organizational and technical knowledge, skills and inputs to a variety of local level collectives. These groups are ideally non-political, non-religious and are different from indigenous organizations within the specific locations.

The community-based approach of collective action for poverty reduction has been linked with concepts of cooperation, networking and civic engagement as a mechanism to address social, political and economic inequalities (Barkan et al. 1991; Lahiri-Dutt and Samanta 2006). Participating in community groups potentially provide opportunities for individuals to enhance their access to diverse resources, and increase their ability to expand social capital and form social networks (Putnam et al. 1993; Barber et al. 2001). A connection between collective action and social networks is also reflected in the sociological literature, with evidence pointing towards social ties increasing the likelihood of collective action especially when there is heterogeneity of resources and interest among the members and when the leadership has a strong, centralized organizing role (Oliver et al. 1985).

But the question is how does change occur at the micro level when individuals who have been historically facing social, economic and political exclusion at the macro, meso and micro levels are not even able to participate in the very programs which aim at creating opportunities for improving their life conditions? How do an individual's caste, ethnicity and gender influence their ability to participate in such programs?

The enduring nature of the caste system as an institution is evident by its persistence despite changing economic conditions, though in attenuated forms (Grusky and Ku 2008:27). With the advent of strategies for economic growth and social change

post World War II, especially in the former colonies, new assets and institutions have created new inequalities. In many countries these new assets have been just as unequally distributed as the old, such as access to modern education, health treatments, skills and knowledge required for a changing labor force, and even differential access to media. This is also true of caste based relationships, where caste hierarchies have been maintained and even strengthened at times by the new inequalities so that the introduction of seemingly basic human entitlements have amplified well known differences. The upper castes or 'the established' as in the case of India and Nepal, been politically and economically dominant, and have better access to the new experiences and monopolize those resources, limiting access of 'the outsiders' or the low caste and other marginalized ethnic groups (Elias and Scotson 1994). The intersection of the social status of caste with class, political position, and lifestyles entails that the condition of 'social exclusion' is not an exclusive category but can vary for the same individual or group based on different characteristics. Thus an 'established' within one context could very likely be the outsider in another context.

This study investigates two important gaps in this area. First, limited attention has been given to social and cultural factors that influence differential access to community-based programs (or 'community groups'), especially in relation to caste and ethnicity in the South Asia region. It is well documented that individuals and groups marginalized due to caste and ethnic differences and hierarchies have been subjected to unequal life opportunities and outcomes (World Bank 2006; Bennett et al. 2008). The first part of this study examines the relationship between marginalized caste and ethnic identities and their association with participating in community group programs. It then goes on to

examine how this effect has changed over time heralding changes in access to atleast one kind of resource. Secondly, studies of the consequences of participating in community group programs have examined effects related to women's empowerment, gender inequality, poverty, and reproductive health seeking behavior (Hashemi et al. 1996; MacIssac 1997; Schuler et al. 1997; Barber et al 2001). But little is known about the influence of such programs on changes in gender and family related attitudes, as well as the mechanisms through which such an association takes place. This advance is an important contribution in that it creates a foundational study for measuring changes in gender and family related attitudes and secondly it examines the importance of local and contextual experiences, in addition to education and labor force participation, in influencing changes in attitudes in a non-industrial context.

Longitudinal data from 1996 and 2008 from the Chitwan Valley in south central Nepal provides time varying contextual measurements and information about individual characteristics and experiences. Of the wealth of data available from the Chitwan Valley Family Study (CVFS), for this study, I utilize the individual interviews, individual life history calendars, household agriculture and consumption surveys, and neighborhood history calendars. In 1996, the CVFS selected 171 neighborhoods with an equal probability, systematic sample, where neighborhoods were defined as a geographic cluster of 5-15 households (Barber et al. 1997). The structured individual survey and the life history calendar components interviewed every resident between the ages of 15 and 59, eating/sleeping in the selected neighborhood for three or more of the past six months, or the spouse of an eligible respondent. Prospective data focused on only 151 neighborhoods thus the second wave of individual interviews conducted in 2008 are

available for 151 neighborhoods. The household agriculture and consumption surveys were conducted three times in 1996, 2001 and 2006. Neighborhood history calendars were collected twice in 1995 and 2006, and comprise data of retrospective measures of walking distance in minutes to the nearest service institutions such as schools, health services, bus stops, employment centers, cooperatives, mills, and temples. These data allows the use of discrete-time event history models with person years as a unit of analysis to examine the rates of participation in community groups between the two waves. Additionally it also provides an opportunity to examine the factors that influence changes in gender and family related attitudes over the period of the two waves, and in particular the influence of new experiences such as community group participation.

The second chapter of this dissertation contains the first set of analysis that seeks to establish the association between an individual's caste and ethnicity and their participation in community groups in 1996. I examine this association from the perspective of how formal and informal institutions and practices create multiple dimensions of exclusions for individuals from disadvantaged groups. I conduct multivariate logistic regression analysis to test for the effects of individual characteristics and apply nested models introducing measures for individual experiences such as educational attainment, labor force participation, travel experiences and exposure to media, to estimate the indirect effect of these intervening measures. The results show that after taking into consideration all measures of individual characteristics and experiences, the ascribed individual status of caste/ethnicity has a strong and independent effect on the likelihood of participation. Compared to the upper caste groups (Bahun, Chettri and Newar), being Dalit (lower caste) or a Hill Janajati (ethnicities from the hills) or a Tarai

Janajati (ethnicities from the plains) significantly lowered an individual's participation in community groups. But the significant differences in rates of participation between men and women, in general, were removed when comparing those with similar educational attainment.

The third chapter uses longitudinal data to refine the analysis in chapter two and also examines changes in the rates of participation from a gender, caste and ethnicity perspective. Using a sample of individuals who had not participated in community groups in 1996, nested discrete-time event history models are used to test likelihood of individuals to participate in community groups between 1997 and 2008, using person-years as the unit of exposure to the 'risk' of participation. I control for individual characteristics and experiences of educational attainment, labor force participation and travel exposure, all lagged by a year in order to assure that participation occurs chronologically after the events. The results show that in 2008, participation rates of lower caste Dalit individuals were no longer significantly different from those of the upper caste groups, but participation of the indigenous and highly marginalized Tarai Janajati people continued to be significantly lower. Another important change was related to the significantly higher rates of participation of women, which increased over time. Additionally results from interactions between caste/ethnic categories and females showed that though, overall individuals from the Hill Janajati category had significantly lower participation rates, women from this caste/ethnic group had positive and significantly higher rates of participation compared to men.

Chapter four of this dissertation examines a specific consequence of participation in community group programs; its influence on changes in gender and family related

attitudes. I apply theoretical insights from the framework of the family modes of social organization to examine how the experience of community group participation exposes individuals to new knowledge, ideas, gender roles and life aspirations which influences changes in their gender and family related attitudes. Results show that the experiences of community group participation has a highly significant and independent effect on changing attitudes related to child marriage, young widow re-marriage, daughter-in-law obedience, and household level decision-making in a more egalitarian direction.

Overall, this dissertation demonstrates, firstly, that social exclusion based on hierarchical ascribed statuses of caste and ethnicity, with historical and ideological roots, can be enduring for some groups. This is particularly so, when hierarchies and inequalities can vary depending on the specific contexts. Additionally analysis from an intersectional perspective also provides insights that at first might be overlooked. Secondly, in non-industrialized contexts, more varied individual and contextual experiences have to be taken into consideration when trying to explain changes in individual level gendered attitudes, especially where there is low prevalence of factors such as educational attainment and labor force participation that have been known to influence gendered attitudes. These theoretical frameworks and analysis are discussed at length in the following chapters.

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CHAPTER 2

Who Participates? The 'Penalty' Of Caste on Participation in Local Level Collective Action Programs

Around the world, social identities such as race, gender, caste and ethnicity have been known to influence and shape life experiences, opportunities and behavior. Disparities in life outcomes related to the quality of life (Hughes and Thomas 1998), income and wealth (Greenman and Xie 2008), education (Stash and Hannum 2001; Buchmann and Hannum 2001), occupation (Hannum and Xie 1998), health (House 2002; Burgard 2002), and in political representation (Kenworthy and Malami 1999) occur in different contexts based on the economic, social, religious, political and ideological domination (Inglehart and Norris 2001) of some groups vis-a-vis others. Discrimination based on such social identities is most often deeply entrenched in societies and it continues to pose challenges for equitable economic growth, basic human rights and social justice in many communities around the world. This study examines the disparities based on ascribed social identities of caste and ethnicity in participation in local level collective action programs most of which aim specifically at improving life conditions of poor and marginalized groups of people. By doing so, I provide important foundational evidence of discrimination of marginalized castes and ethnic groups in community-based programs within a rural, non-industrial context.

This study draws on the theoretical framework of social exclusion which focuses on how formal and informal institutions and practices work in disconnecting groups and

individuals from social relations, and create barriers for them in their ability to fully participate in the activities which would be normal and accessible for other groups in the same community (Silver 1995; Jordan 1995; Sen 2000; Power and Wilson 2000; Bennett 2008). The study examines a residual penalty of social exclusion due to one's caste and ethnic identity that overrides other individual characteristics and experiences that influence one's ability to participate in and to access social and economic capital through local collective action programs in poor communities. This is of critical importance since changes in poverty alleviation strategies globally, since the mid 1950s, have moved the focus towards increased decentralized decision making, good governance, and on basic human rights and social equity, to address some of the endemic problems related to exclusion of groups of people.

There is a gap in the existing literature in relation to empirical evidence that caste and ethnic identities are important markers in facilitating participation of groups of people in community level livelihood support programs. This is especially important in contexts where such identities are historically entrenched in the highly stratified social milieu, and where disparities and discriminatory practices against particular groups are 'common knowledge', driven by powerful political and economic forces. It is increasingly common to find national laws and macro level policies that aim to reduce the disparities in distribution and equitable access to resources. But very often there is limited empirical evidence of inequality in benefitting from community level programs, particularly in those very programs that seek to minimize such disparities due to limitations in data availability. This creates a serious gap in policy feedback, and in program formulation and implementation leading to uneven and unequal economic

growth and increasing inequality. This study is an attempt to address some of these gaps and create a foundation for such knowledge.

This study uses the context of a south-central region in Nepal to empirically investigate the effect of caste and ethnicity on rates of participation in community level collective action programs, or 'community groups'. In the context of the study area, the strategy of livelihood improvement through community group programs is a relatively recent phenomenon, thus the present study becomes an important opportunity to document foundational evidence despite the low levels of participation in community groups at the point in time when the first wave of the data were collected. The data come from a unique combination of individual and household level surveys, and life history data collected from men and women in Chitwan Valley in 1996 (Barber et al. 1997; Axinn et al. 1999). This combination of data makes it possible to take a life course approach to investigate the influence of childhood community level exposure, and the effect of parental experiences on the experiences, attitudes and behaviors of men and women. This helps to better understand the enduring and powerful influence of ideas and experiences, in particular, those which can potentially influence rates of participation of individuals in collective action, and in particular how their caste or ethnicity shapes these experiences and in this way influences their behavior.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study builds on the theoretical framework of social exclusion based on caste and ethnicity to examine the effect of caste and ethnicity on an individual's participation in community group programs. The framework focuses on how formal and informal institutions and practices work to disconnect groups and individuals from social relations,

and create barriers for them in their ability to fully participate in the activities which would be normal and accessible for other groups in the same community (Power and Wilson 2000; Bennett 2008). Social exclusion refers to both individuals and societies, signifying "disadvantage, alienation and lack of freedom" for certain groups relative to others (Gore 1996 in Bhalla and Lapeyere 1997:415). It reflects the cultural devaluation of people based on 'who they are' (or rather 'who they are *perceived* to be') as well as 'where they are' (Kabeer 2000; Kabeer 2006)[1]. Social exclusion based on ascribed identities of gender, caste and ethnicity initiates at birth and the barriers that it creates lead toward continuing experiences of discrimination and disparities in the ability to access opportunities and influence behavior in adulthood as well.

This study examines social exclusion in a specific social, cultural and regional context so it is useful to briefly describe the overall context of caste/ethnicity and of local level collective action in the form of community groups in locally based development programs. Following this, the paper first examines how individual experiences potentially influence participation in community group programs and secondly, how caste and ethnicity, affects opportunities and constraints that shape those influence individual experiences, to begin with.

The Caste System: Hierarchies, Disparities and Diversity

South Asia has been home to the caste system, a distinct, powerful, hierarchical social structure based on the notions of ritual and occupational purity and pollution, in which one's identity is ascribed at birth. Linked intrinsically to the Hindu religious texts, the Dharmashastras, composed between 600 and 200 BC, this system has been the key

[1] For additional definitions and perspectives on social exclusion refer to Sen (1992), Silver (1995) and Jordan (1996) and to Kabeer (2000) for the application of the concept to poor non-western countries since the mid 1990s.

principle for social organization and has proved to be an enduring institution, due to its ability to continually structure and maintain power relations among groups of people, benefitting those in esteemed positions.[2] Unlike that in India, the caste system in Nepal is a mix of both a ritualistic ordering of groups of individuals as well as a "socially created system of social stratification established and sanctioned by secular power" (Greenwold 1975:74). The caste system is believed to have been introduced in the region in the 14th century, prior to the establishment of the nation state of Nepal as it is known at present (ibid). In 1854 the system was legalized through the promulgation of the first National Code (*Muluki Ain*) by the Rana oligarchy. As a strategy to nationalize the diverse population, the caste system incorporated non-Hindu ethnic and indigenous social groups into a modified five tiered caste hierarchy: (i) the *tagadharis* (the wearers of the sacred thread), (ii) the *namasinya matwali* (non-enslaveable alcohol drinkers), (iii) the *masinya matwali* (the enslaveable alcohol drinkers), (iv) the impure but touchable castes (*pani chalne choi chito halnu naparne*), and (v) the impure and untouchable castes (*pani nachalne choi chito halnuparne*) (Höfer 1979). Socially, culturally and linguistically distinct ethnic and indigenous groups were subsumed within this structure based on their degree of similarity and differences with the cultural practices of the "upper caste" Nepali-speaking Hindus. Thus the distinct nature of the amalgamation of ideologies of ritual purity (and pollution) with that of the legal authority of those in political power

[2] The caste system based on the traditional ritual hierarchy is linked with the four *varnas*, the historical occupational classification of society, organized in terms of their relative ritual purity: the *Brahmans* (priests, teachers and scholars), the *Kshatriyas* (kings and warriors), the *Vaishyas* (traders and businessmen), and the *Shudra* (peasants, laborers and service providers). The fifth group, the 'untouchables' (occupational, low caste or *Dalit*) are technically outside of the *varna* on account of their ritually defiling occupations. Many castes and sub-castes (*jat*) emanate from the *varnas* (Béteille 1969; Dumont 1980; Ghurye 1996; Dahal et al. 2002)[2].

makes the system in Nepal unique, unlike in any other country (Greenwold 1975)[3]. Gellner et al. (1997), Pradhan (2002), Guneratne (2002) and others have discussed in varying depths, the acceptance and manipulation of cultural pluralism by the dominant upper caste Hindu ruling groups in Nepal for maintaining their political and economic stronghold. This hierarchical ordering provides an important rational for the processes of Hinduization of the non-Hindus as they assimilated within the caste system[4].

The 1962 Constitution and the new National Code of 1963 abolished legally sanctioned hierarchy and discrimination based on caste, ethnicity, and religion, though such practices continued in everyday life with impunity. With the restoration of democracy in 1990 and the declaration of Nepal as a multiethnic and multilingual state, there was a marked increase in public discourses and changes in legislation on exclusion and discrimination based on ascribed statuses. A ten year long Maoist insurgency culminated in 2007 with the declaration of a secular state, effectively removing the association between the "Hindu" nation and the dominant caste system. Lawoti (2005) argues that the political exclusion of gender, caste and ethnic groups was a major cause for the "genesis and growth" of the Maoist insurgency. The current social landscape of

[3] The link between caste and ethnicity in Nepal is made more complexity by the caste like hierarchies within ethnicities such as among the *Newars*, who have a highly segmented hierarchy which includes all caste categories from the priest to the 'untouchable' groups (Gellner and Quigley 1995). Additionally, the silence on the part of the first legal code about the status of people from the southern plains (the *Tarai* or *Madhes*) became instrumental in contributing to the regional marginalization of these groups of people (Gurung 2003).

[4] "Hinduization" is the more contemporary term used to emphasize the adoption of Hindu norms, values, practices and forms by the non-Hindu population. The concept is a derivation from M. N. Srinivas's (1966) introductory concept of inclusion/exclusion called "Sanskritization" a theoretical framework for caste mobilization which denotes mobilization within the system through the adoption of ritual values, norms and practices of upper caste Hindus, and rejection of attributes considered ritually polluting.

Nepal is thus distinguished by cultural diversity and complexity attested by the census of 2001 which recorded 102 different caste/ethnic groups (CBS 2002)[5].

Across South Asia, ongoing everyday life practices based on a history of socio-cultural hierarchy and patriarchy has left an enduring legacy of deep seated gender, caste and ethnic differences which perpetuates in the present 21st century. Despite fundamental structural and ideological changes over the years of colonialism and post colonialism, and the spread of western and secular ideologies, caste hierarchies have been maintained by affirming economic and social opportunities to some groups, while creating constraints for others, under the sanctification of religion and ideology (Sheth 2004)[6]. Thus social and cultural segregation has been a cause of enduring poverty and inequality in the region (ibid: 11).

Local Level Collective Action Programs: Community Groups

The inadequacy of the 'top-down', 'trickle-down' and 'modernist' approach to social change and economic growth globally brought support for more locally embedded approaches that focused on promoting local governance, increased decentralization, participation, decision making, skills building and collective action of people (Chambers 1983; Kabeer 1994; Escobar 1995; Leys 1996; Axinn and Axinn 1997; Peet and Hartwick 1999; Dasgupta and Beard 2007). In poor countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America this approach has become an entry point for distribution of resources, capacity building and consolidating collective action and social capital as a means to reduce poverty and to access fundamental human rights (Coleman 1988). The process often

[5] In 2001, nationally the *Bahun* and *Chettri* groups constituted 40% of the total population, followed by 13% of indigenous Tharu, and seven percent each of Gurungs and Tamangs in Nepal (CBS 2002).
[6] Refer to Dirks (1989) and Bayly (1999) for discussions on how colonialism was instrumental in strengthening caste divisions in India to consolidate economic and political power by the British.

begins with the strategy of "social mobilization", described by Biggs and colleagues (2004) as "an attempt to harness and enhance human capacity; i.e. the willingness and the potential of local people to help themselves." This approach has been widely adopted by donors, governments and non-governmental organizations. In 2004 the World Bank had a portfolio of US $7 billion invested globally using the community-based approach (Mansuri and Rao 2004).

Civic organizations for mutual support have long existed in Nepal and they have been organized, recognized and valued by communities. Most customary groups were based on kinship or ethnicity (e.g. the *guthis* of the Newars, the *rodi* of the Gurungs) while others were based on neighborhood ties that often centered on shared or common resources (e.g. the agriculture labor exchange custom of *parma*, indigenous groups managing local forests, pastureland and irrigation systems). In more contemporary times, Biggs and colleagues (2004) estimate the existence of close to 400,000 'sponsored' micro-level groups established to facilitate basic service delivery, poverty alleviation and social justice, since the inception of the concept in government policies in 1977 (Shrestha 1999). This study focuses on such sponsored groups which are separate from customary ethnic or religious organizations. The groups focus on different social and economic sectors like agriculture, livestock, forestry, health, education, income generation, and credit. Based on their individual needs and interests, and the program objectives and criteria, individuals within a community are voluntarily organized into "groups". External inputs in the form of specific technical training and tools are provided by the program, whose staff also provides orientations about organization and management.

Community groups vary in objectives, membership criteria and group size. Membership in "users groups" for instance, is based on the type of service or resource that individuals and household use, such as drinking water, irrigation facilities, or community forests. Members are expected to work collaboratively to design and implement mechanisms to operate, manage and conserve these resources with technical assistance from the government service agencies or non-governmental technical staff. For instance, a Community Forest User Group will constitute of representatives of all households that harvest a particular patch of forest for household usage (fuel, fodder, building a house and other household items) and will participate in the conservation and management of that forest, based on guidelines. Savings and credit groups can be initiated by at least five individuals who will save a sum of money on a weekly or monthly basis. Members take turns receiving loans from the group funds; group cohesion, collaboration and peer pressure work as collateral for the loans.

Critiques of community based efforts have focused on problems with the processes of group formation, limited access for women and the poorest segment of the population, the nature and ideology behind the framework of 'participation', elite capture and inequity in the distribution of benefits (Cleaver 1999; Leve 2001; Adhikari 2005)[7]. In focusing on 'participation' in general, it is also important to acknowledge the literature that has examined the nature, ideology and controversy behind the concept within the development industry[8]. Though extremely important, this issue is beyond the scope of the

[7] The dominance of the agenda, programs and activities by the economically, socially and politically powerful group within a community has been a major challenge for social mobilization efforts. Evidence of the elite groups in the community usurping group activities and benefits for themselves, their families and friends have often disrupted the equitable sharing of benefits (Cleaver 1999; Beard 2005; Biggs et al. 2004).

[8] Weinberger and Jütting (2001) discuss how the participation of the poorest in groups has often been questioned due to the high opportunity costs involved and the limited existence of social network ties

present study. This study provides insights into how the enduring nature of exclusion of people based on their social identities despite changes in the multiplicity of their experiences, and how it affects their participation in local level collective action.

Individual Experiences, Caste Influences and Participation in Community Group Programs

In general, individuals join different community groups based on their needs and interests in the activities and objectives of the program that provide support. Other spontaneously formed groups often get together and conduct activities based on their own interests and capacity. Yet at the aggregate level, there is growing recognition that many programs are not able to reach all segments of the target population in a more equitable manner. Analysis of who is most likely to participate in any kind of community group has focused on individual and household level characteristics of participating members. Even within contexts marked by caste and ethnic stratification, there is limited empirical evidence and understanding of the mechanisms of caste and ethnicity as an influencing factor in participation in community groups. In contrast, gender differences in participation in community groups have received much needed focus, and factors related to women's status, measured through their mobility, decision making capacity and experiences of domestic violence, support of spouse and other household members have been identified in different contexts (Beard 2005; Steele et al. 2003; Weinberger and Jütting 2001). Participation in community groups can also be influenced by both structural and ideational factors. Individual experiences of educational attainment, labor

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among such individuals. Leve (2001) presents an important critique on the reality and motives behind the "participation" and "empowerment" agenda of NGOs and aid agencies. Cleaver (1999) provides a critical analysis of the concepts underlying participatory approaches and the myths of the community as a social entity.

force participation, and exposure to different ideas and ways of life through travel experiences can be influential in increasing an individual's ability to participate in groups.

The following section first discusses how selected individual characteristics and experiences – such as educational attainment, experiences of labor force participation or employment experiences, and travel experiences can influence participation in different community groups, and how this influence can differ for men and women. Additionally, it also discusses how the acquisition of these very experiences varies by caste and ethnicity due to structural conditions, differential opportunities and socio-cultural barriers.

Education. Studies have widely demonstrated that education improves access to information and knowledge about voluntary programs in most contexts including community level programs in poor communities. Individuals with very low levels of education are generally less likely to have knowledge about community programs and other voluntary programs (Verba and Nei 1972; Curtis et al. 1992, 2001; Weinberger and Jütting 2001; Steele et al. 2003). In contexts where many community level programs are targeted towards poor and marginalized groups, individuals with higher levels of education tend to have lesser rates of participation since they have more access to alternate livelihood opportunities (Beard 2005). Gender differences in educational attainment are also likely to negatively influence rates of participation for women. But among women with some level of education, their increased bargaining and decision making power within the household has been known to positively influence their rates of participation in community group programs (Weinberger and Jütting 2001).

Education has been one of the influential factors driving social and economic change in South Asia. Aggregate level data on educational enrollment, attainment and dropout rates reflect gender discrimination and the caste and ethnic hierarchies of the social structures of the context being studied (Hannum and Xie 1998; Hannum and Stash 2001). India's affirmative hiring policies for government jobs and educational opportunities have contributed to reducing the education gap, but achievement continues to vary significantly along caste and ethnic lines (Sheth 2004). The provision of free education at different levels of school has been an attempt to mitigate class differences and increase access to educational opportunities in both India and Nepal. Moreover, ethnographic evidence from these countries perpetuating discriminatory practices and discriminatory behavior by teachers is a critical deterrent, often preventing children from 'low castes' from continuing their schooling[9]. This critical gap in educational opportunities and educational attainment thus has had negative effects on life outcomes based on caste/ethnicity and is also expected to influence participation in community level activities.

Labor Force Participation. Experience in the labor force, as well as individual and family economic status, are important factors that influence individual's participation in community groups. Studies have shown that it is primarily the middle class group which has the highest propensity for participating in community organizations and this is true in both rich, western countries and in relatively poorer countries (Curtis et al. 2001; Beard 2005). Different types of labor force participation are likely to have differential

[9] Scholars have analyzed how the spread of "western" education during the colonial and post colonial times actually helped in the reinforcement of hierarchical caste differences since the upper caste, socially and politically dominant ethnic groups had the easiest access to an English education (Bayly 1999). Additionally gender discrimination in educational attainment is also well documented worldwide and for girls and women the intersection of gender and caste has even more critical outcomes.

influences on participation in community groups. Individuals who are dependent on wage labor are less likely to participate in groups compared to those who have a salaried job or who work on their own, rented or sharecropped land. The opportunity cost of attending group meetings, orientations, trainings can directly affect their ability to bring home a daily wage which the family depends on. Limited access to cash also negatively influences their ability to contribute towards membership fees, monthly savings, or/and for any credit reimbursement (Biggs et al. 2004).

Caste and ethnicity also influence access to types of occupation in the context of South Asia. Caste groups with specific occupational skills such as tailoring, shoe making, and blacksmithing, have historically faced social and cultural discrimination due to the dirty and impure nature of the work[10]. Yet even such skills are increasingly being economically displaced by the mass production of such consumer items which are more attractive and are available at lower costs in local markets. Other, more demeaning jobs, such as manual scavenging, cleaning sewers, and disposing of animal carcasses are not only highly exploitative and dangerous but are highly stigmatized. The historic and often exclusive access to educational opportunities and wider social and political networks have led to proportionately higher access to salaried jobs for upper caste individuals. Such jobs are more stable and are attributed a higher status. The lack of necessary social and cultural capital in the form of education and social networks create barriers for low caste and marginalized ethnic groups to access a salaried job and they are thus relegated to daily wage work. Studies have also shown that even among educated individuals, historical relationships of discrimination and dependence often continues due to the

[10] Occupational caste groups are clearly identified by their family names. For instance a *Kami* is a blacksmith, a *Damai* is a tailor and a *Sarki* is a cobbler. Such overt identification of one's caste has made caste based discrimination easier.

differential quality and levels of education which influences the types of salaried employment available for those with privileged access (Jeffery et al. 2005). Due to the persistent overlap of caste status with poverty, as in other economic, social and demographic life outcomes, there has been a tendency to attribute much of the differential to class rather than to caste status or ethnicity per se (Subramanian et al. 2006).

Ideational influences through travel experiences. Experiences of travel to larger urban areas and beyond national boundaries is likely to expose individuals to new information and systems, alternate ways of living and of living standards, and give rise to aspirations for improving their life conditions. The exposure to different life styles, wider opportunities and choice of consumer items, relatively less restricted social norms and behaviors (both gendered and caste related) that occurs when travelling outside of one's neighborhood, especially to larger urban areas, potentially give rise to aspirations for a better life for oneself and especially for one's family. [11]

The exposure due to an individual's experiences with travel gives rise to an interesting phenomenon of the duality of experiences. Pigg (1992 and 1993) refers to the influence of 'modernization' on marginalized rural population as they experience social and economic changes brought about by development activities and programs. They are confronted by vast differences in what they see, and what goes on in their actual lives, which makes them accept discrimination as 'taken for granted truth' when the influences of modernization do not affect them proportionately or even positively. Similarly, while

[11] Media exposure is another important source of ideational influence as messages that come across radios, televisions, print media and cinema are not only a source of information but are also a source for diffusion of new ideas. Men and women in the study area have very high exposure to radio and television programs, which in Nepal relay programs on rural farming households and spread knowledge and information about agriculture and livestock programs, new technologies and means to access those services. Such exposure also becomes an important source of information for individuals about community group activities. Due to the limited variance among study participants, their experiences of listening to radios and watching television, is not used as a measure in this study.

opportunities to travel to urban areas might be difficult due to the high transaction costs involved especially for the poor, for those who do travel the experience of seeing the relatively less overt caste discrimination in urban settings is far from their own experiences of discrimination within their own social context. Such experiences of social exclusion help to shape and deepen self-perceptions of being socially isolated and disadvantaged and affect their self-efficacy.

Thus while individual experiences can influence participation in community level collective action programs, the acquisition of these very experiences are influenced by an individual's ascribed social status of caste.

Caste and Participation in Community Groups

The nature of the ascribed status of caste groups, complete with 'rules' and 'roles' associated with each group along the hierarchy, thus has historically governed the opportunities available and the barriers that must be faced by individuals and groups. The persistent exclusion of individuals and groups in the social, economic and political arena can be attributed to three key factors: (i) the inadequate implementation of legal and policy measures, (ii) the continuation of ingrained and enduring informal institutions of social norms, values, beliefs and practices related to caste in day to day life, and (iii) the internalization of experiences of disadvantage and exclusion by disadvantaged individuals and groups.

Formal institutional measures in the form of legal prohibition of caste discrimination and protectionist and affirmative policies, especially in education and jobs, have improved the situation in South Asian countries to some extent. Protectionist policies and affirmative action measures for "Scheduled Castes" and "Scheduled Tribes"

and “Other Backward Castes” in India, have been initiated since the mid 1950s, for government jobs and educational opportunities. Affirmative policies in Pakistan focused on the ethno-cultural and feudal hierarchical identities of communities, while those in Sri Lanka focused on severe rural-urban and ethnic imbalances. Yet in both cases the inadequate implementation of such polices led to more strife, rather than towards a culturally and politically inclusive state (Sheth 2004). Nepal initiated scholarships for ‘low caste’ Dalit children for primary education and for girls up to secondary school in the late 1990s. The Nepali Local Self-Governance Act of 1996 provides quotas for women and Dalit groups at local levels of government, but full implementation of this policy has been severely impacted by the Maoist insurgency. Nonetheless the recent political conflict in Nepal has provided a more conducive context for increased demands for more inclusive and affirmative policies for low caste and marginalized ethnic groups in the country, given that this was one of the key conditions of the Maoist insurgents. More recently decentralization programs have introduced quotas for women and other disadvantaged groups in local government entities in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan (Dani and de Haan 2008).

Governments in India and Nepal have not been able to enforce the legal measures instituted to abolish caste discrimination. Strong beliefs and continuing practices in day to day social lives of the predominantly Hindu population have changed very slowly. It is especially hard in situations where the individuals responsible for upholding laws against caste based discrimination (such as the police or educators) continue to believe in it and practice it in their daily lives. Informal systems of behavior and values based on relations of kinship, party affiliation, business interest, caste, ethnicity and gender, persist

especially at the meso and micro levels of the bureaucracy (Bennett 2008). Marriage practices among the Hindus that follow strict rules of caste endogamy, for instance, have been one the strongest factors that have helped in the perpetuation of the system. This situation, combined with what Bista (1991) posits as a fatalistic attitude towards one's life and one's future, has helped in the internalization of such centuries old discrimination among the low caste and marginalized ethnic groups. The pace of change in cultural practices, social norms and values has been extremely slow in the wake of blatant impunity for discriminatory behavior.

Given this context this study will focus on examining how historically ascribed identities caste and ethnicity, and the roles and 'rules' ascribed to them prevent and restrict people from participating in community group programs, net of their individual experiences.

Chitwan Valley: The Study Area

In the mid 1950s, a resettlement plan in Chitwan Valley in south central Nepal invited migrants from the hills and mountains of the country, and from neighboring border-states of India, making it one of the most multiethnic, multicultural, multi-linguistic settlements in the country (Elder et al. 1976; Blaikie, Cameron and Seddon 1980). Subsequently it became one of the most *Nepalized* of all districts of the plains of the Tarai belt with a cultural tradition that is distinct from the Indian plains.[12] The influx of migrants of multiple caste and ethnic groups very quickly marginalized the indigenous Tibeto-Burmese population of Tharu, Darai and Kumal who traditionally practiced

[12] *Nepalization* refers to the assimilation process of internalizing and adopting the cultural practices of the dominant Bahun-Chhetri caste/ethnic groups from the hills; the process of nation building or national integration in Nepal. Gaige (1975:216) refers to it as the process of identification with the culture of the dominant upper caste groups. In the context of Nepal the terms Sanskritization, Hinduization and Nepalization have similar interpretations.

shifting cultivation and a gathering economy. The lack of exposure to a money economy and to the value of land they owned, and ill-defined landownership policies led the Tharu population to be heavily exploited by the incoming migrants. Thus many of the Tharus ended up becoming bonded laborers on the land they once freely roamed (Muller-Boker 1999).

In the late 1970s, the valley was linked to two major highways of national importance which facilitated a rapid proliferation of government services, businesses, markets, and diversified employment opportunities, making it one of the most important districts for the government of Nepal within a short span of time (Shivakoti et al. 1999). For most of the older individuals, the rapid and vast social and economic changes have occurred within their own lifetime (Axinn and Yabiku 2001). The district administration office of Chitwan records the presence of over 220 local, national and international non-governmental organizations within the study area. These organizations are involved in a wide array of activities ranging from youth sports, religious programs, income generation, micro credit, women's empowerment, women's reproductive health, to programs that directly support service delivery of government agencies. Most of the programs use community level social mobilization and group formation as a strategic approach for the program implementation.

DATA, MEASURES, AND ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

Data

The study uses data collected in 1996 by the Chitwan Valley Family Study (CVFS), a large-scale study designed to investigate the impact of macro level social changes on micro-level individual behavior. The CVFS selected 171 neighborhoods with

an equal probability, systematic sample, where neighborhoods were defined as a geographic cluster of 5-15 households (Barber et al. 1997). The structured individual survey and the life history calendar components were completed by every resident between the ages of 15 and 59 with an exceptional response rate of 97 percent. A household-level survey of agriculture practices and consumption patterns was also conducted in 1,805 households with a 100 percent response rate. This study uses data from the individual and household surveys as well as from the life history calendar, which uses an innovative approach in collecting retrospective data from all respondents (Axinn et al. 1999).

For this study, the sample is restricted to men and women aged 15-54 in 1996 from 151 neighborhoods. Respondents above 55 years in age and those belonging to "other" caste groups were excluded due to the relatively small number of cases and due to the limited participation of individuals from these birth cohorts. Thus the analysis reported here is for 4,092 respondents, of whom 52 percent are women. Missing data was less than 0.4 percent in most cases except for data on parents' education of which 1.56 percent was missing. Of these groups, 20 percent of the upper caste groups had participated in community groups in contrast to only four percent of the Tharu people.

Table 2.1 illustrated the basic descriptive statistics for the study sample disaggregated by the four caste/ethnic groups and shows important differences in their experiences of participation in collective action programs ranging from a high of 20 percent for the Bahun/Chhetri/Newar category compared to only four percent for the Tarai Janajati. The other key differences are reflected in their educational attainment where only 26 percent of the upper caste individuals have had no education compared to

more than 50 percent of the lower castes and the Tarai Janajati individuals. Also while only 31 percent of individuals in the upper caste category have ever done any wage labor, 60 and 70 percent of the Tharu individuals and low caste Dalits, respectively, have had wage labor experiences.

[Table 2.1 about here]

Measures

Measure of Participation in Community Group Programs

The study focuses on the experiences of any lifetime participation in any community group program as the outcome and how participation is influenced by an individual's caste and ethnicity. In the individual survey, respondents were questioned about their participation with the question: *"Have you ever been a member of any other group, such as a User's Group, Mothers Group, a group organized by health volunteers, Rotary club or any other type of association or organization?"* This is a dichotomous variable coded "1" for any experience and "0" for no experience. While 17 percent of men had experience of participating in any community group, only 10 percent of women had done so by 1996. Biggs and colleagues (2004) report that data from their study of 'development groups' in Nepal depict a spatial bias in the number of groups per capita that favors the more remote, inaccessible and poor hill regions compared to the high mountain and the low lying more accessible districts such as Chitwan, which could account for low participation.

A follow-up question was asked to identify membership in the different types of groups. The respondents mentioned primarily seven types of community groups, namely

women's groups, youth groups, Small Farmers Development Program Groups, credit groups, user's groups, and agriculture groups[13].

Measures of Caste/Ethnicity

The measure of individual caste/ethnicity is derived from the question in the individual survey where each individual is asked about the caste of their father. Married women adopt the family name of their husband after marriage and children take on the caste of their father[14]. The individual interview records more than 20 different caste/ethnic categories and these are re-coded into four functional categories based on the prevalent social and cultural categories prescribed by the Hindu caste system and the National Code of Nepal as described earlier which conjoins caste and ethnicity into one classification system (Höfer 1979; Bennett et al. 2008).

Bahun and Chhetri, as well as Newar caste/ethnicities, are re-coded into one category. The first two are customarily upper caste Hindus. The Newar are a unique ethnic group in that they comprise multiple sub-groups categorized similarly on the Hindu caste classification and they also comprise both Hindu and Buddhist religious followers. They are combined in the same category for this study since their individual characteristics, such as educational attainment, employment experiences, and travel experiences, in general, are very similar to the Bahun and Chhetri.[15] This category of Bahun, Chhetri, and Newar is used as the reference category in the analysis.

[13] An additional 'other' category comprise project specific groups such as literacy groups, health groups, ethnicity specific groups, advocacy groups, multipurpose community planning and development groups.
[14] In the exceptional cases of inter-caste marriages, the woman and her children will still adopt the caste of their husband and father. But the prevalence of inter-caste marriages is still very low in Nepal.
[15] The Newar ethnic group possesses a caste structure with the entire continuum of having ritually pure and practicing priests at the top of the hierarchy, as well as ritually impure groups involved in "polluting" tasks such as cleaners, sweepers, etc. (Nepali 1965; Greenwold 1975). In Chitwan the majority of the Newar are traders thus they are all categorized within one caste/ethnic category.

A second category is Dalit, the so-called "lower caste" and "untouchable" occupational group which is the most discriminated against of caste groups. The next two categories are the Hill Janajati comprising Tibeto-Burmese castes/ethnicities from the hills, and the Tarai Janajati, the castes/ethnicities from the southern plains. The Tarai Janajati primarily comprise the *Tharu* population, who are the original indigenous "forest dwellers" of Chitwan (Muller-Boker 1999). Individuals from the other caste/ethnic groups are migrants originally from other parts of the country. All four measures of the caste/ethnicity of the respondents are coded 1 and 0. Over 50 percent of the study sample is "upper caste" Bahun/Chhetri/Newar, about 10 percent are Dalit, 22 percent are from the hill ethnicities and a little over 13 percent are the Tarai Janajati or the Tharu people.

Measures of Individual Experiences

The study uses five measures of individual experiences of the respondents which are likely to have intervening influences between caste/ethnicity and participation in groups – level of education, experiences of travel beyond one's community and two measures of employment experiences. Separate measures are created for five different levels of educational attainment of the respondents based on the public educational system in Nepal – no education, primary (grades 1-5), lower secondary (grades 6-8), and secondary (grades 9-10) which is completion of high school. Respondents with educational levels of grade 11 and higher are categorized in the fifth category of high education (grades 11 and above). Overall levels of education are very low among both men and women in Chitwan.

Two measures of travel experiences of the study participants are used in the study. One measures whether individuals have ever traveled to Kathmandu, the capital city,

while the second is whether individuals have ever travelled outside of the country. Both are dichotomous measures, coded "0" for no travel experiences ever and "1" for having had travel experiences. Individuals travel to Kathmandu from Chitwan mostly for administrative or religious purposes, while travelling outside of the country is primarily economic short and medium term migration. While 38 percent of the upper caste category has travelled to Kathmandu, only 25 percent of the Tharu have done so. The percent travelling outside of the nation is less than 20 percent for all groups though the percentage varies across groups from 1 to 18 percent.

The final individual level experience is of two types of employment experiences. Respondents were asked separate questions about whether they had any experience of salary work and wage work. Both are measured in 1996, with a value of "1" for any experience ever and "0" for no experience. There is relatively less variance among the four caste/ethnic groups in their having ever had experiences with salaried work, among the Dalit and the Tharu 70 and 60 percent respectively have ever had the experience of wage labor.

Controls

In order to accurately estimate the independent influence of caste/ethnicity on group participation, a variety of individual characteristics that could potentially confound the relationship are used as controls in the models. The different measures are drawn from the CVFS individual interviews, the household level interviews and the life history calendars.

Birth cohorts of respondents are used as controls - those born from 1942-51 (cohort 3), from 1952-61 (cohort 2), from 1962-71 (cohort 1) and the youngest cohort,

born from 1972-81 (cohort 0). They are coded as separate indicator variables with values of 0 and 1, and cohort 1 is used as the reference category since group participation was the highest among this cohort. Year of birth not only represents the age of the individuals but is also related to the timing of the changes in the social context of Chitwan Valley and is also relevant to the dates of introduction of programs focusing on community groups (representing period effects). The life course perspective suggests that events early in the life course can potentially continue to influence behavior later in life (Elder 1983). Thus the educational and employment experiences of the respondents' parents – which would have been influential on the conditions experienced in these respondents' childhoods - are constructed from the questions asked in the individual interviews. An index is created which measures whether either of the parent ever had ever gone to school ("mother ever go to school", and/or "father ever go to school"), coded "1" for either parent ever went to school and "0" for neither parent ever gone to school. Similarly, a second index was created to measure whether either of the respondent's parents had ever worked for any kind of pay whether it was wage labor, salary work, any business or any other type of work ("mother worked for pay" and/or "father worked for pay"), and this measure too was coded "1" for either parent ever worked for pay and "0" for neither parent ever worked for pay.

Another set of controls includes the respondent's exposure to non-family institutions in their childhood. Four different characteristics of the neighborhoods in which the respondents lived before age 12 are used to create an index. Respondents were asked a series of questions to determine the presence of a number of types of institutions within a one-hour walk from their home - schools, bus services, cinema, employment

opportunities, development programs, and the presence of women's groups. The index carries a value of zero to four and measures how many of such non-familial institutions the respondents had exposure to in the neighborhoods of their childhood.

The final key statistical control is related to individual/household wealth, since community group programs are most often designed to focus on low income and poorer households.[16] Four measures of wealth are selected to represent the economic status of the respondents and they are derived from the household level agriculture survey of 1996. Over 86% of individuals rely on farming, yet the majority or people sharecrop, has a mortgage, or rents land as opposed to owning land. Thus the area of land an individual cultivates is a more appropriate measure of their economic situation than land ownership. Agriculture land in Chitwan is divided into the dry upland - *bari* (or *tandi*) - and the more valuable, irrigated, fertile low land - *khet* (or *ghol*). Measures of land cultivated are coded in *kattha* (a standard Nepali unit of measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares). Another measure for wealth is the ownership of livestock where cattle, sheep and goats were converted into livestock units and 1 livestock unit = 1 water buffalo = 1.2 cows = 4 goats = 5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005). The final wealth measure used is an index of seven consumer items that the household may have: a radio, a television, a bicycle, a motorcycle, a bullock cart, whether they have a toilet in their home, and whether they have electricity at home. This index has a value of 0-7, where the mean number of items in the sample is less than three items per individual.[17]

[16] Though there is an overlap between caste/ethnicity and wealth, the correlations between the caste/ethnic groups and the measures of wealth selected for the study do not have correlations higher than 0.3. Similarly the alpha coefficient of the seven consumer items is 00.59 hence these items are not highly correlated.

[17] Individual attitudes towards caste discrimination are likely to be reflected on the behavior of individuals towards others. Discriminatory behavior of upper caste individuals are likely to dissuade individuals from lower and marginalized caste/ethnic groups to participate. Thus an attitudinal statement related to caste discrimination -*"It is better to have no children than to have a child who marries a spouse of a different*

Analytical Strategy

Logistic regression procedures are used in multivariate models that estimate the odds of participation in any kind of community groups as a function of the individual's caste/ethnicity. Starting with a zero order model, subsequent nested models are tested first introducing basic statistical controls, and then a series of selected individual experiences are introduced. Finally interaction terms are introduced to the models to analyze the effects of gender on participation in groups, the intersections of caste and gender in participation, and gender and caste interactions with educational attainment. The following logistic regression equation given below is used for the analysis:

$$\ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = a + \sum B_k X_k$$

where p is the probability of participating in any community group, $\frac{p}{(1-p)}$ is the odds of participation, a is a constant term, B_k is the effect of individual characteristics in the model which influence the outcome, and X_k is the value of these independent measures. The odds ratios can be interpreted as the factor by which one unit change in the independent variable will increase or decrease the odds of participation in community groups, compared to the reference category of the Bahun/Chhetri/Newar individuals.

The study design of collection of data from 151 neighborhoods comprising clusters of 5-15 households is useful to study the neighborhood level effects on various demographic characteristics when individual level variances are examined, there is a

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caste" - was also tested as a control for potential confounding effects. Respondents selected their response on a Likert like scale ranging from 1 to 4 (from strongly agree to strongly disagree), taken to represent a scale of their own increasingly non-discriminatory attitude. The odds of community group participation were increased as the more non-discriminatory caste attitudes the respondents had. The results are not shown here.

potential for cluster level effects on the estimates (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002). Hence the models are controlled for cluster level effects, the standard errors are adjusted for the 151 clusters, and the *p*-values for the odds ratios are based on robust standard errors.

Additionally, studies of community groups face problems related to self-selection of and of non-random placement of community groups, similar to what Barber and colleagues (2001) faced in their study. Participation in community groups is a voluntary process and is based on the individual's needs, interest and ability, even when certain programs focus on gender or caste based groups. Secondly, the location of community groups are based on the geographic coverage areas of the supporting programs. Yet, spontaneously formed community groups such as some women's groups or youth groups or informal savings and credit groups are located within or near the neighborhoods of the participating members. Controlling for a vast number of individual level characteristics in 1996 addresses the concern of self-selection while, controlling for clustering by neighborhoods in the regression models, as mentioned earlier, addresses the effects on non-random placement.

RESULTS

The results from the logistic regressions that test the association of an individual's caste and ethnicity illustrate the influence it has on community group participation. The results demonstrate that experiences of educational attainment, travel experiences, and employment experiences, account for some of the association for both men and women, yet there is much more that is not accounted for. Table 2.2 presents the multivariate estimates of the relationship between caste/ethnicity and participation in community groups for the study sample in a series of nested models. The results are presented as

odds ratios, which are the exponentiated coefficients. An odds ratio that is greater than one represents a positive association with community group participation. An odds ratio less than one is a negative association representing the lower odds of participation in community groups.

Model 1 in Table 2.2 shows the association between participation and individual caste/ethnicity and gender, not adjusted for any other characteristics. The results show that compared to the upper caste reference category – the Bahun/Chhetri/Newar – individuals from all three other caste/ethnic groups have highly significant *lower* odds of participating in community groups. For individuals from Dalit, Hill Janajati and Tarai Janajati categories, the odds of their participating in community groups is significantly lower by 79, 69 and 84 percent, respectively, compared to Bahun, Chhetri or Newar individuals. Also the odds of participation are lower by 51 percent for woman compared to men, with the difference being highly significant.

In Models 2, 3, and 4 in Table 2.2 individual experiences that are likely to influence participation in groups are introduced including the control measures of birth cohort, parental characteristics, childhood exposure, and individual wealth. First in Model 2, two measures to travel are introduced; travel experiences ever to Kathmandu – the largest urban area of the country – and outside of the country are both statistically significant in increasing the odds of participation in community groups. These experiences also reduce the caste/ethnic influences to a certain degree but strong difference among the other caste/ethnic categories remain, compared to the upper category and are still statistically highly significant. The gender differences continue to

remain significant, though the reduced odds of participation for women are lowered with the intervening influence of travel experiences.

A brief review of the control measures show that there are differences in birth cohorts in the expected directions. Compared to individuals ages 25-34 (born between 1962 and1971, the reference category), younger individuals have 58 percent lower odds of community group participation, while older individuals ages 35-44 have 38 percent higher odds of doing so. Participation in community groups are aimed at relatively older individuals who have responsibilities for family welfare and income for the household. Younger individuals are more likely to join youth clubs (particularly prior to marriage) that focus on cultural and sporting activities, than community groups that focus on livelihood support activities. As expected, broader childhood exposure to institutions demonstrates a positive influence on community group participation. The influence of childhood exposure to more modern institutions such as formal schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities and exposure to other economic and community improvement activities in childhood are likely to provide exposure and knowledge about alternate social and economic opportunities giving rise to increased aspirations for changes in adulthood.

Experiences in the labor force further reduces individual caste/ethnic differences in community group participation though the significantly decreased odds for the three other categories compared to the upper caste category remain strong and significant. The association of labor force experiences with participation in community groups differ based on the type of experiences. Individuals with salary work experiences have higher odds of participation (96 percent) while those who have had wage work experience have

lower odds though the results are not significant. The lower odds of participation for women are still significant with the intervening experiences of labor force participation and women have 19 percent lower odds of participation compared to men.

Measures of different levels of educational attainment are introduced in Model 4 of Table 2 and the results show that the intervening influence of educational attainment further reduces the association between caste/ethnicity and community group participation. The caste/ethnic differences remain strong and significant with the Dalit and Tarai Janajati caste/ethnic categories having significantly lower odds of community group participation (63 and 74 percent respectively) than the upper caste Bahun/Chhetri/ Newar individuals. But taking account of educational attainment removes the differences in participation between men and women in community group participation. Four measures of educational attainment (primary, lower secondary, secondary and high) are introduced in this model and compared to individuals with no education individuals with any levels of education have significantly higher odds of having had experience in community groups. As discussed earlier, educational attainment is one of the most important predictors of participation in voluntary organizations and in community level groups globally. Compared to individuals with no education, those with any level of educational attainment are associated with higher odds of participation in community groups, consistent with evidence from other countries (Weinberger and Jütting 2001; Beard 2005). The access to information about community based programs, the confidence and skills needed to communicate with program staff, the wider social capital they gain through their educational attainment, are likely to better equip individuals to participate in community group programs. In the context of more than half of the women

not having any education at all, these results are also indicative of barriers for women with no or limited education to participate in community groups.

[Table 2.2 about here]

The final Model 5 in Table 2.2 measures the intervening combined effects of all individual non-family experiences together with the basic controls, in the association between caste/ethnicity and community group participation. The odds ratio for all three ethnic groups do not reflect much differences from that of the previous model that included the influence of educational attainment alone as the intervening factor, suggesting that it is the different levels of education among men and women that has the most influence on experiences of community group participation for all individuals. Individuals from the Tarai Janajati category have the lowest odds for community group participation (74 percent *lower* odds) compared to individuals from the Bahun/Chettri/ Newar category, when their early life experiences, marital status and their non-family experiences are taken into consideration. Yet while significantly lower odds remain for the three caste/ethnic groups compared to the upper caste groups, the difference in group participation among men and women is explained to a greater degree by their education attainment.

In the final full model, the experience of travel to Kathmandu, the capital city, and experiences of salaried employment significantly increases the odds of community group participation for individuals compared to those who do have had such experiences. Variance in the odds of participation among different birth cohorts and the influence of childhood exposure to non-family institutions and activities are generally similar to the previous model in Table 2.2.

Given the very strong effects of educational attainment as an important intervening factor in influencing community group participation for individuals of all three caste/ethnic categories – the Dalit, the Hill Janajati and the Tarai Janajati – compared to individuals from the Bahun/ Chhetri/ Newar category, additional analysis was conducted to test for interaction effects of caste/ethnicity, gender and education. The results of four different sets tests for interactions are presented in Table A.1 in Appendix-A where Models 1, 2 and 3 test for interactions between the caste/ethnic categories and number of years of education. Here education is coded 0-11; the codes 0 to 10 signify each year of educational attainment, and it is coded 11 for equal to or more than 11 years of education. All controls from the previous models are also included but the results are not shown. The results show significant interaction effects between the Tarai Janajati category and education. Compared to those with no education, a one year increase in education increases the odds of community group participation for Tarai Janajati individuals by 13 percent and since odd ratios are multiplicative they increase exponentially for each year of education.[18] Additionally, interactions between gender and caste/ethnicity, and gender and education were also tested where there were no significant effects for interactions between caste/ethnic categories and gender. But compared with women with no education, women with primary and secondary levels of education had significantly higher odds of community group participation. Thus these results are indicative of how educational attainment has strong and positive effects for women and for individuals from the Tarai Janajati category.

[18] Tests for interactions between caste/ethnicity and different levels of education (primary, lower secondary, secondary and high) were also conducted with all three caste/ethnic categories with the upper caste Bahun/Chhetri /Newar category as the reference group. The results were only marginally significant for the Tarai Janajati individuals who had secondary and high levels of education (z scores were 1.72 and 1.78 respectively). Refer to Table A-1 in Appendix-A.

CONCLUSIONS

This study creates a foundation in the examination of caste and ethnic disparities in participation in community level collective action programs – community groups - in the context of Chitwan Valley in Nepal in 1996. The timing of the availability of a unique set of data makes it possible to examine this association when the spread and mobilization of community groups as an approach to livelihood support programs was beginning in the study setting. The study examines how caste influences the kinds of life opportunities and barriers individuals and groups face in terms of educational attainment, travel and work experiences and ultimately, their participation in community group programs. I find that travel and employment experiences and greater educational attainment that are tested in the analysis increase the odds of an individuals' participation in community groups. These effects are likely to be working through the power of exposure to new ideas and new information through education and travelling to places that are very different from their own communities, in terms of lifestyle and living standards, as well as giving individuals relatively more access to time and money to invest in group activities. Individuals are introduced to new ways of living, social and economic interactions and living standards that are very different from their own and can contribute to increased aspirations for the kind of life style they see for themselves and for their children. Participation in community groups, learning to access basic services, and additional financial and other kinds of resources can also provide an additional opportunity for status enhancement for all individuals, which would be a strong motivation for joining groups.

Yet the results from this study present strong evidence of a residual 'penalty' due to the historical structural barriers of one's caste and ethnic identity in influencing participation in local level community group programs, and that this influence is independent of other individual characteristics and experiences that affect one's ability or desire to participate in community activities and access resources. The framework of social exclusion provides an opportunity to assess how formal and informal institutions influence the life chances of groups of individuals based on their social identities such as those of caste and ethnicity, and how this influence is not necessarily only characteristic of economic disparities in conditions across caste/ethnic groups.

It is important to acknowledge the probability of selectivity playing a role in these analyses and this context. Individuals with particular attributes may have been more likely to participate in community group activities, contributing to the association that has been observed here. This study attempts to address the potential for such reciprocal association by controlling for demographic and individual experiences, including those of the childhood context and parental experience. Yet the main focus of the analysis is to examine the effect of caste/ethnicity, an attribute that is ascribed to individuals from birth and cannot be changed in the social and cultural context of the study area. This is of particular importance to the Dalit who have been historically marginalized with the caste structure along the lines of purity and pollution, as well as the Tharu people (from the Tarai Janajati category), especially within the study area context, who have been marginalized by the dominant upper caste groups that migrated into the valley.

An important contribution of this study lies in its examination of the independent effect of caste and ethnic identity in determining participation in community groups.

Previous studies have focused on participation in various types of voluntary associations as a function of individual and household level characteristics such as gender, education, income, labor force participation, religion, membership in other groups, urban or rural settings (Steel et al. 2001; Weinberger and Jütting 2001; Curtis et al. 2001; Beard 2005). However, most of these studies focus on social class, the poor - and not on the experiences of different caste and ethnic groups across different class groups. The question of whether similar individual experiences are adequate to break the barriers of social exclusion based on ingrained and enduring values, attitudes and practices in day to day life, has not been examined. Therefore this study points to the need for further investigation into the mechanisms of how caste and ethnicity in itself can account for such a strong relationship, net of all the relevant measures that have been controlled for. The differences in cultural practices of accumulating social capital among the different caste and ethnic groups might provide one explanation. A better understanding of the existence and processes of collective action and group cohesion that differ within the groups also need to be better understood. Attempts to better understand these cultural differences also need to focus on a better understand of the formal and informal barriers that particular caste and ethnic groups face in taking up opportunities that are aimed specifically at equitable access to and distribution of resources. Additionally, to increase the visibility of the problems and the barriers of the most marginalized segments of the population, data collection and analysis that are disaggregated by caste/ethnicity, in addition to gender, is of critical importance.

Disparities and discrimination based on social identities have been recognized as eventually giving rise to social and political conflict not only in the South Asia region but

also around the world. Much of such conflict is a composite of more than just one cause of discrimination and is compounded by extreme levels of poverty in most of the poor countries in Asia and Africa for instance. A critical gap exists in contexts like that of Nepal, in empirical evidence that not only examines the key associations of caste/ethnicity with life opportunities but only provides a better understanding of the mechanisms that lead to the disparities, so that appropriate interventions can be designed to address the gaps. Thus this study also has serious implications for accountability in policy implementation by national and local governments. The effectiveness of legal and policy measures to remove discriminatory practices and behaviors towards social groups within the national context have to be continually assessed with empirical evidence, enriched with in-depth narratives from the lives of those affected. The invisible penalty attached to one's social identity that affects equal life chances and life opportunities need to be identified and recommendations for measures to displace them need to be made so that the "disadvantage, alienation and lack of freedom" faced by some groups of individuals within a society can be better addressed. Measures of accountability within government structures and within international agencies that support poverty alleviation, social justice and basic human rights, need to be put to strong tests.

Table 2.1 Descriptive Statistics of Measures.
Means and standard deviations of all measures used in the analysis of the association of caste/ethnicity on community group participation, Western Chitwan 1996.
(Table continued on the following page.)

Measures	**Total Sample (N=4,085)**	
	Mean	**SD**
Participation in Groups Ever (0-1)	0.13	(0.34)
Females	0.52	(0.50)
Birth Cohort (0-1)		
1942-51 (Cohort 4, ages 45-54)	0.15	(0.35)
1952-61 (Cohort 3, ages 35-44)	0.20	(0.40)
1962-71 (Cohort 2, ages 25-34) [a]	0.27	(0.44)
1972-81 (Cohort 1, ages 15-24)	0.39	(0.49)
Married (0-1)	0.74	(0.43)
Wealth		
Bari/upland cultivated (0-112 *kattha*)[19]	8.16	(12.27)
Khet/lowland cultivated (0-150 *kattha*)	14.98	(24.86)
Livestock owned (LU 0-18.5)[20]	2.95	(2.53)
Ownership of consumer items (0–7)[21]	2.57	(1.54)
Parental and Childhood Influences		
Childhood exposure before age 12 (0-6)[22]	3.48	(1.66)
Index of parents' education (0, 1)	0.33	(0.47)
Index of parents' work experience (0, 1)	0.50	(0.50)
Individual Experiences		
Travel Experiences		
Travel to Kathmandu ever (0, 1)	0.34	(0.48)
Travel outside of Nepal ever (0, 1)	0.15	(0.36)
Employment Experiences		
Salary work ever (0, 1)	0.27	(0.44)
Wage work ever (0, 1)	0.42	(0.49)
Educational Attainment		
No education [a]	0.38	(0.49)
Primary (grades 1-5)	0.18	(0.39)
Lower Secondary (grades 6-8)	0.20	(0.40)
Secondary (grades 9-10)	0.11	(0.31)
Higher Education (11+)	0.13	(0.33)

[19] *Kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.
[20] Livestock Unit (LU): conversion of livestock into units where 1 livestock unit = 1 water buffalo = 1.2 cows = 4 goats = 5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).
[21] Index of ownership of seven consumer items: radio, TV, bicycle, motorcycle, cart, have a toilet at home, and have electricity at home.
[22]Sum of six items present within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondents before they were 12 years of age: schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, development programs, and women's groups.

Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics of Measures. *Continued*….

Measures	Caste/Ethnicity											
	Bahun/Chhetri/ Newar (N=2,208)			**Dalits** (N=431)			**Hill Janajati** (N=894)			**Tarai Janajati** (N=552)		
			Range			*Range*			*Range*			*Range*
Group Participation (0-1)	0.20	(0.40)		0.05	(0.22)		0.07	(0.26)		0.04	(0.20)	
Females	0.53	(0.50)		0.49	(0.50)		0.52	(0.50)		0.52	(0.50)	
Birth Cohort (0-1)												
1942-51 (Cohort 4)	0.14	(0.34)		0.18	(0.39)		0.15	(0.36)		0.14	(0.35)	
1952-61 (Cohort 3)	0.20	(0.40)		0.19	(0.39)		0.21	(0.41)		0.19	(0.39)	
1962-71 (Cohort 2) [a]	0.26	(0.44)		0.26	(0.44)		0.27	(0.44)		0.28	(0.45)	
1972-81 (Cohort 1)	0.40	(0.49)		0.36	(0.48)		0.36	(0.48)		0.39	(0.49)	
Married (0-1)	0.71	(0.46)		0.79	(0.40)		0.78	(0.41)		0.77	(0.42)	
Wealth												
Bari cultivated (*kattha*)[23]	7.92	(12.94)	0-112	5.99	(7.91)	0-37	9.38	(12.4)	0-62	8.82	(11.72)	0-62
Khet cultivated (in *kattha*)	16.21	(23.45)	0-122	5.73	(14.53)	0-90	6.79	(15.0)	0-105	30.52	(37.71)	0-150
Livestock owned in LU[24]	3.31	(2.47)	0-16	1.90	(1.65)	0-10	2.65	(2.52)	0-13	2.83	(3.01)	0-18
Consumer items (0–7)[25]	3.11	(1.41)	0-7	1.68	(1.21)	0-5	2.08	(1.46)	0-6	1.86	(1.56)	0-7
Parental and Childhood Influences												
Childhood exposure[26]	3.78	(1.59)		3.21	(1.66)		2.94	(1.74)		3.35	(1.59)	
Parents' education 0, 1)	0.41	(0.49)		0.19	(0.40)		0.26	(0.44)		0.20	(0.40)	
Parents' work (0, 1)	0.49	(0.50)		0.61	(0.49)		0.55	(0.50)		0.39	(0.49)	
Individual Experiences												
Travel Experiences												
Kathmandu ever (0, 1)	0.38	(0.49)		0.29	(0.45)		0.34	(0.48)		0.25	(0.43)	
Outside Nepal ever (0, 1)	0.18	(0.39)		0.13	(0.33)		0.11	(0.31)		0.11	(0.31)	

[23] *Kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.
[24] Livestock Unit (LU): conversion of livestock into units where 1 LU =1 water buffalo =1.2 cows =4 goats =5 sheep (Agrawal & Gupta 2005).
[25] Ownership of seven consumer items: radio, TV, bicycle, motorcycle, cart, have a toilet at home, and have electricity at home.
[2626]Sum of six items present within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondents before they were 12 years of age: schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, development programs, and women's groups.

Measures	Caste/Ethnicity							
	Bahun/Chhetri/ Newar (N=2,208)		**Dalits** (N=431)		**Hill Janajati** (N=894)		**Tarai Janajati** (N=552)	
Employment Experiences								
Salary work ever (0, 1)	0.28	(0.45)	0.25	(0.43)	0.29	(0.46)	0.22	(0.42)
Wage work ever (0, 1)	0.31	(0.46)	0.70	(0.46)	0.46	(0.50)	0.60	(0.49)
Educational Attainment								
No education [a]	0.26	(0.44)	0.52	(0.50)	0.49	(0.50)	0.58	(0.49)
Primary (grades 1-5)	0.15	(0.36)	0.29	(0.45)	0.21	(0.41)	0.17	(0.38)
Low Second (grades 6-8)	0.24	(0.43)	0.13	(0.33)	0.17	(0.38)	0.13	(0.34)
Secondary (grades 9-10)	0.15	(0.36)	0.04	(0.19)	0.06	(0.24)	0.07	(0.25)
Higher Education (11+)	0.19	(0.40)	0.03	(0.16)	0.05	(0.23)	0.05	(0.23)

[a] Reference category.
Standard deviations in parenthesis.

Table 2.2 Odds Ratios of Effects of Caste/Ethnicity on Community Group Participation of Individuals, Ages 15-54 in 1996, Western Chitwan. (*N*=4,085)

	Model 1 Zero Order	Model 2 Travel	Model 3 Labor Force	Model 4 Education	Model 5 Full Model
Caste/Ethnicity					
Bahun/Chhetri/Newar (upper caste) [a]	-	-	-	-	-
Dalit (lower caste)	0.21*** (-5.68)	0.29*** (-4.36)	0.31*** (-4.17)	0.37*** (-3.68)	0.37*** (-3.54)
Hill Janajati (hill caste/ethnicity)	0.31*** (-5.64)	0.38*** (-4.75)	0.39*** (-4.65)	0.46*** (-3.79)	0.45*** (-3.88)
Tarai Janajati (plains caste/ethnicity)	0.16*** (-6.52)	0.21*** (-5.43)	0.21*** (-5.30)	0.26*** (-4.56)	0.26*** (-4.54)
Females	0.49*** (-7.07)	0.60*** (-5.20)	0.71* (-2.51)	0.83 (-1.40)	1.08 (0.49)
Individual Experiences					
Travel To Kathmandu ever		1.66*** (5.31)			1.40*** (3.35)
Travel Outside of Nepal ever		1.28* (2.07)			1.14 (1.10)
Employment Experiences					
Salary work ever			1.96*** (4.92)		1.55*** (3.24)
Wage work ever			0.90 (-0.94)		1.10 (0.73)
Educational Attainment					
No education [a]				-	-
Primary education (1-5)				2.02*** (3.76)	1.90*** (3.38)
Lower secondary (6-8)				2.32*** (4.51)	2.13*** (4.05)
Secondary (9-10)				4.48*** (6.84)	3.99*** (6.05)
Higher education (11+)				6.18*** (8.81)	4.88*** (7.36)
Birth Cohort					
Cohort 4 (1942-1952, ages 45-54)		1.07 (0.43)	1.19 (1.07)	1.70*** (3.13)	1.71** (3.08)
Cohort 3 (1952-1961, ages 35-44)		1.38** (2.62)	1.42** (2.89)	1.80*** (4.58)	1.78*** (4.46)
Cohort 2 (1962-1971, ages 25-34) [a]		-	-	-	-
Cohort 1 (1972-1981, ages 15-24)		0.42*** (-5.71)	0.44*** (-5.03)	0.39*** (-5.59)	0.42*** (-5.15)
Married Individuals		1.56* (2.49)	1.46* (2.13)	1.68** (3.01)	1.52* (2.42)
Wealth					
Bari/upland (in *kattha*)		1.00 (0.63)	1.00 (0.80)	1.00 (0.39)	1.00 (0.33)

	Model 1 Zero Order	Model 2 Travel		Model 3 Labor Force		Model 4 Education		Model 5 Full Model	
Khet/lowland (in *kattha*)		0.99	(-0.13)	1.00	(0.19)	0.99	(-0.35)	0.99	(-0.22)
Livestock owned (in Livestock Units)		1.02	(0.54)	1.02	(0.68)	1.03	(1.06)	1.04	(1.36)
Consumer items ownership		1.16***	(3.41)	1.18***	(3.71)	1.08	(1.67)	1.08+	(1.71)
Parental and Childhood Influences									
Childhood exposure before age 12		1.13***	(3.61)	1.15***	(3.92)	1.08*	(2.07)	1.07+	(1.84)
Parents' education		1.14	(1.11)	1.17	(1.27)	1.01	(0.10)	1.03	(0.21)
Parents' work experience		0.95	(-0.44)	0.95	(-0.42)	1.02	(0.17)	1.00	(0.00)
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-1484.13	-1387.62		-1388.78		-1348.95		-1336.69	
Wald χ^2	138.25***	386.65***		412.51***		413.57***		485.58***	
Pseudo R^2	0.0773	0.1373		0.1366		0.1613		0.1689	

Estimates are presented as odds ratio; Z-statistics in parenthesis; Two tailed tests; Standard error adjusted for 151 clusters.

[a] Reference category.

+p<1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

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CHAPTER 3

Participation in Community Groups: Changes in Membership among Individuals from Different Caste Groups

> *"Social change in not on the horizon but sleeps on the far side of a distant mountain. The people of … (and Nepal), have so embedded caste hierarchy in their sense of self, identity, and religious views that I do not predict change in this area for several generations, and then not without strongest resistance……. Nepal is a country that has always favored local custom over law, even if custom discriminate based on caste. Modernization has not been a great boon for women in Nepal, since it has generally introduced modern forms of patriarchy, a pattern found in other so-called developing countries".*
>
> *- Mary M. Cameroon, On the Edge of the Auspicious, 1998, p 284.*

The decade of the 1980s has been notable for the promotion of participatory, community-based approaches for increasing the involvement of poor and marginalized groups within local communities in decision-making over improving the economic, social and political conditions of their own lives (Chambers 1997; Escobar 1995; Peet and Hartwick 1999; Biggs et al. 2004). Research in multiple sectors have shown that the success of such participatory approaches depend on the ability of individuals with common interests and shared norms to get organized, develop skills and knowledge to access technical and economic resources to improve their social and economic conditions as well as have political voice (Ostrom 1990; Putnam 1993; Uphoff and Wijayaratna 2000; Narayan and Glinskaya 2007). An important underlying principle of the community-based approach has been the focus on issues of social equity, inclusion and empowerment of poor and excluded populations (Biggs et al. 2004; Mosedale 2005; Martinez 2006). Studies have established that the chronically poor, those experiencing

poverty over an extended period, are usually disadvantaged in group formation due to their lack of assets and rights (Lahiri-Dutt and Samanta 2006). But inadequate attention has been given to the influence of socially ascribed characteristics such as caste and ethnicity, which are a basis for inequalities in South Asia, and which most often overlap with economic inequalities. Lahiri-Dutt and Samanta (ibid) attribute the failure of the self-help group approach within a program in India to its inability to take into account diversity due to caste, class, ethnic and religious hierarchies and heterogeneity in the community. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of caste, ethnicity and gender on individual participation in community groups, and how individual trajectories of participation changes over time for women and men and for those of different caste groups.

Participation of individuals and groups of people excluded from sources of power and access to resources is critical for most development programs to succeed in their aims thus these categories of people become their greatest focus. Yet participation in such organizations is influenced by selection factors due to the voluntary nature of these activities. So far most documentation on access to community groups has focused more on the barriers and constraints caused by class and gender differences. Examination of individual and household level demographic characteristics, economic status, and factors related to women's status - measured through their mobility, decision making capacity and experience of domestic violence, support of spouse and other household members - have been identified as important factors that influence participation (Beard 2005; Steele et al. 2003; Weinberger and Jütting 2001). But exclusion based on social identities such as caste and ethnicity has not been adequately examined.

Studies in countries which have widely used the community group approach have documented the outcomes of different programs which highlight the important role they have in improving economic and social life conditions of the poor and marginalized. Demographic research has shown the links between participating in women's groups and savings and credit groups, and changes in reproductive health seeking behavior including regulating fertility (Hashemi et al. 1996; MacIssac 1997; Schuler et al. 1997; Barber et al 2001; Sandberg 2006). Evidence from Bangladesh have shown that credit programs have a greater impact on household expenditure, non-land assets held by women, male and female labor supply, and boys' and girls' schooling when credit is given to women (Pitt and Khandkar 1998). Evidence from the community forestry and irrigation programs in Nepal have demonstrated the application of poverty reduction strategies and the evolution into second generation issues and institutions for policy advocacy (Campbell 1996; Shrestha and Britt 1997; Acharya and Gentle 2008).

This study uses the emerging framework of social exclusion to examine how caste/ethnicity and gender affect participation in community groups that primarily aim at improving livelihoods, social justice and social equity in life conditions and life opportunities. Within the social policy discourse, social exclusion focuses on how institutional barriers influence the ability of groups of people to participation in activities which would be normal for other groups, especially given with the context of historical inequalities (Jordan 1996; de Haan 1998; Power and Wilson 2000; Bennett 2008). Sociological discourses on exclusion from life opportunities has focused on the multiple dimensions of stratification, inequality and hierarchies and have provided empirical evidence of how inequalities and discrimination based on social identities are deeply

entrenched in societies and create seemingly "durable" structures (Tilly 1998; Massey 2007). I utilize these frameworks to study how social markers of caste, ethnicity and gender, that have been entrenched societies through religious ideology, political power, and economic domination, influences individual behaviour and examine how such behaviors have changed over time.

This study uses a case from Nepal where community based development activities form an important means for livelihood support and resource distribution. I use a unique set of longitudinal data with a combination of individual and household level surveys and life history data from Western Chitwan Valley in Nepal (Barber et al. 1997; Axinn et al. 1999). Data on a multitude of individual experiences make it possible to parse out the effects of such individual determinants of community participation to examine how their ascribed social identities affect experiences of participation, as well as being able to measure how participation changes over a period of time for the study respondents.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this section I begin with a brief discussion of the theoretical framework of social exclusion and of stratification based on social identities. I then go on to present empirical evidence on how different individual experiences influence community group participation and how caste, ethnicity and gender influence opportunities for gaining those experiences.

Within the social policy discourse, social exclusion focuses on how formal and informal institutions and practices work in disconnecting groups and individuals from social relations, and create barriers to their ability to fully participate in the activities which would be normal and accessible for other groups in the same community (Power

and Wilson 2000; Bennett 2008). Scholars have examined social exclusion from both an individual and group perspective, where there is "disadvantage, alienation and lack of freedom" for certain groups relative to others (Gore and Figueiredo 1997). Exclusion of individuals or groups can be based on several dimensions or a multiplicity of disadvantages – class, caste, ethnicity, race, gender, age, religion, political representation, physical abilities, or even based on geographic locations such rural or urban areas (Sen 1992; Jordan 1996; Hills et al. 2002). The overlap and reinforcement of economic, social religious and political categories of exclusion over many decades result in 'hard core' excluded groups such as low caste, indigenous and marginal ethnic and tribal groups, for instance, in South Asia (Kabeer 2000). Thus Kabeer contends that social exclusion reflects the social and cultural devaluation of people based on 'who they are' (or rather who they are *perceived* to be) as well as 'where they are' (Kabeer 2000; 2006).

The original discourse on the concept of social exclusion in the early 1970s focused on the rupture of 'social bonds' in Europe and the breakdown of social integration, in the Durkheimian tradition, within the context of growing social problems and disintegration due to the crises of the welfare state (Silver 1994; 1995; Gore and Figueiredo 1997; de Haan 1998). With the wider adaptation and application of the framework among international aid agencies and the national policy agendas of countries in the 'south' after the Social Development Summit in Copenhagen in 1995, the global discourse has been dominated by the examination of the relationship between social exclusion and the frameworks of social disadvantage, discrimination, poverty, and relative deprivation (de Haan 1998; Sen 2000; Saith 2001; Hills et al. 2002). [27]

[27] In 2000, the United Nations adopted the UN Millennium Declaration committing nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets by 2015, putting a

From a sociological perspective, social exclusion has been conceived by Silver (1995) in the form of three different yet overlapping paradigmatic styles of solidarity, specialization and monopoly, where multiple forms of disadvantage and exclusion are deeply embedded and are often enduring. Additionally, works by Tilly (1998) and Massey (2007) theorize on how political, social, psychological and institutional mechanisms and practices distribute resources differentially effectively generating and sustaining "enduring" conditions of exclusion for individuals and categories of people.[28] They contend that inequalities and discrimination based on social identities are most often so deeply entrenched in societies, and are continually exploited by the elites, that they continue to pose challenges for equitable economic growth and social changes and make inequalities and disadvantages enduring. Despite values and norms of "universalism" in a democratic system such as in the US, persistent stratification, inequities and discrimination in opportunities and access to resources for different groups cannot be explained by economic factors alone, as shown by Massey's analysis of how despite changing economic conditions of African Americans and Puerto Ricans, they continue to face discrimination in the housing market. According to Massey, as long as "…racial discrimination and prejudice are translated so directly into economic disadvantage", vulnerable groups like the African Americans and Puerto Ricans will continue to be made even more vulnerable (Massey 1990:357).

While hierarchies and inequities create categories of exclusion, scholars have also been acutely aware of how the intersections of multiple dimensions of exclusion or

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focus on "exclusion" at a global scale. Concomitantly, national governments of countries receiving international development aid have developed Poverty Reduction Strategies, using social inclusion as an analytical framework (Jackson 1999; de Haan 1998).

[28] In the United States, concepts related to social exclusion are 'ghettoization', 'the underclass' and 'marginalization' (Hills et al. 2002:2).

inequalities create important differences within and across categories of individuals and groups (Jackson 1999)[29]. This entails the need for examining "the relationship among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formation" using the framework of intersectionality (McCall 2005)[30]. The differential basis of oppression entails that individuals or groups of people can experience exclusion from multiple dimensions such as religious, social, economic and political. Gendered positions vary by castes for women as Bennett (1989) and Cameron's (1998) studies with high caste and low caste women have shown. Additionally, studies of the intersections of race, gender and the labor market in the US shows that women of all minority groups suffer a smaller gender penalty in earnings compared to white women when they are compared to men of the same race (Greenman and Xie 2008; Browne and Misra 2003).[31]

[29] Jackson (1999) also raises the pertinent question of whether the integrated approach of social exclusion works for gender, particularly in relation to the analysis of marginality and integration, the implicit dualisms of exclusion and inclusion, and in the treatment of agency within the structures, institutions, and processes that create and sustain exclusion.

[30]McCall's (2001) use of intersectionality as a central category of analysis in her work on examining the interrelationships of class, gender and race within the context of new economic structures, employment and immigration, leads to additional insights on the complexity or these interrelationships.

[31] It is useful to briefly allude to the contested nature of the concepts of 'participation' and 'community' and to clarify that while I acknowledge the importance of these debates this study does not claim to contribute to them. The concept of participation has become an essential dimension of development, seeking to invoke popular local knowledge, empower the voiceless and the powerless, and to establish alternate models and approaches to meet basic needs of poor and marginalized groups of people (Rahnema 2010). Thus it has been conceptualized as intrinsically a 'good thing' (Cleaver 1999). Yet Cleaver critically points out that the mere fact of having poor and marginalized groups "sit on committees or individually at meetings" does not necessarily overcome exclusion (1999:603). When local norms of decision making, representation, and the local complexities of relations of domination/subordination are driven by age, race, gender, religion, economic status, or multiple intersections of these relations, then individual abilities to forge social change many not be effective (Gujit and Shah 1998; Cleaver 1999; Leve 2001). Similarly, the myth of 'community' as a homogeneous, political and social system, with marked geographic, social, and administrative boundaries, and with tremendous capabilities has also been contested. The initial glossing over of communities as sites not only of solidarity but also of "conflict, shifting alliances, power and social structures" (Cleaver 1999:604), and where the overwhelming focus was on local authority, knowledge and practices – can in reality, perpetuate age old discriminatory structures, norms and practices, and allow for continued elite capture. Thus both participation and community are frameworks that are being questioned and refined through the increasing multiplicities of evidences coming in from the field.

Individual Characteristics, Individual Experiences and Community Group Participation

In a previous study, where I examine the association of caste/ethnicity and community group participation, I presented theoretical reasons and empirical evidences of: (i) how individual experiences such as educational attainment, labor force participation and travel experiences influence participation in community groups; and (ii) how the institution of caste has continued to create barriers in taking up opportunities to gain these life experiences (Pradhan, Chapter 2). That study presented strong evidence of a residual 'penalty' due to the historical structural barriers of one's caste and ethnic identity in influencing participation in local level community group programs, and that this influence is *independent* of other individual characteristics and experiences. All caste/ethnic categories had statistically significantly lower odds of participation in community groups, compared to the upper caste categories, after controlling for key individual characteristics and experiences. Women, in general had lower odds of participation than men yet when measures of educational attainment were added, the relationship was no longer significant. Here I present a brief summary of the specific theoretical and empirical evidence on selected individual experiences – educational attainment, labor force participation, and travel - can influence participation in different community groups, as well as how the acquisition of these very experiences varies by caste and ethnicity.

Differential experiences within the labor force are also likely to influence participation in community groups. Studies have also shown that it is primarily the middle class group which has the highest propensity for participating in community

organizations in both rich, western countries and relatively poorer countries (Curtis et al. 2001; Beard 2005). Experiences of wage labor is likely to influence participation negatively due to the high opportunity costs of attending group meetings, orientations, trainings, and regular membership contributions (Biggs et al. 2004). Salaried work, on the other hand, is more likely to provide relative flexibility in terms of time during non-working hours and in access to cash for membership dues and savings contributions.

Education improves access to information and knowledge, including those about community programs, thus various studies has shown that individuals with lower levels of education are less likely to participate in such programs (Verba and Nei 1972; Curtis et al. 1992, 2001; Weinberger and Jütting 2001; Steele et al. 2003). Educational enrolment, attainment and dropout rates from countries where the social structures continue to be based on historical norms and practices of discrimination based on gender differences, and caste and ethnic hierarchies, demonstrate how such divisions continue to have an effect on educational enrollment, attainment and dropout rates (Hannum and Xie 1998; Hannum and Stash 2001). Studies have also shown that even among educated individuals, historical relationships of discrimination and dependence often continue due to the differential quality and levels of education which influences the types of salaried employment available for those with privileged access (Jeffery et al. 2005; Subramanian et al. 2006). Also due to the persistent overlap of caste status with poverty in most cases, the high transaction costs (in terms of lost labor and of high costs) individuals from disadvantaged groups are also less likely to be able to travel beyond one's community.

THE STUDY SETTING

The setting for this study is the western Chitwan Valley in Nepal, an area that has undergone vast structural and social changes, especially since the mid 1950s, when the government of Nepal undertook a campaign to populate the fertile valley with people from neighboring hill districts and from the neighboring border states of India (Elder et al. 1976). This in-migration into the valley has made it one of the most multiethnic, multicultural, multi-linguistic settlements in the country (Blaikie, Cameron and Seddon 1980; Guneratne 2002). It also quickly marginalized the indigenous population of Tharu, Darai and Kumal who traditionally practiced shifting cultivation and a gathering economy. The lack of exposure to a money economy and to the value of land they owned, and ill-defined landownership policies led the Tharu population to be heavily exploited by the incoming migrants – the *pahadiyas* (people from the hills). The construction of two major roads linked to the eastern and western borders of the country which supported the rapid proliferation of government and non-governmental services including education and health, businesses, markets, banking, communications and diversified employment opportunities. Many of the major structural changes along with the extensive social changes they have introduced have occurred within the lifetime of many of the Valley's residents given the rapid pace of change that has taken place (Axinn and Yabiku 2001).

Community Based Organizations related to Livelihood Support

In recent years, Nepal too has been undertaking locally embedded approaches that focus on promoting increased decentralization, participation, decision making, skills building and collective action of local people (Chambers 1983; Kabeer 1994; Escobar 1995; Leys 1996; Axinn and Axinn 1997; Dasgupta and Beard 2007). A "community

group" approach has become an important entry point for distribution of resources, capacity building, consolidating collective action and social capital, and in participation in planning for livelihoods improvement and has been widely adopted by international donor agencies, governments and non-governmental organizations. Based on an adaptive interpretation of Putnam's (1995) seminal work on the role of civic participation, international aid agencies have been taking community based collective action and participation in planning almost as a pre-requisite for positive social change.

Indigenous civic organizations within different ethnic groups have long existed in Nepal but this study focuses on community groups that are separate from such customary ethnic or religious organizations, but are rather "sponsored" by development efforts in different social and economic sectors like agriculture, livestock, forestry, health, education, income generation, and access to credit. These groups are generally categorized as women's groups, resource users groups, credit groups and agriculture groups. More details of these groups have been presented in chapter one.

Caste, Ethnicity and Gender: Diversity, Disparities and Domination

Two important manifestations of the Nepali social structure which has been the basis of stratification, hierarchy and discrimination have been caste and gender. The enduring nature of the caste system in Nepal and India, as an institution, is evident by its persistence despite changing economic conditions, though in attenuated forms (Grusky and Ku 2008:27). Unlike the system in India, the caste system in Nepal is a mix of both a ritualistic ordering of groups of individuals as well as a "socially created system of social stratification established and sanctioned by secular power" (Greenwold 1975:74). In Nepal non-Hindu ethnic and indigenous categories of people were incorporated into a

modified caste hierarchy where socially, culturally and linguistically distinct ethnic and indigenous categories of people were subsumed within this structure based on their degree of similarity and differences with the cultural practices of the "upper caste" Nepali-speaking Hindus (Höfer 1979)[32] and the system was legalized through the promulgation of the first National Code (*Muluki Ain*) in the late 1854. Chapter two has outlined more details of this system of stratification and hierarchy.

Patriarchy and patrilineal systems are the underlying governing structures defining roles of men and women in general. The consistent paternalistic behaviors towards women are intertwined with religious ideologies prescribing strict conventions, norms and behaviors.[33] The legal adaptation of the caste system that integrated all non-Hindu ethnic groups promoted restrictions in the roles and status of women even among the relatively more egalitarian ethnic groups (Acharya and Bennett 1981; Pradhan 2002).[34] Studies of ethnic groups from the mid and high hills such as the Sherpa, Thakali, Magar, Tamang, and Limbu have shown the relatively more egalitarian roles and autonomous positions of women in terms of household decision making, mobility outside of the home and community, and roles in the family business and marketing (Jones and Jones 1976; Acharya and Bennett 1981; Molnar 1981; Watkins 1996; March 2002).

[32] The five tiers of the adapted caste hierarchy in Nepal are: (i) the *tagadharis* (the wearers of the sacred thread), (ii) the *namasinya matwali* (non-enslaveable alcohol drinkers), (iii) the *masinya matwali* (the enslaveable alcohol drinkers), (iv) the *pani chalne choi chito halnu naparne* (impure but touchable castes), and (v) *pani nachalne choi chito halnuparne* (the impure and untouchable castes) (Höfer 1979).

[33] Political processes of nation building guided by the powerful upper caste men encouraged *Hinduization* - the adoption of Hindu norms, values, practices and forms - of the non-Hindu population, promoting restriction of the relatively more egalitarian and autonomous positions of women of other ethnic groups within the country (Srinivas 1966; Höfer 1979; Pradhan 2002).

[34] Refer to Tamang (2009) for a critique on the role of various agents, including that of the NGOs and international aid agencies in "excluding and silencing radical diversity" in the women's movement in Nepal. Additionally she suggests that the processes of 'development' has not only linked Nepal with the 'West', but that it is also the "locus classicus of generic apolitical consciousness-less Nepali woman", where a single category of '*the* Nepali Woman' has failed to acknowledge the multiple intersections of gender, caste/ethnicity, and political ideologies.

Additional details on the situation of gendered relations and it impact on social indicators have been covered in chapter two.

Ideological changes and social movements in the decades of the 60s and 70s lead to a strategic focus on "women as agents and beneficiaries in all sectors and at all levels of the development process" in the 1980s by the UN and other aid agencies supporting economic growth in poor countries (UN 1989 in Kabeer 1994:2). Since the early 1990s government policies and plans have reflected specific measures to increase 'participation of women'; the Eighth National Plan (1992-1997) in particular stipulated the mandatory inclusion of women in the decision making process of local community based development initiatives, as well as increased a financial and structural support for micro-credit programs[35].

Gender and Caste/Ethnic Intersections: Polarized gender roles and structures that permeate life in Nepal intersect with caste and ethnic identities, as well as class. Bennett's (1983) seminal work on the life of the upper caste *Parbatiya* women (Bahun and Chettri) depict the contradictions and social pressures they face within their marital families, despite their high status within the caste hierarchy. Cameron's (1995) work with low caste women in western Nepal shows how due to their low status in two hierarchies – gender and caste – the work of untouchable women has changed with the changing economic needs of the community from that of primarily artisan-related production with a variety of paid agricultural and non-agricultural work. Furthermore, she details how the intersection of caste and gender has resulted in differing gender ideologies and set of meanings (for the differential values of productive and reproductive work and marriage

[35] The National Planning Commission of Nepal: http://www.npc.gov.np/en/plans-programs/detail.php?titleid=16.

practices for instance) within different caste groups among Hindu women (Cameron 1998). Thus the analysis of multiple dimensions of exclusion provide better insights into where and how locations of exclusion (and by extension, of inclusion) occurs and changes for different groups of people.

Changes at the Macro Level: This study does not examine changes in the macro context and its effects on individual behavior, yet it is useful to have a brief outline of some macro level changes that took place in Nepal that are likely to have some indirect effects on the phenomenon being studied.[36] Political changes in 1990 in Nepal to a multiparty democracy with a Constitutional Monarchy, lead to the liberalization of the civil society movement giving rise to a massive growth of non-governmental organizations. These organizations became a critical force in the process of delivering basic services particularly to rural communities, assisted by the influx of development aid channeled through these agencies.[37] The rapid rise in services delivered at the community level through mechanisms of local collective action programs can also be seen by the proliferation of community groups in Western Chitwan in Figure 3.1.

The post 1990 period also heralded a rise in discourses on identity politics (Lawoti 2010), particularly those based on caste, ethnicity and region, in stark contrast to earlier national agenda of forging a united state identity vis a vis Nepal's powerful neighbors and as a measure of political and cultural dominance of the upper caste elites. Caste, ethnicity and region based political parties, organizations and federations proliferated nationally (Lawoti and Guneratne 2010). Additionally the decade between

[36] The Chitwan Valley Family Study was designed expressively to study the impact of macro level changes in micro level demographic behaviour. Since such studies are not feasible within large national contexts, thus Western Chitwan Valley was selected as a site to study the causal influences of such changes.
[37]Beard (2005) notes a similar situation in Indonesia and outlines how this shift was a welcome political move for all parties concerned – the liberals and the conservatives.

1996 and 2006, a Maoist insurgency, aimed at unseating the constitutional monarchy and installing a democratic republic, caused severe political, economic and social instability throughout the country. The Maoists maintained an ideological commitment to class, caste and gender equality. In relation to gender equality Pettigrew and Shneiderman (2004) point out that the gap between rhetoric and practice was quite clear. Yet, high levels of participation of young women in the "People's War" was one of the most reported aspects of the conflict, and striking photos of young, gun toting guerrilla women, in unprecedented, highly unconventional roles often made the headlines during the years[38]. The Maoists are credited with pushing the ethnic agenda as well as that of the Dalits, highlighting the political, economic, social and cultural exclusion of these categories of people.

Legislative changes and national debates also thrust issues of women's rights and the exclusion of Dalits into the forefront during this period. The Nepal Citizenship Act 2006 provided the right of any individual whose mother or father is a Nepali citizen to gain citizenship, as opposed to the prior requirement of providing proof of father's citizenship. Secondly, the country also followed the trend towards liberalization of abortion law in support of women's reproductive rights. In 2000 the National Dalit Commission and in 2002 the National Women's Commission were formed to promote and protect the rights of Dalits and women heralding positive institutional change[39].

DATA, MEASURES AND ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

[38]Refer to Pettigrew and Shneiderman (2004) for a discussion on the contrasting narratives of agency and victimization of women during the Maoist movement in Nepal, and the new experiences for Nepali women of all caste, ethnic, class and regional backgrounds that have introduced them to "potentially transformative possibilities".

[39] Subsequently, both commissions have been near defunct due to continued political manipulation, limited power, and a lack of adequate resources.

This study uses data from the Chitwan Valley Family Study (CVFS) in Nepal, a large scale multidisciplinary longitudinal study. In 1996 data were collected from 171 neighborhoods in the study area of western Chitwan using a multi-stage probability proportionate to size sample, where neighborhoods were defined as a geographic cluster of 5-15 households (Barber et al. 1997). The 1996 individual survey interviewed every resident between the ages of 15 and 59, eating/sleeping in the selected neighborhood for three or more of the past six months, and the spouse of an eligible respondent. In 2008 the individual survey were re-administered in 151 of the original neighborhoods with data being obtained from a panel of 3,621 individuals.[40] Data were also collected at both time periods using a semi-structured interview technique called life history calendars, which generated yearly data on education, work and travel behaviors of the respondents among other information (Freedman et al. 1988). The study also uses household data from the Household Agriculture and Consumption survey component of the CVFS and the neighborhood history calendar of 1996 which comprise data of retrospective measures of walking distance in minutes to the nearest service institutions such as schools, health services, bus stops, employment centers, cooperatives, mills, temples, and the distance of the neighborhoods to the largest urban center in the study area.

The individual survey contained several questions related to the respondents' participation in community level youth and livelihood support oriented program groups. For this study, only individuals who reported in 1996 that they had never participated in community groups ever were selected from the panel. Only individuals between the ages

[40] Prospective demographic data collected after the 1996 individual and household surveys have focused on 151 out of the original 171 neighborhoods. Thus the 2008 individual survey was conducted in 151 neighborhoods only and an additional study component related to ideational influences on marriage and fertility behavior was also administered.

15-54 were selected for this study since group participation was focused within this age range. Thus respondents over age 55 years and those categorized as "others" in their caste/ethnicity were not included in this study sample due to the relatively small number of cases. Thus this study focuses on a panel of 2,742 respondents with complete data, 61 percent of who are women, and 36 percent of who participated in community groups for the first time at some point between 1997 and 2008. Data were missing for less than 1% for all variables. To ensure a clear temporal ordering of a set of individual experiences and their influence on participation in groups, a hazard file was constructed creating 25,295 person years of exposure to potential community group participation between 1997 and 2008. Descriptive statistics for all the measures used in this analysis are presented in Table 3.1. Since caste/ethnicity have had such a strong influence on life experiences and opportunities, selected measures of individual experiences disaggregated by caste/ethnic are presented in Table 3.2. The biggest differences among the caste/ethnic groups can be seen in their educational attainment. For instance, while the percentage of secondary level educational attainment for the upper caste category of individuals is 12 percent, the other three categories all have less than five percent.

[Tables 3.1 and 3.2 about here]

Measures of Caste/Ethnicity and Gender

The measure of individual caste/ethnicity is derived from the question in the individual survey where each individual is asked about the caste of their father. The individual interview records more than 20 different caste/ethnic categories and I re-coded them into four functional categories based on the prevalent social and cultural categories prescribed by the Hindu caste system and the National Code of Nepal which consolidated

all castes and ethnicities into one classification system as shown in Table 3.3 (Höfer 1979; Bennett et al. 2008). It is important to note that this study focuses on overall categories of caste/ethnic groups for two reasons: one is that this is a context where the status of individuals are closely tied to the status of the sub group/caste that they belong to, and secondly the small numbers of respondents in each of the 20 different groups is not sufficient, nor desirable, for the kind of analysis conducted for this study.

[Table 3.3 about here]

Bahun, Chhetri and Newar castes/ethnicities are re-coded into one category. The first two are customarily upper caste Hindus, with historic political and economic strongholds in the country. The Newars are a unique ethnic group within which lies the Hindu caste classification, yet they also comprise Buddhist religious followers. All three groups are combined in the same category for this study; they share similar social and political stature and also, in general, have similar individual characteristics, such as educational attainment, employment experiences, and travel experiences within the study context. This category of Bahun, Chhetri, and Newar is used as the reference category in the analysis.

A second category is Dalit, the so-called "lower caste" and "untouchable" occupational group which lies on the lowest end of the caste hierarchy and is the most discriminated against.[41] The third category is the Hill Janajati (ethnicity or nationality) comprising Tibeto-Burmese castes/ethnicities originally from the mid hills of the country.

[41] The term 'Dalit' is attributed to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, born in India into a low caste family, who rose to great prominence through his scholarship and lifelong political advocacy against caste discrimination. He is credited with introducing the term 'Dalit' to the low caste, untouchable population in 1957 in India and later on in Nepal too. The word means to be broken, torn or downtrodden. Refer to Cameroon (in Guneratne 2010) for an overview of the discussions around this highly contested label within Nepal among individuals belonging to this caste category.

They have distinct cultural characteristics especially in relation to gender roles and relationships, as well as separate languages, cultural interactions and caste/ethnic community associations. The forth category are the Tarai Janajati, the castes/ethnicities from the southern plains. The Tarai Janajati primarily comprise the *Tharu* population, who are the original indigenous "forest dwellers" of Chitwan (Muller-Boker 1999). Though the Dalit lie at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, in this study area, the Tharu as a group have suffered domination and marginalization since the multicultural migration into the Chitwan Valley. Guneratne (1998) argues that more than ideas of the ritual purity, it is the idea of modernity (like education, material conditions) that is used against the Tharus to characterize them as *'pichąri'* (backward) both by others and by themselves (p. 761). All four measures of caste/ethnicity are coded 1 and 0. Almost 50 percent of the study sample is Bahun/Chhetri/Newar, 11 percent Dalit, 23 percent Hill Janajati and 13 percent Tarai Janajati.

The measure of gender is straight forward with females coded "1" and males coded "0". In this study sample there are 61 percent females and 39 percent males. In 1996 the sex distribution was more evenly split, but since then there has been an increase in the migration of men from the study area, primarily to the countries in the Gulf region.

Measures of Participation in Community Groups.

In 1996, all respondents were asked the following question: *"Have you ever been a member of any other group, such as a User's Group, Mothers Group, a group organized by health volunteers, Rotary club or any other type of association or organization"?* The responses were coded "1" for any experience and "0" for no experience. All those in who had never participated in groups by 1996 are treated as at

risk of joining a group after 1996, and in 2008 they were asked the same basic question. Following this, respondents were asked how old they were when they first participated in community groups after 1996. This measure was used to define the hazard of participation in community groups, creating over 25,295 person years of exposure to the 'risk' of participation. Years in which individuals joined a group are coded as 1, all other years are coded 0, and individuals are censored from the analysis when they join a group. Pooling these person-years together forms a discrete-time hazard of joining a group following procedures described by Yamaguchi (1991). Because the likelihood of joining a group in any one particular year is low, this discrete approach is quite similar to continuous time approaches. All other measures of individual experiences used in this study were lagged by a year, so they describe the year before the person-year at risk. In the study sample 37 percent of those at risk had participated in community groups between 1997 and 2008.[42] Finally, a follow-up question asked the respondents to identify the different types of groups they had been members of which were primarily women's, youth, credit, resource user's groups, various agriculture groups, and non-governmental organizations[43].

Controls

Measures of Individual Experiences: Measures of selected individual experiences of the respondents up to 1996 and between 1997 and 2008 are used to test the influence of these experiences as intervening measures between caste groups and participation in

[42] In 1996 only 14 percent of the 5,271 original respondents had ever participated in community groups (CVFS 1996). Biggs and colleagues (2004) report that data from their study of 'development groups' in Nepal depict a spatial bias in the number of groups per capita that favors of the more remote, inaccessible and poor hill regions compared to the high mountain and the low lying more accessible districts such as Chitwan, which could account for these relatively low rates of participation.

[43] An additional 'other' category comprise project specific groups such as literacy groups, health groups, ethnicity specific groups, advocacy groups, multipurpose community planning and development groups.

community groups. Accumulated yearly experiences of travel, labor force experiences, and educational attainment are used to measure experiences up to 1996. The measure for these experiences between 1997 and 2008 are also accumulated and lagged by one year of the time to participation or the age of first participation.

Travel experiences: Respondents' travels to Kathmandu, the capital of the country, and outside of Nepal, were recorded, yearly, in the life history calendar in 1996 and 2008. Though travelling to Kathmandu and outside of the country is likely to have separate significance for the respondents, both kinds of travel present opportunities for wider exposure to ideas, information and alternate ways of lifestyles. The capital city of Kathmandu is one of the largest urban areas of the country with a concentration of administrative services, the best of health and educational institutions the country has to offer, and a key pilgrimage area for Hindus. Travel outside of the country is most likely for seasonal or short-term employment, usually to neighboring India and of more recently to countries in the Persian Gulf such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Kuwait.

Employment experiences: Two measures of employment experiences are used in the analysis: wage work and salary work. Different individuals are likely to have different employment experiences; low income individuals, especially those with limited educational attainment, are likely to have more wage work experiences. In this setting the majority of wage work is most likely to be agriculture labor. Salaried work requires atleast some level of education, thus due to generally low levels of education, there are fewer people who have had salaried work experiences.

Educational attainment: The respondents' years of formal education are recorded in the individual survey and they are categorized into five different levels of education based on the Nepali system: no education, primary education (1-5 years), lower secondary (years 6-8), secondary (9-10) and high education (11+ years). In 1996, 39 percent of respondents had no education, while 10 percent had 11 or more years of formal education. A dichotomous measure is used to denote those who obtain any additional education between 1997 and 2008 (1=yes and 0=no).

Individual Characteristics: Birth cohorts, marital status and measures of wealth are used as important controls. Given that tremendous social, economic, and political changes have been introduced within a span of 50 years in the study area, birth cohorts are an important control since respondents experience different influences on social roles and expectations over the years. Dummy variables are created for four birth cohorts (coded "1" and "0") and the youngest cohort of 1972-1981 (age group 15-24) is treated as the reference group. Livelihood support programs aim at adults who have responsibilities for their family welfare thus the married individuals are more likely to participate in community groups. Marital status of the respondents in 1996 is another control used and is coded dichotomously[44].

The wealth of the individuals representing their economic status is also an important control, given that the principal focus of most community group programs is poor and marginalized households. The study setting is characterized by subsistence agriculture and low levels of monetization hence a combination of four measures from

[44]Four different categories of marital status: single, widowed/divorced, married-not living with spouse, and married-living with spouse was also tested and the results were substantially similar with the forth category having the significantly higher odds of participation. So the simpler measure was retained in the models.

the 1996 agriculture practices segment of the survey.[45] The amount of cultivation of *bari* (upland that is usually not irrigated) and the more valuable and productive *khet* (irrigated low land) is used, since the majority of the respondents do not own land but sharecrop, work on contract or are tenants on the land that they farm. Both measures of amount of land cultivated are coded as ordinal variables. Livestock ownership is another measure for wealth. Respondents were asked how many cows, buffaloes, sheep, goats, and pigs they owned. Using the livestock unit conversion based on the average weight of animals used successfully in the context of Nepal (Agrawal and Gupta 2005), a single measure of total livestock ownership is created. The final wealth measure is an index of seven 'consumer items' that the household owes - a radio, television, bicycle, motorcycle, a bullock-cart, whether respondents have a toilet in their home, and whether they have electricity at home. This index of consumer items has a value of 0-7.

Parental and Childhood Experiences: The second set of control measures are related to the respondents' parents' experiences and their early childhood exposure. Separate indices are created of parents' experiences of going to school, working for pay outside of the home, traveling outside of their community and having ever watched a movie. All four indices measure whether both parents have never had the experience coded"0", whether one parent has had the experience coded "1" or whether both parents have had the experience coded "2". The influence of the respondent's exposure to non-family institutions in their childhood are controlled through an index of the existence of a six institutions within a one-hour walk from home of the respondent before they were 12

[45] Two additional waves of the household agriculture practices surveys were conducted in 2001and 2006. I use the 1996 measures of wealth to maintain temporal order to household wealth prior to respondents joining community groups.

years old - the presence of schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, development programs, and presence of women's groups (with a value of 0-6).

The final control considered in the analysis is the parameterization of time, measured by the number of years for the risk of participation. The hazard is parameterized as a quadratic function, which allows the hazard to increase and then decrease in an upside-down 'U' shape.

Analytical Approach

A series of nested discrete-time event history models are used to test likelihood of individuals to participate in community groups between 1997 and 2008, using person-years as the unit of exposure to the 'risk' of participation. The models test the yearly hazard of participating in community groups within the 12 year period beginning in 1997. The cumulative sum of the time varying independent measures (after 1996) is lagged by a year in order to assure that participation occurs chronologically after the events. The models also control for the time since the beginning of the hazard, as well as a squared measure of time.

Logistic regression procedures are used to estimate multivariate models that measure the odds of respondents using following equation:

$$\ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = a + \sum B_k X_k$$

where p is the probability of community group participation, $\frac{p}{(1-p)}$ is the odds of participation, a is a constant term, B_k is the effect of independent variables in the model, and X_k is the value of these independent variables. The odds ratios can be interpreted as the factor by which one unit increase in the independent variable will increase the odds of

community group participation. The *p*-values for the odds ratios are based on robust standard errors.

The sample design that generated the CVFS data results from 151 neighborhoods that comprise clusters of 5-15 households. As useful as it is for some analysis, in a study which looks at individual level variances, there is a potential for cluster level effects on the estimates (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). Hence the models are controlled for cluster level effects and the standard errors are adjusted for the 151 clusters. Additionally, the study of community group participation faces two key problems: the issue of self-selection of members and the nonrandom placement of groups (Barber et al. 2001). The factor of self-selection of members into community groups is due to the voluntary nature of participation; being based on the individual's needs, interests and abilities. The nonrandom placement of community group programs is due to the livelihood support programs being placed in specific locations for proximity to poor and marginalized neighborhoods. But, spontaneously formed community groups such as some women's groups or youth groups are likely to have been formed by members themselves. Therefore the analysis controls for all individual level characteristics in 1996 to address the first issue, and controls for clustering by neighborhoods in the regression models to address the second issue.

RESULTS

Caste/Ethnicity, Gender and Group Participation

Table 3.4 shows the results of the analysis of the effects of caste/ethnicity and gender on community group participation, which are presented as odds ratios, the exponentiated logistic regression coefficients. A coefficient of greater than one represents

higher odds of participation in community groups, and a coefficient of less than one represents lower odds of participation for individual respondents. Model 1 in Table 3.4 has the results from the analysis which measures the direct effect of caste/ethnicity on the odds of participation between 1997 and 2008 taking only measures of time and time squared into the model, as well as how it differs for women compared to men. Compared to the reference group of the upper caste category of Bahun, Chettri and Newar, the other three caste/ethnic categories have significantly low odds of participation in community groups. The odds are lower by 38 percent for lower caste Dalit individuals, 48 percent lower for the Hill Janajati, and 46 percent lower for the Tarai Janajati, all compared to the Bahun/Chettri/Newar category of individuals. For women in general, compared to the men, their odds of participation in community groups are 112 percent greater and highly significant, potentially a result of the higher levels of targeted programs nationally to reach women. The parameters specifying the duration of the hazard show a quadratic trend. The positive effect of time and the negative effect for time squared indicate a hazard of participation that increases at first and then decreases in an upside-down 'U' shape over the period of time

In Model 2 of Table 3.4 all the measures from 1996 that are likely to affect participation are introduced into the model. Individual characteristics of birth cohort, marital status, household wealth, measures of parental experiences and childhood exposure, as well as the cumulative total of individual experiences of travel, employment and educational attainment are introduced into the model. It can be seen that individual characteristics and experiences intervene and reduce the direct influence of individual caste/ethnicity on the odds of participation in community groups. For Dalits, their odds of

participation between 1997 and 2008 are only 19 percent lower compared to the Bahun/ Chettri/Newar category when all the measures for individual characteristics and individual experiences before 1996 are taken into consideration. Similarly for the marginalized indigenous Tarai Janajati the odds of participation are 28 percent lower compared to the upper caste category. For individuals from the Hill Janajati category however their odds for participation (42 percent lower odds) do not vary much from Model 1 even after all the 1996 controls are introduced.

The results also show that women, in general, have significantly higher odds of joining community groups compared to men (132 percent) between 1997 and 2008 when taking into account all the individual characteristics and experiences. The previous study of the association of caste and community group participation before 1996 had generated results where the significantly lower odds of participation for women compared to men had been removed when educational attainment had been introduced in the model (Pradhan Chapter 2). As mentioned earlier,

A review of the results of some of the key intervening measures show that among the selected individual experiences, educational attainment has one of the biggest effects on the odds of participation in community groups. Individuals with even a primary level of education have higher odds of participation in groups compared to those with no education. Subsequently those with increasingly higher educational attainment have even more significantly higher odds of participation.[46] In terms of the effects of birth cohort, we see that compared to the individuals in the youngest cohort (ages 15-24), for both cohort groups born before 1961, their odds of participation are significantly lower. These

[46] Addition of the 1996 educational attainment measures in Model 2 also wiped out the significant and positive odds of community group participation of individual experiences of travelling to Kathmandu (results not shown).

individuals had less chances of participating in groups particularly since the community based approach for livelihoods support had not developed and spread so much. Married individuals also have much higher odds of participation compared to non-married ones as expected since younger (and most often unmarried) individuals are more likely to join youth clubs that focus primarily on sporting and cultural activities. Of the four different measures of the respondents' parents' experiences, interestingly those with the exposure to movies had statistically significant, higher odds (16 percent) of group participation compared to those who did not have any exposure, suggesting perhaps the power of the media in the intergenerational spread of new ideas and aspirations for a better life.

In the Model 3 of Table 3.4 more contemporary individual experiences of travel, employment and additional education are added to account for the influence of any of these experiences prior to the age at first participation (i.e. the risk of group participation). We can see that none of the cumulative experiences of travel to Kathmandu, travel outside Nepal, salary and wage work, and any additional education received after 1997 (lagged by a year before first group participation), has a significant effect on the group participation and thus does not significantly change the effects of caste/ethnicity on group participation from the previous model. The odds of participation for Dalit are not significant from those of the upper caste category. For the indigenous inhabitants of the Valley (the Tarai Janajati – the Tharu, Darai, Kumal and Bote/Majhi), their odds of participation are still significantly lower by 27 percent compared to the *pahadiyas* (the Bahun/Chettri/Newar). The results for the hill ethnicities are also similar to the previous model at 41 percent lower odds for group participation.

Similarly, the magnitude of the odds of participation for women compared to men does not change much either. When the additional individual experiences of travel, salary and wage work experiences and additional educational attainment are taken into consideration, women still have much higher odds of joining in community groups.

Thus we can see that the odds of group participation for some individuals between 1997 and 2008, is influenced by their caste/ethnicity even when selected individual characteristics and experiences are taken into account. For individuals from the Dalit category, their odds of participation between 1997 and 2008 are not significantly different from these of the upper caste Bahun/Chettri/Newar individuals. The biggest influence on decreasing the lower odds of participation comes from taking account of their individual characteristics and experiences in 1996, in particular their educational attainment. For the individuals from the Tarai Janajati category, controlling for those measures changes the odds, but compared to the upper caste category, they still have significantly lower odds of participation. However, for individuals from the Hill Janajati category, the pre- and post-1996 experiences do not significantly change their odds of participation compared to the upper caste category. Additionally, women's odds of participation in community groups are significantly higher than men within the same timeframe, and attest to the increasing access for women to community level collective action programs that support their livelihood during this timeframe despite the ongoing political conflict and violence throughout the country and including the study site.[47]

[47] Separate analysis was conducted for examining participation in different community groups: (i) Women's Groups for (women only); (ii) Savings and Credit Groups; and (iii) All Other Groups. Participation of women compared to men was highly significant and positive in the latter two groups. Compared to the upper caste groups, women from all other caste/ethnic groups had significantly lower odds of participation in Women's Groups. Participation of Dalit, Hill Janajati and Tarai Janajati was lower in Credit Groups but was significant in the case of the first two caste/ethnic groups only. Participation in All

[Table 3.4 about here]

Changes in Community Group Participation Overtime

Table 3.5 presents the results of the analytical models with interaction terms between gender and time to examine how participation of men and women changes over time.[48] As in the previous model, here too all pre- and post- 1996 experiences and characteristics have been controlled for. The results show that women had 59 percent higher odds of joining groups between 1997 and 2008 compared to men and this relation was positive over time (6 percent).[49] Figure 3.2 shows the predicted log odds for women and men, where the likelihood of women joining groups increases steadily and drops off gradually over time forming a curvilinear pattern. For men, participation increases at lower levels and drop to much lower levels between 1997 and 2008 as well. In the previous study on the association between caste/ethnicity in chapter two and community group participation, the effect of educational attainment had explained all gender differences in community group participation. The availability of longitudinal data has helped to refine this association by the ability to establish the correct temporal order of individual experiences prior to the joining of community groups, to establish how the likelihood of joining groups for men and women within the period of the two study waves have changed over time, and to be able to show how for women the likelihood of joining groups for the first time has increased significantly and positively compared to men while taking all other individual characteristics and experiences into consideration.

Other Groups was significantly lower than the upper caste groups for Hill Janajati members only. Results are not shown.

[48] Interactions between caste/ethnic categories and time were also tested to examine how participation for the different categories differs over time. The results were not significant thus are not presented here.

[49]The predicted log odds in Figure 3.2 and Figure 3.3 are calculated using only the key measures while all intervening individual characteristics and experiences are kept constant.

[Table 3.5 and Figure 3.2 about here]

The Intersection of Caste/Ethnicity and Gender

Table 3.6 shows the results for the interaction between gender and caste/ethnicity on community group participation. All the individual characteristics and pre- and post-1996 experiences are included but those results are not shown. A significance test statistic for the interaction terms indicates that the effects of caste/ethnicity vary by gender (Allison 1977). In Table 3.6 I find that the only significant interaction effect is the difference between odds of participation for Hill Janajati women compared to men from the same ethnic group. While the overall odds of participation for all Hill Janajati individuals is lower compared to the upper caste categories (lower odds of 60 percent compared to the reference category), the interaction effect between caste/ethnic category and gender suggests that for women from the Hill Janajati category, their odds of community group participation are significantly higher (66 percent) compared to men from the same caste/ethnic category. Figure 3.3 depicts the predictive log odds of participation for Hill Janajati men and women and shows the consistent wide gap between them in the community group participation. Participation for both Hill Janajati men and women increases at first and then overtime it decreases forming a curvilinear path. Women from the Hill Janajati ethnic groups in Nepal (particularly Gurung women in the western mid hills of the country) have been the pioneers in the formation of *Ama Samuha* (Mother's Groups) for community work such building trails, temples, community centers, etc. They are most noted for raising funds through entertaining tourists and *Lahures* (Nepali men serving in the British or Indian Army) through cultural programs in their villages (Bhattachan 2002; Biggs et al. 2004). This model of the *Ama*

Samuha has been taken up and adapted not only by women of other caste/ethnic groups, but also by development agencies.[50] The analysis of the intersection between caste/ethnicity and gender provides valuable insights into differences among men and women from different caste/ethnic categories and the differences in their behaviors. At the outset, though individuals from the Hill Janajati category seem to have the lowest odds of participation in community groups compared to the upper caste groups, the women among them have much higher odds of participation compared to the men. For the most marginalized categories of Dalit and Tarai Janajati people within the study context, the interactions effects are not significant, suggesting non-significant differences among men and women in community group participation.

[Table 3.5 and Figure 3.2 about here]

DISCUSSION

Previous studies have examined determinants of individual participation in voluntary community level organizations, which aim at improving livelihoods as well as life conditions of poor and marginalized groups of people. This study adds an important dimension to previous studies by using longitudinal data and focusing on the effects of social identities such as caste and ethnicity and gender on the probabilities of joining an organization, particularly within contexts where groups of individuals have experienced multiple exclusions based on social, economic and political structures and norms.

Additionally this study also examines this exclusion from the perspective of the intersectionality of caste/ethnicity and gender recognizing that multiple levels of

[50] Many *Aama Samuha* of Bahun-Chhetri castes have been known to promote the banning of alcohol and gambling in public in the villages across the country. Others activities conducted by contemporary *Aama Samuha* have also centered on forming support networks against gender based violence, promotion of women's reproductive health, and child health activities as well as savings and credit activities (Bhattachan 2002).

exclusion are likely to have differential effects. Finally it also examines how community group participation changes over time. The study uses discrete-time hazard models from a unique set of survey data from Western Chitwan Valley in Nepal. The results show that participation of women, in general, compared to men, increased significantly over time (130 percent) when accounting for all individual level characteristics and experiences. The odds of participation for individuals from marginalized caste /ethnic categories show the influence of historically exclusion. In 2008, the participation rates for individuals from the lower caste Dalit category are no longer significantly different from that of the upper caste Bahun/Chettri/Newar categories, while those of the indigenous Tarai Janajati category and the migrant Hill Janajati category continue to have significantly lower odds of participation (27 percent and 41 percent respectively). Yet, the interaction effects show that rates of participation for women from the Hill Janajati category is statistically significant and positive compared to men from the same category, unlike that for the other women from the other caste/ethnic categories. Additionally the odds of participation for all women, in general, also increase over time in a manner that is significantly different for men.

There are a number of critical issues that this study has brought up. The first one is related to the need for contextual analysis within the framework of social exclusion. The understanding that social exclusion as being inherently relational, and that *who* is excluded is a matter that needs to be situated within a context in time and place, need to be strongly underlined. In the context of the Chitwan Valley, the indigenous Tarai Janajati category of people has been marginalized particularly since the process of in-migration into the fertile Valley. Guneratne discusses the widespread perception among

Tharus about the advantage the migrants took of them and exploited their illiteracy to take control of land through chicanery and fraud, and how this perception continues to define the relationship between the Tharus and the *Pahadiya* migrants (2002:109). Yet until the recent political turn of events in Nepal, academic discourses and policy debates focused more on discrimination, disadvantages and exclusion mostly on the two ends of the hierarchical caste structure – the upper most categories of Bahun/ Chettri in relation to the 'untouchable' Dalits at the lowest ends. Many ethnic groups have been underrepresented in development activities and are relatively powerless due to inadequate political representation in many communities. A re-conceptualization of the institution of caste hierarchy (with its manipulation of non-Hindu ethnicities into its folds) would become more meaningful if "differences dominate the articulation of a hierarchy in the caste system", rather than hierarchy per say as Gupta (2007) argues for.[51] This view is not to undermine the acute disadvantages that the lower caste 'hard core' excluded categories of people have faced. But defining exclusions based on the specific narratives of the local context, political conditions, economic systems, and key relational categories of people is critically important in designing policies and programs for social change. While the indigenous Tharu population in Chitwan might be one of the most marginalized groups, all Tharus throughout the country are not alike. Adhikari and Pradhan (2000) document the case of Dang Valley further west in Nepal where Tharus are numerically and politically dominant, where they control an irrigation system and the *Pahadis* migrant upper caste and hill ethnic groups find themselves discriminated against in the distribution of water for irrigation.

[51] Gupta (2007:11-12) propagates this framework of rethinking of the institution of caste, particularly within India, where there are as many other legends or origin tales as there castes and sub-castes, contesting the Brahman' legends of the origin of the hierarchy, which places them at the top.

A second issue is related to categories of marginalization and disadvantage being extended to more modern institutions and structures as well. In his study of Tharu political identity, Guneratne argues that more than ideas of the ritual purity, it is the idea of modernity (like education, material conditions) that is used against the Tharus to characterize them as *'pichąri'* (backward) both by others and by themselves (1998: 761). In Western Chitwan, educational attainment has the strongest effect on community group participation and unlike the case in other similar contexts where individuals with some levels of education have the highest levels of participation (Beard 2005), in Chitwan, individuals with higher education (more than 10 years) participation much more. Thus educational attainment not only influences basic life conditions and opportunities, but is also an important determinant for community group participation in this context. This has critical consequences within contexts such as the study area, where universal educational attainment is low and varies based on caste and ethnicity, and where there is considerable overlaps between educational attainment and poverty. Education is a major intervening variable through which class, racial and gender inequalities are created, sustained and reproduced in a knowledge-based society, yet the contentious politics surrounding unequal access to quality education for certain groups has not only been inadequately addressed but has also negative consequences in programs that seek to support the marginalized groups (Massey 1998). While at some levels the juxtaposition between ethnic identity and economic struggles may be very stark, at other levels it calls for a deeper understanding of why despite principles of universalism, freedom and equal opportunity, discrimination of certain groups continue along racial or ethnic lines in the global context.

The third issue is related to the importance of examining the intersection of multiple categories of exclusion. As the results from this study showed that examining the intersection of caste/ethnicity with gender revealed that though the overall odds of community participation are lower for the hill ethnic groups compared to the upper caste category, when the effect is disaggregated for men and women, the latter have statistically significant and positive odds of community group participation compared to the men, when important individual characteristics and experiences were taken into account. Women from hill ethnic groups such as the Gurungs have customarily been involved in local level community activities, and this form of community group has been modeled in many rural areas of the country among other caste and ethnic groups as well. Culturally too, women from the ethnic groups originally from the mid hills of the country have known to have relatively more autonomy and decision making power compared to women from other caste/ethnic groups. Yet women from the other ethnic groups have potentially been encouraged to join groups due to targeting by development programs.

A final point that I would like to address is the need for closer examination of individual agency among excluded categories of people. The current focus on social exclusion by policy analysts have focused on macro-level trends of "disadvantage, alienation and lack of freedom" for certain groups relative to others (Gore and Figueiredo 1997) and have not paid adequate attention to the role of individual agency at the micro levels which continue practices of exclusion and inclusion. Individual agency is reflected in for instance how powerful, dominant and wealthier groups might exercise their own agency to protect their own interests through 'elite capture' to maximize access to resources (Biggs et al. 2004). Thus the question arises, what do poor and marginalized

groups do in situations of disadvantage in relation to opportunities provided by community based programs? Thus additional ethnographic research would potentially help in providing important insights into these issues.

While this study has highlighted crucial evidence of how community group participation has changed overtime it is important to understand that measures of discriminatory practices among individuals and institutions that might have helped to better understand the conditions are not available in the current data being used. As unique as the CVFS data are, they were designed for different purposes. Yet the availability of the data that provides an opportunity to conduct this kind of a study to generate important empirical evidence is in itself a unique opportunity.

"Community development groups mean different things to different people: one version might mean that caste-based discrimination might be left as it is thus reinforcing social injustices. In another situation it might mean activities to help marginalized groups to become empowered and begin to effectively challenge existing social relationships." (Biggs et al. 2004:44). For social scientists studying social change, this means the need to unearth the underlying causes and processes of how such differences come about, and how changes in these differences come about, is still very crucial.

Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics of Measures. Changes in Community Group Participation in Western Chitwan, 1996-2008. (*N* =2,742 creating 25,295 person-years exposure)

Variables	Respondents		
	Mean	**Std. Deviation**	**Range**
Participation in Groups 1997-2008	0.37	0.48	0 - 1
Caste/Ethnicity			
Bahun/Chhetri/Newar (upper caste)	0.49	0.50	0 – 1
Dalit (lower caste)	0.11	0.32	0 – 1
Hill Janajati (hill caste/ethnicity)	0.16	0.36	0 – 1
Tarai Janajati (plains caste/ethnicity)	0.24	0.42	0 – 1
Females	0.61	0.49	0 – 1
Additional experiences after 1997			
Times travelled to Kathmandu	0.39	1.40	0 – 11
Total times outside of Nepal	0.11	0.53	0 – 11
Total years of salary work	1.28	2.99	0 – 11
Total years of wage work	3.27	4.55	0 – 11
Additional Education	0.65	1.88	0 – 11
Experiences as of 1996			
Total times travelled to Kathmandu	0.53	2.07	0 - 38
Total times outside of Nepal	0.16	0.70	0 - 14
Total years of salary work	1.54	4.37	0 - 40
Total years of wage work	3.12	7.25	0 - 57
Education in 1996			
No Education [a]	0.46	0.50	0 - 1
Primary (1-5 years)	0.19	0.39	0 - 1
Lower Secondary (6-8 yrs)	0.19	0.39	0 - 1
Secondary (9-10 years)	0.08	0.28	0 - 1
High Education (11+ years)	0.08	0.28	0 - 1
Birth Cohort			
1942-51 (Cohort 4, ages 45-54)	0.16	0.36	0 - 1
1952-61 (Cohort 3, ages 35-44)	0.20	0.40	0 - 1
1962-71 (Cohort 2, ages 25-34)	0.26	0.44	0 - 1
1972-81 (Cohort 1, ages 15-24)	0.38	0.48	0 - 1
Married in 1996	0.76	0.43	0 - 1
Wealth in 1996			
Bari/upland cultivated (in *kattha*)[52]	8.14	12.00	0 - 112
Khet/lowland cultivated (*kattha*)	14.73	24.86	0 - 150
Livestock owned (in LSU) [53]	2.90	2.50	0 - 18.5
Index: ownership of consumer items[54]	2.64	1.61	0 - 7
Parental Influences	0.34	0.57	0 - 2
Parents school ever			
Parents work for pay >R is 12 yrs	0.66	0.75	0 - 2
Parents travel ever >R is 12 yrs	0.43	0.67	0 - 2
Parents movie ever >R is 12 yrs	0.67	0.84	0 - 2
Influence of childhood exposure (<12)[55]	2.71	1.65	0 - 6

[52]*Kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.

[53]Livestock Unit (LSU): where 1 LSU=1water buffalo=1.2 cows=4 goats=5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).

[54]Ownership of seven consumer items: radio, TV, bicycle, motorcycle, cart, a toilet at home, and electricity at home.

[55]Sum of the presence of schools, market, employers and development programs within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.

Table 3.2: Descriptive Statistics of Measures Disaggregated by Caste/Ethnicity, 1996-2008, Western Chitwan.
(*N* = 2,742 creating 25,295 person-years of exposure)

	Caste/Ethnicity											
	B/C/ N (upper caste) *N=1,354*			**Dalits (lower caste) *N=308***			**Hill Janajati (hill ethnic) *N=433***			**Tarai Janajati (plains ethnic) *N=647***		
			Range			*Range*			*Range*			*Range*
Group Participation 1997-2008	0.45	(0.50)		0.31	(0.46)		0.27	(0.45)		0.28	(0.45)	
Females	0.64	(0.48)		0.56	(0.50)		0.63	(0.48)		0.58	(0.49)	
Experiences after 1997												
Times travelled to Kathmandu	0.52	(1.62)	0-11	0.18	(0.64)	0 - 6	0.54	(1.80)	0-11	0.13	(0.59)	0-11
Total times outside of Nepal	0.15	(0.66)		0.11	(0.41)	0 - 4	0.10	(0.35)	0 - 2	0.05	(0.29)	0 - 5
Total years of salary work	1.39	(3.05)		1.16	(2.94)	0-11	1.16	(2.79)	0-11	1.21	(3.01)	0-11
Total years of wage work	1.62	(3.38)		5.72	(4.90)	0-11	3.35	(4.65)	0-11	5.51	(4.94)	0-11
Additional Education	1.03	(2.36)		0.23	(0.90)	0 - 6	0.35	(1.33)	0-11	0.25	(1.09)	0-11
Experiences as of 1996												
Times travelled to Kathmandu	0.57	(2.31)	0-38	0.67	(2.29)	0-25	0.46	(1.79)	0-19	0.43	(1.49)	0-21
Times outside of Nepal	0.17	(0.67)	0-12	0.19	(0.96)	0-14	0.16	(0.76)	0-12	0.13	(0.55)	0 - 7
Total years of salary work	1.57	(4.36)	0-40	1.51	(4.13)	0-31	1.85	(5.19)	0-33	1.25	(3.86)	0-33
Total years of wage work	2.64	(6.53)	0-43	3.15	(7.04)	0-36	3.68	(8.03)	0-41	3.72	(8.13)	0-57
Education in 1996 (0, 1)												
No Education [a]	0.32	(0.47)		0.58	(0.49)		0.50	(0.50)		0.65	(0.48)	
Primary (1-5 years)	0.16	(0.37)		0.25	(0.43)		0.22	(0.42)		0.18	(0.39)	
Lower Secondary (6-8 yrs)	0.25	(0.43)		0.17	(0.32)		0.18	(0.39)		0.11	(0.31)	
Secondary (9-10 years)	0.12	(0.33)		0.04	(0.19)		0.05	(0.22)		0.04	(0.20)	
High Education (11+ years)	0.14	(0.35)		0.02	(0.13)		0.04	(0.19)		0.02	(0.15)	

Table 3.3: Categorization of Caste and Ethnic Groups.
Categorization in Western Chitwan along regional divisions and social groups based on 2001 Census of Nepal.

	Caste/ Ethnic Groups	Caste/Ethnic Groups with 11 Regional Divisions and 103 Social Groups	Categorization in Chitwan Data
Caste Groups	1. Brahman /Chhetri	1.1 Hill Brahman Hill Brahman	***Bahun/Chhetri*** 1. Bahun (Brahman) 2. Chhetri
		1.2 Hill Chhetri Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi	
		1.3 Tarai/Madhesi Brahman/Chhetri Madhesi Brahman, Nurang, Rajput, Kayastha	
	2. Tarai/ Madhesi Other Castes	2.1 Tarai/Madhesi Other Castes Kewat, Mallah, Lohar, Nuniya, Kahar, Lodha, Rajbhar, Bing, Mali, Kamar, Dhuniya, Yadav, Teli, Koiri, Kurmi, Sonar, Baniya, Kalwar, Thakur/Hazam, Kanu, Sudhi , Kumhar, Haluwai, Badhai, Barai, Bhediyar/ Gaderi	--
	3. Dalits	3.1 Hill Dalit Kami, Damai/Dholi, Sarki, Badi, Gaine, Unidentified Dalits	***Dalit*** 1. Kami 2. Damai ***3.*** Sarki
		3.2 Tarai /Madhesi Dalit Chamar/Harijan, Musahar, Dushad/Paswan, Tatma, Khatwe, Dhobi, Baantar, Chidimar, Dom, Halkhor, Unidentified Dalits	
Adivasi/ Janajati	4. Newar	4. Newar Newar	***Newar*** 1. Newar
	5. Janajati	5.1. Hill Janajati Tamang, Kumal, Sunuwar, Majhi, Danuwar, Thami/Thangmi, Darai, Bote, Baramu/Bramhu, Pahari, Kusunda, Raji, Raute, Chepang/Praja, Hayu, Magar, Chyantal, Bankarya, Rai, Sherpa, Bhujel/Gharti, Yakha, Thakali, Limbu, Lepcha, Bhote, Byansi, Jirel, Hyalmo, Walung, Gurung, Dura	**Hill *Janajati*** 1. Tamang 2. Gurung 3. Magar
		5.2. Tarai Janajati Tharu, Jhangad,Dhanuk , Rajbanshi, Gangai, Santhal/Satar, Dhimal, Tajpuriya, Meche, Koche, Kisan, Munda, Kusunda, Kusbadiya/Pathharkatta	**Tarai *Janajati*** 1. Tharu 2. Darai 3. Kumhal 4. Bote/Majhi
Other	6. Muslim	6. Muslim Madhesi Muslim, Churoute (Hill Muslim)	**Others** 1. Muslim 2. Indian 3. Others
	7. Other	7. Other Marwari, Bangali, Jain, Punjabi, Sikh, Unidentified Others	

Adapted from Gurung (2003) and Bennett, Dahal and Govindasamy (2008).

Table 3.4: Caste/Ethnicity, Gender and Changes in Community Group Participation. Logistic Regression Estimates in Odds Ratios, of Discrete-Time Hazard Models of Community Group Participation of Individuals ages 15-54 years in 1996 in Western Chitwan, 1996-2008**.**

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Caste/Ethnicity						
Bahun/Chhetri/Newar (upper)[a]	-		-		-	
Dalit (lower caste)	0.62***	(-3.70)	0.81+	(-1.68)	0.81	(-1.58)
Hill Janajati (caste/ethnicity)	0.52***	(-6.59)	0.58***	(-5.10)	0.59***	(-4.96)
Tarai Janajati (plains caste/ethnicity)	0.54***	(-4.83)	0.72*	(-2.51)	0.73*	(-2.41)
Females	2.12***	(9.47)	2.32***	(9.62)	2.30***	(8.93)
Experiences after 1997						
Times travelled to Kathmandu					0.94	(-1.41)
Total times outside of Nepal					1.07	(1.03)
Total years of salary work					0.99	(-0.55)
Total years of wage work					0.99	(-0.23)
Additional Education					1.02	(0.79)
Experiences as of 1996						
Times travelled to Kathmandu			1.02	(1.62)	1.02+	(1.67)
Total times outside of Nepal			1.03	(0.67)	1.03	(0.66)
Total years of salary work			1.00	(0.60)	1.00	(0.57)
Total years of wage work			0.99	(-0.81)	0.99	(-0.74)
Educational Experiences						
No Education [a]			-		-	
Primary (1-5 years)			1.28*	(2.43)	1.29*	(2.47)
Lower Secondary (6-8 yrs)			1.68***	(4.39)	1.68***	(4.15)
Secondary (9-10 years)			1.89***	(3.76)	1.90***	(3.54)
High Education (11+ years)			1.97***	(4.28)	2.03***	(4.29)
Birth Cohort						
1942-51 (Cohort 4)			0.46***	(-4.68)	0.46***	(-4.57)
1952-61 (Cohort 3)			0.70**	(-2.68)	0.71**	(-2.64)
1962-71 (Cohort 2)			0.95	(-0.52)	0.96	(-0.44)
1972-81 (Cohort 1) [a]			-		-	
Married in 1996			1.46***	(4.41)	1.54***	(3.94)
Wealth in 1996						
*Khet/*lowland cultivated (*kattha*)			0.99*	(-2.17)	0.99*	(-2.29)
*Bari/*upland cultivated (*kattha*)			1.00+	(1.87)	1.00+	(1.88)
Livestock owned (in LU)			1.01	(0.47)	1.01	(0.53)
Ownership of consumer items			1.06*	(2.17)	1.07*	(2.18)
Parental Influences						
Parents school ever			0.92	(-1.16)	0.93	(-1.10)
Parents work for pay > R is 12 y			0.97	(-0.52)	0.98	(-0.47)
Parents travel ever >R is 12 yrs			0.96	(-0.89)	0.95	(-0.94)
Parents movie ever >R is 12 yrs			1.16**	(2.85)	1.16**	(2.84)
Childhood Exposure			0.98	(-0.57)	0.98	(-0.58)
Time	1.30***	(5.03)	1.31***	(5.14)	1.31***	(5.09)
Time Squared	0.98***	(-3.84)	0.98***	(3.78)	0.98***	(3.74)
No. of Obs. (person years)	25,297					
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-4085.11		-3997.45		-3995.21	
Wald χ^2	205.93***		394.27***		423.21***	
Pseudo R^2	0.0305		0.0513		0.0519	

Estimates are presented as odds ratio, with Z-statistics in parenthesis. [a] Reference category
Standard error adjusted for 151 clusters in neighborhoods. +p<0.1 *p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Table 3.5: Caste/Ethnicity, Gender and Community Group Participation with Gender and Time Interactions. Logistic Regression Estimates of Discrete-Time Hazard Models of Community Group Participation in Western Chitwan, 1996-2008**.**

Interactions	**Gender and Time**	
Caste/Ethnicity		
Bahun/Chhetri/Newar (upper caste)	*- Reference -*	
Dalit (lower caste)	0.81	(-1.60)
Hill Janajati (hills caste/ethnicity)	0.59***	(-4.96)
Tarai Janajati (plains caste/ethnicity)	0.72*	(-2.44)
Females	1.59**	(2.82)
Females * Time	1.06*	(2.49)
	- Controls not shown -	
Time	1.25***	(3.90)
Time Squared	0.98***	(-3.73)
No. of Observations (person years)	25,297	
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-3992.28	
Wald χ^2	435.59***	
Pseudo R^2	0.0526	

Estimates are presented as odds ratio, with Z-statistics in parenthesis.
Standard error adjusted for 151 clusters in neighborhoods.
+p<0.1 *p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Table 3.6: Caste/Ethnicity, Gender and Community Group Participation with Gender and Caste/Ethnicity Interactions. Logistic Regression Estimates of Discrete-Time Hazard Models of Community Group Participation in Western Chitwan, 1996-2008**.**

Interactions	**Gender and Caste/Ethnicity**	
Caste/Ethnicity		
Bahun/Chhetri/Newar (upper caste)[a]	*- Reference -*	
Dalit (lower caste)	0.81	(-0.84)
Hill Janajati (hills caste/ethnicity)	0.40***	(-3.92)
Tarai Janajati (plains caste/ethnicity)	0.72+	(-1.75)
Females	2.17***	(7.15)
Dalit * Gender	0.99	(-0.00)
Hill Janajati * Gender	1.66*	(2.09)
Tarai Janajati * Gender	1.02	(0.07)
	- Controls not shown -	
Time	1.31***	(5.10)
Time Squared	0.98***	(3.74)
No. of Observations (person years)	25,297	
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-3993.19	
Wald χ^2	429.75***	
Pseudo R^2	0.0523	

Estimates are presented as odds ratio, with Z-statistics in parenthesis.
Standard error adjusted for 151 clusters in neighborhoods.
[a] Reference category.
+p<0.1 *p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Figure 3.1: Proliferation of Community Groups in Study Neighborhoods between 1953-2004, Western Chitwan.

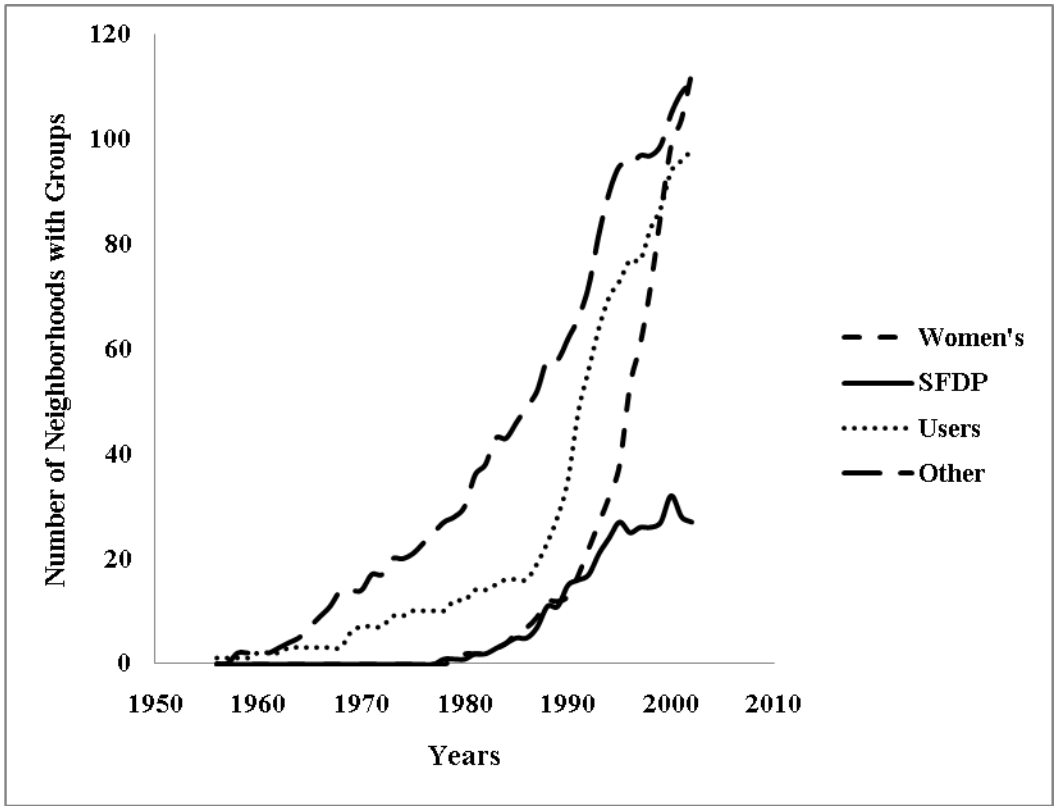


Figure 3.2: Predicted Log Odds of Community Group Participation among Women and Men between 1997 and 2008 in Western Chitwan.

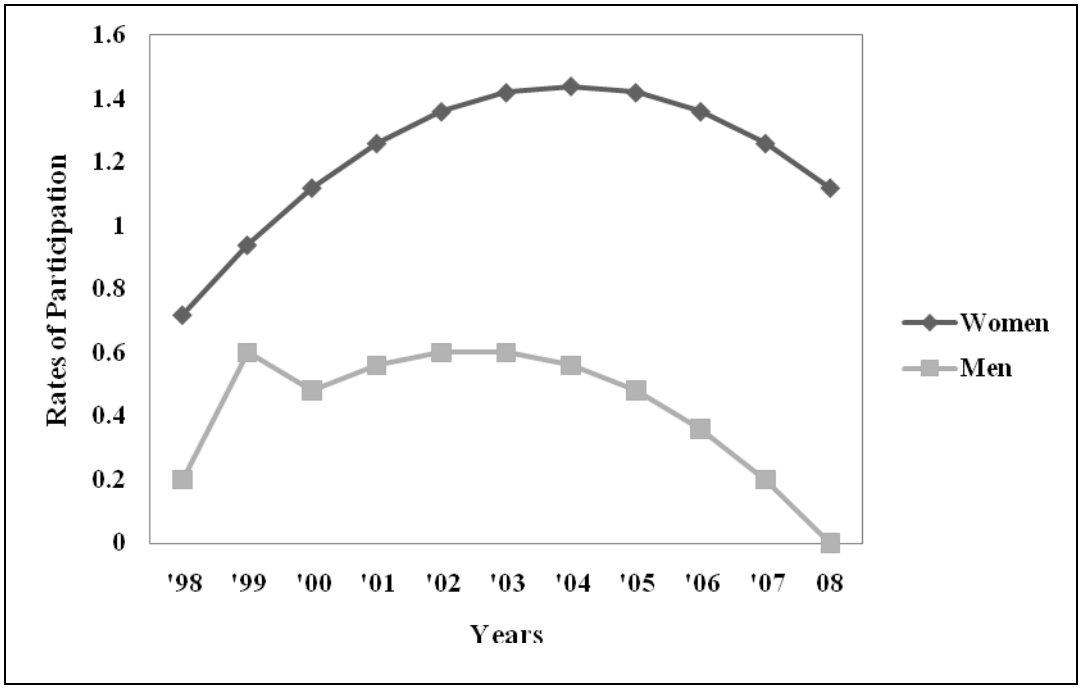
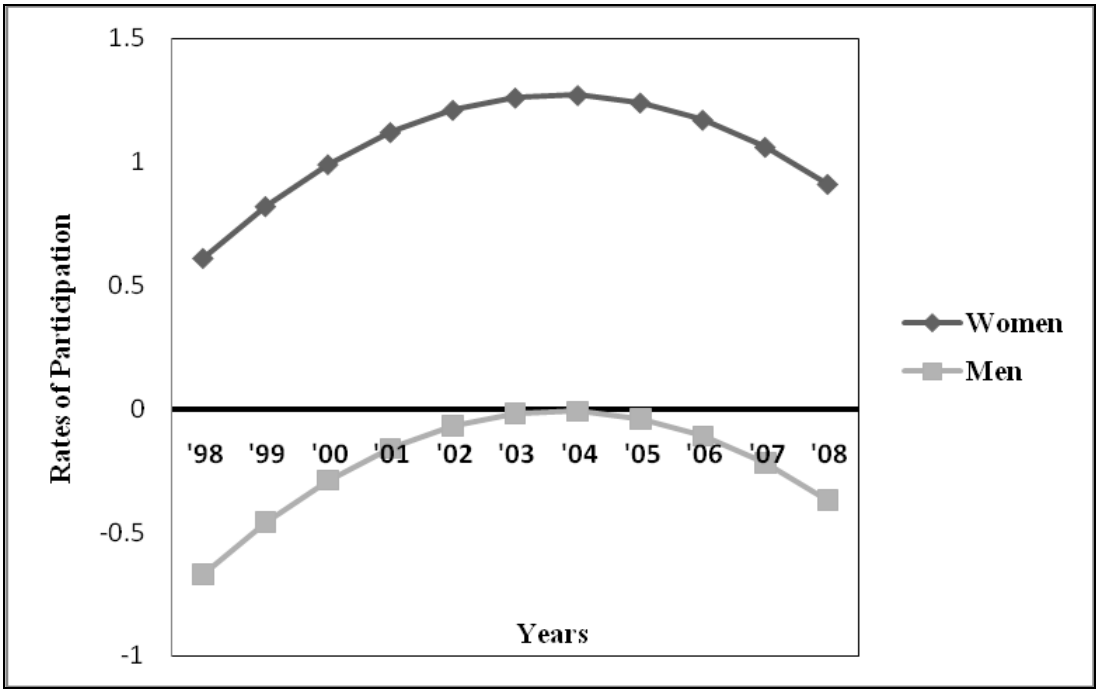


Figure 3.3: Predicted Log Odds of Community Group Participation among Hill Janajati Women and Men between 1997 and 2008, Western Chitwan.



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CHAPTER 4

Changes in Attitudes: The Influence of Community Group Experiences on Gender and Family Related Attitudes.

Extensive attention has been given to studies on the formation and changes in gender roles and family related attitudes in industrialized Western countries, especially in the wake of growing evidence of linkages between individual attitudes and behaviors (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). Studies have shown that since the 1960s individuals in these countries have become more accepting and approving of egalitarian gender roles, premarital sex, divorce, cohabitation, and of childbearing by cohabiters due to the expansion of the educational system, women's labor force participation and improvements in birth control among other macro level changes (Mason and Lu 1988; Rindfuss, Brewer and Kavee 1996; Thornton 1989; Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001; Barber 2001; Treas 2002). But in non-industrialized countries, where the prevalence of such influential experiences are low, the question then arises as to what kinds of individual experiences lead to changes in gender and family related attitudes? In many such countries there are other practices that individuals are being introduced to that are likely avenues for generating new knowledge, ideas, and experiences. One key objective of this study is to examine changes in selected gender and family related attitudes in poor countries that are in social, economic and political transition. In particular, this study examines the influence of a rapidly spreading phenomenon in many countries – local level community based livelihoods support programs - on changes in such attitudes.

In non-industrialized countries that are in economic, social and political transition, there is limited empirical evidence about factors influencing formation and change in gender related attitudes. In such countries the introduction of new institutions, opportunities and experiences – such as schools, exposure to multiple forms of media, expanded opportunities for travel due to new road networks, and the emergence of new markets and employment systems - have introduced new ideas, norms, values, practices and beliefs, which have important consequences in shaping individual attitudes and behaviors related to family life (Caldwell, Reddy, and Caldwell 1983; Thornton and Fricke 1987; Thornton and Lin 1994; Axinn and Barber 2001; Axinn and Yabiku 2001; de Jong et al. 2006). In many such countries, other types of new institutions have also been introduced by government and non-governmental organizations to improve livelihoods and life conditions of the people in different communities. Formal and informal 'community groups' - collectives of individuals at the micro level that assist the process of delivering basic and specialized services – represent a new form of institution that has been increasing in numbers. Members of such community based groups are mostly adult men and women who come together to access new information, skills and inputs for livelihood improvement and, at times also, to advocate for their basic rights. These groups, 'sponsored' by development agencies are, in principal, non-political, non-religious and different from indigenous social and ethnic organizations within the countries.

Attitudes have been known to change over time, generally resulting from relatively long term processes such socialization, as well as relatively short term exposures to information in the environment (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). In the light of

this understanding, I draw on the theoretical framework of the family mode of social organization to examine how the new experience of participation in community based groups influences changes in gender related attitudes (Thornton and Fricke 1987; Thornton and Lin 1994). I argue that membership in community groups creates potential mechanisms through which new knowledge introduces new roles for men and women, and the social learning and networking opportunities provided by group membership provide motivation for individuals for changing behaviors and attitudes.

This study uses the context of rural Nepal to empirically investigate the effect of a relatively new phenomenon of community level collective action on selected gender related attitudes. Chitwan Valley in south central Nepal, like the rest of the country, is marked by a system of beliefs that lead to highly structured unequal gendered relationships which negatively affects important life conditions and life outcomes for girls and women. Within this context I examine a set of four attitudes - the timing of marriage for girls, re-marriage of young widows, the role expectations of daughters-in-law, and the role of men in household decision-making – to represent a range of attitudes that represent gendered relations. The longitudinal data come from a unique combination of individual and household surveys and life histories data collected in 1996 and 2008.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The mode of social organization framework begins with a continuum that focuses on social institutions that organize individual lives and interpersonal relations. On one end lies the conceptual domain of life as completely organized around the family and kinship relations. This *family* mode of social organization focuses on how the family as the key institution that organizes all information, resources, beliefs and structures of

authority, organizes and directs the lives and the experiences of individuals in the absence of other non-familial institutions and relationships (Thornton and Fricke 1987; Thornton and Lin 1994). Although the ideal type of this form of social organization probably never existed, a great deal of evidence indicates many societies, including Nepal, were organized close to this end of the continuum in the past. The introduction of non-familial institutions such as schools, health centers, markets, places of employment, different forms of media, government structures, present opportunities for individuals to be exposed to alternate authority structures and access to information, knowledge, and skills which influence new patterns of behavior. The new institutions that are introduced become avenues for new ideas and options that influence attitudes and behaviors of individuals in relation to family life in countries as different as the United States, Argentina, Iran, Taiwan, Vietnam, and Nepal (Thornton et al. 1994; Axinn and Barber 2001; Axinn and Yabiku 2001; Ahearn 2004; de Jong et al. 2006; Jayakodi, Thornton, and Axinn 2008). Finally, at the other end of the continuum is the *non-familial* mode of organization in which none of the multiple domains of social life is organized by the family.

The modes of organization framework is a powerful tool for making predictions about the likely micro-level consequences of the spread of specific macro-level non-family organizations and services (Axinn and Yabiku 2001; Thornton and Lin 1994). Evidence from non-Western settings have demonstrated how the introduction of non-family social and economic institutions have brought opportunities for changes in behaviors, norms and practices thereby influencing young people's marital timing, their participation in spouse choice, their tolerance for inter-caste marriage and divorce, and

their fertility behaviors (Axinn and Yabiku 2001; Barber et al. 2001; Yabiku 2005; Ghimire et al. 2006; de Jong et al. 2006; Thornton and Lin 1994; Jayakodi et al. 2008). Additional studies have explored how such changes influence individual attitudes as well (Barber 2004).

Studies examining the formation and variations in gender roles and family related attitudes among individuals have found that apart from an individual's own characteristics and experiences, those of the parents also have an influential role (Mason et al. 1976; Smith-Lovin and Tickamyer 1978; Thornton and Freedman 1979; Thornton et al. 1983; Mason and Lu 1988; Alwin 1994; Blee and Tickamyer 1995; Kane 2000; Fan and Marini 2000). Additionally, strong influences of life course transitions in educational status, employment and in marital status of both the individuals and their parents have also been known to influence attitude changes (Thornton and Freedman 1979). Yet, in a context that is marked by limited formal education and labor force participation experiences, the institutions that seem to have the biggest influences on changes in gender and family related attitudes in western countries, questions arise about which factors might induce changes in these attitudes.

This study examines how a specific type of non-family experience, participation in community groups, potentially influences changes in individuals' gender role and family related attitudes. The following section first briefly outlines theoretical arguments and empirical evidence for how selected non-familial experiences can influence changes in individual attitudes. Before moving on to discuss the potential mechanisms through which community group participation is likely to influence changes in gender and family related attitudes, it is useful to introduce the study setting and the specific context

particularly in terms of gendered relationships and the phenomenon of community groups.

Social Organizations and Social Changes

In an early comparative study of family changes, Thornton and Fricke (1987) adapted the framework of the family mode of production and extended it to present an *"actor-based"* framework of the *"family modes of social organization."* They developed this framework to better explain a wider range of changes in individual and family behaviors in response to new institutions and organizations that began influencing activities of daily life that were originally controlled by the family. The introduction of non-familial institutions such as schools with western-style education, health centers, markets, places of employment, expansion of modes of transportation, different forms of media, government and non-governmental structures, all present opportunities for individuals to be exposed to new information, knowledge, and ideas that differ from ones that have been passed on within the family for generations. These new structures and the new ideas that they diffuse also open up alternative ways of life and new patterns of behaviors.

Studies in a range of countries from the West to the Far East have found that changes in the macro-level context have influenced micro-level behaviors, where the new information, ideas and options, influence changes in individual attitudes and behaviors in relation to family life (Thornton et al. 1994; Axinn and Barber 2001; Ahearn 2004; de Jong et al. 2006; Jayakodi et al. 2008). Studies in the US have also documented the role of social structural changes in schooling, employment, and family formation in producing attitude change (Waite et al.1986; Mason and Lu 1988; Fan and Marini 2000). Thornton

and Lin (1994) provide evidence from Taiwan on how interactions with new non-family institutions altered the opportunities and constraints faced by the Taiwanese population leading to significant changes in the way they organized their interpersonal relationships in relation to marital arrangement, childbearing, living arrangements and intergenerational relationships.

The Study Setting

I next provide background information on the gendered role expectations for men and women in Nepal and of community group programs, which is relevant to the specific study setting of Western Chitwan Valley as well. I also briefly highlight some macro level changes that have taken place between the two study waves in 1996 and 2008. Following that I discuss potential mechanisms of how community group participation is likely to influence changes in gender and family related attitudes.

Role Expectations for Men and Women in Nepal: Despite the tremendous diversity among women in South Asia in their egalitarian and autonomous demographic behaviors, they continue to be linked by a theme of cultural uniformity particularly in relation to institutions of marriage and family (Allen and Mukherjee 1982:1; Caldwell et al. 1983; Dyson and Moore 1983; Morgan and Niraula 1995). Among Hindus, patriarchal and patrilineal systems marked by consistent paternalistic behavior towards women are intertwined with religious ideologies that prescribe strict conventions, norms and behaviors. In Nepal, political processes of nation-building guided by the powerful upper caste men encouraged *Hinduization*[56] of the non-Hindu population, promoting restriction

[56] "Hinduization" is the more contemporary term used to emphasize the adoption of Hindu norms, values, practices and forms by the non-Hindu population. The concept is a derivation from M. N. Srinivas's (1966) introductory concept of inclusion/exclusion called "Sanskritization" a theoretical framework for

even among the relatively more egalitarian and autonomous positions of women of other ethnic groups (Höfer 1979; Acharya and Bennett 1981; Pradhan 2002).[57] Anthropological studies of ethnic groups from the mid and high hills such as the Sherpa, Thakali, Magar, Tamang, and Limbu have shown the relatively more egalitarian roles of women in terms of household decision making, mobility outside of the home and community, and roles in the family business and marketing (Jones and Jones 1976; Acharya and Bennett 1981; Molnar 1981; Watkins 1996; March 2002). But polarized gender roles and attitudes continue to permeate life in Nepal, intersecting with caste and ethnic identities.[58]

Women continue to have a lower status on almost all social, economic and political indicators. Literacy rates for women in rural areas are less than 40 percent compared to 63 percent for men. The country has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in South-East Asia (281 per 100,000 live births) and the under five mortality rates for baby girls is 112.4 compared to 91.2 for boys, with a continuing high degree of son preference (Bennett et al. 2008; Brunson 2010). In 2008, less than six percent of the members of parliament were women and women made up only seven percent of the civil service in the country (TPAMF 2008).

Parents marry their daughters at very young ages in Nepal; more than 50 percent are "child marriages" of girls younger than 18 (Pradhan 2010). Historically, young Hindu

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caste mobilization which denotes mobilization within the system through the adoption of ritual values, norms and practices of upper caste Hindus, and rejection of attributes considered ritually polluting.

[57] Refer to Tamang (2009) for a critique on the role of various agents, including that of the NGOs and international aid agencies in "excluding and silencing radical diversity" in the women's movement in Nepal. Additionally she suggests that the processes of 'development' has not only linked Nepal with the 'West', but that it is also the "locus classicus of generic apolitical consciousness-less Nepali woman", where a single category of '*the* Nepali Woman' has failed to acknowledge the multiple intersections of gender, caste/ethnicity, and political ideologies.

[58] Cameron's (1998) work among the lower caste groups in western Nepal depicts how the intersection of caste/ ethnicity and gender has resulted in differing gender ideologies and set of meanings within different caste groups among Hindu women.

girls were married before their menstruation, following a belief that *kanyadan* ("gift of the virgin"), was a means for parents to gain spiritual credit. Yet, recent studies show that with the influence of non-family activities, changes in marriage age and marital arrangements are taking place (Yabiku 2005; Ghimire et al. 2006; de Jong et al. 2006). Control over a woman's sexuality and fertility by the patriarchal family extends to after a woman is widowed and provides one explanation for the lack of socially sanctioned opportunities for re-marriage for young Hindu widows (Bennett 1983). Hindu women were perceived to have the role of ensuring the physical and moral salvation of their husbands, and responsible for their health and long life (Chen 1998). Thus the death of one's husband signified the "social death" of a widow; women become ritually inauspicious, are forced to lead a life of stigma and discrimination, and have limited or no freedom to remarry. Yet in recent years, local campaigns to end the stigmatization of widows have often made headlines in the local and national media in Nepal[59].

In adherence to the patrilocal system of residence, after marriage women move in with their in-laws. Co-residence prescribes lower autonomy for young women and they are expected to obey their husbands and older in-laws, but research shows that having a higher education and employment status brings different outcomes for them (Jejeebhoy and Sathar 2001; Sengupta and Johnson 2006). A mother-in-law is a powerful force due to her proximity to senior men in the family and she exercises this power over junior women. Thus participation of women in decision making processes related to family, children and household issues depend on their position within the family hierarchy, their

[59] Prompted by the increased number of young widows as a direct result of the insurgency, and the Hindu ideological taboo against widow re-marriage, in 2009 the government of Nepal made an announcement for an incentive of around $640, for men who married widows. This was met with protests by human rights groups and dismissed by organizations working for the rights of widows.
Refer to: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8153193.stm.

age, giving birth to sons, as well as their access to economic resources and ownership of assets (Kabeer 1994).

Changes in the Macro Context: During the time between the two waves of the CVFS (1996 and 2008), the country underwent important political changes and introduced legislative changes pertaining to women's rights. For a decade between 1996 and 2006, a Maoist insurgency, aimed at unseating the constitutional monarchy and installing a democratic republic, caused severe political, economic and social instability throughout the country and left over 13,000 people dead. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) maintained an ideological commitment to gender equality, though as Pettigrew and Shneiderman (2004) point out, the gap between rhetoric and practice was quite clear. Yet, high levels of participation of young women in the "People's War" was one of the most reported aspects of the conflict, and striking photos of young, gun toting guerrilla women, in unprecedented, highly unconventional roles often made the headlines during the years[60].

Additionally other legislation changes and national debates thrust women's rights into the forefront during this decade. The Nepal Citizenship Act 2006 provided the right of any individual whose mother or father is a Nepali citizen to gain citizenship, as opposed to the prior requirement of providing proof of father's citizenship. Secondly, the country also followed the trend towards liberalization of abortion law in support of

[60]Refer to Pettigrew and Shneiderman (2004) for a discussion on the contrasting narratives of agency and victimization of women during the Maoist movement in Nepal, and the new experiences for Nepali women of all caste, ethnic, class and regional backgrounds that have introduced them to "potentially transformative possibilities".

women's reproductive rights[61]. Both changes are examples of decreases in legislative restrictions in unequal gender relations.

Community Groups: Increased decentralization, local governance, participation and decision making at the "community" levels continue to be a focus on international aid organizations and governments prompted by bilateral and multilateral global agencies as a strategic approach to support poor and marginalized individuals and groups of people (Chambers 1983; Kabeer 1994; Escobar 1995;)[62]. Throughout poor communities in countries such as India, Bangladesh, Ecuador, Yemen, Ethiopia, Uganda and Somalia, a "community group" approach has become an important entry point for distribution of resources, capacity building and consolidating collective action and social capital for livelihoods improvement and establishing basic human rights (Mosedale 2005; Martinez 2006). In adapting the interpretation of Putnam's (1995) seminal work on the role of civic participation, community based collective action and participation in planning has been elevated from a simple matter of good development practice to a pre-requisite for positive social change by aid agencies.

This trend was introduced in Nepal in the mid 1970s by the government, in particular, the concept of the "users groups" building on the practices of local collective management of long established irrigation systems (Shrestha 1999). With political changes in the 1990s and the liberalization of the civil society movement, this trend has

[61] The debate over equal property rights for women have caused much heated discussions on both sides of the issue during this decade too, though the Bill has yet to be ratified by the parliament.

[62] Weinberger and Jütting (2001) discuss how the participation of the poorest groups have often been questioned due to the high opportunity costs involved and the limited existence of social network ties among such individuals. Leve (2001) presents an important critique on the reality and motives behind the "participation" and "empowerment" agenda of NGOs and aid agencies. Cleaver (1999) provides a critical analysis of the concepts underlying participatory approaches and the myths of the community as a social entity. Elite capture, exclusionary practices, passing on oppressive tendencies by the dominant groups, local power dynamics are other key concerns related participatory community based programs (Mohan and Stokke 2000; Dasgupta and Beard 2007).

been on the rise. Biggs and colleagues (2004) estimate the existence of close to 400,000 'sponsored' micro-level community groups established in the country[63].

Members of women's groups, in general, are involved in improving the living conditions of families in the community. Their activities revolve around savings and credit, labor-pooling, cultural activities, and community social action (Barber et al 2001). They also often become platforms for reproductive health activities in communities. Youth groups primarily comprise young men and women with most activities revolving around some form of entertainment – sports or cultural events - with few having a civic component too. Membership in different 'users groups' is based on services or natural resources used by households, such as piped drinking water, irrigation facilities, or forest tracts. A community forest user group constitutes representatives of all households that harvest a specific forest track for fuel, fodder, and building materials. Credit groups usually comprise five or more members who regularly save a designated sum of money, and take turns for loans for small businesses or household needs from the group funds. Group cohesion, collaboration and peer pressure substitute for formal collateral. Specific agriculture groups are formed to access information, skills and inputs on agricultural techniques or improved breeds of livestock. Other groups are involved in activities such as non-formal literacy for adults, reproductive health, and multi-purpose community development activities.

The western Chitwan Valley in Nepal is an exciting location for this study. This Valley has undergone vast structural and social changes, especially since the mid 1950s

[63] Civic organizations for mutual support have long existed and have been organized, recognized and valued by communities in Nepal. Such customary groups were based on kinship or ethnicity (e.g. the *guthis* of the Newars, the *rodi* of the Gurungs) but others were based on neighborhood ties that often centered on shared natural resources (e.g. agriculture labor exchange - *parma*, and management of local forests, pastureland and irrigation systems).

when the government of Nepal undertook a campaign to populate the fertile but isolated area with people from neighboring hill districts and from the neighboring border states of India (Elder et al. 1976). Due to this settlement history it is one of the most multiethnic, multicultural, multi-linguistic settlements in the country, providing an opportunity to study the variations in social and cultural attitudes and behaviors with a microcosm (Gurung 1998). The construction of two important highways in the late 1970s linked the valley to the eastern and western borders of the country and supported the rapid proliferation of government and non-governmental services including education and health, businesses, markets, banking, communications and diversified employment opportunities, bringing them closer to the communities (refer to Figure 4.1). Given the relatively short span of time, these major structural changes along with the extensive social changes they have introduced have occurred within the lifetime of many of the Valley's residents (Axinn and Yabiku 2001).

[Figure 4.1 about here]

Community Groups and Changes in Gender Related Attitudes

Next I present some insights into the potential mechanisms through which the specific experience of participating in community groups is likely to influence individual attitudes, and is likely to be an equally powerful factor in influencing changes in gendered attitudes.

(a) *New and diversified knowledge, skills and roles:* Community group membership provides opportunities for individuals to gain two specific types of skills within a non-familial setting. Technical knowledge and practical skills related to livelihood support activities are imparted through direct formal training and experiential

learning opportunities provided by staff of the sponsoring agency. Based on their chief interest, members learn about agriculture or livestock technologies, methods of informal savings and rotating credit, formal banking procedures, planning and fund raising for community level activities. The expectations are that members apply such new knowledge in improving the diversification of their livelihood strategies. The processes of group organization, management, communications and community leadership are the second part of learning for members. Community group based projects are increasingly being accepted as a means to invest in the collective agency of the poor and the marginalized, hence most programs start with building organizational structures and capacity of the groups (Narayan and Glinski 2007; Weinberger and Jutting 2001). The new organizational culture and processes are different from family based ones, departing from the gendered norms that guide the roles of men and women. Members are expected to attend regular group meetings which are often structured around a set of formal rules and official procedures; participation from all members and collective decision making is expected, meeting minutes are recorded and members sign off (or mark their thumbprints) on the agenda, and in principle they are expected to be equal as group members.

This new knowledge and new norms of expected behaviors expand the roles of men and women beyond conventional forms. Most often, the information that both men and women receive is new to them and can potentially have a leveling effect. For women, it brings an additional dimension to their customary gendered roles and raises their economic value (Boserup 1970). When women use this knowledge and engage directly in income generating activities or community support activities that they have never

performed before, the changes that take place in own their sense of agency and in the perceptions of family members can be substantial as Amin (1997) has shown in Bangladesh[64]. Women's new abilities and their increased economic and social potential are likely to receive increased acknowledgement, respect and acceptance by men. Thus the new knowledge and its application within the family and the community are likely to influence more egalitarian gender related attitudes for both men and women.

(b) *Increased interactions, expanding social networks and social changes*: Membership in community groups also provide an environment for new social learning due to the opportunities for increased non-family interactions and expansion of social networks, which can influence individual behavior and attitudes. Community groups provide opportunities for regular interaction with different sets of people ranging from program staff, trainers or resource persons, staff from local government agencies, bankers, etc. Many of these new interactions take place in new settings such as in formal office settings. Through these repeated interactions, individuals have opportunities for social comparison and also new role models, expanded worldviews and increased aspirations in general. Increased social interactions and the exposure they give rise to have been linked to diffusion of innovative fertility behaviors (Bongaarts and Watkins 1996). In her 2004 study of the direct and indirect influences of one's social context on marriage related attitudes, Barber argues that opportunities for increased interactions and exposure through one's neighbors and social networks (those who have had experiences with new institutions) can become an important influence on an individual's attitudes.

[64] Consequences of women's participation in community groups are often positive based on some conditions. Kabeer (2001) notes that when women are known to be more compelled to participate in new social and economic activities outside of their home with the support of the family as long as their position in the existing division of labor in the productive and reproductive spheres is not affected.

Increased social interactions also bring a sense of awareness, though for many groups this is part of their program aim as well. For many women this is a first, often uncomfortable exposure of their self as an individual, as opposed to being linked to their family[65]. Yet evaluations studies of micro credit programs for instance have shown how over a period of time women report an increase in self-confidence and recognition of their own agency which is likely to influence changes in their attitudes. It provides an alternate forum to discuss and be exposed to different life options and available choices. Examples from Pakistan and Chad tell of how women get together for collective action for improving and strengthening their position and changing social norms (Weinberger and Jutting 2001). In depth interviews by Abrahams (1996) with Latina and Anglo women in California, reveal how women secure a sense of identity and community through their participation in community organizations. These organizations created avenues for those women to embrace and negotiate multiple identities and well as their ethnicities. For homemakers from the same study community, involvement enabled them to carve out a space for independence from and meaningful work beyond the home. Omveldt (1993) also shows how rural women in India, involved in community level activities, are at the forefront of exploring new alternatives as they revisit their life conditions in relation to gender, caste, ecology and rural livelihoods through their focus on *"stree shakti"* or women's power.

For men too, in contexts such as in Chitwan, interacting with non-family women as co-members within the same group is often a new experience. But repeated interaction among men and women through their membership in the same group, or in multiple

[65] Women often report how introducing themselves and saying their names to group members or staff of community group programs used to be a scary and uncomfortable experience for them which they eventually overcame.

groups, is likely to increase positive affect in relation to the multiple roles of women[66]. Men perceive the potential economic role of women given their new skills, as well as their increased social roles when they are involved in community improvement programs. Studies on the impact of micro-credit programs have shown how both men and women have experienced changes for the better in their life situations, not only economically but also due to the social network that they develop through the community groups (Schuler et al. 1997). Thus there is evidence of both men and women feeling empowered – having a kind of expanding freedom of choice and action to shape own lives – when they participate in community level groups that is likely in influence their own attitudes and behaviors regarding their roles (Narayan 2005). Participation in community groups or other non-family organizations at the community levels provide women and men with new roles and alternative options to the daily routine of their lives.

DATA, MEASURES AND ANALYTICAL STRATEGY

This study uses data from the Chitwan Valley Family Study (CVFS) in Nepal, which is a longitudinal panel study. In 1996 data were collected from 171 neighborhoods in the study area of western Chitwan using a multi-stage probability proportionate to size sample, where neighborhoods were defined as a geographic cluster of 5-15 households (Barber et al. 1997). The 1996 individual survey and life history calendar components of the study interviewed every resident between the ages of 15 and 59 who was eating/ sleeping in the selected neighborhood for three or more of the past six months, and the spouses of eligible respondents generating complete life histories of 5,721 individuals. In 2008 the individual survey was re-administered in 151 of the original neighborhoods,

[66] In her study, Barber (2004) of the influence of non-family institutions on marriage related attitudes, she draws on Zajonc's (1968) experiments of changes in attitudes through repeated exposure which led to increases in positive affect.

along with a new section of questions related to ideational influences on marriage and fertility behavior[67]. Thus data were obtained from a panel of 3,621 individuals from the original respondents. Trained interviewers from the local area conducted all the interviews in the Nepali national language in both 1996 and 2008. Data were also collected at both time periods using a semi-structured interview technique called the life history calendar, which generated yearly data on education, work and travel behaviors of the respondents (Freedman et al. 1988). This study also uses household data from the Household Agriculture and Consumption survey component of the CVFS and the neighborhood history calendar from 1996, which comprise data of retrospective measures of walking distance in minutes to the nearest service institutions such as schools, health services, bus stops, employment centers, cooperatives, mills, temples, and the distance of the neighborhoods to the largest urban center in the study area.

In 1996, over 92 percent of the respondents who had participated in community groups were between 15-54 years of age, and in 2008 that figure was almost 97 percent. This shows that this age range is the one in which men and women were most likely to have participated in community groups. For this analysis, I selected only respondents between the ages of 15-44 years in 1996 who had never before participated in community groups, to allow for an appropriate temporal ordering for the individual experiences, including that of community group participation, prior to 2008. Respondents older than 44 and those categorized as "others" in their caste/ethnicity were not included due to the relatively small number of cases. Respondents who had participated in groups for the first time in 2008 were also dropped in order to maintain the causal priority of participation in

[67] Prospective demographic data collected after the 1996 individual and household surveys have focused on 151 out of the original 171 neighborhoods. Thus the 2008 individual survey was conducted in 151 neighborhoods only.

a community group before the outcome measure of attitudes in 2008. Thus we have a panel of 2,323 respondents with complete data, 63 percent of who are women. Over 79 percent of the study sample reported that they were Hindu or followed Hindu related religion. Missing data was less than 1% for all variables. Descriptive statistics for each of the measures used in this analysis is presented in Table 4.1.

[Table 4.1 about here]

Measures of Gender Related Attitudes

The study focuses on four attitudes related to gendered norms, in particular, in relation to marriage, widowhood, decision-making within the household and role expectations for young married women. Each selected attitude was measured in 1996 and 2008 by presenting respondents with the same statements that represent the more conventional role of women in Nepali society. Two statements related to marriage were represented by: *"A girl should be married before her first menstruation"* and *"A young widow should remarry another man"*. Early marriage and restrictions in re-marriage are gendered norms and practices in Chitwan since men are not expected to be virgins prior to marriage, while women are; men do not face social restrictions, stigma or discrimination related to remarriage after widowhood, while women do.

Two additional statements selected were related to role expectations of women vis a vis men and other women of higher status within the household: *"A man should make most of the decisions in the household*" and *"After coming to her husband's home, a daughter-in-law should be obedient to her mother-in-law"*. The patriarchal system and the paternalistic behavior gives men the final say in most household decisions related to, for instance, large consumer purchases including land, education and marriage decisions

of the children. Similarly, given patrilocal residence, men stay with their own families and are not culturally obliged by similar obedience to their in-laws as their wives are. For all attitudinal measures, respondents are asked to select their response on a Likert like scale ranging from 1 to 4 representing the strength of their agreement/disagreement with the statements in the direction of strongly agree to strongly disagree, taken to represent an ordinal scale of increasingly egalitarian attitudes. The 1996 measures of the four attitudes are used as controls, while the 2008 measures are used as the chief outcome of changes in gender related attitudes. The set of four graphs in Figure 4.2 show the range of percentage changes in four attitudes between the two waves. In each wave the respondents had to choose one from a range of four possible responses, hence the changes in each response could either be no changes, one to three levels higher, or one to three levels lower in 2008 compared to their responses in 1996. We can see that 37 percent and 56 percent of individuals did not change their responses to their attitudes related to child marriage and role expectations from daughters-in-law, respectively. The percentages of individuals whose attitudes increased two points of the scale of the responses were 27 percent and 13 percent in the case of positive attitudes towards young widow remarriage and women also participating in household decisions.

[Figure 4.2 about here]

Measures of Participation in Community Groups.

In 1996, all respondents were asked the following question: "*Have you ever been a member of any other group, such as a User's Group, Mothers Group, a group organized by health volunteers, Rotary club or any other type of association or organization"?* This dichotomous variable is coded "1" for any experience and "0" for no

experience. Since the study sample only involves respondents who had never participated in groups in 1996, the measure for their participation in community groups between 1997 and 2007 is constructed by asking respondents if they became a member of any group after 1996. This variable is dichotomous, coded "1" for any experience after 1996 and "0" for no experience. The timing of their participation was use as a cutoff point to ensure that only those respondents who had participated between the years 1997 to 2007 were included in the study sample. Thus all individual experiences in groups occurred prior to the measure of attitudes in 2008. In the study sample 42 percent of the respondents had participated in community groups by 2008.

Of the study sample of 2,323 individuals, 41 percent had membership in community groups in 2008[68]. Respondents in the study site identified atleast nine different types of formal and information community groups they had participated in, namely women's group, youth groups, Small Farmer's Development Group (a program to help poor farmers access credit), savings and credit groups, 'users groups', agriculture group, religious groups, and local non-government organizations. Neighborhood data collected by the CVFS in 1996 and 2004 reflect increases in the spread of community group programs. For example, in 1996 over 65 percent of neighborhoods in the study area did not have any women's groups and 49 percent did not have any 'users groups'. By 2004 that changed to only 19 percent and 34 percent neighborhoods, respectively.

Measures of Individual New Experiences

[68] In the original sample of over 5,721 individuals in 1996 (wave one), only 14 percent of individuals had participated in community groups ever.

The study uses three measures of respondents' non-family experiences - of travel, wage and salaried work, and educational attainment - to test their influence on changes in the gender-related attitudes.

Travel experiences: The life history calendar recorded whether the respondents travelled to Kathmandu, the capital city, and outside of Nepal. Every year they did travel was marked as "1", including multiple instances of travel, and if they did not travel it was recorded as "0". Though travelling to Kathmandu and outside of the country is likely to have separate significance for the respondents, both kinds of travel present opportunities for wider exposure to information and alternate ways of lifestyle. As the capital city, Kathmandu is one of the largest urban areas of the country, with a concentration of administrative services and offers the best of health and educational institutions within the country. Travel outside of the country is most likely for seasonal or short term employment to neighboring India or primarily to the Gulf and other countries.

Employment experiences: Two measures for employment experiences are used in the analysis: the sum of years of wage work and salary work experiences. Different individuals are likely to have different employment experiences; low income individuals are likely to have more wage work experiences, most likely as agriculture laborers. Most types of salaried work, on the other hand, require at least some education, thus due to generally low levels of education in the Chitwan Valley, there are fewer people who have had salaried work experiences.

Educational attainment: The respondents' years of formal education are recorded in the individual survey and they are re-coded into five different levels of education based on the national system: no education, primary education (1-5 years), lower secondary

(years 6-8), secondary (9-10) and high education (11+ years). In 1996, 39 percent of respondents had no education, while 10 percent had 11 or more years of formal education (Table 4.2).

The influence of the individual experiences of travel and employment is segregated into two time periods: one from birth to 1996, and the second between 1997 and 2007. Measures of media exposure are from before 1996. The educational attainment of the respondents is measured in 1996. For the intervening period between 1996 and 2008, a dichotomous measure of any additional educational experiences received (1= yes and 0= no) is used. This is an appropriate measure because there were only marginal changes in the educational attainment of respondents between 1996 and 2008 (refer to Figure 4.3).

[Table 4.1 and Figure 4.3 about here]

Controls

The control measures used in the analysis are those that have been known to influence gender related attitudes. The first in our set of individual level characteristics is the sex of the respondents since it is widely documented that men and women are likely to have different attitudes. Variance in cultural practices and norms are likely to influence gender related attitudes thus the caste/ethnicity of individuals are an important control. The multiple ethnic/caste backgrounds of respondents are categorized into five major groups, a strategy used by other scholars following the historical context of social categorization in Nepal (Bennett et al. 2008; Gurung 1998). I distinguish the groups of Bahun/Chhetri ("upper caste"), Dalits ("lower caste"), Newar, Hill Janajati (ethnicities or nationalities of the hills) and Tarai Janajati (ethnicities or nationalities of the plains). Of

the analytical sample, 44 percent are Bahun/Chettri "upper caste" which (the reference group), while only 6 percent are Newars. Given tremendous social, economic, and political changes over the past 50 years in the study area, birth cohorts are an important control since respondents experience different influences on social roles and expectations over the years. I distinguish three birth cohorts - cohort 1 (born 1972-1981 ages 15-24), cohort 2 (born 1962-1971 ages 25-34) and cohort 3 (born 1952-1961 ages 35-44). The youngest cohort is treated as the reference group.

A measure of media exposure before 1996 is also used in the models, as a control, given the importance of media exposure in influencing social changes. The measure of media exposure is an index constructed from responses to three questions in the individual interview asking whether the respondent had ever listened to a radio, watched television or watched a movie at the cinema. The creation of an index was instrumental in addressing issues of multi-collinearity, and the sum of all three types of exposure was coded on a scale of zero to two. The media index is coded "0" for no exposure at all and "1" for exposure to one or two of these experiences and "2" for exposure to all of the three experiences.

The second set of control measures are related to the respondents' parents' experiences and the respondents' early childhood exposure. Separate indices are created of parents' experiences of ever going to school, working for pay outside of the home, traveling outside of their community and having ever watched a movie before the respondent was 12 years of age. All four indices indicate whether the parents had not had the experience (coded 0), one parent had the experience (coded 1) or both parents had the experience (coded 2). Another control includes the respondent's exposure to non-family

institutions in their childhood, and its influence on their gender attitudes as adults, six characteristics of the neighborhoods in which the respondents lived before age 12, is used. An index was created from the responses of a series of questions asked to determine the existence of a number of types of institutions within a one-hour walk from home of the respondent before they were 12 years old - the presence of schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, presence of development programs, and presence of women's groups.[69]

Analytical Approach

Ordered logistic regression procedures are used to estimate multivariate models that measure the odds of respondents having more egalitarian gender attitudes. An ordered logit model was chosen because it appropriately treats the gender attitudes as an ordinal indicator of an underlying continuous variable. The categories of all four dependent variables have a clear ordering of values from 1 to 4 going from strong agreement to strong disagreement, taken to represent a scale of increasingly egalitarian attitudes. Though the distance between the values is not equal or similar, we use a summary statistic to interpret the results. Ordered logistic regression allows for the estimation of the summary odds ratio, or the cumulative logit, using a weighted average of three observed odds ratio, when we have four categories in our dependent variable (Agresti 1996).

[69] Additional individual, household and neighborhood level characteristics known to influence gender related attitudes were also tested in sensitivity analyses. At the individual level, these included measures of marital status, religion and religiosity, and experiences of non-family living or of living away from home. At the household and neighborhood levels, they included the proportion of household members and neighbors who had participated in groups and the presence of a selection of neighborhood level institutions. None of these measures influenced any changes in the strength and the direction of the odds of the influence of community group participation on changing attitudes. Therefore the results are not presented in the paper (refer to Appendix A for more details).

The analysis begins with a zero order model. The second model tests the influence of all measures of controls and tests subsequent nested models. We first introduce individual experiences, parental characteristics and the childhood neighborhood context of the respondents, followed by the introduction of non-family individual experiences to the model. We finally test the independent effect of the association of participation in community groups on individual gender attitudes, as a specific kind of non-family experience. The following logistic regression equation is used for the analysis:

$$\ln\left(\frac{p}{1-p}\right) = a + \sum \beta_k x_k$$

where p is the probability of having more egalitarian attitudes, $\frac{p}{(1-p)}$ is the odds of more egalitarian gender attitudes, α is a constant term, β is the effect of independent variables in the model, and x is the value of these independent variables. The odds ratios can be interpreted as the factor by which one unit increase in the independent variable will increase the odds of having more egalitarian gender attitudes. The *p*-values for the odds ratios are based on robust standard errors that accommodate the potential effects of correlation arising from the sampling design. The sample design that generated the CVFS data results from 151 neighborhoods that comprise clusters of 5-15 households. In a study which looks at individual level variances, there is a potential for cluster level effects on the estimates (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002). Hence the models are controlled for cluster level effects and the standard errors are adjusted for the 151 clusters.

As outlined in the study by Barber and colleagues (2001), the study of consequences of community groups face two key problems. The first one is related to the

factor of self-selection of members into community groups, since participation is voluntary and is based on the individual's needs, interest and ability. The second issue is related to the nonrandom placement of community group programs. Most programs that support community groups are placed in specific locations for proximity to poor and marginalized neighborhoods. But, spontaneously formed community groups such as some women's groups or youth groups are likely to have been formed by members themselves. Therefore the analysis controls for all individual level characteristics in 1996 to address the first issue, and controls for clustering by neighborhoods in the regression models to address the second issue.

RESULTS

The first set of results of the ordered logistic estimates of the changes in the degree of egalitarianism in the four gender related attitudes are presented in Table 4.2. For each of the attitudes I first test zero order models (Models 1, 3, 5 and 7) with the estimates of only the effects of experiences of community group participation between 1997 and 2007 on the attitudes measured in 2008. In the case of all four attitudes it can be seen that the experience of participating in community groups has a strong, statistically significant and positive association. The odds ratio of 1.77 in the model predicting negative attitudes towards child marriage indicates that among those individuals who had the experience of participating in any one of the various community groups, their odds of having more egalitarian attitudes is 77 percent higher than among those who did not have that particular experience. Similarly, in the cases of more egalitarian attitudes towards widow re-marriage, daughter-in-law obedience towards mothers-in-law and towards decision making within the household, individuals with this experience also had

significant and positive higher odds (48, 83 and 76 percent respectively) compared to those who did not have the experience[70].

[Table 4.2 about here]

Changes in Attitudes between 1997and 2008

The second set of results in Table 4.2 presents the estimates of the effects of the individual characteristics, parental experiences, and childhood exposure on changes in the selected gender related attitudes. These models include the measures of non-family experiences up to 1996 and also the specific attitudes measured at the same point in time. These models seek to examine the changes in attitudes over time and the influence of experiences early in their life course. A comprehensive look at the estimates reveals that for men and women who were between the ages of 15-44 years in 1996, the biggest influence in changes in their gender related attitudes from 1997 to 2008 is their educational attainment as of 1996. This strong, highly significant and positive influence of educational attainment, especially at levels above lower secondary or more than six years of education, is the single most influential mechanism through which gender related attitudes are influenced. The effects of educational attainment is much more powerful than the influence of other experiences such as parental experiences, the respondent's travel and employment experiences and their exposure to three kinds of media.

These results show differences in changes in attitudes among men and women in only two out of the set of four attitudes. Compared to men, the odds that women have more egalitarian attitudes about decision making within the household is 46 percent higher and this difference is highly significant (Model 8). On the contrary, in Model 4 we

[70] As mentioned in the previous section, only cumulative logits are reported in this section since the focus of the study is on testing for the influence of community groups on changes in gender related attitudes.

can see that the odds of women supporting more egalitarian attitudes towards young widow re-marriage are 32 percent less than those of men. While women seem to have more confidence about a shared role in household decision making, they do not have seem to overcome the strong and rigid norms that seek to control female sexuality. The deeply ingrained social and cultural taboos against widow re-marriage seem to be harder to change even though the brunt of the stigma and discrimination associated with widowhood affects them more directly and disproportionately.

Birth cohorts and caste/ethnicity of individuals also have varied effects on influencing changes in attitudes among the study sample. As expected, individuals born in the older cohorts (between 1952 and 1971) have significantly less egalitarian attitudes compared to the younger cohort (born between 1972 and 1981), except in the case of attitudes related to decision making within the household. These results generally support the theories of cohort replacement which suggest that due to systematic variations in childhood experiences and historically specific values, attitudes of individuals of older cohorts are replaced by those of younger birth cohorts (Alwin and Krosnick 1991). The effects of caste/ethnicity on changes in attitudes also reveal interesting results. Compared to the reference category of the upper caste Bahun/Chhetri, individuals from all other caste/ethnicities have less egalitarian attitudes, some of which are significantly different even among caste/ethnic categories where women have been known to have relatively more egalitarian and autonomous positions. Customarily, the Bahun/ Chhetri category maintained their position in the upper most echelons in the social and cultural hierarchy overall in the Nepali society and this was maintained by adherence to the rituals and social norms, and in relation to how upper caste women were expected to behave in

relation to men. Yet, in the context of changing gender related attitudes, individuals from the upper caste groups have more egalitarian attitudes compared to the other social groups within the study setting.

Of the four measures of wealth of the respondents, only ownership of consumer items influences changes in attitudes. In the case of attitudes towards young widow remarriage and only men making decisions, the odds for an individual to have more egalitarian attitudes increase by eight and nine percent, respectively, with each additional item owned.

As in western countries, the experiences of parents also influence the attitudes of the respondents in this setting. Respondents whose parents had ever gone to school had higher odds of having more egalitarian attitudes related to child marriage and to daughter-in-law obedience to mothers-in-law (19 and 17 percent respectively). Similarly respondents whose parents had travel experiences (before the respondents were 12 years old) also had increased odds of having more egalitarian attitudes related to decision making roles of men and women.

Next, each previous individual attitude of 1996 was controlled separately in the models and as expected, they were all significant predictors of positive changes in the same attitudes in 2008.

The final set of measures in Table 4.2 is of four different types of individual level non-family experiences measured in 1996 have varied results. The results from the cumulative times of travel to Kathmandu show positive and significant influence only on changes in attitudes about household decision making. The exposure to media shows a positive effect on changing attitudes towards being more egalitarian about child marriage

and about young widow re-marriage. Every one unit increase in the index for media exposure increases the odds of changes in egalitarian attitudes towards child marriage and young widow re-marriage by 31 percent and 44 percent respectively (Models 2 and 4). As mentioned earlier, the media exposure index is the sum of three dichotomous measures: experience of listening to the radio, watching television and going to the cinema. For individuals having had all three experiences, their odds of having more egalitarian attitudes about young widow re-marriage, for instance, is 107 percent greater than individuals who have had none of those experiences[71]. Contrary to expectations, the analysis shows that the cumulative number of years of employment experience, for both salary and wage work, does not have any statistically significant effect on changes in any of the gender related attitudes. Labor force participation, particularly of women, have been known to influence changes in gender related attitudes in the Western industrialized countries yet such evidence is not seen in the study context[72].

Finally, educational attainment, particularly education levels higher than lower secondary school, measured in 1996, has strong, statistically significant and positive effects on changes in all four gender related attitudes in 2008. Compared to individuals with no formal education, individuals with more than six years of formal education had significantly higher odds of having more egalitarian gender related attitudes. These results are quite consistent with the evidence from other settings related to the positive effects of educational attainment on changes in gender related attitudes in a more egalitarian direction. An additional issue of interest in this set of results is that attitudes

[71] This estimate is calculated by taking the odds ratio of 1.44 (Model 4 in Table 4.2) to the second power which yielded an estimated difference of 2.07 or 107 percent.
[72] Models were also run using dichotomous summary measures of any travel, employment (salary and wages) and schooling ever experiences. The results were not significantly different therefore they are not shown here.

related to young widow re-marriage are relatively less strongly linked to the educational attainment of the respondents compared to the other three levels of education.

Experiences of Community Groups and Changes in Attitudes

Table 4.3 presents the final set of models (Models 9, 10, 11, and 12) in which the effect of individual experiences in community groups between 1997 and 2007 on changes the gender attitudes in 2008 is examined. These models contain all the measures from the previous models shown in Table 4.2, including the individual attitudes in 1996[73]. These models also include the additional non-family experiences that the respondents gained between 1997 and 2007. For all four gender related attitudes, we see that the effect of experiences of community group participation between 1997 and 2007 has a strong, statistically significant, positive and *independent* effect. Individuals who had community group experience(s) between 1997 and 2007 had 44 percent and 29 percent higher odds of having more egalitarian attitudes towards girls getting married before their first menstruation and towards young widow remarriage. Similarly in relation to negative attitudes towards the roles of daughters-in-law vis a vis mothers-in-law and only men making decisions at home, the odds of attitude changes towards being more egalitarian were 36 and 29 percent respectively.[74] These results suggest that for those individuals who joined community groups between 1997 and 2007, those experiences played an important and independent role in influencing changes in gender related attitudes in 2008.

[Table 4.3 about here]

[73] Analysis was also conducted without controlling for the 1996 attitudes and the results were similar.
[74] An additional model was examined controlling only for all 1996 individual experiences and attitudes (i.e. leaving out the additional experiences gained between 1997 and2007). The results of changes in attitudes in 2008 were similar in direction, magnitude and significance levels, therefore the results are not shown here.

DISCUSSION

This study attempts to address a gap in the current understanding on changes in gender and family related attitudes in non-industrialized countries where there is a low prevalence of individual factors known to have been influential in changing attitudes in western countries. Thus this study provides important information about what changes are taking place in selected gender related attitudes in such a context, and examines local, contextual non-family experiences that potentially influences changes in gender roles and family related attitudes. The results show evidence of strong, statistically significant, positive and *independent* influence of an individuals' experiences in community based collective action programs – community groups - on a set of four gender and family related attitudes when their individual characteristics and experiences, as well as their previous attitudes were taken into account. Attitudes about the gendered roles of daughters-in-laws and women in household decision-making and about child marriage and young widow re-marriage were all more egalitarian for individuals who had participated in community groups compared to those who had not. The study provides strong evidence for the multiplicity of experiences that potentially influence gendered attitudes, in societies that are rapidly changing and where men and women have increasing opportunities to participate in social and economic activities outside of the realm and authority of the family.

The attitudes studied here are representative of some gender and family related attitudes that have important consequences on young girls and women life conditions and freedom of choice, particularly in societies that are marked by deeply divided and discriminatory gender roles and perceptions. Due to the reciprocal relationship between

attitudes and behaviors, changes in attitudes towards a increased egalitarianism, for example, can be expected to influence individual behaviour changes in a similar direction too (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). A more positive attitude towards increasing age at marriage for young girls has important implications for changes in marital fertility, reproductive health and will increased opportunities for competing experiences such as more education and possibly labor force participation. Remarriage for young widows has tremendous implications for changes in the structure of patriarchy which has been an important ideological system to control women's sexuality and reproductive choices as well as introducing changes in the family and kinship relationships. The importance of changes in attitudes towards gendered roles in the household for married individuals have repercussion for hierarchical structures within the family as well as increased autonomy and participation of women in decision-making.

In the US, changing gender and family related attitudes are linked to an increasing embracing of rights-based principle related to values of individualism and freedom (Thornton and Young-DeMarco 2001). Additionally, Brooks and Bolzendahl's (2004) study suggests that a number of behaviors and relations relating to gender have been significantly influenced by broader ideological changes in individual's attitudes. Thus this foundational study presents opportunities to examine such relations between ideological change and individual attitude changes (and vice versa) in non-western countries where new information, ideas and experiences, do not necessarily come primarily from sources of formal western styled education or increased labor forces participation of women, but also informal experiences and interactions in social networks and groups for adult men and women.

The current study draws on the case of a non-Western rural setting, in a poor country that has experienced tremendous macro level changes within a short time span. Yet the study has relevance for other similar contexts as well. Many communities around the world receive external support from government and non-government agencies in the form of "development projects" that seek to build capacity of community level collectives to improve livelihoods and establish basic rights and access to critical resources in an equitable manner. Bangladesh's Grameen Bank for example, supports access to micro-credit, and actively promotes behavioral and attitudinal changes among members (Barber et al. 2004). Most other programs supported by aid from bilateral and multilateral agencies have integrated gender sensitization training as part of the process and have an explicit focus on gender equality (Biggs et al. 2004).

The study theorizes that through their membership in different kinds of non-family community groups, men and women learn new knowledge and skills, gaining wider access to new information and ideas, and find themselves in much expanded roles within the family and the community. They also have much expanded opportunities for social interactions and networking that potentially increases their awareness and expands their worldview. In the context of women, the awareness gives them opportunities to focus on issues of their own agency and identities. Though there is some evidence that supports this theoretical framework, more work is needed in understanding the mechanisms of how the new socialization processes, particularly in adulthood, within formal and informal community groups can potentially lead to changes in gender related attitudes and behaviors among men and women.

Another important issue is related to the strong relationship between educational attainment and changes in attitudes. This study shows that higher levels of educational attainment have stronger influences on changes in gender related attitudes towards a more egalitarian direction, and this is consistent with research on the socialization effect of formal education in other contexts as well. Yet, as in the context of the study, it is also important to understand that ideological differences, particularly in relation to social and cultural norms can continue to have a strong effect, as in the case of women's attitudes towards young widow re-marriage in Chitwan when controlling for educational differences. Additionally, recent research in the South Indian state of Kerala (which has the highest gender development index in the country) shows that high educational attainment has fostered new aspirations and attitudes among women there. Yet the societal and cultural norms continue to dictate that women should be subservient to men both at home and in the labor market and that such imbalance often contributes to family violence and suicides (Mitra and Singh 2007). Thus the seeming imbalance between ideological equality between men and women and the strong gendered day-to-day social norms need to be better understood within the cultural contexts being studied. Attitude changes are stronger when individuals are able to systematically process the new information presented (for example through learning in schools, at home and in the community), and the degree of changes in attitudes will depend on the quality of the information and arguments (Ajzen and Fishbein 1980). Without this kind of coherence attitudinal changes can be temporary.

The findings from this study present an additional dimension to non-familial factors that play a potential role in influencing changes in gender related attitudes, and

more generally about additional consequences of community level collectives and networks. The study takes into consideration membership in multiple types of community groups, which are formed in different manners and have specific objectives in supporting individuals. Research on consequences of community groups have to a greater extent focused on micro-credit groups and its impact on the economic and social empowerment of women. By expanding the examination to assess the consequences of changes in gender related attitudes of men and women, this study presents a valuable addition to the knowledge base and opens up additional questions for future research.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Statistics of Measures.
Means and standard deviations of measures used to analyze the effects of participation in community groups on changes in gender related attitudes of respondents ages 15-44, Western Chitwan, 1996-2008. (*N* = 2,323)

MEASURES	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Gender Related Attitudes 2008				
Negative towards marriage before menstruation	2.35	0.84	1	4
Positive towards young widow remarriage	3.28	0.88	1	4
Negative towards daughters-in-law obedience	2.45	0.84	1	4
Negative towards only men decide	2.98	0.62	1	4
Group Participation between 1997-2007				
Participation in Community Groups	0.41	0.49	0	1
Individual Characteristics				
Women	0.63	0.48	0	1
Birth Cohort				
Cohort 3 (born 1952-1961 ages 35-44)	0.24	0.43	0	1
Cohort 2 (born 1962-1971 ages 25-34)	0.31	0.46	0	1
Cohort 1 (born 1972-1981 ages 15-24)	0.45	0.50	0	1
Caste/Ethnicity				
Bahun/Chhetri (upper caste)	0.44	0.50	0	1
Dalit (low caste)	0.11	0.31	0	1
Hill Janajati (nationalities)	0.15	0.36	0	1
Newars	0.06	0.24	0	1
Tarai Janajati (plains' nationalities)	0.24	0.42	0	1
Gender Related Attitudes in 1996				
Negative towards marriage before menstruation	2.04	0.85	1	4
Positive towards young widow remarriage	2.64	0.86	1	4
Negative towards daughters-in-law obedience	2.14	0.92	1	4
Negative towards only men decide	2.66	0.79	1	4
Wealth in 1996				
*Khet/*lowland cultivated (in *kattha*) [75]	14.53	24.57	0	150
*Bari/*upland cultivated (in *kattha*)	8.20	12.03	0	112
Livestock owned (in LU)[76]	2.87	2.49	0	18.5
Consumer Items [77]	2.68	1.60	0	7
Parental and Childhood Influences				
Index of parents school ever	0.39	0.60	0	2
Index parents work before R is 12 years	0.69	0.75	0	2
Index of parents travel ever	0.46	0.68	0	2
Index of parents movie ever	0.76	0.87	0	2
Childhood exposure before age 12 [78]	3.02	1.54	0	6

[75] *Kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.
[76] Livestock Unit: conversion of livestock into units where 1 livestock unit = 1 water buffalo = 1.2 cows = 4 goats = 5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).
[77] Ownership of seven items: radio, television, bicycle, motorcycle, bullock cart, own drinking water source, and a toilet at home

Individual Experiences in 1996				
Total times travelled to Kathmandu	0.51	1.97	0	38
Total times travelled outside of Nepal	0.16	0.68	0	14
Media Index: exposure to radio, TV and cinema ever	1.79	0.43	0	2
Total years of salary work experiences	1.41	4.14	0	40
Total years of wage work experiences	3.10	7.23	0	57
Educational Attainment				
No Education	0.39	0.49	0	1
Primary (1-5 years)	0.20	0.40	0	1
Lower Secondary (6-8 years)	0.21	0.41	0	1
Secondary (9-10 years)	0.10	0.30	0	1
High Education (11+ years)	0.10	0.30	0	1
Experiences between 1996 and 2007				
Total times travelled to Kathmandu	0.68	1.77	0	11
Total times travelled outside of Nepal	0.23	0.94	0	11
Total years of salary work experiences	1.63	3.33	0	11
Total years of wage work experiences	2.48	4.18	0	11
Any additional education	0.19	0.39	0	1

[78] Sum of the presence of schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, presence of development programs, and of women's groups, within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.

Table 4.2: Community Group Participation and Changes in Attitudes. Odds ratios from ordered logit regression of models analyzing the influence of community group participation between 1997 and 2007 on gender related attitudes among respondents (ages 15-44 in 1996), Western Chitwan 1996-2008. (*N*=2,323)

	Negative toward Child Marriage		Positive toward Widow Remarriage	
	Model 1	**Model 2**	**Model 3**	**Model 4**
Group Membership ('97-2007)	1.77***(6.04)	-	1.48***(4.22)	-
Individual Characteristics				
Females	-	1.02 (0.14)	-	0.68***(-4.04)
Birth Cohort				
1952-1961 (Cohort 3)		0.56***(-4.18)		0.72* (-2.19)
1962-1971 (Cohort 2)		0.83 (-1.54)		0.71** (-3.14)
1972-1981 (Cohort 1) [a]		-		-
Caste/Ethnicity	-		-	
Bahun/Chhetri (upper caste) [a]		-		-
Dalit (lower caste)		0.93 (-0.39)		0.85 (-0.88)
Hill Janajati (ethnicity)		0.86 (-0.90)		0.69** (-2.69)
Newars		0.79 (-1.11)		0.81 (-1.23)
Tarai Janajati (plains ethnicity)		0.84 (-1.09)		0.61* (-3.53)
Attitudes in 1996	-		-	
Negative: Child marriage		1.30*** (3.95)		-
Positive: Widow remarriage		-		1.41*** (6.81)
Negative: DIL obedience		-		-
Negative: Only men decide		-		-
Wealth in 1996	-		-	
Khet/lowland cultivated [79]		0.99 (-1.18)		0.99 (-0.88)
Bari/upland cultivated		0.99 (-0.19)		1.00 (0.62)
Livestock owned (in LU)[80]		1.02 (0.71)		0.99 (0.14)
Consumer Items[81]		1.07 (1.61)		1.08* (2.17)
Parental /Childhood Influence	-		-	
Parents school ever		1.19+ (1.93)		0.99 (-0.08)
Parents work before R is 12yr		0.96 (-0.62)		0.93 (-1.13)
Parents travel ever		1.04 (0.55)		1.11 (1.46)
Parents movie ever		0.99 (-0.14)		1.03 (0.59)
Childhood exposure (<12)[82]		1.03 (0.66)		0.98 (-0.49)
Experiences in 1996	-		-	
Travel Experiences				
Total times to Kathmandu		1.02 (0.83)		0.98 (-0.91)
Total times outside of Nepal		0.99 (-0.03)		1.06 (0.79)
Media Exposure(Index)	-		-	
Radio, TV and cinema ever		1.31* (2.10)		1.44** (3.51)
Employment Experiences	-		-	
Total years of salary work		0.99 (-1.56)		0.98 (-1.78)

[79] The measure of land is in *kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.
[80] Livestock Unit: conversion of livestock into units where 1 livestock unit = 1 water buffalo = 1.2 cows = 4 goats = 5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).
[81]Sum of the presence of schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, presence of development programs, and of women's groups, within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.
[82] Sum of the presence of four institutions -schools, market, employers and development programs- within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.

Total years of wage work		1.01 (0.89)		1.01 (1.83)
Educational Experiences	-		-	
No Education [a]		-		-
Primary (1-5 years)		1.12 (0.82)		0.93 (-0.64)
Lower Secondary (6-8 yrs)		1.41* (1.99)		1.41* (2.39)
Secondary (9-10 years)		2.10*** (3.78)		1.48* (1.89)
High Education (11+ years)		2.04*** (3.57)		1.49* (2.32)
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-1892.02	-1813.41	-2399.20	-2275.36
Wald χ^2	36.45***	207.61***	17.81***	274.34***
Pseudo R^2	0.0092	0.0503	0.0047	0.0561

[a] Reference Category.
Z-scores in parenthesis.
+p<1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 4.2: *Continued…..*

	Negative toward Daughter-in-Law Obedience		Negative toward Only Men Decide	
	Model 5	**Model 6**	**Model 7**	**Model 8**
Group Membership ('97-2007)	1.83***(7.54)	-	1.76***(5.93)	-
Individual Characteristics				
Females	-	0.97 (-0.28)	-	1.54*** (4.24)
Birth Cohort				
1952-1961 (Cohort 3)		0.56***(-4.34)		1.28+ (1.76)
1962-1971 (Cohort 2)		0.77** (-2.42)		1.14 (1.29)
1972-1981 (Cohort 1) [a]		-		-
Caste/Ethnicity	-		-	
Bahun/Chhetri (upper caste) [a]		-		-
Dalit (lower caste)		0.90 (-0.63)		0.92 (-0.44)
Hill Janajati (nationalities)		0.53***(-5.17)		0.79 (-1.50)
Newars		0.71* (-2.16)		0.75+ (-1.81)
Tarai Janajati (plains)		0.47***(-5.81)		0.57***(-4.24)
Attitudes in 1996	-		-	
Negative: Child marriage		-		-
Positive: Widow remarriage		-		-
Negative: DIL obedience		1.60*** (9.42)		-
Negative: Only men decide		-		1.42*** (6.77)
Wealth in 1996	-		-	
Khet/lowland cultivated [83]		0.99 (-0.57)		0.99 (-0.95)
Bari/upland cultivated		1.00 (0.72)		1.01 (1.31)
Livestock owned (in LU)[84]		0.98 (-0.96)		1.00 (0.08)
Consumer Items[85]		1.04 (1.33)		1.09** (2.52)
Parental /Childhood Influence	-		-	
Parents school ever		1.17+ (1.80)		1.00 (0.02)
Parents work before R is 12yr		0.99 (0.24)		0.98 (-0.40)
Parents travel ever		1.05 (0.76)		1.20* (2.34)
Parents movie ever		0.96 (-0.62)		1.05 (0.88)
Childhood exposure (<12)[86]		1.04 (1.30)		1.02 (0.48)
Experiences in 1996	-		-	
Travel Experiences				
Total times to Kathmandu		0.98 (-1.41)		1.06** (2.78)
Total times outside of Nepal		1.01 (-0.29)		0.91 (-1.15)
Media Exposure(Index)	-		-	
Radio, TV and cinema ever		1.14 (1.35)		0.94 (-0.57)
Employment Experiences	-		-	
Total years of salary work		0.98* (-2.02)		1.01 (0.45)
Total years of wage work		0.99 (-1.12)		0.99 (-1.19)

[83] The measure of land is in *kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.
[84] Livestock Unit: conversion of livestock into units where 1 livestock unit = 1 water buffalo = 1.2 cows = 4 goats = 5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).
[85]Sum of the presence of schools, bus services, cinema, employment opportunities, presence of development programs, and of women's groups, within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.
[86] Sum of the presence of four institutions -schools, market, employers and development programs- within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.

Educational Experiences	-		-	
No Education [a]		-		-
Primary (1-5 years)		1.21 (1.53)		1.46** (2.72)
Lower Secondary (6-8 yrs)		1.72*** (3.45)		2.08*** (5.42)
Secondary (9-10 years)		2.27*** (4.33)		3.22*** (5.75)
High Education (11+ years)		2.60*** (4.88)		3.31*** (5.88)
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-2613.14	-2370.64	-2389.23	-2235.56
Wald χ^2	56.88***	670.98***	35.17***	302.37***
Pseudo R^2	0.0106	0.1024	0.0097	0.0734

[a] Reference Category.
Z-scores in parenthesis.
+p<1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table 4.3: Odds ratios from ordered logistic regression of models analyzing the influence of community group participation on changing gender related attitudes in 2008, Western Chitwan 1996-2008. (*N*=2,323)

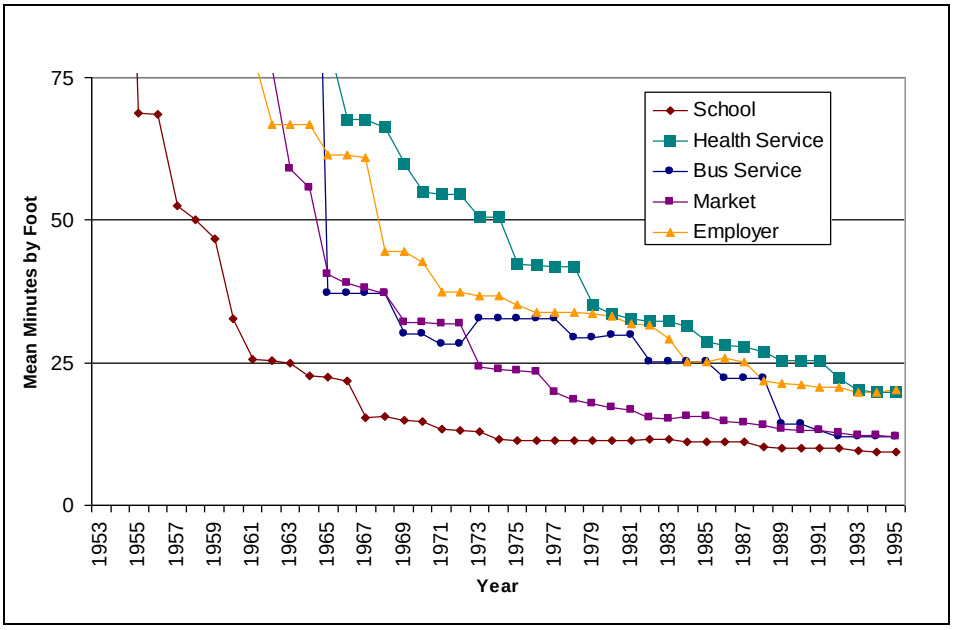
	Negative toward Child Marriage		**Positive toward Widow Remarriage**		**Negative toward Daughter-in-Law Obedience**		**Negative toward Only Men Decide**	
	Model 9		**Model 10**		**Model 11**		**Model 12**	
Group Membership ('97-2007)	1.44***	(3.68)	1.29**	(2.58)	1.36***	(3.68)	1.29**	(2.62)
Experiences (1997-2007)								
Times travelled to Kathmandu	0.97	(-1.17)	0.99	(-0.47)	0.98	(-0.69)	0.99	(-0.34)
Times travelled out of Nepal	0.96	(-0.68)	0.95	(-1.57)	1.06	(1.31)	0.99	(-0.02)
Total years of salary work	1.01	(0.54)	0.99	(0.40)	0.98	(-1.23)	1.02	(1.53)
Total years of wage work	1.01	(0.95)	1.00	(0.19)	1.00	(0.46)	0.99	(-0.79)
Any additional education	1.02	(0.17)	1.20	(1.44)	1.04	(0.36)	1.21	(1.53)
Individuals Experiences 1996								
Times travelled to Kathmandu	1.03	(1.11)	0.99	(-0.61)	0.98	(-0.96)	1.06*	(2.47)
Total times outside of Nepal	1.01	(0.11)	1.09	(1.10)	0.99	(-0.22)	0.91	(1.23)
Index of Media Exposure	1.30*	(2.09)	1.44***	(3.42)	1.13	(1.16)	0.95	(-0.49)
Total years of salary work	0.98	(-1.76)	0.98	(-1.51)	0.99	(-1.42)	0.99	(-0.16)
Total years of wage work	1.00	(0.49)	1.01	(1.38)	0.99	(-1.29)	0.99	(-0.64)
Educational Attainment								
No Education [a]	-		-		-		-	
Primary (1-5 years)	1.10	(0.70)	0.93	(-0.62)	1.21	(1.52)	1.45**	(2.65)
Lower Secondary (6-8 yrs)	1.34+	(1.72)	1.34*	(2.13)	1.69***	(3.24)	1.98***	(5.09)
Secondary (9-10 years)	1.98***	(3.46)	1.42+	(1.69)	2.22***	(4.28)	3.05***	(5.42)
High Education (11+ years)	1.91***	(3.21)	1.41*	(1.98)	2.51***	(4.57)	3.05***	(5.42)
Individual Characteristics								
Females	0.93	(-0.57)	0.64***	(-4.52)	0.90	(-0.96)	1.43***	(3.36)
Birth Cohort								
1952-1961 (Cohort 3)	0.57***	(-3.88)	0.76+	(-1.82)	0.58***	(-4.02)	1.33*	(2.02)
1962-1971 (Cohort 2)	0.84	(-1.44)	0.74**	(-2.72)	0.78*	(-2.23)	1.18	(1.55)
1972-1981 (Cohort 1) [a]	-		-		-		-	
Caste/Ethnicity								
Bahun/Chhetri (upper caste) [a]	-		-		-		-	
Dalit (lower caste)	0.94	(-0.31)	0.88	(-0.71)	0.93	(-0.48)	0.93	(-0.37)
Hill Janajati (nationalities)	0.92	(-0.54)	0.74**	(-2.19)	0.56***	(-4.74)	0.84	(-1.12)
Newars	0.81	(-1.03)	0.83	(-1.08)	0.71*	(-2.15)	0.77+	(-1.67)

	Negative toward Child Marriage		Positive toward Widow Remarriage		Negative toward Daughter-in-Law Obedience		Negative toward Only Men Decide	
TaraiJanajati (plains)	0.87	(-0.85)	0.64**	(-3.14)	0.48***	(-5.60)	0.59***	(-4.00)
Attitudes in 1996								
Negative: Child Marriage	1.29***	(3.79)	-		-		-	
Positive: Widow Remarriage	-		1.40***	(6.69)	-		-	
Negative: DIL Obedience	-		-		1.59***	(9.35)	-	
Negative: Only Men Decide	-		-		-		1.42***	(6.77)
Wealth in 1996								
Khet/lowland cultivated [87]	0.99	(-1.03)	0.99	(-0.85)	0.99	(-0.31)	0.99	(-0.84)
Bari/upland cultivated	0.99	(-0.32)	1.00	(0.48)	1.00	(0.65)	1.01	(1.24)
Livestock owned (in LU)[88]	1.02	(0.78)	0.99	(-0.10)	0.98	(-0.92)	1.00	(0.02)
Consumer Items	1.06	(1.48)	1.08*	(2.07)	1.04	(1.16)	1.09**	(2.38)
Parental /Childhood Influence								
Parents school ever	1.20*	(1.95)	0.99	(-0.12)	1.17+	(1.80)	0.99	(-0.10)
Parents work before R is 12 y	0.96	(-0.59)	0.93	(-1.10)	0.99	(-0.14)	0.98	(-0.37)
Parents travel ever	1.04	(0.59)	1.11	(1.49)	1.05	(0.79)	1.21**	(2.46)
Parents movie ever	0.98	(-0.30)	1.02	(0.32)	0.95	(-0.90)	1.04	(0.60)
Childhood exposure (<12)[89]	1.03	(0.72)	0.99	(-0.42)	1.05	(1.39)	1.02	(0.52)
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-1805.59		-2268.91		-2362.58		-2228.81	
Wald χ^2	241.19***		291.15***		691.73***		335.76***	
Pseudo R^2	0.0544		0.0588		0.1055		0.0762	

[a] Reference Category.
Z-scores in parenthesis.
+p<1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

[87] The measure of land is in *kattha*: a standard Nepali unit of land measurement that is equal to 0.034 hectares.
[88] Livestock Unit: conversion of livestock into units where 1 livestock unit=1 water buffalo=1.2 cows=4 goats=5 sheep (Agrawal and Gupta 2005).
[89] Sum of the presence of four institutions -schools, market, employers and development programs- within a one hour's walk during childhood of the respondent before they were 12 years of age.

Figure 4.1: Changes in Distance to Non-Family Institutions in the Neighborhoods Of The Chitwan Valley Family Study, Western Chitwan 1953-1995.



Source: Chitwan Valley Family Study, 1996.

Figure 4.2: Changes in Gender Related Attitudes between 1996 and 2008, among Women and Men, Ages 15-44 in 1996, Western Chitwan.

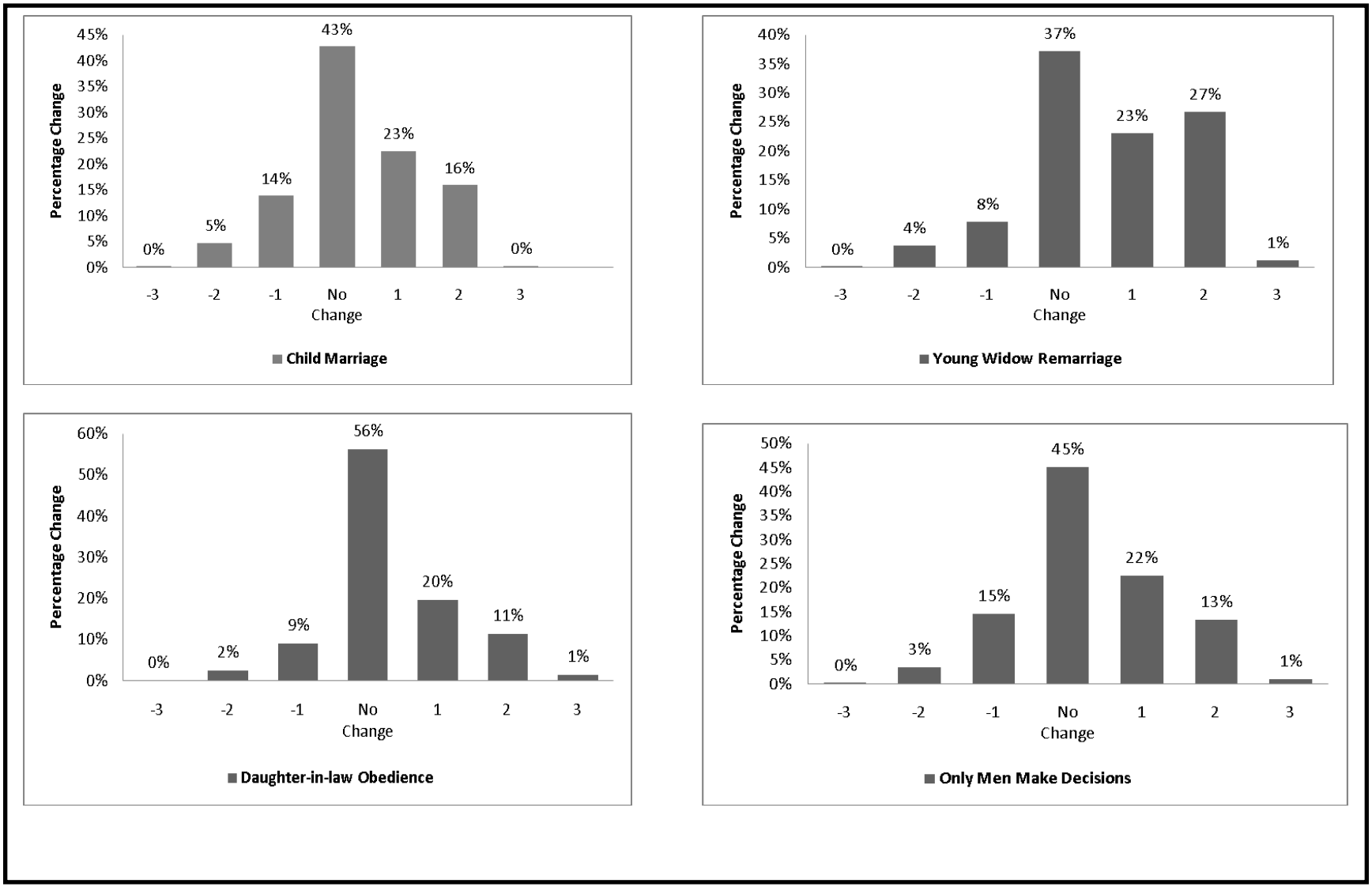


Figure 4.3: Changes in Educational Attainment of Women and Men, Ages 15-44 in 1996, Western Chitwan.

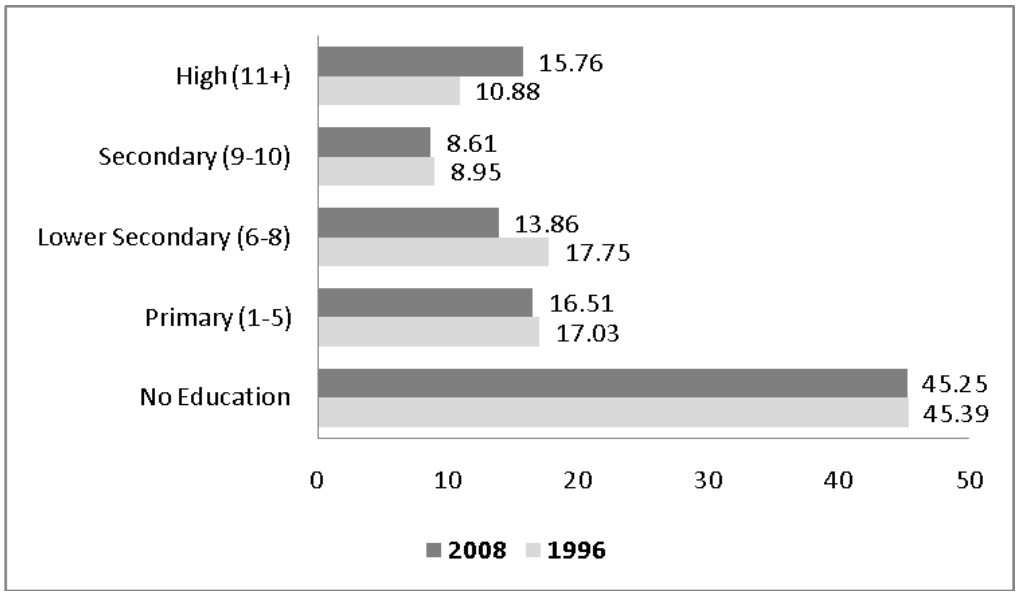


Figure 4.4: Changes in Educational Attainment of Individuals Born between 1972 and 1981, Western Chitwan.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This dissertation is a study of social exclusion based on caste, ethnicity and gender, and how human behavior and attitudes might change towards the excluded, marginalized and discriminated groups within these social categories. It is, at first, a study of how individuals face exclusion and constraints in accessing and utilizing community-based resources due to their caste, ethnicity and gender. Secondly, it examines how this kind of exclusion changes over time for women and men of different castes. Finally, it examines whether the experiences of accessing those resources leads to changes in their attitudes related to gender based discrimination. This study examines these changes in the context of the pivotal role of community-based organizations – an agent of change that is external to the community but is introduced to improve life opportunities and life conditions of excluded groups of people.

In the second chapter of this dissertation, the analysis shows that experiences of travel, employment and educational attainment are likely to positively affect community group participation, working potentially through the power of exposure to new ideas and new information and through creating aspirations for better living standards. Participation in community groups, learning to access basic services, and additional financial and other kinds of resources can help with providing additional opportunities for status

enhancement, which would be a strong motivation for joining groups. But we also see strong evidence of a residual 'penalty' due to the historical structural barriers of one's caste and ethnic identity in influencing community group participation, with marginalized caste/ethnic groups having relatively lower rates of participation compared to the higher status upper caste groups. The framework of social exclusion provides an opportunity to assess how formal and informal institutions influence the life chances of groups of individuals based on their social identities and how this influence is not necessarily only characteristic of economic disparities in conditions across caste and ethnic groups.

Moving on to the third chapter, I examine how the likelihood of participation in community groups changed over time for women and men from different castes and ethnicities. This analysis is timely and important in providing empirical evidence of social exclusion in community groups disaggregated by caste/ethnicity in a context where confronting categories of exclusion have focused primarily on economic factors. In Nepal the analysis of social changes from the perspective of differences in caste and ethnicity, two critical markers of social stratification and exclusion, is a relatively new phenomenon. Results from the analysis of long-term panel data shows that over time, the differences between participation of upper caste and the caster group on the lowest rung of the hierarchy no longer significantly different when all individual characteristics and experiences are taken into account. But individuals from the ethnic groups that are indigenous to the study area and have been marginalized and excluded continue to have significantly lower rates of participation. These results highlight the need to examine social exclusion within specific contexts so that *who* is disadvantaged can be redefined. Additionally the results also show that the likelihood of women joining community

groups has increased significantly compared to men between 1997 and 2008, the two study waves, unlike the results in chapter two of this dissertation where educational attainment explained the differences in rates of participation. This is potentially due to the increased targeting of women and the lower caste groups by the development programs.

Chapters two and three of this study offers some important theoretical insights that are relevant for other similar contexts. Social stratification based on hierarchies often focus on the variances between the two ends of the continuum, such as in the case of the caste hierarchy, the upper caste and the lower castes. Yet a re-conceptualization of the institution of caste hierarchy would become more meaningful if differences within each rungs of the hierarchy dominate the articulation of discrimination and disadvantages rather than only on the vertical hierarchy per say as Gupta (2007) has argued. This view is not to undermine the acute disadvantages that the lower caste *'hard core'* excluded groups of people have faced. But defining exclusions based on the specific narratives of the local context, political conditions, economic systems, and key relational categories of people is critically important in recognizing *who* is excluded from *what* and who can be defined as the *'hard core'* excluded categories of people based on the specific contest. Therefore hierarchies and differences among the categories need to be situated within the context, in time and in place.

The current focus on social exclusion by policy analysts have focused on macro-level trends of "disadvantage, alienation and lack of freedom" for certain groups relative to others (Gore and Figueiredo 1997). The question then arises is about the role of individual agency in maintaining or changing structures that include some and exclude others. Individual agency is reflected in, for instance how powerful, dominant and

wealthier groups might exercise their own agency to protect their own interests through 'elite capture' to maximize access to resources and to maintain their inclusiveness. Yet marginalized groups are not without agency and have known to effectively use their marginality in securing their needs and interests as Swarteveen and Neupane (1996) show in their study of how women acted in a particular irrigation scheme. Chapter four of this dissertation also provides preliminary evidence from interviews with marginalized indigenous Tharu women in Chitwan who created their own informal savings groups, on their own terms and conditions.

Finally, in chapter four, I examine an important, yet little studied consequence of participation in community-based organizations. I examine one consequence of experiences of participation in community groups on changes in a set of four individual level gender and family related attitudes, namely, attitudes towards child marriage, young widow re-marriage, daughter-in-law obedience, and only men making decisions at home The results show that among individuals who participated in community groups for the first time between 1997 and 2007, their attitudes measured in 2008 had all changed to become significantly more egalitarian, even as their earlier same attitudes, individual characteristic and individual experiences were taken into account.

This dissertation also provides empirical insights into the study of changes in attitudes, which are particularly relevant to non-industrial settings that are in transition. It shows how a broader and more diverse approach needs to be taken in examining the role of multiple experiences, institutions and structures that are likely to influence human attitudes. Since individual attitudes influence human behavior, any change in attitudes,

particularly towards more egalitarianism and greater social equity, can influence conditions of discrimination against excluded groups of people.

Finally, this study adds to the wealth of evidence of the role of education as a major intervening variable through which class, racial, ethnic and gender inequalities are created, sustained and reproduced in a knowledge-based society. Yet it is important to remember that the universality of education has been known to be inadequate to transcend the status boundaries as excluded groups are not able to necessarily transpose one form of 'capital' to another, due to the deeply entrenched structural boundaries. This is even more potent within contexts where *universal* and particularly *quality* educational attainment is low, where it varies based on individual social identities, and where there are considerable overlaps between educational attainment and poverty. Evidence from chapter four in particular shows how educational attainment is not necessarily adequate to bring greater changes in some attitudes that are a result of deeply discriminatory social norms, values and practices – such as that of young widow re-marriage in the case of Chitwan. Nor is it adequate to address continuing gender based violence against even highly educated women in South India (Mitra and Singh 2007). Thus principles of universalism, freedom and equal opportunity, are not necessarily adequate to address why discrimination of certain groups continue along social identities of gender, race, ethnicity, caste, religion, and other markers even in the global context.

The results in this dissertation have relevance for policies and programming pertaining to social justice and equity in countries where poverty levels vary based on social and cultural differences, but where economic status alone does not necessarily explain the continuing discrimination and adverse outcomes for individuals from

marginalized groups. Firstly, there is adequate evidence and theoretical understanding that poverty is not only an economic condition but is influenced by social, cultural and political conditions as well (Sen 1992; Lipton and Maxwell 1992). When external catalysts for social and economic changes are introduced into communities that are deeply divided vertically and horizontally, then such programs have difficulties in challenging existing social relationships. Leaving membership in community-based programs to be 'voluntary' undermines the structural constraints that excluded groups face in accessing these resources. Since their participation is conditioned by unequal social positions *within the specific contexts*, universal policies and programs, while necessary, will not address localized differences. Thus policies and programs need to be supported by more in-depth understanding of the local contexts, as well as flexibility and decentralization of decision-making at the meso and micro levels. This will support government and non-governmental agency planners to then focus more effectively on objectives and outcomes of the specific programs, while concurrently investing in and designing appropriate social welfare programs for specific groups of people who are marginalized economically and socially.

Secondly, the results from chapters two and three also create additional impetus for better monitoring and measurement of community-based programs, particularly the accounting of who among the different groups of individuals are able to and *not* able to access such resources. If community-based programs are able to involve only selective groups of people, while continuing to marginalize others, then the very nature and target of programs will have to be revised and re-ascertained. This would demand re-designing of programs with multiple components to address both the poor and the socially

marginalized groups of people, as well as better accountability of addressing the formal institutional barriers that negatively affect excluded groups of people.

The results from chapters three and four of this dissertation, in particular, also highlights the need for future research in the areas that have been studied. As mentioned in all three chapters of this dissertation, joining community groups is voluntary in nature and the issue of selectivity of individuals as well as the targeted placement of community based programs becomes a contentious issue in the generalizability and representativeness of the results. Additional ethnographic studies focusing on the social and cultural conditions that make individuals more conducive towards or one the other hand create barriers towards joining community-based organizations could be better understood. Alternatively, if feasible, a large scale experimental study design with random assignment to community groups, would allow for a better understanding of the full breadth of the consequences of participation in community groups whether they be changes in social and economic conditions or changes in individual attitudes. Ethnographic data would also help in understanding the processes and mechanisms that influence not only individual decisions and ability to join a community group but also shed more light on the range of consequences of participation in community-based groups. In the study of changes in attitudes in chapter four, there was inadequate co-relation among the set of attitudes which were conceptually framed as gender and family related, which gives rise to the need for additional investigation on the ideological frameworks that influences such attitudes and the adequacy of a single 'gendered' framework.

Finally if community-based programs that aim at creating better social and economic life conditions and opportunities, miss out on pockets of sub-populations that require such support the most, the whole purpose of their effectiveness and existence becomes questionable.

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APPENDIX-A

Table A.1: Odds Ratios of the Effect of Caste/Ethnicity on Participation in Community Groups, with Caste, Gender and Education Interactions on Individuals Ages 15-54, Western Chitwan 1996. (*N*=4,085)

	Model 1 Dalit*Educ.	**Model 2 Hill-J*Educ.**	**Model 3 Tarai-J*Educ.**	**Model 4 Gender*Educ.**	**Model 5 Gender*Caste**
Caste/Ethnicity					
Bahun/Chhetri/Newar (upper caste)[a]	-		-	-	
Dalit (lower caste)	0.32** (-2.64)	0.38***(-3.49)	0.38***(-3.54)	0.38***(-3.46)	0.32*** (-3.42)
Hill Janajati	0.45***(-3.76)	0.38***(-3.77)	0.45***(-3.86)	0.45***(-3.84)	0.39*** (-4.47)
Tarai Janajati	0.26***(-4.54)	0.26***(-4.55)	0.11***(-3.89)	0.26***(-4.48)	0.31*** (-3.58)
Female	1.15 (0.96)	1.15 (0.95)	1.15 (0.98)	0.86 (-0.62)	1.03 (0.21)
Interactions					
Education (0-11) [b]	1.15***(7.58)	1.15***(7.09)	1.15***(7.14)		
Dalit*Education	1.04 (0.68)				
Hill Janajati*Education		1.03 (0.90)			
Tarai Janajati*Education			1.16* (2.17)		
Female*Primary				2.25* (2.38)	
Female*Low Secondary				1.50 (1.18)	
Female*Secondary				1.81+ (1.86)	
Female*High				0.79 (-0.61)	
Female*Dalit					1.43 (0.86)
Female*Hill Janajati					1.38 (1.29)
Female* Tarai Janajati					0.58 (-0.97)
Log Pseudo Likelihood	-1338.21	-1337.85	-1334.97	-1333.15	-1335.17
Wald χ^2	506.07***	520.05***	500.42***	532.49***	493.81
Pseudo R^2	0.1680	0.1682	0.1700	0.1711	0.1699

Notes:
Estimates are presented as odds ratio, with Z-statistics in parenthesis. Standard error adjusted for 151 clusters in neighborhoods.
[a] Reference category. [b] Education: coded 0-10 for each year of educational attainment and 11 for more than 10 years of educational attainment.
+p<1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

APPENDIX-B

Effects of additional measures on changes in gender related attitudes

The demographic literature suggests additional factors that influence changes in gender roles and family related attitudes in western countries, namely religion and religiosity of individuals, changes in marital status, and the effect of the age of individuals, thus models had been tested using these characteristics as well, though the results are not presented. The results of the models are presented in Table AI in the Appendix. All the models contain the controls that have been used in the models presented in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 of the main paper.

Sex Disaggregated Analysis and Interactions

Research in the US has shown that young women tend to have more egalitarian attitudes compared to men their age. Though the context and the ideology related to gender roles are very different in the study context, separate models were examined for men and women (refer to results in #1 in Table A-I). We see differences within men and women among those who have participated in groups, with women's attitudes changing towards a more positive and egalitarian direction for all four attitudes unlike those among men where the direction of the change is positive but the differences are significant in only two out of the four attitudes. Secondly, men and women participate in community groups at different rates thus interactions were tested between gender and membership in community groups, but we do not find any significance differences (#2 in Table A-1).

The Influence of Religion

Given that two out of the four attitudes selected are closely tied to the Hindu religious ideology and culture of the majority of the sample (79 percent Hindu), additional analysis was conducted including four measures related to religion: (i) whether the individuals reported themselves as Hindu/Hindu related religion or non-Hindu (0, 1); (ii) how important religion was for them; (iii) how often they prayed (the latter two measured on a scale of 1-3) and (iv) mean of household members frequency of praying. None of the characteristics and experiences related to religion had any intervening influences on the effects of community group experiences on the selected attitudes of the respondents, except for the household mean of frequency of praying which had marginally significant effects on changes in two out of the four attitudes.

Birth Cohort, Age and Participation in Community Groups

Most community group programs, in general, are focused on the needs of adult men and women. Youth Clubs are the only kind of groups where adolescents are more likely to be members. Birth cohorts are used as controls in the current models since the influence of historical events are especially relevant in this context where there have been rapid social and structural changes within the life time of some individuals. But additional analysis was also conducted with different age groups since greater changes in more egalitarian attitudes have been known to occur in young adulthood. Thus analysis was also conducted with different age groups. The effect of individuals between ages 15-18 years of age in 1996 were the only groups that had less significant effects on two out of the four attitudes measured. For all other age groups the results were similar in terms of their magnitude and direction. These results are consistent with earlier research that

provides evidence of greater changes in attitudes among individuals during "impressionable" years of adolescences and early adulthood (Alwin 1994). Yet, as participation in community groups is more prevalent in later adulthood (over 90% of those who had participated were older adults), the current age range of the sample was maintained. This presents interesting new evidence of later life experiences that influence gender related attitudes among men and women in non-Western, rural settings (results not shown).

Predicting Attitudes in 2008

Models testing for the influence of community group participation between 1997 and 2007 were also tested, without controlling for the 1996 attitudes. The results were also very similar to those of models presented in Table 4.3 of the main paper. The models comprised all controls used in the main models except for the 1996 measures for attitudes. The odds ratio for the effect of *"group membership between 1997and 2007*"were as follows with the z scores in parenthesis: (i) negative attitudes towards child marriage 1.55 (4.43); (ii) positive attitudes towards widow remarriage 1.37 (3.15); (iii) negative attitudes towards daughter-in-law obedience 1.49 (4.88); and negative attitudes only men making decisions 1.39 (3.39).

Table B-1: Odds Ratios from Ordered Logistic Regression of Models Analyzing the Influence of Community Group Participation on Changing Gender Related Attitudes in 2008, Western Chitwan 1996-2008: Analysis Results with Additional Measures and Interaction Effects.

	Negative toward Child Marriage	**Positive toward Widow Remarriage**	**Negative toward Daughter-in-Law Obedience**	**Negative toward Only Men Decide**
1. Separate models for men and women				
For Women Only (N=1,458)				
Community Group Membership (1997-2007)	1.36** (2.45)	1.24+ (1.88)	1.35***(3.23)	1.31** (2.38)
For Men Only (N=866)				
Community Group Membership (1997-2007)	1.67** (2.95)	1.45* (2.17)	1.28 (1.47)	1.26 (1.22)
2. Interaction effects: gender and group membership (N=2,324)				
Community Group Membership (1997-2007)	1.74***(3.35)	1.39+ (1.90)	1.34+ (1.83)	1.33 (1.57)
*Gender*Membership*	0.77 (-1.25)	0.89 (-0.56)	1.01 (0.07)	0.97 (-0.17)
3: Interaction effects: age and group membership (N=2,324)				
Community Group Membership (1997-2007)	1.23 (0.66)	1.49 (1.47)	1.49 (1.47)	1.13 (0.42)
Age at 1996 Membership*	1.01 (0.60)	0.99 (-0.58)	0.99 (-0.58)	1.00 (0.68)
4: Effect of religion and religiosity (N=2,324)				
Community Group Membership (1997-2007)	1.45***(3.74)	1.29* (2.50)	1.35***(3.58)	1.29** (2.66)
Hindu/Non-Hindu	0.93 (-0.55)	0.97 (-0.28)	1.08 (0.79)	0.97 (-0.28)
Importance of Religion	1.09 (1.10)	0.99 (-0.18)	0.94 (-0.81)	0.99 (-0.00)
Frequency of Praying (individual)	1.03 (0.09)	0.99 (-0.17)	0.98 (-0.26)	0.95 (-0.75)
Mean of household members praying	1.05 (0.31)	0.81+ (-1.67)	1.24+ (1.78)	1.12 (0.93)