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EDITORIAL

Institutionally speaking, the Central Department of Sociology and Anthropology has become fully adolescent but it is increasingly facing the challenge to collect a dozen of articles from the fastest growing population of the sociologists and anthropologists in one of the poorest conflict-ridden societies of South Asia. Whether we agree or disagree, we must realize openly that the generality of us are busy for beating our own drums and there has been very little or no concerted effort for giving the continuity to publish this Occasional Papers. The editorial board is not boastful for publishing the present volume replete with highly academic articles in sociology and anthropology of Nepal. But it has a sense of contentment for being successful in giving continuity for its publication with its modicum of effort. Unequivocally, giving continuity to such an activity is definitely better than staying indolently with hands folded and criticizing others with jaundiced eyes.

The present volume has been made possible by the contributions of a number of sociologists, anthropologists, and other scholars. Therefore, the editorial board acknowledges all the contributors of this volume of Occasional Papers. It contains articles written in the field of sociology, anthropology and social psychology. Professor R.R. Regmi has made analytical discussion on the issues of ethnicity and identity in Nepal. He has given emphasis on the participation to solve the ethnic problem in Nepal. Dr. Om Gurung has also presented an analytical discussion on the *Lagi-Lagitya* relations in Jumla district of the Karnali region. This article highlights the prominent features of inter-caste economic interdependency in Jumla, which is a long-term hereditary contractual labour relation. Mr. Laya Prasad Uprety has analyzed the non-economic benefits of the participatory action research as perceived by the researchers working with the adoption of adaptive and collaborative management approach on community forestry and members of the community forest user's group themselves. Mr. Binod Pokharel presents a longitudinal analysis on the changing pattern of forest consumption of Dhankuta district in eastern Nepal for the period of 10 years from 1991 to 2001. Ms Meena Poudel and

Mr. Youba Raj Luitel have critically analyzed gender advocacy with the adoption of social relation approach and the utilization of the framework of institutional analysis. They attempt to introduce the notion of advocacy in general and gender advocacy in particular. Dr. Samira Luitel has analyzed the position of *Dalit* women in caste system. She concludes that women of the *Dalit* communities are oppressed as women in their own society and also marginalised in all aspects of individual development. Mr. Man Bahadur Khatri has focused on the rituals and family shrines, which are associated with agriculture. The author has demonstrated the relationships among the landscape, rituals and the process of development. Mr. Jib Nath Prasai has critically analyzed the policy trends and development practices of rural water supply and sanitation activity. He also examines the roles of the beneficiaries to make the rural water supply and sanitation activity sustainable. Mr. Madhusudan Sharma Subedi's article is related with medical anthropology. The author has discussed the health -related issues, including the etiology of the diseases and the preventive and curative measures. Dr. Philip Tanner and Mr Dharendra Parajuli have quantified peoples' participation and psychological empowerment. The article primarily focuses on the concept of psychological empowerment as a basis for future research into the multifaceted phenomena of empowerment theory. Dr. Niranjana Sharma has focused on various forms of corruption. He discussed the corruption as psychological issue. Mr. Hari Har Ghimire has described the NGO/INGO- centered approach in Nepal. Dr. Kishor Raj Pandey and other co-authors have discussed the health care practices of infant patients at Nepal Medical College. Professor Ganesh Man Gurung has expressed obituary note to Prof. Gopal Singh Nepali. Finally, Bishnu Prasad Dahal has reviewed the book "Ordering Sherpa Through their Rituals: Symbolic and Interpretive Perspective".

Prof. Dr. Rishikeshav Raj Regmi
 Head of the Department
 On behalf of
 The Editorial Board

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ETHNICITY AND IDENTITY

Rishikeshav Regmi, Ph.D*

These days ethnicity is much talked issues in the contemporary world, especially in the third world, so called underdeveloped countries by developed western countries. Personal identity as well as cultural identity Ethnic identity always materialise in relation to somebody else. "Identity is contextual in both derivation and expression-that is manipulable and changeable is now well known and is surely expectable, for it shares these features with all that is Cultural"(Berremann: 1983).It is almost impossible to delineate the boundaries of one cultural identity and the beginning of another.

Ethnic Stereotypes

All men live in a symbolic environment, a substitute world in which objects and events fall into an orderly scheme. Life is much too complicated for any individual to respond to each item he encounters, but there is rarely time enough to examine it with care before handling it. Hence, objects and events must be classified, and men act as if all items in each category have the same characteristics. For example, no two chairs in the world are alike, but we assume that all chairs have certain common attributes and sit with confidence even upon a chair that we have never before encountered. To facilitate reference to these categories, each is given a level; words are names that designate categories. Much of the environment in which human beings make their ways then consists of objects that are classified and labelled. The symbolic environment is not

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mere reproduction of the external world; it is a reconstruction of it in terms of group interests and the available linguistic categories. No two things in the world are exactly alike. Human beings not only classify objects and events; they categorise people-themselves as well as others. Human beings are generally classified into social types, and they are approached or avoided on the basis of their classification. Social types of all kinds are recognized and used daily. Social types are abstractions. They are constructed by selecting and putting together some of the more conspicuous traits that are supposed to characterise a category of people. A group, normally support its social types. They place themselves as well as others into social types, and then try to be up to group expectation. Therefore, social types as a model that guide positively by immitational ways and negatively by avoidance.

Ethnic stereotypes are social types. People in well-established ethnic groups developed a distinctive culture, and outsiders pickout conspicuous traits and exaggerate them to construct a short hand depiction of them. A comparative study of ethnic categories conducted by UNESCO in 1952 revealed the extent to which various groups are similarly characterised in different parts of the world. Thus, members of different ethnic groups interact on the basis of the conceptions they form of one another. Stereotypes may not be accurate, but they represent the ways in which people see each other. People frequently conceive of themselves in terms of such stereotypes, although they do not acknowledge all of the negative traits attributed to them by others.

Ethnic stereotypes vary along several dimensions—among them are the degree of clarity, degree of complexity, extent of people's consciousness and awareness, degree of stability, extent of consensus, and manner in which they are evaluated. Some stereotypes are closely organised patterns; others are vague, fragmentary impressions.

Ethnic Identity and Ethnicity

For the formation of ethnic identity combination of factors—common descent, a socially relevant cultural or physical

characteristics, and a set of attitude and behaviors— is necessary. In this process, common descent may be real or putative (supposed); it is not necessary that there actually be a common racial origin. Cultural attributes like distinctive beliefs, institutions, practices, religion, and language often form the bases of identity. In some instances, physical attributes—pigmentation of the skin or body shape—provide the foundation of ethnic identity. To consolidate such an identity the members of an ethnic group must also share ideas, behavior patterns, feelings, and meaning. They should distinguish themselves (we) from others (they). They should also perceive that they share a common destiny.

There are two main approaches to the understanding of these new ethnic phenomena. The primordialist approach to ethnic identities and ethnicity considers common descent as the more important factor, for primordial loyalties can be activated more easily than rational principles and organisations founded upon them. The other approach is variously known as situational/subjective/instrumental. Its main emphasis is on the members' perception of being different from others and the implications of this for the groups' present status and predicament and to the understanding of contemporary reality, but they do not offer any final answers. They are often no more than grand exercises in the reconstruction of the past (even by manipulation or outright manufacture); the definition and redefinition of situations to explain the present; and strategies for achieving a desired future.

The very expression, ethnicity has gained currency rather recently. As enumerated by Glazer and Moynihan (1975), the term was used for the first time around 1953 and it took decade before the same could get regular usage in anthropological literatures. During the past decade and a half, ethnicity has assumed the quality of an over-used concept often reflecting non-identical meanings, of course in dissimilar contexts.

Etymologically, the concept traces its origin from the word ethnic that relate to a community of physical and mental traits possessed by the members of the group as a product of

their common hereditary and cultural tradition. According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1967:781), ethnicity ordinarily refers to certain quality or affiliation based on hereditary as well as cultural considerations. Winick's Dictionary of Anthropology (1946) does not incorporate the term ethnicity. It, nevertheless, defines ethnic as having somewhat a restricted connotation primarily referring to a group-distinguishable by certain common cultural attributes like a linguistic group.

Ethnicity as such does not appear to have fulfilled all conditions of becoming a standardised concept yet, since the meaning it conveys even now is more or less society specific and to a major extent depends upon overall social and political orientation of the concern society. The same as a concept is also found to have been attributed with different meanings in the context of a mononational state and a pluri-cultural agglomerate bound by a system of authority or in majority-minority situations.

In a state having bio-cultural homogeneity nationality in contemporary sense is generally assumed to be singular. Under such a situation, ethnicity ordinarily attracts mere academic interest and hardly possesses a source of problem unless the state has Colonies having multiple nationalities to administer. Experience of multi-cultured states are bound to be considerably different in this respect as often they are viewed with the manifest aberration of heterogeneity. In a country like Nepal where even pluralism manifests itself in its multiple perspectives and dimensions, the expression stands out altogether on different footing.

Differences in meaning of ethnicity are also observed depending on where the accent is put as well as on the basis of fact whether positive, neutral or negative connotation is assigned to it. In United States of America, problems associated with populations other than those of the Anglo-Saxon background are considered to be related to ethnicity. In previous USSR, ethnicity was largely associated with the problems of national minorities. In Nepal in particular, gradually such problems emanated from socio-economic underdevelopment are designated as ethnicity

related ones that involve ethnic groups or the communities residing in various harsh ecological regions. Under the circumstances, in the interest of the reducing the possibility of furthering ambiguity to the concept, it is considered essential and urgent to standardise the concept having cross-cultural, cross national perspectives in view. Until that has been achieved, in the interest of the science as such, it could be necessary to use the concept in a rather restricted sense, carefully spelling out the specific meaning assigned to it.

Thus, the phenomenon of ethnicity is the expressive aspect of ethnic identities: it involves consolidation, mobilisation, goal setting and goal attainment. Ethnicity is thus a nebulous concept; it is confusing and complex. Originally an archaic word ethnicity has been given new meanings. Despite its ambiguities and shifting emphasis, ethnicity presents a heady cocktail potent in its effect and unsettling to the established order of things. It is part sentiment, part ideology, and part agenda.

Ethnic ideologies have been practiced from time immemorial. Two widely known ideologies of this kind are Nazism and apartheid. These ideologies emphasise domination-subordination relationships; the subordinate groups are denied social and economic equality as well as freedom in equal measure. Approaches to nationalism, assimilation and cultural pluralism have an implicit ideological content. The nationalist mainstream seeks to absorb sub- and micro-nationalism; assimilation, aims at the homogenisation of all groups, relegating ethnic identities to a merely symbolic status; and in the third the prevailing cultural situation is sought to be stabilised, while consciously abiding the erosion of any of the cultures.

In the contemporary world, we find several patterns of inter-ethnic relations. The domination pattern was glaringly represented by South Africa in relation to the blacks and the coloured, and by Israel in relation to the Arabs in general and especially to the Palestinians. The "Melting Pot" approach of USA and of Mexico has sought to incorporate all ethnic groups as equal members of the body politic; in theory at least they are to be dealt with according to universalistic criteria. However, the Anglo-Saxon tradition continues to be strong in the US and

persons of European origin have been better assimilated than those from other regions. Blacks continued to encounter social discrimination and must function as a society within a larger society. In the open elite structure some of them have been able to move upwards, but there are strong barriers in the way of their assimilation.

Australia, Belgium, Canada, Lebanon, Nigeria, Yugoslavia and Switzerland generally have been allowing ethnic groups to retain their cultural identities and institutions. Of these in ethnic terms Lebanon, Nigeria are on a course of self-destruction. Nigeria and previous Yugoslavia have faced serious ethnic problems. Wars and human Genocide are occurred Croats, Serbs, Bosnians have been divided and thousand of people have died, millions homeless. There are rumblings in Belgium and Canada also.

In the last two decades there has been a rash of ethnic movements characterised by unprecedented terror. Some have had behind them one radical ideology or another, often a convoluted mix. Others have taken an ethnic cause based on its own logic goals and instrumentalities. Both have had an unsettling effect on social order.

Ethnicity may be attributed to several causes. It may be a response to the cultural arrogance of the dominated group in a country. Some ethnic groups may resent being dominated and exploited by the group in power. Prejudice and discrimination-which need not be real-may consolidate feelings of ethnicity. Ethnic groups may fear the erosion of their cultures and identities. When the economy is retarded and development unequal, some groups may organise on ethnic platforms to fight their battles for equity and distributive justice.

There is reason to believe that ethnicity and movement based on it has been engineered in some countries by foreign powers. Rivals contending for political power within a country have also played the ethnic card for momentary gain like that of Maoists in Nepal. Some leaders have stoked the fire of ethnicity in order to maintain their leadership. Where sentiment is involved rationality and logic are at a discount. In recent decades, the Third World has witnessed four shifts in emphasis;

from political freedom to economic development to social equality to cultural self-determination. Most ethnic movements now seem cultural autonomy as a prerequisite to the attainment of real political freedom and distributive justice, to the growth of the economy, and to the creation of a fraternal social order.

One of the most current well known political examples of the fluctuating character of ethnic identity is undoubtedly the total lack of congruence between the ethnic label, Serbo-croat and those people who are supposed to be represented and described by this category.

It is impossible to substantiate ethnic and cultural identities without the aspects of historical processes and external relations. In this sense, ethnicity to a large extent is subject to manipulation from its own members internally as well as externally from the nation state or by other social scientists.

Nepal from the historical point of view was intergrated in a very harmonic way. Some 234 years ago, Prithvi Narayan Shah united petty states and principalities to form a single nation called Nepal. This in real sense initiated the process of national intergration after the country had been politically integrated. Prithvi Narayan Shah realised the pluralistic nature of Nepal and called his new founded kingdom "Garden of four Varnas and 36 sub-castes." Prithvi Narayan Shah and those after him made the four key ideas as ways to integrate the various ethnic groups and their cultural diversities. These ideas were the unquestioning power of the king . Hindu values as the ethos of national life, social integration by means of Hindu value system based on caste, and Nepali language as the official language and the medium of education. This traditional method of National Integration was carried till 1950. Panchayat System after 1960 initiated some methods while the traditional method being more dominant. Monolithic ideology, added with Panchayat idology giving highest emphasiss to the crown and nationalism was the main strategy for national integration where everything was imposed for uniformity. The advent of democracy has changed the notion of national integration. The 1990 constitution with democratic spirit has recognized the cultural pluralism and

guarantees different communities or ethnic groups to practice their religion, culture and language.

After 1990, Nepal has been facing many problems related to ethnicity. Nepal is a multicultural, multi-religious and multi-lingual country. Nepali culture is the syncretism of all these diversities.

Nepali social, cultural, political, ethnic and religious spheres have been deeply influenced by its topographical conditions. Its land-locked, high mountains, rugged hills, turbulent rivers, dense forest and malaria had forced into isolation from the rest of the world. It is ethnically diverse and culturally pluralistic. This is due to the fact that since about 1500 B.C, this country was penetrated slowly and steadily by various races.

In present day, newer values of democracy, human rights, minority rights, equality and justice has become the slogan of the day. The new constitution has acknowledged the cultural pluralism of Nepal and guarantees the right of every community "to conserve and promote its language, script and culture."

Ethnic consciousness is increasing everyday in Nepal. The ethnic awareness of the communities like Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu, Thakali, Sherpa, Tharu, Dhimal is prominently growing to identify themselves as a cultural groups rather than political groups. Terai people are becoming drastically serious to raise their economic prosperity through developmental efforts. The notion of *Pahade* and *Madhise* has been slowing down when Sadhbhavana Party has participated in present government, by enjoying power at the centre. *Pahadia Hatao Campaign* has fused with the political power enjoyment. Poverty and landlessness are the major problems of Terai people. Political parties have now realised that merely propagating and promoting animosity against the hill people would not work by merely practising democratic norms. Exposures to various educational and other development programs would have to be fulfilled. Those with various virulent tendencies have not been able to create tension. Some ambitious ethnic elite and political leaders are still striving to bring the ethnic minority group together on

socio-political ground rather than ethnical ground. The Mongol and Janjati parties are trying to generate communal slogans for their political goal might have realised that if they really distract the peaceful and harmonious life of their own people, they themselves will be banished. Because in a multiparty system of government, people are bound to thwart them, for they want an integrated Nepal. People are knowing and becoming aware through mass media and TVs that what is happening to the people of Sri Lanka, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia and Kosovo.

King Prithvi Narayan Shaha established the enlarged Nepali nation and recognised the cultural plurality. During his time, he was guided by different feudal ethos, and had used various methods in nation building and laid down strong group relationships. Today, nation requires a strong government, people, territory and political sovereignty to remain together despite difference in language, culture, religion and political ideology. We must realise and hope that under the dawn of multiparty democracy, national integration should have to be achieved in a very different way. Equality is required for the development of all people and their quality of life.

Ethnicity and Development

Ethnicity poses a challenge to the two major paradigms of development; it questions both the communist and non-communist manifestos. According to both, development should have and must contain assertions of ethnic identities. But they appear to be confronting the ideology of development itself. The primacy of output goals according to them is questionable; cultural goals also need to be emphasised. They reject the notion of one-dimensional economic man. Development is much more than the economic growth. Participatory development is possible only in smaller units that share a need structure and social facilities. The recognition of ethnic identities is essential to this. But many problems-food security, peace, the search for energy substitutes, the preservation of ecological balance, avoiding environmental degradation, the fight against disease can be solved only through global effort. Science and technology also

need a massive human effort if they are to grow. The potential of ethnic identities has to be mobilized and tapped. They are to be made aware and educated.

At the present juncture some aspects of ethnicity appear to be disruptive as for example the demand of Janajati Sangh's separate federation of states in Nepal, quota systems and other facilities. It was believed that nation building and development are going together, but ethnic movements are moving towards fragmentation. Will this trend be conducive to development?

Here we have to rethink the model of the nation that is sought to be built. In the project scheme of things it should be possible to accord both recognition and a substantial measure of economic facilities to ethnic groups. The country should be sensitive and responsive to cultural differences and predispositions. Strong ethnic cultures are not necessarily a hindrance to nation buildings.

Order and peace are also needed to ensure continued pace of development. The possibilities of turmoil created by ethnic movements does have an unsettling effect. When violence by ethnic groups is counted with violence from a powerful government apparatus no problems are solved. Temporary peace may be brought about but there is always the possibility of a second and third round. It should be noted that the government is becoming increasingly helpless against many forms of insurgency. Prejudices handed down from the past can be removed only through everyone's participation in national institutions as also in education politics and communication.

There is also economic logic behind ethnic underdevelopment. Prejudice and discrimination have to be avoided; ethnic groups must see that this is being done. Development schemes of activities and programs should be devised and implemented to better the lot of the poor and deprived irrespective of ethnicity and castes background. These steps will gradually bind people together and will consolidate the fragile bonds of nationhood.

Current practices of development, despite rhetoric to the contrary, are an imposition from the top. They permit little participation by the people in building a consensus regarding the

goals and instrumentality of development. Integration cannot be achieved without participation. In real sense, the people from the village level should have to be involved in all round decision making process.

Finally, the structure of society now appearing to be gradually cracking under social strains has to be recognized. Perhaps we have to think in terms of a multi-layered society with appropriate degrees of autonomy to different levels. Only an interpenetrating and interdependent social pattern can solve some of the problems posed by the emergent phenomenon of ethnicity in the country.

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NOTES ON LAGI-LAGITYA RELATIONS IN JUMLA

Om Gurung, Ph. D.*

A deeply rooted prominent feature of inter-caste economic interdependency in Jumla is long-term hereditary contractual labor relations known as *lagi-lagitya*. This relation is called *riti-bhagya* (Cameron, 1997:77) in far west Nepal and *hali pratha* in west and east Nepal. It is based on the traditional feudalistic Hindu *jajmani* (patron-client) system of caste-specific task specialization. *Lagi* is a patron or landlord and *lagitya* is a ploughman. In Jumla, men from Buddhist communities plow their agricultural fields themselves. Similar is the case among *matawali* Chhetris who occupy the dry slopes of higher valleys called *pawai*. Unlike many other *Bahun*, *Thakuris* and *Chhetris*, these communities have less cultural restrictions to work in agricultural fields. The Hindu religious ideology does not prohibit them to plow their fields. The absence of low caste occupational groups in their communities, the shortage of agricultural lands, and the poor material conditions are also operative forces for these communities to plow their fields by themselves.

Among *Bahun*, *Thakuri* and *Chhetri* communities, who occupy lower valleys of Tila, Sinja and Pansayadara and own most parts of irrigated lands called *Jiula*, men do not plow their agricultural lands themselves. For them, agricultural works in general and plowing in particular are ritually polluting. In order to plow their fields, they establish a special economic relation with low caste people who live close to their area.

In Jumla *lagityas* come from low caste groups (*dalit*), mainly from *Kami* (black smith) and *Sarki* (leather working) communities. Because low caste groups own very small plots of agricultural lands and produce very little grain, they need to work as *lagityas* for their higher caste landlords to supplement their own agricultural produce. They plow the agricultural fields of *Bahun*, *Thakuris* and *Chhetris*. Depending upon the quantity of agricultural lands of their landlords they plow, *lagityas* receive four to five *supas* (winnowing basket) in the amount of 16 to 20 kg. of grain called *khalo* on seasonal basis for their services. Some *lagityas* get a small piece of irrigated land worth one *muri* of paddy called *badike* from their landlords in exchange of their *khalo*. In addition to *khalo*, *lagitya* also get a bundle of paddy plant called *athaline* during rice harvest. He is also given food and snacks during his work and other festive occasions. Moreover, he is given a pair of clothes once a year and other support during emergency periods.

There are two types of *lagitya*. Those untouchable men who work for their landlords and get *khalo* are called *lagitya* and those untouchable men who work for their landlords and get small plot of land for cultivation are called *badike*. Traditionally, *lagitya* and *badike's* works start with the preparation of agricultural fields in Fagan (March/April) and go on until harvesting barley and transplanting paddy in jeshth (May/June) and harvesting paddy in October/November. During agricultural peak season, other family members, particularly wives of *lagitya* and *badike* work in the agricultural fields of their husbands' landlords on daily wage basis.

The *Lagitya* relation is obligatory and tradition-bound. It is a deeply rooted hereditary long-term contractual arrangement characterized by customary rights and responsibilities (Bishop, 1990: 186). Within these rights and responsibilities, low caste people have rights to employment. Under most circumstances, a patron will not and cannot replace the low caste *lagitya* with another family of the same caste; the relationships cannot be so

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easily terminated (see Cameron, 1998:77 for details). A low caste *lagitya* also cannot work for another patron so long as the relations exist. *lagitya* relation is inheritable. Like their parental properties, sons of *lagityas* inherit their *lagis* as a share from their father during their separation from their parental home. But the *badike* relation is contractual. This type of relation is established for a fixed period of time. Its continuation depends upon mutual contractual understanding. It may go for years or may terminate as soon as the understanding between landlord and *badike* breaks. But once an agreement is made, *badike* must work for his landlord at least for one agricultural season. In total *badike* works for 16-20 days a year for one *muri* of his *badike* land. His work includes plowing and preparing agricultural fields, sowing seeds, transplanting paddy plants, weeding, harvesting, threshing, storing grain and carrying paddy straws to the cattle shed. Traditionally, the agreement with the *badike* is made during *shripanchami*, a Hindu winter festival that falls in late January. Jumli people believe that *shripanchami* is an auspicious day to start a new business.

Perhaps the most longstanding and tradition-bound *lagi-lagitya* relations are those between higher caste and lower-caste people for caste-specific artisan products. In Jumla, the Kami makes and repair agricultural tools, such as hoe, shovel, sickle, axes and cooking utensils for higher caste *lagi* households and in return, they get two to three *Jumli pathi*¹ of grain as *khalo* on a seasonal basis from their *lagi* households. Their wives help them deliver artisan products to their landlords's houses and collect *khalo* from there. Similarly, Damai sews new clothes and repairs

I prepared this short note while I was doing my field research in Jumla from August to September. I am thankful to IFAD for their financial support for my field research. I am also thankful to Man Bahadur Khattri for his assistance during my field research and Tunga Nath Upadhyaya for his valuable information on *lagi-lagitya* relations in Jumla.

¹ One *Jumli pathi* contains 4 *manas* of grain equivalent of 2 kg.

old ones, and gets two to three *jumli pathi* of grain as *laja* on a seasonal basis from his *lagi* households. Because in some villages there are no occupational caste groups, the demand for their caste specific services is very high. In order to meet caste-specific services, landlords invite these occupational caste groups from other villages and pay them more *khalo*. Damais from Talium village, for example, go to Lhorpa, Patmara, Guthigaon, Muduri, Dillichaur, Luma, Lamri and Chautha to provide their caste-specific services. Their wives accompany them to help deliver finished clothes to the households of their landlords and collect *laja* and other food items from these households. On average one Kami and one Damai have 10-12 higher caste households as their *lagis*. But some of them have even more than 30 households as *lagis*. The Kamis work in their own houses, but the Damais move from house to house to serve their *lagis*. Damais are also traditional musicians. They provide musical services to all caste groups during marriage ceremonies and other ritual occasions and get their wages either in cash or in grain. During leisure time, some Damai people make *sulpa* (big tobacco pipes) and sell them to their *lagi*.

Traditionally, Sarkis used to make shoes for higher caste people on the basis of *lagi-lagitya* relations. But these days the traditional *lagi-lagitya* relations between Sarkis and their upper caste landlords do not exist any more. Like in other parts of Nepal, the construction of roads to Nepal's northern borders from Tibetan side and Indian borders from Nepal's side and massive supply of ready made shoes from Indian and Chinese markets have adverse effects on the traditional artisan works of Sarki people. As a result, people of Jumla have now permanently adopted wearing the imported ready made shoes from Nepal, India and China. Also, there is a lack of raw materials (particularly cow hide and leather processing chemicals) and

lack of modern equipment to make new shoes² which have greatly affected the Sarki's traditional occupation (cf. Cameron, 1998). Few Sarkis are now engaged in repairing old shoes in Khalanga Bazaar to maintain their livelihood. A Sarki in Khalanga Bazaar can earn up to Rs. 200 from this work. But this is not enough to support his family economy. Therefore, Sarkis are the most vulnerable communities for their artisan products in Jumla. Seddon et al. (1979) report even worse conditions for Sarkis from the central west Nepal. This has forced them to change their traditional occupations. These days, Sarkis work as *lagityas*, daily wage laborers, carpenters and masons to earn their bread. They also make a special kind of threshing sticks called *jalelauro* and sell them to higher caste people to supplement their earnings. There are other occupational caste groups in Jumla as well, but their numbers are very small. There are a few Oudh and Sunar households, who establish marriage relations with the Kami caste. The Oudhs work as carpenters and masons. Sunars are economically in an advantageous position for their work as goldsmiths. They make gold and silver jewelry for marriage and gift purposes.

All low caste people do not necessarily have artisan skills and thus they do not produce artisan products even for their own use. Low caste people who do not produce artisan products themselves establish *lagi-lagitya* relations with those low caste people who produce them.

Lately, *lagitya* and *badike* relations are slowly declining as a result of multiplicity of factors. Many high caste people told that they can no longer keep *lagitya* and *badike* relations with low caste people due to shortage of agricultural lands. The shortage of agricultural lands restricts the high caste landlords in their ability to pay their *lagityas* more. Similarly, low caste

² In Jumla high caste Hindu people bury cows after their death. This deprives Sarkis of an important food resource and of the hides for making leather shoes.

people told me that *lagitya* work is not profitable. Compared to their long hour services, they get less from their landlords not sufficient to support their family. Unlike their fathers and forefathers, younger generations also do not want to work as *lagityas*, because *lagitya* is labor-intensive work for less return. It is also a form of exploitation and domination by higher caste people over the low caste people. So young people from low caste communities prefer to work in other places. But there are no work opportunities for these people in the region. The Lack of work opportunities has forced many young people from these communities to migrate to India for better economic pursuit. Village people told me that each year the degree of out-migration is increasing. Thus, out-migration has become a recurrent phenomenon among the poor and low caste people in Jumla. This phenomenon has great impact on the local technology, economy and society of Jumla.

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PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH IN COMMUNITY FORESTRY: A CASE STUDY OF A COMMUNITY FOREST USERS' GROUP FROM A HILL VILLAGE OF EASTERN NEPAL

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1.0 The Context and Introduction

Traditionally, forests in Nepal are managed by the user communities as the "common property resources" and the government, recognizing this historical fact, has formulated the national policy of handing over the forests to the willing communities for their sustained management and utilization. The forests are "common property resources" because a group of users share rights and duties towards them. The institutional arrangements exclude the non-contributing beneficiaries from the "common pool resources". In fact, they are not the "open-access resources." The user group has the collective responsibility for its conservation. Currently, the community forestry in Nepal is also being managed in accordance with the theories common property resource management.

The Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) had conducted the Adaptive and Collaborative Management (ACM) research in the community forestry in Nepal for a period of two and half years beginning from the middle of 2000 until the end of 2002. This was a part of the overall ACM research being co-ordinated by CIFOR in various Asian (Nepal,

Indonesia, and the Philippines) and African countries (Ghana, Cameroon, Zimbabwe and Malawi) countries. The ACM research in Nepal was a formal collaboration of the Ministry of the Forests and Soil Conservation (MOFSC), CIFOR and other three research organisations, namely, New ERA, NORMS and Forest Action Group. The Nepal component of ACM research included policy research at the national level and participatory action research at the users' level.

ACM is rooted in collaborative management techniques that are increasingly being applied today in various fields of natural resource management. This more inclusive approach is gaining favour out of a growing consensus that without some basic agreements among all the affected parties (stakeholders) about how and for what purpose the resource is maintained, sustainability cannot be achieved and degradation will continue. At the same time, ACM draws on models of yet another decision-making process that is gradually being adopted in natural resource planning and adaptive management. The approach is iterative, it provides for regular analysis of progress toward established objectives, and calls for adjustment where necessary in response to changing circumstances. ACM has been taken as a vision and a concept of management. Adaptive collaborative management is a means or a combination of means, that can help achieve sustainable forest management (CIFOR, 2001:1). ACM aims at focusing on the conditions leading to both the improved human well-being and to the maintenance of forest cover and diversity approaches encouraging sustainable use and management of forest resources and impacts of ACM processes and outcomes on people and forests with respect to the different ways that stakeholders act and learn together.

The vision of CM research in Nepal is the well-being of diverse women, men and children involved in the management of forest resources and their sustainability. The goal of ACM research in Nepal is to increase the effectiveness, efficiency and equity of stakeholder relations and management practices through enhanced shared institutional learning and adjustment of management (i.e. collaboration and adaptiveness) in order to

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promote sustainable forest management and well-being of diverse women, men and children.

ACM research in Nepal began in the middle of 2000. Two research organisations, namely, New ERA and WATCH (now NORMS), started conducting the research in two districts of Nepal. After extensive consultation with the government stakeholder, Sankhuwasaba hill district was selected by New ERA from the eastern development region of Nepal. There two Community Forestry Users' Groups (CFUGs) were selected for the research. These comprised Manakamana and Andheribhajana CFUGs. Similarly, the another research team affiliated with WATCH, after the extensive consultation with government stakeholder, also selected Kaski, a hill district in the western development region of Nepal. These two CFUGs, namely, Bamdi and Hanspur, were selected for the research. These sites were selected by using the criteria developed in the ACM Methodological Workshop held at Bogor, Indonesia, from 28 February to 9 March 2000. The site selection criteria included level of conflict (medium), stakeholders (diverse), composition of community (heterogeneous), devolution status (formal/informal), pressure on forest (number of households and forest area), forest condition (medium), commercial value (high) and social capital (higher number of locally organized groups/institutions).

Participatory action research (PAR) had been a research approach in ACM. Researchers had used comparable research methodological framework to study adaptive and collaborative processes in the context of community-based management. The use of PAR was guided by the assumption that ACM systems, that is, collaborative systems endowed with the structural capacity to generate and adjust to new knowledge, may not exist as such in concrete forested landscape. There may be a need to address the collaborative and adaptive dynamics in a research/problem-solving mode and participatory action research offers a well-established platform for the facilitation role of research in that process. It was in that framework that a range of methods such as prospective (learning by doing) and anticipatory (future scenarios) designed to enhanced shared learning and

transformative knowledge among stakeholders had been in use. These included participatory systems analysis, visioning, future scenarios, criteria and indicator (C&I) based collaborative monitoring, and conflict management (CIFOR, 2000). The participatory research in Nepal had looked at the iterative processes and at their impact on management actions, people and resources.

When New ERA and WATCH were working for the background and PAR study in the selected four sites of the two hill districts, the MOFSC raised the doubt about the representativeness of the small size of sample and the generalizability/extrapolability of the research findings. The time allocated for background study and PAR was one year each but later the PAR period was extended for six more months. Then, CIFOR also pondered over the seriousness of the issue raised by the MOFSC and finally decided to increase the number of research sites. Then, it commissioned Forest Action Group, a local forest-related research organisation, to conduct the comparative case studies using the conventional research methodology between May and December, 2001. The studies were conducted in nine different CFUGs of the hill and Terai region of Nepal. The objective of this commissioned study was to explore, assess and synthesise the knowledge and experiences of adaptiveness and collaboration at the CFUG field level across a range of community forest (CF) sites and contexts in Nepal. The outputs of this review were intended to enable forest stakeholders in Nepal to draw more easily on the wealth of existing knowledge so that they may make even more informed decisions in designing their forest management process. The study was conducted on five interconnected topics, viz, local stakeholders in community forestry and patterns of their collaboration, social learning and adaptive management, costs and benefits of adaptive management and equity implications, adaptive approach, livelihoods and bio-diversity conservation, and facilitating adaptiveness and collaboration. This was the context of the ACM research.

The present paper is based on the Manakamana CFUG where PAR was carried out. It is in ward no. 12 of Khadbari

municipality of Sankhuwasabha district. Though it is in the municipality, it possesses predominantly the rural agrarian characteristics. The forest area is 132 hectares. It is a natural forest. The number of the user households is 164 with a total population of 879. Anthropologically speaking, there is heterogeneity in the composition of the user households. *Brahmins, Chettris, Tamangs, Rais, Magars, Gurungs, Limbus, Newars, Majhis* and *Kumals* are the different caste/ethnic groups. The forest has been formally handed over to the CFUG by the District Forest Office.

The objective of the paper is to analyse the non-economic benefit/impact of the participatory action research (PAR) as perceived by the ACM researchers and members of the CFUG. In fact, it was a research on participatory action research and in doing so, a myriad of data collection techniques were used, which comprised focus group discussion, key informant interview, group discussion, review of the CFUG records and ACM monthly reports, etc.

2.0 Participatory Action Research: Conceptual Understanding

Participatory research can be defined by different levels and types of local involvement of local stakeholders in and control over the research process. It also encompasses different methods, tools and approaches. It includes such methodologies as Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), Participatory Action Research (PAR), and Farmer Participatory Research (FPR). The rationale for using the participatory research is to encourage community participation in order to improve the usefulness of research to local people (McAllister, 1999:7). Another reason may be for empowerment or social transformation to strengthen the local people's capacity in decision-making in research, and in management of local resources, in order to improve their awareness of options and to strengthen their ability to act on their own behalf (Ashby, 1996:16-17).

Given the fact that different social groups have different knowledge about natural resource management and different priorities, it is imperative to speak about these social groups in

the community (women, men, poor, landless, different ethnic and social status groups, etc) with the objective of understanding the different social perspectives because there are a myriad of social issues in natural resource management. These comprise conflicting social entitlements/ traditional norms, social identities, relationships and roles, different inside and outside stakeholders having values, perceptions and objectives, representation of "community interests" and "knowledge" in participatory research process, power differences between community and outside groups and differences in social power and resource rights between men and women (gender analysis). Daniel Selener, in his treatise, 'Participatory Action Research and Social Change' (1997), clearly explicates the *raison d'etre* of conducting the participatory action research to induce change. Participatory research is thought to catalyze social change by increasing local awareness of problems and issues, encouraging them to collect, organize and analyze information relevant to their situation, mobilizing them to develop their own options and plans for dealing with problems, and strengthening local capacity and options to act on those plans. The short-term goal of mobilizing local people to solve immediate practical problems is intended to lead to long term shifts in power relations in favor of marginal groups within communities and between the community and governments (Selener, 1997). Indeed, under the traditional research, the researcher sets agenda, controls and undertakes research activities and finally, he benefits from the results. Hopefully, community interviewees will indirectly benefit in the long run. Capacity of the community (social capital) is underestimated and people are separated from process and results of research. This does happen even if the research is conducted using the PRA tools which are increasingly being misused by the inexperienced /untrained field researchers. Conversely, participatory action research (PAR) recognizes the social capital of the community. Under PAR, the researcher and the community identify the problems together. Activities are planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated together. PAR has to focus more on community empowerment, that is,

strengthening social capital such as networks and local organizations and institutions.

3.0 Methods Used in Participatory Action Research and their Impact/Benefit

This section primarily dwells on the methods used in PAR and their local impact/benefit. As analyzed in the preceding section, it has been increasingly recognized that participatory research does encourage the involvement of local people with the objective of improving the effectiveness of the research and enhancing its usefulness for the community. The goal of “empowering” participation is to empower marginalized people and communities by strengthening collective and individual capacity and decision-making power within wider society (Selener, 1997). Given the fact that there is high control or ownership over the research process, local people make decisions with the help of the researchers, implement activities, analyze information and use the research for their purpose. There is collective decision-making and negotiation for the improvement of the existing condition.

With the above theoretical considerations in mind, the ACM researchers in the PAR of Manakamana had used an array of research methods. These comprised visioning of ideal future, trend analysis (comparison of past trends with ideal future of that issue), problem tree analysis and prioritization, participatory intervention or action (by the community with the help of the researchers), self-monitoring (as a research tool), *Tole*¹ meeting (as a tool), participant observation, semi-structured interview, etc. Visioning exercise done with the facilitation of ACM research team helped the internal stakeholders of CFUG to chart out the ideal future of 10 years for the sustainable forest management. Prior to the PAR, they did not have such experience. The problem tree analysis was also an important method in critically analyzing their forest management-related problems and carefully getting them prioritized for the possible action/intervention. Participatory intervention/action involves all

¹ *Tole* is a cluster of houses.

the diverse internal stakeholders for getting it implemented with the underlying objective of inducing the desired change. The intervention included workshops, income generating activities, social development, quiz contest on forest, cross-site visits (between ACM sites), etc. Most importantly, the self-monitoring method had been used as a research tool because the forest users had been monitoring changes from their own work/experimentation and sharing the information with the researchers. The researchers, as in other action researches, had also been tracking down the change process and employing research for the purpose of learning and institutional strengthening. Finally, the local forest users had also been assisted by the researchers for tracking the results of their activities and organizational management decisions.

Participant observation was also an important research method for recording the necessary qualitative information on individual or group domination in the discussions, role of women participation in the discussions, process of decision-making, conflict resolution and other relevant group dynamics. The researchers had also been participating in different meetings with the intention of observing and assessing social interactions between forest users and interest groups. Participation in such events had been providing the researchers with ample opportunity to help the forest users devise the relevant strategies in implementing the activities successfully for their well-being. In the PAR, the *Tole* meeting had also been used as the research tool. Prior to the PAR, this phenomenon virtually did not exist and there was no micro level assessment of the problems and possible solutions with the active involvement of the *Tole* users of forest. PAR used it as an effective tool because the forest users of the *Tole* had been identifying the *Tole* forest-related problems, prioritizing them and getting the activities implemented. They had also been tracking down the changes when they met. It had also been helping the forest users to solve their micro level (i.e. *Tole* level) problems more effectively and timely. The researchers had also been conducting the semi-structured interviews with different stakeholders or groups of stakeholders of the community forest with the objectives of

gaining their perspective. Thus, a number of methods had been used in the PAR for accomplishing the objectives of ACM research. (e.g. well-being of men, women and children and better management of forests in a sustainable way).

The review of the monthly reports of the site prepared by the ACM researchers also showed that PAR had its positive impact on strengthening the communication system/information flow amongst the stakeholders, joint learning/social learning, improving forest management activities (e.g. construction of fire lines), people's understanding of systems perspectives (e.g. how socio-cultural and economic systems are linked to the biophysical system of the forest), reflection (past, present and future using participatory systems analysis), trust-building among the stakeholders, use of CFUG fund for income generation of the poor, transparency and accountability of the committee and exploring possible collaboration.

The researchers of the PAR site held the view that the transformative learning process taking place was the direct function of the collaborative research effort. Given the fact that the micro-level change vis-à-vis building of the social capital of the institution and its members had been possible through the incessant collaborative effort of the local stakeholders and the researchers in a relatively long period of time. They held the opinion that these PAR tools were the most suited ones because they involved the field team and community members in all aspects of the study, the collection of information, and the analysis of the findings. The on-the-spot analysis ensured that gaps in the knowledge/information could be filled immediately before leaving the field. They always believed that these PAR tools/techniques raised people's self-awareness, suggested viable solutions and enabled people analyze complex issues and problems of forest management. They also shared that the methodology was flexible and was used for a short time, which involved low level of cost. They expressed that these were the strengths of the methodology. And they thought that they reached the intended participants, i.e., diverse groups of people. The internal constraint of the use of methodology for the researchers was the limited financial resource (which had direct

bearing on the length of time). The constraints for the community people were the busy schedule of the livelihood activities (were forced to steal the time to participate in the research process) and skepticism at the beginning (of whether or not the research would benefit them). However, the rapport built with the community through the use of PAR tools and the emphasis on the problems for their solution worked as the enabling factors for undertaking the research.

The intended benefit of PAR was the sustainable forest management by the user community wherein well-being of the diverse groups (men and women, rich and poor, children, etc.) was ensured. This was being done through intentional learning for social transformation and empowerment with the support of the catalytic agents, that is, researchers. Compared to the traditional studies, more stakeholders and community interest groups had been consulted to increase the level of representation. And the voices of the women and marginal groups had also been heard more than before. There had been regular interactions by the researchers with the different stakeholders of each *Tole* of the CFUG which was utterly inconceivable in the traditional studies. These were the main strengths of the PAR. But there were also a number of weaknesses being discerned in the PAR. The field observation and interaction with the diverse stakeholders had adduced the confirmatory evidence that all women and economically marginalized social groups were still not being included in the PAR process. This was corroborated by the fact that about a total of 26.8 percent of the user members of the CFUG reported that they were unaware of the PAR process. The constraint of the researcher in PAR was the lack of financial resources to support the community forestry activities asked by the users. In fact, the researchers wanted to reduce the dependency syndrome of the local stakeholders. For the users, project meant the provision of financial support. Sometimes when the urgent community need could not be fulfilled with the support of limited quantity of financial resources, people turned to be unwilling to be participants in the research process.

And the researchers were in awkward condition. The constraint of the community was the conflict of the time for

livelihood activities and PAR activities. And a few local stakeholders also considered the PAR as alien because they did not receive any tangible benefit immediately as they had seen in other projects. Nonetheless, the regular interaction of the researchers with the diverse stakeholders of CFUG and the relative institutional weaknesses had helped the PAR process get going smoothly.

During the PAR stage, the study had made an effort to empower the women under the transformation-oriented gender analysis. The field data have shown that a total of 263 persons had been mobilized by the ACM research team within a period of 7 months (beginning from February, 2001) for their participation in different institutional development activities such as self-monitoring workshops, cross-site visits, reflection and leadership workshop, awareness-raising workshop and forest-related quiz contests. The field level data generated from the interview and review of the monthly reports had explicitly demonstrated that women participation in research activities was high, that is, 45.3 percent during the PAR phase) (see Table 1). Every time, the ACM researchers made an effort to enhance the participation of women by making both men and women understood about the crucial and important role of women. Sometimes, women were requested by the researchers to participate even by visiting their homes. They had also always urged the functionaries of the CFUG committee to include women in each of their activities and had now realized that women's participation was as important as the men's participation. Nonetheless, women of the poor wealth group had still not been fully mobilized in the PAR activities – a function of less social mobilization by the ACM researchers and more concern of these poor women for their own livelihood activities and household drudgery. Field visit showed that even the socially and economically marginalized groups were still not fully included in the PAR activities.

Table.1 Relative Quantity of Participation in the PAR Study Activities in Manakamana Community Forest Users' Group by Gender in Sankhuwasabha District (2001).

S.N	Types of PAR Activities	Participation by Gender		
		No. of Males	No. of Females	Total
1.	Second self-monitoring workshop	29	12	41
2.	Third self-monitoring workshop	6	7	13
3.	<i>Tole</i> self-monitoring workshop	52	30	82
4.	Cross-site visit during second self-monitoring workshop	2	2	4
5.	Reflection and leadership workshop	2	1	3
6.	Awareness-raising workshop	47	55	102
7.	Quiz contest	6	12	18
	Total	144 (54.7%)	119 (45.3%)	263 (100.0)

Source: Fieldwork, November, 2001.

4.0 Researchers' Perceptions on the Benefits of Participatory Research

The ACM researchers shared that the intended benefits comprised increased collaboration between and among the internal stakeholders, development of the institutional networking, transformative learning and resolution of conflicts between and among individuals and different *Toles*. The costs included the time of the users for the participation in self-monitoring activities, *Tole* level meetings/discussions, awareness creating workshops, quiz contests, facilitation skill training to the *Tole* coordinators (planned), excursion to successful CFUGs, income generation activities, etc. The researchers thought that these benefits would be generated only through the catalyzation of the CFUG to make the users participative in the research process.

The informal sharing of the information by the researchers was thought to have its influence on community benefits by improving the weak areas (as analyzed earlier on). The researchers had thought that the local stakeholders would also generate their own findings through the process of participation. In other words, the interactive process among the local stakeholders would generate new findings among them, which would be possible through reflection. The effect would be the better functioning of the CFUG in general and committee in particular.

The ACM research team did the facilitation of the second self-monitoring workshop organized in February, 2001. The CFUG had already gone through the first self-assessment process with the support of district forest office and Nepal-UK Community Forestry Project (NUKCFP). Hence, the general objective of the workshop was to activate on-going learning process which encouraged reflection to apply its learning for the continual improvement of forest and natural resource management and people's life condition. Since the CFUG had already started the process, it was very important to maintain a sense of shared ownership of the workshop and future activities without disturbing existing ownership feelings. The other specific objective were to: (i) revisit the self-assessment process that the CFUG followed to develop the criteria and indicators during the previous workshop and add to an exploration of the concept of learning and monitoring approach to forest management; (ii) review the indicators developed previously and assess their strengths and weaknesses and revise them as needed; (iii) conduct mini-assessment using indicators and exploring strengths and weaknesses; (iv) prioritize issues for action; and (v) develop concrete action plan.

A total of 41 participants (12 females and 29 males) took part in the workshop. During the early hours of the first day of the workshop, it came to be realized by the participants that the first self-monitoring workshop had many shortcomings in the process that led to wrong assessment of indicators. And they also realized that their assessment also did not reflect the actual situation of community forestry. Therefore, it was essential to

revisit the self-assessment process and to review indicators so that users would realize the mistakes they made. The participants realized that they did the self-monitoring without the visioning exercise and there was the mismatch between the issues identified and prioritized action points. In fact, the action points the committee had decided to work on were different from the issues to be addressed as identified by users present during the workshop. In fact, the participants did eventually realize that they had not understood the actual meaning and importance of self-monitoring process.

The researchers also shared that the goal of the workshop was also to instill the idea among the participants that self-monitoring is a tool for adaptive and collaborative approach to forest management (that is, vision statements and indicators as tools for monitoring progress towards goals, which enable reflections to contribute to new understanding to adjust and improve management). The games played during the workshop also helped the participants to understand the basic concept and importance of adaptive and collaborative management of community forest and natural resources. The participants did recognize their strengths and weaknesses during the period of game play. They came to the conclusions that each failure was an opportunity to learn and devise collaborative strategies to be successful.

The ACM team facilitators had prepared the self-assessment chart for five vision statements containing three to five indicators (in each vision statement). Ranking of indicators was done on the basis of four different phases of the moon ranging from the new moon to full moon (both being two extremes). New moon meant no achievement or very little achievement in the indicator whereas full moon stood for full achievement. The facilitators explained in brief by demonstrating one self-assessment chart and scoring method. And the participants were divided in five different groups for scoring the indicators of five vision statements separately. They did the scoring in the groups after a protracted discussion. Finally, each group presented the scoring sheet in the plenary and the participants had the heated discussion provided they disagreed

with the scoring to certain indicators. There was also a realization that the users had to do a lot for improvement of the performance of the indicator that were scored in new moon of the first phase of the moon.

The workshop facilitated by the ACM team also made the participation clear on the issue of prioritization. Indicators that were scored with new moon or the first phase of moon were considered as weak areas (issues) that need to be addressed by the CFUG. But it was not possible to address them at a time. Hence, they were helped for prioritizing them on the basis of their immediate need of their solution. Thus, they also learned the prioritization of issues. Finally, the ACM team also helped them for doing action planning. While facilitating the action planning process, the participants were asked to brainstorm on the past history regarding the issue, supporting and hindering factors, alternative options (that would provide more learning opportunities on the basis of adaptiveness and collaborativeness), anticipated problems and strategies to address them and action plans (indicating activities, their commencement, approach to work, actors responsible, potential problems and possible solutions).

In fact, the benefit of self-monitoring was for all the CFUG members. Awareness and women empowerment workshop and quiz contest did benefit the women. The income generation activities did benefit mostly the poor households living within the CFUG area. A total of 13 persons did participate in the third self-monitoring process (of which 7 were females and 6 were males) at the committee level. At the *Tole* level self-monitoring, a total of 52 male members and 30 female members did participate. Similarly, a total of 18 participants did participate in the forest-related quiz contest in six *Toles* (1 male and 2 females from each *Tole*).

Thus, self-monitoring and *Tole* meeting were used as the research tools. Similarly, participant observation had also been used as another method particularly during the committee meeting, general assembly, *Tole* and other informal meetings to understand the power dynamics, interactive relationship and domination as well as submission of marginalized interest groups

and the individuals. During the interaction with the committee meetings or functionaries of the committee, semi-structured interview was also conducted to arrive at a conclusion for the solution of problems.

Each finding of the PAR activities was communicated to the users in the committee and *Tole* meeting. During the committee meeting, the members had identified that the new DFID-funded livelihood project had the provision of extending support to the existing CFUGs and had been eagerly waiting for ACM researchers for getting an appropriate modality of possible collaboration. This finding was linked to the ACM approach. Likewise, they had discovered that exchange of opinion and visits between and among the CFUGs greatly contributed to social learning process.

As indicated earlier on, the second self-monitoring workshop worked as a foundation during which a shared ideal vision of the future was developed. People, then, started exploring concepts of collaboration, and learning and monitoring approaches to the community forestry management. Then, they also started exploring criteria and indicators and finally, developed a local set of criteria and indicators based on the vision of the ideal future. They had also started revising C&I as part of learning and monitoring approach. Using the C&I, self-assessment was done. They had also identified the strengths and weaknesses and their prioritization. And action plans were formulated on the basis of the prioritized issues. In fact, these were the benefits generated by PAR.

In fact, the contribution provided by the ACM researchers during the second self-monitoring workshop helped the local stakeholders to internalize it in the proper. Earlier, they had given the highest scores to the progress of prioritized issues and there was competition among the different *Toles* to be first without making the actual progress. This had happened due to the lack of visioning. But during the PAR, there were no more problems in this regard.

It has been argued that if the gender participation improves, it will contribute to the sustainable forest management mechanism. There are empirical evidences in Nepal that once

women start taking part in forest management activities, particularly in the decision-making process, the condition of the forest will improve and the equity of the distribution of forest products will be ensured. Women are the primary stakeholders because they have close relation to forest for fetching firewood, fodder, leaf litter, etc. Their frequency of visiting the forest is higher than men. Hence, they are more familiar with the community forestry. But there was no gender equity in decision-making process at the beginning of PAR in the CFUG studied. It has been recognized that lack of women's participation in forest management and decision-making hinders sustainable forest development and ACM was being proved as an effective strategy for effective gender participation in community forest management and decision-making process – a function PAR. Ever since the PAR activities had been initiated, the ACM researchers had played a facilitating role in increasing the participation of women in the self-monitoring process which subsequently helped the women to be aware of the importance of their participation in sustainable and equitable forest management. Thus, PAR had been using the transformation-oriented gender analysis. Women had been considerably empowered – a function of PAR for building the social capital (Sharma, 2001). For example, they had become increasingly aware of the functioning of the committee, general assembly and *Tole* committees. They started to speak in the public forum much better than before. The awareness creation and empowerment workshop did really make the local women aware of the roles and responsibilities of committee functionaries and transparency as well as accountability. And as a result, the women members of the CFUG pressurized the secretary of the committee to repay the misappropriated amount of Rs. 39,000. They voiced that they would not allow to have general assembly taken place until its repayment and it was postponed once for that reason. And finally, the secretary returned the misappropriated amount. This was an example of transformation-oriented gender analysis. Though the greater number of the stakeholders had been mobilized during the PAR,

not all economically and socially marginalized groups had been incorporated in the process.

The ACM strategy had also been gradually effective in enhancing the level of meso and micro-level sharing among the stakeholders. There were different types of stakeholders of the CFUGs at district and range post level (meso level) and local level (micro-level). There had been the confirmatory evidences that ever since the ACM team members started working as the facilitators at the four monthly meeting of the range post level co-ordination committee (which used to represent the CFUGs of the range post), it had turned to be a forum of exchanging views on forest management and helping each other for the resolution of the forest boundary and management-related conflicts. The ACM researchers had also inspired the two CFUGs (of New ERA sites) for cross-site sharing, which had been proved to be extremely instrumental for mutual learning the lessons/gaining experiences for practical applications.

5.0 Local Stakeholders' Perceptions on the Benefits of Participatory Action Research

Most of the people who participated in the PAR shared that they had been present in the initial two days' second self-monitoring workshop facilitated by the ACM team. Some had participated both in awareness-raising workshops and quiz contests. People who did not have time and did not have interest and who were not informed did not participate in the PAR activities. Small government job holders and school teachers did not participate. The time of participation ranged from 4 hours to 40 hours. The highest amount of time was spent by those people who spent 5 days in self-monitoring workshops (two days in the beginning and three days in the subsequent one). In fact, the participation of the committee members was definitely higher compared to other forest users. The reported reasons behind the participation were for being aware of forest management, strengthening the committee, developing sense of ownership of the research process and helping the committee people to conserve the forest, developing the ability for continuous self-monitoring for tracking the change. Some

shared that deep interest in the forest conservation, interest in games (played as energizers during the workshop), provision of prizes during the workshop, and the request made by the researchers were the principal factors behind the participation.

The expected benefits were enhanced skills on sustainable forest management and conservation, awareness on the roles and responsibilities of the users towards the forest, understanding of New ERA's role in strengthening the committee in particular and user group in general (as previously done by Nepal-UK Community Forestry Project), possibility of cementing better ties with New ERA for effective forest-related programme implementation in the future, exploration of possibility of increasing the production of non-timber forest products and initiation of the income generation program through the channelization of CFUG fund, etc.

A number of the actual advantages were also reported. For example, the actual advantage from the self-monitoring workshop was the internalization of its very importance for tracking down changes for the sustainable forest management. Increased sense of ownership over the community forestry was another outcome of the participation of the workshop. The games played during the workshop also gave the knowledge to the participation how the internal collaboration would contribute to achieve the desired goal. They realized that the role of the women was also equally important in the conservation of the forest. The importance of the regular reflection was also realized as the actual advantage. Even illiterates were able to participate in the self-monitoring process due to the use of pictorial chart. The gradual disappearance of the fear/hesitation to speak with the outsiders was another advantage from the self-monitoring process/workshop.

The users had a perception that the self-monitoring workshop induced a number of major changes in the CFUGs. These comprised (i) improved communication and consultation between the committee of CFUG and different interest groups within the CFUG; (ii) regularity in committee and assembly meetings; (iii) development of the agreed plan and its effective implementation of the plans; (iv) increased use of CFUG income

in social development activities (i.e., income generation for the poor), and (iv) decreasing expectation of the communities for the financial assistance from the donor (because ACM researchers had told them that there was no funding for the CFUG activities and only institutional support was provided). The awareness and empowerment workshop (as indicated earlier on) also helped the women to be bold enough for taking interest in transparency of the committee activities and became assertive.

The quiz contest helped increase the knowledge of the participants on the community forestry and constitution and operational plan of the CFUG. In other words, they were aware of the rules and regulations of the community forest. The viewers of the programme were also benefited from it. Given the fact that there was the formation of sub-groups at each *Tole* to lead each separate action plan, each of them learned from its activities and adjusted the activities accordingly. Each group shared its learning and progress with CFUG through semi-annual and *Tole* meetings and annual development of annual work plans via *Tole* meetings and assembly. In fact, the agreed prioritized issues and options were selected in the assembly and thus, the micro-level processes were embedded in the macro-level process. This whole process had been giving advantages to the CFUG members.

There had been the perceptions among the stakeholders that the participating stakeholders were better-off in terms of their enhanced capacity (social capital) that could contribute to the effective functioning of their CFUG and its committee. And, in the long run, it would definitely contribute to make the community better off—a function of the enhanced social capital.

6.0 Conclusions

The participatory action research was geared towards institutional strengthening/empowerment of the CFUGs (including the capacity-building of diverse stakeholders of the group/community) and this was its principal strength. Besides this, the other strengths comprised the relatively high focus on understanding the multiple perspectives/high focus on the quality of participation, greater degree of the reliability of the findings

(because more intimate contact was maintained for building trust between the researchers and the local stakeholders), more triangulation of the information by talking to a greater number of people in a longer span of time and use of more methods/tools, higher degree of the adaptability of the research approach (for instance, if the self-monitoring system had not worked effectively for the institutional sustainability or if the *Tole* meetings had not yielded expected results, then the researcher and stakeholders would have devised strategies for the rectification of the weaknesses or used other methods/tools collaboratively), greater emphasis on co-learning (researchers and local people learnt together from each other's activities), dis-aggregation of the collected information for the benefit of stakeholders (e.g. collection of the socio-economic information of the poor/vulnerable households for the initiation of income generating activities), higher degree of the perception of the "ownership" of the research process, more focus on the determination of possible-plausible connection (because effort was always made to look at minutely what factors have triggered the change in the community which was also feasible due to the relatively long stay of the researchers in the community), etc.

Despite the plethora of strengths of PAR, it was also not free from its weaknesses as witnessed in the field. The research, albeit focused on higher diversity of stakeholders, could not be very effective in reaching all the poor men and women – a function of the less orientation of the researchers on the goal of empowering "participation" to "empower" marginalized people and community by strengthening collective and individual capacity and decision-making power within a wider society and less social mobilization by the researchers (Ashby, 1996) and lack of genuine commitment of the researchers and CFUG committee members to empower them. The poor also bore more costs by providing more time (for their longer term benefit) to be utilized for eking out their livelihood.

If "empowerment" is the goal, it is important to strengthen local institutional and individual capacities by involving local people throughout the research process: in problem identification and definition, collection and analysis of

information, planning of possible solutions, and in mobilizing local action for change (McAlister, 1999:5). In fact, the quality of the research also hinges on the competency of the researchers using the participatory methods and hence, it has to be enhanced by enhancing their critical understanding of the limitations and benefits of tools and methods, and increasing their awareness of power and social relations which underlie participatory processes and influence whose perspectives are presented and awareness on how participatory methods do have influence on information and action.

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CHANGING PATTERN OF FOREST CONSUMPTION: A CASE STUDY FROM AN EASTERN HILL VILLAGE IN NEPAL

Binod Pokharel*

1. Preliminary

This is a longitudinal study on the changing pattern of forest consumption in Belahara Village Development Committee of Dhankuta district for the period 2001 to 1991. The author carried out a follow up study in 2001 and compared it with the results of the study conducted by the author in 1991 for his thesis research in M.A. degree in Anthropology to know the changing behavior of forest consumption in the study area. The follow up study attempts to find out the changing factors associated with forest consumption behaviour of the people. Similarly, this article also compares and contrasts the past and present forest consumption pattern of the study area.

In 1991 there were 750 households (HHs) at the VDC. Out of a total of 750 HHs 80 HHs were selected for the study. During the period of follow up study, the family members of the same 80 sampled houses were separated from original households for data collection (few of them were found to leave their village and get settled down along the road). The major tools and techniques used in the study were formal/informal

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interview, interview schedule and observation. The data gathered from original and follow up studies were compared with the help of tables. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistical tool such as percentage.

2. Review

2.1 Utilization of Forest

Forest resources are essential to the livelihood (Fricke, 1993) of the people who live in subsistence agriculture economy. Forest is used for several purposes like cooking, heating, lighting, etc. As stated by Beresford (1968), there are manifold uses of forest in the world, viz. cultivation, fuel wood for cooking, and timber for consumption of homes. Forest bio-mass is the main source of energy in the world. Of all the wood cut in the forest of the world around half is burnt as domestic fuel (Ibid). Historically, Nepal's rural populations have been meeting the energy needs from the traditional sources like fuel-wood and other bio-mass resources (AEPC, 2000). Firewood shares the highest percentage of consumption of the country. MoF (2001) noted that of the total energy demand of the country, 77.7% is met from the firewood. Firewood is a basic source of energy for cooking in most part of the rural areas in Nepal. The second most commonly used fuel is dung. The use of firewood is highly prominent in the mountain and the hill areas (CBS, 2002). The role of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), electricity and kerosene in cooking purposes is still negligible. CBS (2002) stated that cent percent households in the Far Western region are found to use firewood for cooking purpose. The utilization of dung is widely common in the eastern Terai. The use of dung for energy gradually decreases as we move on to the west from the east (Ibid). Share of the rural areas in total energy consumption of the country is about 87%. Rural sector accounts for 89% of the total rural energy consumption. However, if only commercial energy (including new and renewable energy) is considered, then the rural areas consume only 30% of total commercial energy consumption (WECS, 1995 quoted by AEPC, 2000).

Forestry plays an important role in sustaining the productivity of the land by using the organic manure of animal

dung supported with bedding materials from the forest which provides grass, trees and fodder for animals (ADB/N, HMG/N, 1982 : 63). It is considered a very important contribution of forestry to hill farming in the use of plant bio-mass, when mixed with animal excreta yields organic compost manure which forms the principal source of soil nutrients for hilly agricultural land (ICIMOD, 1987:8). Fuel for cooking fires and warmth, lumber for roofing, floor planks and household timbers and the raw materials for the whole array of household and farm tools come from the forest area in Tamang village (Fricke, 1993). Lacking sufficient supply of fossil fuel as well as industrial fuel Nepal has heavily relied on fuelwood as main source of energy. It is estimated that the fuel-wood is the source of 83.7 percent of energy used (WECS,1987:1) and per capita consumption of energy is equivalent to 490 kilograms of coal in Nepal energy (Economic Survey, 1989). There is a considerable variation in the consumption of fuel wood in the different regions of the country. In the rural hills, consumption ranges from about 0.7 cum in the central region to nearly 1.2 cum in the east. Consumption in the rural Terai ranges from less than 0.6 cum, ranges from less than 0.6 cum, in the central region to over 1.4 cum in the mid-West and for west (WEC, 1988, cited by Wallace, 1988: 5). These figures show that hilly people consume more fuelwood than urban and Terai dwellers do. Fricke (1993) stated that fuel consumption varies by season in Tamang village. During the cold months of November through February, households burn nearly one load a day, while a load will last close to five days in the other months. Stevens (1993) noted that Sherpa's household firewood use varies seasonally and also with wealth, household size and labour resources, and the accessibility of forest. Forest consumption pattern is also affected by some important variables like class, caste/ethnicity and family size. In this regard Pokharel (1991) mentioned that some ethnic groups like Rai, Tamang and Newar consumed more firewood than Brahmin and Chhetry because of cultural reasons. People collect firewood from different sources. In this regards one report (CBS, 2002) states that

More than two-thirds of the households collect firewood from the forest. The other form of collection of firewood is from the land owned by the households. In rural Nepal 68 percent of the households reported collecting firewood from the jungle and the community forests whereas 25 percent households reported such collection being done from their own land. Only 5 percent of the households purchase firewood from the market.

Fodder from the forest is the most important for livestock, especially at certain times of the year when grasses are unavailable at agricultural land. As mentioned by FAO (1985;12) in arid areas, trees often provide regular supplies of fodder in the form of edible seeds and pods and leaves. During the time of drought, they become important sources of animal feed. Timber is considered the major construction material of the huts, houses and buildings in Nepal. Malla et. al (1981) mentioned that the per capita timber consumption in Nepal is 8 cu.ft per year.

2.2. History of Forest Management and Consumption

Prior to 1957 most of the forests were under control of local community. The traditional forest management strategies followed the principle of considering the needs of local people. Pokharel et. al. (1996) stated that before 1957 nobody could cut trees to thatch or collect fodder from the forest without local indigenous organization's permission. Permission to cut down fuelwood was granted depending on household size, and gathering of thatching grass was allowed in proportion to roof area of a house. Hence, the forest utilization behaviour was largely controlled by the local organization in the past. Many literatures on forestry analysed the forest situation of Nepal before 1957 in terms of Management. Gilmour and Fisher (1991) noted that Nepal had different forest management strategies in different historical epoch. As stated during the unification period *Thari* and *Jimbuwal* were responsible to control the forest and the government looked after few forests. They made rules, regulations and operational plan. Dahal (1993) notes that before 1964, there existed primarily *Kipat* and *Raikar* system of land tenure in the Eastern Hill Region. Both land and forest resources

were held under the *Subba*, *Jimuwal*, *Pahari*, and *Thari*. They were responsible for both the sustainable use of the resources and its allocation. It is said that people's forest consumption behaviour was regularized by the local and traditional organizations in the past.

The literatures of forestry show that the process of deforestation started just after the nationalization of forest. Many countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America experienced massive deforestation under the state led forestry strategy. Ten countries in the developing world that contained substantial areas under forest in the past were at present in a state of acute fuelwood "scarcity". This list includes Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal and Tanzania in Africa; Afganisthan, Bangladesh and Nepal in Asia, Haiti and Peru in Latin America (Noronha and Spears, 1985). Noronha and Spears (1985) viewed that in 1970 international agencies' concentration on the protection and management of government owned forest reserves was questioned. Forestry for the people heralded a new approach to forestry development in Jakarta in 1978. Nepal also practiced different type of forest management in the name of *Panchayat* forest, *Panchayat* protected forest, leasehold forest, etc after the world forestry congress in 1978. However, the effect of late 1970s approach of community forestry hardly changed the forestry scenario of the country. In this regards Dahal (1994) says that the *Panchayat* forest, and the *Panchyat* protected forest could not function effectively as there was little participation at the local level and the forest rules were simply confined to the file of the *Pradhan Pancha*. He viewed that the sensitivity of the village people and their forest product requirements were hardly considered by the village leadership.

In late 1980s, the concept of community forest emerged as new approach. The approach focused on people-centered forestry management. The approach of community forestry in Nepal emerged in response to an increasing awareness of the implication of declining forestry (Saussan et. al, 1995). However, several scholars (Chhetri and Panday, 1992, and Baral and Lamsal, 1991) viewed that community forestry was started in

Nepal because of the existence of indigenous forest management system.

After the government intervention in forestry sector late 1980s and early 1990s, several changes have been experienced in the field of forest consumption. The mode of behaviour of people have changed because of outside factors such as government intervention, population growth, migration, integration into national and global economy and other processes. Because of new invention, people have developed many adjustments to obtain and use resources. In this regards, Stevens (1993) states the people of Himalayan like highland regions, have developed for subsisting the distinctive conditions of ecosystems.

3. The Study Area

The study area lies on the western part of the district capital of Dhankuta. The area under study is located on the ridge of Belahara and alluvial basins of Patle Khola, Ruduwa Khola and Tamor river. The eastern and southern part of the study village is touched by Dharan-Dhankuta highway. Hile-Chhintang fair weather road connects the northern and western part of the VDC. In the study the forest covers area 22% of the total land. The contribution of the forest to the people of the Belahara includes fuelwood, timber, fodder, some fruits and vegetables.

The total population of the village is 5720 comprising 2807 female and 2413 male with 1028 households (VDC, 2001). The *Rais*(20%) are the dominant group of the village followed by *Chhetries*(15%), *Tamang*(13%), *Magars*(13%), *Kamis*(12%), *Damais*(11%), *Newars*(10%) and *Brahmin*(6%) .

4. Forest History of the Study Area

Like in other parts of the country, the forest of the study area was under the control of local indigenous group of people called *Athpaharia Rai*. The authority of the *Athpahariyas* later shifted into *Jhari* and *Jimbuwal* of the *Chhetry* and *Brahmin* groups. As noted there was dense forest in the village upto 1970.

It is said that the forest of the village was under the control of local people even after it was nationalized in 1957. As reported, Forest Nationalization Act became effective only after the late 1960s. In 1970s, Dhankuta was declared as development center of Eastern Development Region. During that time, a large number of regional level government offices were established. Population influx of the district headquarters increased because of offices. As told by informants, the fuelwood demand of the district headquarters was fulfilled by the adjoining areas like Belahara, Bhirgoan, Atmara, etc. Similarly, at the same time, government and individuals began to construct the houses for line agencies. As recorded most of the timber demand of the headquarters was supplied from the area under study. The other major upheavals and change of the forestry of the study area were Dharan- Dhankuta Highway. Thirteen kilometers of highway, out of 52 k.m. passes through village territory from Tamor river to Patle Khola., this brought tremendous changes in many aspects of the social life of the village. The transportation changed the settlement pattern of the village from the scattered to concentrating trend along the highway as well as the pattern of using forest resources. During the construction period of road 13 km forested area was destroyed from Tamor river to Patle Khola. After the construction of road, the naturally protected forest on steeper slopes of Southern part which was far from the villages, also experienced massive destruction due to cutting down of piles of *Khair* (*Acacia Catechu*) trees and fuelwood for their sale in market as well as personal use. The construction of highway encouraged the people of other areas also to exploit this forest. During the first field visit in 1991, 200 *bhari* (1 *Bhari* = 30 kg) of firewood was supplied to Dhankuta bazaar from the area under study. Hence, the opening of the highway had intensified the process of degradation in several ways. As noted the process of forest degradation continued in the beginning of 1991. The concept of community forest was introduced in the study area around 1993. Now there are 157 forest user groups. After 1993,

many changes have taken place in forest consumption behaviour of the people. People developed several adaptive strategies to cope with changing pattern of forest management.

5. Adaptive Process of People

After the establishment of community forest (CFs) in the area people were confined to be the member of particular community forestry. Prior to CF, one could get the firewood from any forest of the village. Because of heavy deforestation between the period of 1970-1990, people felt scarcity of firewood. Community forestry approach also established some rules with regard to forest products. Both deforestation and CF controlled the easy access of people on forest. To cope with changing situation, they developed several strategies to fulfill their energy demand. Adaptive strategy denotes those patterns formed by the many separate adaptive processes (Bennet, 1996). In 1991, there was complete absence of alternative source of energy throughout the village. Out of 80 hhs, 35 hhs were found installing bio-gas during the period of follow up study. In the past some ethnic group like *Rai*, *Tamang*, *Newar* and *Kami* used more firewood than other groups because a function of cultural needs. Except heating and cooking, they used firewood for wine making. Because of market intervention distillery products displaced their alcohol-brewing business. The factory made alcohol gave the death blow to the local alcohol-brewing business. Scarcity of charcoal gave pressure to the blacksmith to abandon their crafting business. In 1991, eight households, out of ten were under patron-client relationship but after a decade, only 2 houses were noticed involving in their traditional occupation. The community forestry was strictly restricted to make charcoal from the forest of VDC under study. People's dependency on firewood was high in 1991. However, the dependency on forest had significantly decreased in 2001.

Table- 1 Changing Pattern of Firewood Consumption on the Basis of Caste and Ethnicity

Serial No.	Ethnic/ Caste Groups	Main Source of Fuel, 1991			Main Source of Fuel, 2001		
		Fire wood (HHs)	Bio-gas (HHs)	Kerosen (HHs)	Fire wood (HHs)	Bio-gas (HHs)	Kerosen (HHs)
1	Rai	10			6	4	
2	Chhetry	10			2	8	
3	Magar	10			7	3	
4	Brahmin	10			2	8	
5	Tamang	10			6	4	
6	Newar	10			2	5	3
7	Kami	10			8	2	
8	Damai	10			9	1	
Total		80			42	35	3

Source : Field Survey, 1991-2001

The table 1 shows the change coming in firewood consumption pattern between the period of 1991-2001. There are three factors which force the people to use bio-gas. The first one is that the CFs fixed the amount of firewood requirement of each household. One can harvest firewood one time in a year, which is barely sufficient for them. The second one is subsidy on bio-gas encouraged the people to install it. The last one is people's awareness on forest preservation. At the national level, the percentage of households using alternation sources of energy (LPG, Kerosene, Bio-gas, etc.) in the rural areas is negligible. However, the percentage of using bio-gas in the area under study is high because of government intervention and transportation facilities. However, bio-gas is still used for limited purposes i.e. cooking. Use of bio-gas for lighting was not common through out the VDC. As observed bio-gas is used for cooking two times meal and one time snack in a day. During the course of big feast and festivals, all of the users of the bio-gas also use firewood for

cooking. All of the sampled households use firewood for preparing *Khole* (gruel).

b. Changing Herd Composition and Herding Movement

Livestock are essential to the livelihood of the study area. Animals are kept for several purposes such as milk, manure and draft. They used to maintain large number of animals in 1991. As recorded in 1991, the average size of livestock holding per household was 9. Now this number had significantly declined to 5. The community forestry had restricted the animal grazing in the forest freely. The respondents of the study area would collect the fodder only on seasonal basis. In 1991, leaf and grass from forest were the main sources of animal feed. After the formation of forest user groups, crop residue (straw) was the major source of fodder. To cope with the fodder scarcity, the respondents started to grow fodder trees at their agricultural land. In 1991, only 17 households independently provided year round fodder for the animal. Now, the number of independently fodder supplier household reached 25 in 2001. The size of livestock of two different period has been presented in tables 2.

Table : 2 Comparison of Livestock Size of two Different Periods.

S.N.	Type of Animal	Total Number in 1991	Total Number in 2001
1	Cows	182	82
2	Oxen	134	50
3	Buffaloes	68	70
4	Goats	274	130
5	Pigs	90	110

Source : Field Survey, 1991-2001

The number of all animals except the pig had decreased. The causes of decrease were several such as installation of bio gas, restriction on forest, lack of manpower at the family, etc.

The households who owned bio gas needed regular supply of dung. Therefore, they kept fewer animal on stall-fed basis. Similarly, the local breeds of buffaloes and cows were gradually replaced by improved ones. The improved breeds of livestock needed more care and people invested more money on the animals. Therefore, they did not let the animals stray because of their high cost. The second reason was restriction on grazing in community forest. The third reason was that in the past herding was the duty of children. As noted, most of the children of sample households went to school. Similarly, adult males of the area under study were hardly available at the village as they went outside to earn their livelihood. In the past, some families had a tendency to keep domestic servants for animal herding. The transportation facilities in the district created other type of wage labouring opportunities within and outside of the village. Therefore, the members of the poor households started to give little preferences to herding works. Difficulty in recruiting herders was one of the responsible factors to decrease the livestock size in the study village.

Balahara had no open grazing land and *Kharka* (seasonal/ individual/communal gazing land). As recorded there was 8 *ropanis* of grazing land in the village. The forest lands had been restricted for grazing animals since 1993. Therefore, the majority of the households shifted their herding place from forest grazing land to stall feeding. Scarcity of grazing land and, need of dung and urine for bio-gas are the major factors to change the herding practices of the people. Change on herding practices created new social involvement. In the past, for example, herding was the duty of children but now collecting dung, operating gas-pit and taking care the livestock are of the duties of the adult population also.

7. Change in Firewood Consumption Pattern

Firewood is used for different purposes such as heating, cooking, etc. In addition, it provides many other amenities to the

villagers such as heating the houses particularly in the upper parts of this area where the winter is fairly severe. In 1991, the per capita consumption of firewood was 617.57 kg. in the village annually which was higher than national level firewood consumption. The rate of firewood consumption has significantly changed within a decade. The rate of firewood consumption is presented in table : 3

Table : 3 Rate of Firewood Consumption on the Basis of Caste and Ethnicity

Group	Caste/ Ethnic	No. of HHS	Annual per Capital of Firewood in 1991 (Kg)	Annual Per Capita of Firewood in 2001 (Kg)
1	Rai	10	700.64	415.15
2	Chhetry	10	403.33	301.0
3	Magar	10	738.26	504.14
4	Brahmin	10	421.76	276.0
5	Tamang	10	508.05	357.11
6	Newar	10	605.10	212.00
7	Kami	10	1085.70	585.00
8	Damai	10	600.00	387.00

Source: Field Survey, 1991 and 2001

The per capita firewood consumption rate has significantly decreased in 2001 compared to 1991. As mentioned in 1991, people had access to all forest areas of the village. Now people are depended only on forest to collect the forest resources. The *Kamis* shared the highest percentage of firewood both in 1991 and 2001. However, the ratio of consumption has declined by fifty percent. There is a cultural reason behind the use of such a large volume of firewood by blacksmiths. According to blacksmiths, themselves, about fifty percent of the firewood was converted into charcoal for manufacturing agricultural implements such as spade, sickle, *Khukuri* (traditional knife), etc. In addition, some of them supplied charcoal to Dhankuta bazaar for sale. However, such

kind of practices are largely controlled with the establishment of CFs. The number of households collecting firewood from the own land was small in 1991, i.e. 5 HHs. This figures exceeds in 15 households in 2001. Among the ethnic/caste groups, the households of Brahmin and Rai consume the highest proportion of firewood collected from the owned land. Table 4 presents the firewood collection pattern of two different periods.

Table No. 4 Firewood Collection Pattern of the Respondents on the Basis of Caste and Ethnicity

S.N.	Caste/ Ethnic group	No. of HHs	Method of Firewood Collection 1991			Source of Firewood Collection 2001		
			Forest	Owned land	Others	Forest	Owned land	Other
1	Chhetry	10	9	1	-	7	3	-
2	Magar	10	10	-	-	10	-	-
3	Brahmin	10	9	1	-	6	4	-
4	Rai	10	8	2	-	5	5	-
5	Tamang	10	9	1	-	8	2	-
6	Newar	10	8	-	2	6	1	3
7	Kami	10	10	-	-	10	-	-
8	Damai	10	10	-	-	10	-	-
Total		80	75	5	2	62	15	3

Source: Field Survey, 1991 and 2001.

8. Change in Timber Consumption

Timber is used in the study village for the construction of houses and cow shed. In the area under study, houses are mostly made of stones and timber. Timber is used for door and window frames, shutters, roof rafters and ceilings. In 1991, the houses were generally two storeyed and the roofing is mostly conical thatched. Bamboo was used for thatching the cattle shed and houses. In addition, timber provided agricultural equipment such as plough, yoke, handle for hoe, etc. In the present study, attempt has been made to compare the past and present timber consumption pattern of the sample households on the basis of caste and ethnicity.

Table : 5 Timber consumption with Regard to Caste Ethnic Group (cu.ft)

Caste/ Ethnic group	No of HHs	Annual Per Capita of Timber- 1991	Annual Per Capita of timber- 2001
Rai	10	27.94	12.15
Chhetry	10	27.50	12.95
Magars	10	32.39	10.5
Brahmins	10	22.53	9.0
Tamangs	10	47.92	10.56
Newars	10	63.00	11.59
Damai	10	35.60	7.0
Kami	10	40.00	8.5
Total	80		

Source : Field Survey, 1991 and 2001

For 80 sample households, the per capita consumption of timber was 37.57 cu. ft. per annum in 1991. The timber consumption rate was higher in 1991 at the area under study not only owing to any domestic requirement, but they had also a tendency to stock timber for future construction. With the introduction of community forestry timber consumption behaviour is regularized by forest user groups. Now one can get timber on the basis of his/her needs rather than wants. According to forest user groups' rule, a household gets fixed amount of timber on annual basis for agricultural equipments such as plough, yoke, etc. If someone's house is caught by fire, such a victimized family will extract some timber as per his needs. During the time of family separation FUG provided timber to the families to construct the houses. As observed, some families of the VDC under study have started to plant timber tree in their land for future security. There was a tendency to cut down big trees for the small purpose in 1991. However, cutting down the big trees for agricultural implements was not noticeable in 2001.

In 1991, among the 80 respondents, 77 respondents extracted timber from the forest. However, this tendency declined in 2001 because of the FUG formation and ownership feeling of the people. The housing pattern of the roadside significantly changed. In 1991, almost all houses were roofed by thatch grass. The follow up study shows that iron sheet was the roofing material of the roadside dwellers and well-to-do families.

9. A New Innovation : Family Forest

Systematic plantation of trees for fuelwood, fodder, and timber was hardly observable in 1991. However, with the introduction to community forestry, individual family started to plant multipurpose trees to meet their fodder, firewood and timber demand. In the mid of 1990s, the British road project started to plant the seedlings at both side of highway and encourage to the locals to plant trees on their land. The project also provided seedlings and technical support to the people. Now people have domesticated some trees at the edge of agricultural land. As Noronha and Spears (1985) noted, adopting family forestry implies a change in behaviour inasmuch as farmers didn't not previously plant fuel wood systematically. Another trend during the last decade is the plantation of bamboo trees in the vertical slope of agricultural land. There was some tendency to grow bamboo plants for fodder, roofing and firewood in the past. However, after 1995, people were attracted towards bamboo farming because of its economic value in the local market. The price of single bamboo tree was Rs. 20-25 in the beginning of 1991. The demand of bamboo tree is increased after 1995 and the price of a bamboo tree reached Rs 40-50.

10. Change in Firewood Sale

There were 10 sample households involved in firewood sale in 1991. As recorded, each day bundle of firewood was supplied in Dhankuta Bazar in the beginning of 1991. There were a large number of poor families involved in firewood sale up to 1993. After the construction of Dharan Dhankuta highway, some of the highway labourers started to live in the area under

study adapting firewood sale as a means of livelihood. There was high demand of firewood in the district headquarter between the period of 1970s-1990s. As mentioned above, the population of the district headquarters increased with the establishment of regional headquarters in 1970s. However, the process of firewood sale dramatically declined in the mid of 1990s triggered by different factors. In 1993, most of the government forests of the adjoining areas were handed over to communities. Since then, the firewood sellers could not collect firewood freely. The price of firewood hiked in Dhankuta bazaar. In 1991, the price of one bundle firewood was not more than Rs. 25. But price of one bundle firewood went up Rs 70-75 in 1995. Before 1993, it took almost a full day to bring a bundle of firewood up to one's residence. The next day, early in the morning the same firewood was carried to Dhankuta bazaar. Thus, to sell one bundle of firewood needed one and half day's work. After 1993, one could not supply firewood on regular basis because of the restriction on community forests. Due to the high price of firewood the bazaar dwellers started to use alternative source of energy for cooking such as L.P. gas and Kerosene. The number of L.P. gas and Kerosene users were hardly 1 or 2 percent of the total households at Dhankuta Bazar in 1991. The percentage of L.P. gas and Kerosene users increased by 60 percent in the end of 2000. In the time of follow up study in 2001, the number of firewood sellers decreased by 70 percent. Therefore, they left their firewood selling job and directly entered into national, regional and international labour markets for their survival. The wood sellers hardly participated in community forestry management. Because most of them were either landless or owned a small piece of land. The primary need of such households is to extract firewood from the forest to sell in the local market which is disturbed by community forestry. Similarly, they are skeptical towards the well off families because they think the benefit coming from the community forest would go to the well to do families. In this regard, Agrawal (quoted by Noronha and Spears, 1985: 236) stated that the poorer farmers and the landless are reluctant to contribute

free labour for community projects since they feel the benefits would go to the few who are well off.

11. Conclusions

The people of Belahara have changed their strategies on forest consumption pattern since last ten years. Community forestry and bio-gas programs are the major catalysts of change. During the period between 1970s to 1990s, several new demands emerged on local forest resources as a result of outside intervention. The policies and performance of government institutions, development of infrastructure and social pressure affected the people's forest consumption pattern in the study area. Community forestry program regularized the people's behaviour on firewood, fodder and timber consumption. Similarly, government encouraged the locals to install the bio-gas in subsidy price in the study area. To cope with the scarcity of forest resources, people developed a set of strategies such as installation of bio-gas, starting family forest, keeping small number of livestock on stall-fed basis and changing on roofing pattern. Similarly, the firewood selling households felt threatened on their job and switched other type of wage labourings in regional, national and international level markets. The land utilization pattern of study area has changed to some extent. People of the area under study started to plant trees on the edge of agricultural land and slope area for their future security.

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STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES OF ADVOCACY: GENDER ADVOCACY AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN WOMEN IN NEPAL*

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1.0 Introduction

Advocacy is an organised and sustained campaign to get the interest of the marginalised people represented and addressed in public policy, attitudes or practices. It is a deliberate, systematic and organised way of influencing effective implementation of existing policy, change it or formulate alternative policies in favour of targeted area/group/issue. The goal of advocacy is to challenge the powerful in favour of the deprived and disadvantaged ones, such as Dalit, ethnic minorities, landless, women, children and older people.

While there has been a growing body of literature on empirical cases of trafficking in women, movement against it has been rarely documented and discussed. This paper attempts to critically analyse gender advocacy from the light of Social Relations Approach (SRA), especially from the framework of Institutional Analysis (IA). We argue that while trafficking in women has become a lucrative business for profit-making, a critical analysis of the institutions involved in it and a concerted

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effort against them would definitely yield some results. Referring to the case of anti-trafficking campaign in Nepal, we attempt to introduce the notion of advocacy in general and gender advocacy in particular.

2.0 The Notion of Advocacy

The concept of advocacy entered into the NGO sector as a strategy and a tool to change policies and practices of institutions and to contribute for lasting social change. Around 1980, a growing number of NGOs in the Southern underdeveloped and Northern developed countries have intensified their advocacy work in local, national, regional and global levels to counter the constraints placed on their development efforts by national, regional and global powers – the market forces and the state mechanism. Particularly in the issues of gender, NGOs and women's movements in national and global levels have intensified their advocacy after the Third World Conference on Women in 1985.

Advocacy is the speaking up about a problem or an issue in the relevant political arena in order to improve the situation for those affected by that particular problem. It is an essential part of the most of NGOs and human rights groups who aim to bring about vital social changes. It is a *process* of widening support through networking and alliance building in order to bring changes in the policies. An advocacy campaign is a set of targeted actions in support of particular cause. A base of any advocacy is essentially a common issue.

In advocacy, NGOs play critical role to change policies and practices at different levels. NGOs claim themselves as ambassador of the poor, socially excluded, and discriminated due to their specific class, gender, age and ethnic identities. Political dimension of poverty, powerlessness and suffering is the major area of concern of any advocacy.

2.1 Elements of Advocacy

There should be a clear understanding of the political culture and effective ways of bringing about policy changes in that cultural context. The agenda of the changes should reflect

the perspectives of the affected communities. Lobbying initiatives for policy changes should be firmly grounded in community based campaigns affected by the issue. Leadership (of an organisation, a group or an individual) with clear political analysis based on specific cultural context is very important to make an advocacy successful. The way activities are

Box 1: Elements of advocacy

- Dynamic leadership
- Wider public support
- Effective communication
- Collaborative partnership

organised (or strategies are determined) at various levels and stages is also very important to make an advocacy effective. However, activities may change during the course of implementation. Therefore, it depends entirely up on the given context including political and cultural sub-contexts. The advocacy group(s) should aim at building strong and enthusiastic public support that could influence policy-makers at various levels. There should be an effective communication system with different sectors. The organisation or the group that aims to advocate for social change through gender justice should set up (a) *concrete objectives*, (b) *attainable targets*, and (c) *clear strategies*. Most importantly, groups, organisations and individuals need to have equal partners with whom they can share views, values and beliefs.

2.2 Steps of Advocacy

On the whole there are four main steps in any advocacy campaign. They are **planning** (issues identification; research and information-base; setting objectives and goals of the campaign; and, designing strategies); **preparing resources** (lobbying, networking and alliance building, and; resources generation); **launching the campaign**, and finally; **monitoring and evaluation**.

Identify problem(s) : First step in any advocacy is to identify and choose the main problem to advocate for or against it. An organisation, a group or an individual who wishes to advocate for gender justice in particular problem should consider

some key questions, such as: Is the problem really related to the women's rights issue? Does the problem educate a wider community and help them bring in support? Will the problem contribute to strengthen gender justice? Will this help expand the scope of state responsibilities? To what extent does the problem address women's practical gender needs (PGNs) and strategic gender interests (SGIs)?

Do research and identify critical issues: Next step, for any advocacy groups or individuals, is to identify key and critical issues within the problem. Some pertinent questions could be: What is the nature of injustice? How can the injustice be proved? Are there documented cases against it? Who are the violators or perpetrators? Which social institutions (the family, community, market or state) are found to be directly (or indirectly) responsible for that particular problem? Which legal tools help confirm the injustice or violation? Which international human rights standards has the state ratified? Is there any possibility of linking the issue with those human rights standards? What is the possibility of satisfactory solutions to be expected at local, national, regional and international levels? Do the public understand the issue? Is there any possibility of mobilising wider public to generate awareness and gain support?

Set objectives and demands: This step is very critical for the ones who wish to contribute in the process of advocacy. It basically deals with what advocacy organisations or individuals want to achieve. Some key questions to be addressed are: What is the possibility of success of the advocacy issue? Which aspect of advocacy issue needs to be focussed? Is it possible to monitor some mid-term or final objectives? Does the issue have some positive impact on gender relations with respect to class, caste and religion? These are some examples to set out clear advocacy objective(s).

Design strategies: In order to achieve the set objectives, the advocacy groups or networks should set their strategies very clearly. Strategies should be devised in such a way that it could constructively influence the existing policies and practices at its

different levels. The larger political context of the issue should also be considered while setting the strategies. The strategies should be such that the advocacy should help enlarge its allies, gain wider support and single out the opponents. There are many ways to formulate strategies which, however, depend heavily on local contexts. Ethnicity, class and religion are some major factors that shape the local context of advocacy in relation to gender. Sociological literature suggests that women from ethnic minority group, non-Hindu background and economically lower strata enjoy relative autonomy and freedom than women from caste groups, middle or high class strata and Hindu background. In such a context, gender advocacy strategies should address these realities first. On the whole, gender advocacy should constantly challenge the patriarchal ideologies and practices in every stage.

Networking and alliance building: Advocacy is a complex task with full of challenges, political, social and ideological. It is much more difficult in societies like Nepal that are predominantly feudal and patriarchal. The advocacy groups, therefore, should enlarge their partnership and networks to gain wider support from the public. If necessary, the campaigners should build their own alliance or mobilise the existing ones to make the issue effective and vibrant. Since

Box 2: Forms of Alliance Building

- **Lobbying** is one of the *strategies* to strengthen advocacy process, which aims to bring policy and practice change in particular, issue.
- **Networking** refers to both formal and informal communication between individuals and agencies working on similar issue. Network is usually developed and maintained by keeping regular contact with the agencies or people who are interested on issues agreed.
- **Coalition** refers to a mechanism to build a network between existing agencies where the organisations/ agencies become members either temporally or for a longer period. Though the coalition works on a common concern, each organisation retains its own background, thus giving space for differences and open discussion.

advocacy is more a collaborative action, single and isolated efforts are highly likely to be less effective. Some relevant questions to be addressed are: Who are the potential allies and opponents for gender justice? Where are they located, in which level (vertically and horizontally)? Who are the main targets and where are they located? What can be the role of media to sensitise the public? How can the opponents be neutralized?

Generate resources: A reserve of flexible resources (human, material and financial) is very essential for a successful advocacy campaign. First, mature, articulate and politically clear human resource is crucial to carry out the critical analysis of the agenda. We need to analyse the political economy of the agenda critically and identify potential cultural barriers (implicit or explicit) that might impede women's rights issues from entering into public discourse. Second, a stock of literature and publication with clear political position is essential to further advocacy campaign effectively. Also we need other tools and equipment to sustain the campaign. Third, availability of a reserve of loose and flexible financial resources is very crucial. In course of advocacy campaign, often we need to change our strategy and alliance frequently to respond to the changing circumstance(s). There may be many hurdles to work with the project-based and pre-allocated budget. Therefore, availability of flexible funding that could be utilized beyond project boundary, on quick and circumstance-driven decisions, is very much essential.

Action and implementation: If there are clear objectives, strategies and monitoring mechanism, we can start implementing the action plan. Action plan should have clear linkages, vertically and horizontally, to bring wider impact on policies and attitudes. Action plan needs to be flexible, since we cannot work with same plan in all circumstances. It should be very clear who is in charge of implementing particular part of the action plan, ensuring that his/her political vision does not contradict with the set objectives and strategies. There should not be any "gap of understanding" between those who designed the

campaign and those who implement it.¹ Finally, field reality (social structure, cultural differences and religious beliefs of the stakeholders, their ethnic/caste and gender dynamics, etc.) should be given utmost consideration before actually initiating the campaign.

Monitoring and evaluation: While evaluating advocacy, we usually focus on short-term outcomes and long-term impact against the stated objectives. Some key questions are: What is the state of progress on objectives and goals? To what extent are the strategies effective to achieve those objectives? Are the plans working well? Are they practical in the given context? What has been the final outcome and impact with respect to gender relations between women and men (with respect to PGNs and SGIs)? To what extent have social institutions become sensitive in protecting the rights of women along with their male counterparts? Has the state formulated any gender redistributive policies? And finally, was the issue chosen for gender advocacy really suitable and relevant?

There should be a clear, locally adaptable, and culturally and politically sensitive mechanism to monitor gender advocacy

¹ There are many cases of gender issues being evaporated. For example, the National Network against Girls Trafficking (NNAGT), one of two leading advocacy groups in Nepal that deals with the issues of women in trafficking appears completely different in operational level than its claim of following human rights approach. NNAGT is clearly following welfare approach. The Alliance against Trafficking in Women and Children (AATWIN), another advocacy group, has the problem of diversity. Many of its member organizations deal with the issue but on their own way. Thus, the challenge to both NNAGT and AATWIN is translating the originally envisaged vision, strategy and programs in the practice. Even some of the United Nations agencies in Nepal do not precisely follow United Nations human rights principles while implementing their programs. The UN Task Force on Trafficking and its Joint Initiatives on Trafficking (JIT) project, for example, have considerable deviation from UN's internationally recognized human rights standards to deal with the trafficked persons.

campaign. Since gender advocacy mostly includes qualitative issues, such as change in attitude, behaviour, policy and practice, etc. quantitative indicators often do not reflect the success, effect and magnitude of the outcomes. Selection of proper indicators is, therefore, very crucial in gender advocacy. Developing qualitative indicator(s) to monitor change in attitude, practice and belief is more complicated than monitoring policy change. Policy change as a matter of fact is visible (therefore, less challenging) than attitudinal and behavioural changes. Change in attitude and behaviour is not only a time-consuming and slow process but also invisible.

Due to the temptation of finding "visible outcomes," monitoring and evaluation of (gender) advocacy might pose two dangers. First, there is danger of moving beyond the set objectives and agreed principles of the campaign. Second, there is equally high possibility of arriving at spurious conclusion that the campaign could not generate any success outcomes (due largely to their invisibility).

3.0 Gender Advocacy

Gender concerns reflect a shift of focus in development policy and programme from the welfare to the equity, the efficiency and finally the empowerment approach. Such approaches are also seen to coexist, either as single policies of particular state institutions or mixed and matched within an organisation. But there is often hope for coherence.

Most importantly, the distinction made is between two policy perspectives: WID (women in development) and GAD (gender and development). The WID approach aims to include women in development programme in order to make them efficient, while GAD aims to address inequalities in women's and men's social roles in relation to development. As one of the recent development debates all over the world the latter was largely shaped in course of women's movements and demands for the inclusion of gender issues in the development process.

3.1 Framework of Analysis for Gender Advocacy

Advocacy as a process encompasses many activities. For gender advocacy, for example, some or all of the following activities or a combination (of few) could be devised. Possible activities include, among others:

- (a) identification of a particular issue,
- (b) access to and collection of relevant information,
- (c) media campaign,
- (d) awareness campaign,
- (e) mass mobilisation and/or demonstration,
- (f) lobbying, coalition building or networking,
- (g) civil disobedience,
- (h) litigation,
- (i) influencing policy decision and discussion at the local-level governance units, and
- (j) influencing parliamentary discussions.

Box 3: Gender Analysis

- Gender relations are social relations between men and women that create and sustain systematic differences in positioning of both sexes in society. Gender relations are context specific in terms of class, race and ethnicity. Gender relations are, therefore, social relations at large.
- Gender analysis is to explore the relations between women and men in specific context and inequalities in those relations. It seeks ways to bring about more balanced (power) relations between both sexes.

Currently there are more than half a dozen of internationally recognised frameworks to analyse gender relations and develop gender advocacy plan. Those are Social Relations Approach (SRA), Gender Analytical Framework (GAM), Women's Empowerment Framework (WEF), Moser Framework, Harvard Analytical Framework and Capacities and Vulnerabilities Analytical Framework (CVA), etc. Experience has shown that each of the frameworks needs specification and local adaptation. Using any framework must not ignore cultural differences. Difficulties often arise while translating their key terms used. It is so while linking the local context and local case (which reflect the reality of individual location) with the globally applicable framework. It's a challenge of micro-macro linkages.

Here, we will try to describe SRA as an example to show how this framework helps us in gender advocacy campaign in specific circumstance. Naila Kabeer, at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, developed SRA and has widely been used by NGOs, advocacy groups and donor communities. SRA analyses gender relations in relation to social institutions involved and perceives gender relations as part or reflection of social relations. In this sense, SRA is a tool to analyse gender inequality in the distribution of resources, responsibilities and power. Theoretically, SRA is more inclined towards socialist feminist school of thought. The point of departure of SRA is its perception that the ultimate goal of development should be human well-being. The concepts of social relations and institutional analysis are centrally located in the framework of SRA. SRA has two major uses so far as gender is concerned. First, it is a *method* of analysing existing gender inequalities with respect to distribution of resources, responsibilities and power. Second, SRA helps *design* gender policies, advocacy plan and programmes to enable women to be the active agent of their own development and justice.

For SRA, development is all about increasing human well-being, which can be seen as concerned to the survival, security and autonomy of human being. Social security and autonomy are closely linked to gender, ethnic, caste and racial dimensions of discrimination. The concept of social relation is central to the framework of SRA. Social relations are different structural relationships that create and reproduce systemic differences in the positioning of different groups of people. Gender relations refer specifically to those dimensions of social relations that create and reproduce differences in the positioning of men and women.

In a patriarchal society like ours, gender relations accord men than women a better privilege and opportunity to social roles, material resources and political power. Social relations can also be seen as resources that groups and individuals have, and these social resources often play a crucial role in the survival of people living in poverty, distress and powerlessness.

Below, an attempt has been made to apply one important element of SRA, the institutional analysis, on gender advocacy in Nepal, referring to trafficking in women as a case.

3.2 Institutional Analysis of Gender Advocacy

An institution refers to a framework of rules for achieving certain social, political and economic goals (Kabeer, 1996). Institutions reinforce and reproduce patterns of social relations and thereby create and perpetuate social differences and social inequalities. Organisations, in the other hand, are the specific structural forms that institutions take. An institution operates with official ideologies shaped by its set goals and procedures.

Under the framework of Institutional Analysis (IA), gender advocacy requires analysing how these institutions and organisations actually create and reproduce gender inequalities in society. For understanding an institution it is necessary to analyse the rules, resources, practices, people and power/hierarchies of command and control in order to uncover how gender is constituted as relations of inequality. IA as a framework of analysis draws attention to the way gender is constructed as relations of inequality reinforced by the rules and practices of different institutions, both separately and through their interaction. IA identifies four institutional locations for the analysis: the state, the market, the community and the household. An IA makes it clear how gender is constructed in different levels and terrain of social relations.

While applying IA in the case of trafficking in women in Nepal, first we have to set clear and precise objective(s). One possible objective could be to identify social institutions and locate their role in the criminal business of trafficking. If we really identify all the institutions involved and explore their existing or potential roles, it would help us in strategizing ourselves to single out the enemies against whom we have to fight, and allies with whom we could collaborate in achieving the common goals. Table 1 shows tiers of institutions involved

and their organizational and structural location in the criminal business of trafficking.

Table 1: Institutions in different domains of women and men relationships

Level	Institutions	Motives
State	Legal bodies, administrative organisations, ministries, village and district development committees and departments.	National welfare
Market	Recruiting agencies, employment generating agencies, media, factories, industries, distribution network, e.g. brothels.	Profit maximisation
Community	Villages, communities, social norms, informal networks, political parties, religious institutions, NGOs/CBOs, patron-client relationship.	Service and moral economy
Household	Families, lineage groups, etc.	Altruism and co-operation

The **state** is supposed to take the responsibility for those who are at risk of trafficking. Usually, state has holds a conservative attitude while dealing with such issues. Consequently it is almost difficult to get flavour of human perspective towards women in terms of recognising their autonomy and independence. An anti-trafficking law in Nepal, for example, is much more victim-centred thus ignores crime part where mostly men are located. Before 1990, trafficking was not even recognised as a problem by the state. Now, trafficking has been accepted as a problem but still as one of women's problems. Gender advocacy groups had very hard time to convince the government that it is not a problem of women only, but a national problem.

Although Nepal has signed almost all international instruments, including CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action, and trafficking convention and protocol, still the state seems always reluctant so far as their

implementation is concerned. Legal institutions such as Ministry of Law, Laws Reform Commission, Courts and Bar Associations are overtly patriarchal and conservative, heavily dominated by middle class men from higher castes. Law enforcing bodies such as Nepal Police, Armed Police and Royal Nepal Army too are not exception to this. It is very hard and embarrassing for a trafficked woman (and her family) to go through the official legal process and get justice. One typical example is the parliament and the bills related to trafficking control and violence against women, and, of course, the eleventh amendment of civil code popularly known as *women's rights* bill.

The anti-trafficking bill has been overtly victim-centred and does not even touch upon the criminal part of trafficking.²

Box 4: Timeline of Government Initiatives

- 1997 Ministry of Women and Social Welfare forms a national Task Force to draft national plans and policies.
- 1997 A two-year agreement between Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and ILO for a program against trafficking in women.
- 1998 Ministry of Home and UNICEF entered into an agreement to train and mobilize police force in awareness raising for and prevention of trafficking in women.
- 1999 HMG/N approves National Plan of Action against trafficking in women.

² Similarly, the bill on violence against women does not reflect Nepal's international commitments, such as Beijing Platform for Action, and UN Human Rights principles, although Nepal has ratified both. Regarding women's property rights bill, the government passed it from the parliament, but again without substantial improvements in the existing legal discrimination. Now gender activists have clear tow positions in it: (a) the welfare-

The National Plan of Action against trafficking in women and children for commercial sexual exploitation, for example, is indicative itself to see how far is it victim-centered. Of the six main areas identified, none of them attempts towards controlling the perpetrators effectively. The six working areas identified are (1) policy, research and institutional development; (2) legislation and enforcement; (3) awareness creation, advocacy, networking and social mobilization; (4) health and education; (5) income and employment generation, and; (6) rescue and reintegration (see Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, 2000).

The same applies to the SAARC Convention to combat trafficking. Since 1996, gender activists of the SAARC countries were asking collectively that trafficking issue be accepted officially into the SAARC process. Although the Kathmandu (Eleventh) Summit (2002) formally approved the convention³, it did not include activists' demand that trafficking issue be looked from rights-based approach.

After the escalation of liberal economic policies in Nepal, **market** has become stronger than the state mechanism in relation to trafficking. Licensing of the recruiting agencies (that does not include human cost), migration policies (which are gender-blind) and the media (which have capitalistic orientation) are some examples of how market as a social institution plays crucial role in trafficking.

centred activists support the bill, (b) while those following the human rights principles have many reservations and disagreements on what has been passed. The implication is that the state has failed to prosecute the perpetrators and thereby to protect the rights of the affected women and their families.

³ While the Male (Ninth) Summit (1997) had accepted the issue for its consideration, it was the Colombo (Tenth) Summit (1998) that endorsed the draft for final consideration.

On the whole, rather than protecting women's rights and allowing them to exercise their freedom, market forces promote women's trafficking for their economic benefits. Before the government started issuing licence to recruitment agencies, trafficking used to happen with few women and was confined within South Asia only. When agencies were allowed to operate their business, trafficking started in a mass scale and the market extended beyond Asia. For example, groups of brokers of recruitment agencies visit districts these days and attempt to lure as much women as possible for unknown jobs.⁴

Box 5: Case Study

Ms. Radha (a trafficked survivor, nicknamed) was kept in custody for about two years (1988-1990) in Kathmandu. When she got HIV positive, the brothels in India (where she was kept as captive) first ousted her. She was also not allowed to stay in her society and family back in Nepal. Eventually, she was taken to custody. After the restoration of democracy in 1990, the interim government released her from the custody and offered a lowly paid job under the Ministry of Health. However, after one year she was disposed from the service on the charge of HIV positive (for which cause she was given employment earlier). An NGO working for the cause of women at risk then picked up her and offered a job at its office as a token of sympathy. She served there for two years (1992-1994). Due to an increasing gap between employer's normal job expectation and her weakening health, she was eventually forced to resign. She is still alive and maintaining her life on her own within the triangle of social rejection, state repression and civil society disposal.

⁴ For example, couple of months ago one such group including some local persons visited Sindhupalchowk and Rupandehi districts in a similar purpose and succeeded to persuade some 29 girls and women. These brokers neither had any official document nor had any reliable paper of jobs offer. Of the total 29 women targeted, 18 were Tamang and the rest Tharu by their ethnic belonging. Fortunately, some local NGOs and the concerned families found them doubtful and managed to save the girls and women from being trafficked.

Before 1995, Nepali media too tended to expose trafficked women negatively which used to disclose the identity of the victims and heightened their social stigma. With the continued advocacy of feminist groups and NGOs alike, however, the role of Nepali media seems to have been improved recently. Still, there is a long way to go to make the market sensitive to gender issues in relation to trafficking.

Community and civil society too are making trafficking issue much more complex due mainly to two reasons. First, the service delivery mechanism of the society is much more inclined to welfare approach. Second, the tendency of NGOs preferring to work in certain territory (only) has created problems of co-ordination and sharing. Most of the NGOs are covertly patriarchal. Furthermore, they are politically less matured also, thus lack conceptual clarity on the issue.

From the grassroots to the international level, gender advocacy against trafficking in women has revealed two clear positions, viz., (a) the conventional and orthodox "welfare approach," and (b) the liberal and empowerment-centred "rights-based approach." The followers of the welfare approach hold moralistic position and adopt repressive strategies. For instance, it attempts to restrict women's mobility in public places and gives stress on rehabilitation of those women who are already victims. Unlike it, the proponents of human rights approach advocate for autonomy and fundamental rights of women while addressing the issue of trafficking. They attempt to incorporate empowerment strategies as an integral part of their campaign. This is how both NGOs and advocacy groups are divided in two clear fronts for anti-trafficking campaign. Due to the division of civil society like this, there has been a lack of consolidated and concerted effort. Directly or indirectly, it has allowed the market and the state mechanisms not assuming their responsibilities effectively.

Households are the main location of care and affection of family members. But patriarchal power relations within the family and the discriminatory social norms and morals towards women have added vulnerability to women. In relation to

trafficking, while market creates a negative image of women, the community formulates patriarchal values, and the family rejects a woman once she is trafficked. In Nepalese context, it is almost impossible for a woman to be normally accepted within her family once she is trafficked. There are many cases of women suffering repeatedly because of the family rejecting them. In some few cases where the family is willing to accept her, the wider community (primarily, either kin and/or the neighbourhood groups) discourages and ridicules on the family itself.

4.0 Conclusion

Each individual, both male and female, lives amidst the web of social relationships. An analysis of social relations, therefore, occupies a central position in Social Relations Approach (SRA). Recognising gender as a form of social relations, the SRA focuses on connectedness and embeddedness of relationship between women and men. Gender relations are considered as relations of inequality due largely to the discriminatory rules and practices of different institutions. In such a systemic situation gender relations are connected to other systems in society of which power is one important concept. Power has been at the centre of SRA approach as well, also because power needs constant debate and continuous challenge for making the society equity-based.

Advocacy is a campaign launched on the part of civil society actors that aims at influencing public decision-making for the benefit of relatively marginalized section of society. Gender advocacy in particular is also the same process with primary attention towards making relations between women and men more equity-based. Since women are often in disadvantaged position, gender advocacy focuses on empowering them vis-à-vis their male counterparts. Building women's (or mixed) alliances and networking is one of the main activities of feminist advocacy campaign.

As a country of periphery, Nepalese women and girls are trafficked to the countries of semi-periphery or core status. With the growing incidence of trade on human body, especially that of trafficking in women, a vibrant advocacy campaign has also emerged in Nepal very recently. While Indian brothels have been

the main destination, recently trafficking business has also extended its hands up to gulf and some East Asian countries. This paper shows that gender advocacy like any other advocacy campaigns is a systematic body of activities, each linked to other logically and aimed at achieving the set goals or objectives. It shows that identifying the actors involved, their location and linkage in the tier of social institutions and identification of potential enemies and allies would greatly help achieve the target. In this process, IA could be one important tool that gender advocates could apply.

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THE POSITION OF DALIT WOMEN IN CASTE SYSTEM

Samira Luitel*

Background

Out of the 22 million population of the country it is estimated that the total population of *Dalits* is 20% (CERID, 1997) of which female *Dalits* occupy half of that population. Except for a few, the total segment of this population leads a miserable life. Socially discarded for a long time, they are compelled to live a vulnerable life be it economic, education, health and all the other areas that fall under basic needs. The word *Dalit* itself connotes the lowest strata of the society in all the aspects, a term which is condemnable itself. One has to go back to its history to understand the situation of the *Dalits*. Based on the Hindu caste system the total social system is divided into hierarchies since long, where people are divided into various caste and ethnic groups. In this background the position of *Dalit* women is one of the lowest from all these aspects.

The major caste groups as stated in the religion are four - Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya, and Sudra. Sudra which was placed at the bottom of the ladder in the caste hierarchies is termed as *Dalit* these days which is the untouchable groups in the society. Besides the caste groups, there are about 60 ethnic groups (CERID, 1997) in the country. No caste discrimination is found in the ethnic groups except in the Newars. Outlawed in the year 1963 itself, without no strong action against it, the practice of untouchability still exists in all parts of the country. As it has not

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been totally abandoned and punished by the government, *Dalits* are still prohibited to use the public facilities such as water taps, schools, *mandirs*, restaurants, hotels, etc. There have been cases where *Dalit* women have been beaten by the upper caste women while filling their water jars from the public tap. Even the *Dalit* men are punished for not washing the glass of tea in the restaurants. Several cases of insult and humiliation occur with the *Dalits* which go unnoticed when there is no strong channel to hear their voices. *Dalit* women on the other hand have to bear both the social humiliation and male domination in the family. The *Dalits* have been the victim of psychological and physical violence from the upper caste groups be it the caste or ethnic groups who are supposed to be superior to them. Various *Dalit* organisations, INGOs and NGOs are working hard to raise the condition of *Dalits* by bringing awareness among the people but without a strong support from the government mechanism and a supportive attitude from the people it is very difficult to change the situation. Among the *Dalits* also there are several types who also practice social hierarchies as upper and lower caste groups.

The *Dalits* can be divided into three types - hill *Dalits*, e.g. Kami, Damai, Sarki; Terai *Dalits* e.g. Musahar, Chamar, Dusadh, Khatwe, Tatma and Dom; the *Dalits* among the Newars of the valley e.g. Chyame, Pode, Kasai, etc. All these people share almost the same social discrimination from the upper caste groups. There is also discrimination among these groups who practice untouchability among themselves as superior and inferior groups. So it is not only one category of untouchability to address but the total context of the system to bring change and transformation in the society.

Status of Dalit Women

In the total context of the country, the status of women of Nepal itself shows that the condition of women is far behind men in all respects and the condition of *Dalit* women is worst compared to others. The vulnerability of *Dalit* women as depicted by a Nepali writer can be taken as an example on how these women are oppressed in the total social and family context. In her story of *A Naikape Sarkini*, Parijat has well described the

story of a low caste woman who has to earn her living by digging sand in the Bagmati river, in Kathmandu valley. The story goes like this -

The woman works so hard digging the sand in Bagmati river during the cold and chill winter of Kathmandu. During that cold winter she has wrapped herself in a thin saree and a blouse without proper winter clothes. She returns home after she finishes the work at 4 O'clock in the evening which is almost dark during the winter time. She then begins to cook the evening meal and waits for her drunken husband to come home from playing cards, which is his daily job. Her husband who is disabled cannot help her in anything even giving the physical comfort, but assaults her with bitter words and gets satisfied as being a man. He comes to the *pati* (shelter for the homeless) with all his frustration, inferiority complex and defeat which automatically comes in his words. He still demands the money she earned by her hard work as his right, to drink alcohol which she cannot protect without a proper place to hide. After completing all the household chores she sleeps in her wet clothes, that is all she has to wear. "She is as cold as the sand of Bagmati, being deprived by everything". She is already turned to her old age in her middle age. She can neither revolt nor fight against this injustice.

This is a typical story described by the writer which represents the condition of majority of the *Dalit* women's life. They have to live a miserable life be it social, economic, educational, legal and others. All these aspects of *Dalit* women's lives have been presented separately as follows.

Social status

Some of the sociologists describe that the status of *Dalit* women is better than that of the high caste women as both the men and women share the same work. So there are not so many rules that create gender discrimination in the low caste groups (Bennett, 1981). But so far as the social status is concerned, *Dalit* women have been doubly victimised, being women and untouchables. Often times they have to face humiliation and psychological depression while using the public spaces e.g. water sources, entering *mandirs* and others. Besides that, when

they have to survive on the mercy of the upper caste groups they need to provide various services that are low paid and risky. In the labour force also, if there are untouchables, they are segregated while serving food. They need to stay away from the so called upper caste people of the same economic status while eating. Such practices have not been changed much from education and legal sanctions. A Chamar woman however is the most needed person during the time of delivery. She attends the birth and does all the required works as a doctor yet she is not allowed to enter the house. A certain amount of wage is given either in cash or in kind as the fees, which the person using her service can afford.

Dalit women are often found to be the victims of illegitimate sexual relationships. If they have such relationships with the higher caste men, they are not accepted in their family. In such cases they have to lead a miserable life. On the other hand there are some groups in which women are indulged in prostitution as their profession. The Badi women are indulged in sex trade from the very young age which is a big source of earning to the family. Men of the family work as the dealers for their trade. Many *Dalit* women also have become the victims of girl traffickers being ignorant of all these activities. Having no other source of income, *Dalit* women are compelled to adopt such illegal and odious occupation for being destitutes in the society.

Economic

Most of the *Dalits* have no land and no other regular source of income. Those who are the occupational groups especially in the rural areas, get a fixed wage. For example a tailor will sew the clothes mostly during the Dasai or during rainy season when people usually sew new clothes. The blacksmith will make tools or sharpen them at the same time of the season when they are in use. Women share hands with their male in these activities. For this purpose they are given a certain amount of food grains from the families where they work seasonally, as most of the farmers also don't have their regular income. This allowance is not sufficient if there are more family

members to feed. In such cases they live in hand to mouth situation. So, they are compelled to take whatever job is available for them. Those who don't work as fixed labour still have difficulty to survive as there is no job in the rural areas. In such cases they become the victims of low wages of their arduous jobs as they have to take whatever job is available just to survive. Women will be the victims of such cases as they are not the skilled labourers.

Due to illiteracy and lack of awareness men mostly spend their income in alcohol. Even the little food grains is used in preparing alcohol rather used as staple food. Women have to work hard in case of alcoholic husband to feed their children and take other household works. They also get continuous mental and physical torture from the drunken husband. Such households face all the hardships leading to a condition of destitute. A *Dalit* woman is the one to bear all the problems associated with these hardships. She may even leave the house and become victim of other social evils due to her own ignorance having no other alternative to survive.

Terai *Dalits* still lead a miserable life than the hill *Dalits*. Most of the *Dalits* in the Tarai own no land of their own. They mostly live in the land of others, so they have to adjust in a limited space that is available for them. It is found that majority of them have just a small house to live in. The whole family have to adjust in that little space. They also keep birds and animals in the same house - chicken, duck, pig, goat, cow to add their income. Without space and proper food to feed they cannot rear the animals in proper way rather add up additional burden. This burden also falls on the shoulder of the women as the males have to go for wage earning. The women thus are never free from the household chores without proper food to eat and dress to wear. A *Dalit* woman leads a life worse than that of an animal full of scarcity throughout her life.

Health

The health condition depends on various factors - economy, sanitation, education, health facilities, and other available and affordable resources. Most of the *Dalits* live in

filthy areas and poor sanitation condition. Most of them even do not have access to pure drinking water facility. The health condition of *Dalits* is the lowest due to all the cumulative factors, low calorie intake and use of stale food, unhygienic labour work, poor living condition, heavy work load, ignorance, etc. They are the ones who suffer mostly from the infectious, and waterborne diseases. The most common diseases are skin diseases, bacterial and viral infections, gastro-intestinal diseases, worms and others. Most of the *Dalit* children are severely malnourished due to food deficiency and low calorie intake. Women are the victims of all these hazards as they have to look after all the sick and diseased people in addition to her household burden. She ignores her health to provide service to others and cuts short her life span.

Due to various health problems *Dalits* have a short life span. There is also a high death rate among the children below 5 years. Due to this reason women are compelled to give birth to many children so that a few children could survive. Maternal and infant mortality rate which is quite high in the country itself, is the highest among the *Dalits*. When there is no health facility they are compelled to depend on the faith healers, traditional birth attendants and locally available medicines at the time of illness and delivery. They rush to the hospital only in the case of emergency otherwise they survive in the mercy of the almighty. Women face the problem of anaemia, uterus prolapse and other gynaecological problems as they do not get good care and good food during pregnancy and lactation.

The case of *Dalit* women is even severe if they are indulged in sex trade. The statistics show that quite a large number of *Dalit* women have adopted this profession. The Badi women are well known for such activities. Apart from this, girls from these communities are also trafficked in the very young age. All these factors have caused women to suffer from the problems of HIV/AIDS.

Education

History tells that *Dalits* were not allowed to attain knowledge as they were the service providing groups. Women in particular, even in the upper-caste groups were prohibited for

gaining knowledge. Where women of upper castes were somehow benefited by their men, the *Dalit* women were prohibited from such opportunity also. So they lived in complete ignorance. This in total, affected the *Dalit* community. They even didn't feel the need of education for their children due to all the cumulative factors. Although the opportunity for schooling was opened for all since 1950 only in the country itself, the social and economic situation did not allow to do so for the *Dalits*. The situation for Women of all groups did not change much due to the religious orthodoxy, so both the women and the *Dalits* have been left behind from the educational opportunities. The *Dalit* women hold the lowest status in education being doubly exploited as *Dalit* and women. A study (CERID, 1997) shows that the literacy percentage of *Dalits* is below 10% and that of *Dalit* women is below 5%. The enrolment of *Dalit* children at the primary level is negligible.

Schools in most part of the country do not treat the *Dalit* children equally. They are kept away from other children in the class room, are not allowed to drink water from the same pot, or eat food with other children. Most of the *Dalit* children are not attended properly by the teachers in schools so they cannot perform well in their studies and dropout even at grade 1. There are ample of stories told by the educated *Dalits* about the humiliating situations they had to face during the time of their schooling. People did not rent their houses when they knew that they were the untouchable castes. Even the friends kept seclusion from them to avoid the societal encroachment.

The other fact is that due to poverty they do not get sufficient food to eat at home and cannot stay in the school for long. When they become older to share hands with parents they are withdrawn from the school due to the necessity of survival. Girls are the most vulnerable groups among the *Dalits* also, as son preference is practised there too.

There are few *Dalits* who have received graduates or above degree, and women can be counted in fingers. The educated also have not got job opportunity which has brought frustration among them.

Employment

Only about 8% of the total population is engaged in the productive work and the rest is engaged in agricultural works. When there are fewer job opportunities for the younger generation in the country there is very little or no job opportunity for the *Dalits* being educationally left behind and having none of their people in power. Only a few *Dalits* who have received higher level of education also have not been able to join the government job. Due to low level of education and approach to the authority, they hardly get the opportunity in other jobs too. There is no reservation system for *Dalits* either in education or in the job which has further marginalized them as they cannot compete with others. Some of the areas where *Dalits* have been engaged are in teaching, music, and other occupation.

The situation escalates in the case of *Dalit* women as they lag far behind in education and other opportunities. A few of the *Dalit* women are found to work as nurses, and teachers. A vast majority of the *Dalit* population work as wage labourers, women also equally participate in the wage labour as there is no other alternative to survive.

Politics

There is hardly any representation of the *Dalits* in the politics. There is one government nominee in the house of representatives. No one has represented this group as the electorate candidate in the house of representative. None of them have come in the cabinet since the establishment of democracy. There is a nominal representation even in the local level politics. There is not a single representation from the woman *Dalit* in the higher level politics in the history. *Dalit* women have been marginalized in the total voices of women as they are small in number. However, the *Dalit* Women's Organisation is raising the voices about the *Dalit* women's issues which has drawn the attention of Government, NGOs and INGOs at the present time.

Policy of GO, NGO and INGO for the Upliftment of Dalits

Since the establishment of democracy the voices against untouchability and upliftment of *Dalit* community has been raised by various NGOs and the INGOs. The government also has started to give due consideration on the issue. There are NGOs and INGOs who work for the benefits of the *Dalits* as they are the poorest of the poor of the country. Various *Dalit's* organisations are raising their voices against the issue and are also working to uplift their condition. A separate NGO '*Dalit* Women's Organisation' works on the issue of women of this group. The INGOs, Plan International, Action Aid, and Lutheran have been working since long in this area. Since the establishment of democracy the government has been providing scholarships to all the *Dalit* children enrolled in school. All these programmes have drawn public attention to the issue which has aroused some awareness among the people. However, due to long established caste system, the upliftment of *Dalits'* situation especially in the social situation has not changed much. Other major lacuna of all these programmes, especially of the INGOs have been the big investment in the administration and contingencies than to the beneficiaries. They are termed as the White Elephants who consume a large amount of their budget on their own benefits rather to the target groups.

Although there are programmes addressed for the upliftment of the *Dalits* they are run on the piece-meal basis. They have not been able to design and run programmes for the whole country in a consolidated form. Apart from the *Dalit* Organisations, other NGOs and INGOs have programmes in their specific areas focusing to all the poor people of the surrounding locality. In such a situation the *Dalits* have not been able to utilise the benefits and are marginalized.

There is no specific programme for *Dalit* women from these organizations and the programmes addressed especially for

women have hardly been able to bring the *Dalit* women in it. It is also difficult for the *Dalit* women who have to live in the hand to mouth situation to attend the programme on the regular basis and so they drop out. On the other hand their problems have not been addressed by such programs and so they do not feel comfortable to participate fully. There is also the discrimination against caste groups among the participants in the programme. A handful of *Dalit* women participating in the programme would hardly be taken care by the programme organisers as special focus group and are given due care. In such a situation they feel even embarrassed and humiliated and try to keep away themselves from such an awkward situation

Conclusion

There is no particular and clear description about the origin of *Dalits*. The religion describes it as created by God whereas the literatures show that it is based on occupation. History also shows the custom of ostracism when people deviate from the given social norms. The social system based on a culture of domination and slavery has scornfully outcasted the individuals creating the social hierarchies. This very system of uncouchability is the major drawback of Hinduism, which is the humiliation of mankind.

Outcasted by the society, the *Dalits* were prohibited to acquire wealth or hold any land also denied to receive education. Manu, who prescribed the law and rules for the Hindus, has stated "There is no sacred text for the women and Sudras (*Dalits*/untouchables). So they were socially, economically and psychologically exploited since long.

Women of the *Dalit* communities are multi-exploited for being born as women in the Hindu culture and as the low caste group. They are oppressed as women in their own society and are also marginalized in all aspects of individual development – social, economic and educational. Having no other alternative to survive many *Dalit* women are compelled to indulge in sex

trade. Young girls are becoming the victims of trafficking. Women and girls in this very group are at the high risk of being vulnerable of HIV/AIDS. The very system of untouchability (*Dalits*) is a shame for humanity in this 21st century which needs to be rooted out at any cost. *Dalit* people, especially women, can only lead a dignified life when there is no caste system. To provide justice to all citizens the state should take necessary actions to uproot the system of uhntouchability or being called as *Dalits*.

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AGRICULTURE AND RITUAL LANDSCAPE: A CASE STUDY FROM THE MAGARS OF ARGAL, BAGLUNG DISTRICT, NEPAL

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1.0 Introduction

The signification of rituals and landscape in human socio-cultural life is very important. We must not try to undermine them looking just as traditions. We must try to see social, economic and cultural meaning associated with rituals. Rituals play a vital role on people's socio-cultural and economic life of the community. People perform rituals in a particular place. The selection of that particular place is culturally conditioned and its meanings subjectively understood by the community. I have used local people's perspective, which helped me understand the meaning and function of rituals in their own socio-cultural context.

The main theme of this article is to discuss about how a ritual place is associated with ancestor and agriculture. I have focused on mostly to those rituals and farm and family shrines which are associated with agriculture. This article tries to demonstrate the relationships among the landscape, ritual and the process of agriculture development with some specific questions such as: 1) why that particular ritual is performed?, 2) where that

particular ritual is performed?, and 3) why a particular space/place is chosen in order to perform that particular ritual?

In order to study ritual landscape I have focused on the Magar ethnic group of *Argal* VDC. I argue that ritual landscape plays a strong and important role, on the explanation of the relationship among landscape, rituals, and agricultural activities of the Magars of *Argal*. The concept of landscape has been used in anthropology from the beginning of the history of anthropology, however for different purposes and contexts.

Ritual landscape is a cultural phenomena, therefore throughout the world it is a construct of human beings, either through human ascription of mythological creation or through physical actions by the human themselves (Ucko 1994: xviii). Ritual landscape also called sacred landscape is also manifestations of a cosmology of local people with a distinctive array of mythical, religious, or spiritual beings or essences, which finally conceptualize and classify (i. e. bring order to, and make sense of) the natural world (Saunders 1994:172). In Nepal, the rivers, lakes, ponds, water springs, and the Himalayas (mountains) are considered to be sacred. Wherever one goes it is easy to see a lot of rituals being performed publicly on the bank of rivers, streams, beside the water holes, lakes, ponds, on the hill forts, the top of the hills, etc. Therefore, it is difficult to separate a particular landscape from sacred to profane. Sometime *Argali* people consider all the geographical features or the universe as sacred phenomena, however they have special considerations for special features of the natural landscape for ritual purposes. David Holmberg has made a remark in the following way on the ritual performance in Nepal which is similar with the ritual landscape in *Argal*:

"Throughout Himalayan Nepal one finds an abundant array of ritual expressions reflecting multiple Hindu, Buddhist, and indigenous forms. Lamas, Brahmans, shamans, sacrificers, monks, nuns, tantrics, ascetic medicants, and other ritualists practice in innumerable temples, houses, fields, and forests, at crude and elaborate altars, at all social gatherings, at remote peaks and high lakes, in river valleys, along trails, and in bazaars" (Holmberg 1989: xi).

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The word landscape was originally coined in the emergent capitalist world of Western Europe by aesthetes, antiquarians and landed gentry-all men (Bender 1993:1-2). More accurately it was re-coined. There was an earlier Anglo-Saxon usage of the word corresponding to the German word *landschaft*-meaning a sheaf, a patch of cultivated ground, something small scale that corresponded to a peasant's perception, a mere fragment of a feudal estate, an inset in a Breugel landscape. This usage had gone out of vogue by the eleventh century, replaced by word that corresponded to the larger political spaces of those with power-*territories, pays, domain*. And then in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it reemerge, tightly tied to a particular 'way of seeing', a particular experience, whether in pictures, extolling nature or landscaping an estate Jackson 1985: quoted in Bender 1993:2). Similarly, the word 'landscape' was introduced into English as a painter's technical term in the seventeenth century (Cooney 1994:32). Moreover, in contemporary western societies, it involves only the surface of the land; in other parts of the world, or in pre-modern Europe, what lies above the surface, or below, may be as or more important (Bender, 1993:1-2).

In modern usage, the words "landscape", "nature" and "scenery" share a common core of meaning. Scenery and landscape, from which the seeing occurs are often used interchangeably and both imply nature (Tuan 1974: 132, Bender, 1993, Cooney, 1994, Olwing, 1993: 309). This was a perspective by which landscape was recognized as views and vistas.

In the case of 'landscape', there is no agreement, even among scientific users of the word, whether it refers to 'the landforms of a region in the aggregate' or 'a portion of area that the eye can comprehend in a single view, vista, prospect (Olwig, 1993: 307). Knowledge of a place stems from human experiences, feeling, thought and cosmology (Tilley, 1994:15). Thus the "nature" independent has only been perceived through the mind "dependent" concepts. Cognition is not opposed to reality, but is wholly given over in the total social fact of dwelling serving to link place, praxis, cosmology and nature (Ibid).

Daniels and Cosgrove (1988:1) have defined landscape as 'a cultural image, a pictorial way of representing, structuring or symbolizing surroundings'. Thus landscape is created by people -through their experience and engagement with the world around them (Ibid), which is an entirely subjective concept. Therefore, meaning of landscape is more important for the people who are actually occupying it, their views and understanding upon landscape are conditioned by their cultural behaviors.

Thus, landscape is the entire surface over which people move and within which they congregate. Thus a person's perception or mental map of a place is what underpins his/her actions rather than the objective reality of that place, so the nature is totally socialized. It is a symbolic form, a series of signs relating to the ancestral past on which people draw in day to day experience and through which they live (Cooney 1994, Tilley 1994).

People try to dichotomize the whole landscape from a sacred and a profane or ritual and a no-ritual perspective. The concept of sacred implies restrictions and prohibitions on human behavior. Thus, if something is sacred then certain rules must be observed in relation to it; such rules ultimately turn into ritual (Hubert, 1994: 11-14). What makes things become sacred or to be used for ritual activities? The English word 'sacredness' is derived from Latin, and is defined as restriction through pertaining to the gods. The sacred/ritual landscape is often looked upon as composed of thought, perception and attitude, towards a geographical area with a distinctive array of mythical religious or spiritual beings or essences. The profane landscape results from geological processes and on occasions, humans and possibly animals, activities (Saunders, 1994:172). Similarly, a sacred space is demarcated with specially produced religious objects that sanctified human ordering of life and environment, and gave meaning to that activity (Ovsyannikov & Terebikhin 1994:44). The secular landscape is defined as one concerned with everyday life - home, field and farm - while the sacred would be identifiable as containing special places, for example sites for ceremonial ritual and tombs (Cooney 1994: 33).

Mircea Eliade (1957) has argued that it is impossible to overemphasize the paradox represented by every quality of sacredness, even the most elementary. By manifesting the sacred, any object becomes something else, yet it continues to remain itself, for it continues to participate in its surrounding cosmic milieu. A sacred stone remains a stone; apparently (or, more precisely, from the profane point of view) nothing distinguishes it from all other stones. But for those to whom a stone reveals itself as sacred, its immediate reality is transmuted into a supernatural reality. In other words, for those who have a religious experience all nature is capable of revealing itself as cosmic sacrality. The cosmos in its entirety can become sacred (Eliade, 1957: 12). This may further help to perform more elaborate rituals in such sacred places or sacred objects. Some special locations are imbued with benevolent sacred qualities which assist people in having good health, good luck and good energy. Other localities or the same localities are imbued with malevolent forces capable of aiding in injurious acts, infertility of animals, illness in the family etc. (Theodoratus & LaPena, 1994: 22).

The sacred landscape is associated with their particular economic and cultural activity. There is a heavy influence of religious tradition as well. The ritual leaders have the leading role to establish the sacred landscape. The ritual landscape of *Argali* Magars is influenced with the indigenous religious faith and practice as well as the influence of the Hinduism. The Hindu religion practitioner like Bahun and other group are their neighbors. Hinduism is the state religion and has played dominant role in the village. Slowly and gradually the ritual landscape has become a mixture of two religious traditions and faith therefore it becomes more complex to understand. The Indigenous ritual landscape which is build in *Argal* is more associated with agricultural development processes which is directly observable in relation to agricultural fertility.

2.0 The People

The Magars are the most dominant ethnic group of *Argal* VDC Baglung district which constitutes 49.23% of the total

population (Khattri 1995). In the context of ethnic group and their variation, especially in the case of Magars of Nepal I am trying to be specific, because I am aware of the variation of the Magars in Nepal. Sometimes the variation can be observed even in different dialects of their language. In this sense I accept some cultural variations even within an ethnic group, however such variations are not significant to the local people in relation to ethnic identity. I assume some socio-cultural variations are due to geographical location as well as the degree of the interaction with the other dominant ethnic groups who have been settled down as neighbors. Similarly, there is a challenging problem to generalize the finding of a community to an entire ethnic group especially in relation to immediate ancestors. In this article I would like to refer them as *charthare*² and other *pasuwa* Magars settled in *Argal* for a long time.

The Chetties, Brahman, Blacksmiths, Tailors are the neighboring ethnic groups of *Argali* Magars. Each particular ethnic group or caste group identify themselves as a distinct ethnic group in relation to their social structure, kinship system, cultural values, ritual practices and acceptance of particular food items and burial practices. The *Argali* Magars called *pasuwa* to their neighbors who came later in *Argal* and settled down. The Magar people came *Argal* and settled down from the time unknown. When they came to *Argal* they were hunting small games and practicing slash and burn cultivation as their main occupation for their survival. Their earliest economic life can be observed from their ritual practices, which are performed at present as the remembrance of their ancestor's activities. They probably brought millet, maize, wheat and barley as their main crop during their arrival. This is also indicates because of its uses in ritual context and elaborate ritual with some restriction before plantation and harvesting the crop. The restriction and elaborate

² According to the elderly people *charthare* *Argali* Magars were the first settlers in *Argal*. There are four sub-groups among them, which includes Osasa, Nausa, Pulisa and Pun. In relation to cultural practices these Margar had dominant role in the Village. The other sub-group of Magars of *Argal* are Naisa, Roka (Sinjali and Ramjali) and Thapa. These were later settlers in *Argal* and called them *pasuwa*.

use of particular types of grain is developed in order to pay regards to their ancestors rather than their other religious idea. They regard to the ancestors and the religious ideas might be interconnected.

The Magars of Nepal have been regarded as one of the indigenous ethnic groups who have accepted the Hindu value system first because of their early contact with the Hindu groups. Although many sub-groups of the Magars have lost their language and have adopted some Hindu ritual traditions in the process, they have not been totally absorbed into Hinduism (Sharma, 1977:294). From religious point of view the Magar community of *Argal* practice indigenous religious faith which does not fit actually with Hinduism as well as with Buddhism. Neither a shaman nor a Bahun priest is employed during the rite of transition, they ask their sister's son as the priest. The sister's son is assisted by the elderly people who are well experienced with their traditional ritual practices, but they do not have any sacred text to perform their rituals. A shaman is consulted when someone in the family get sick, and or if a shaman also know to perform other rituals but he is not recognized as the ritual leader of the community (Khattri, 1995 and 1999).

3.0 The Study Area

Argal VDC lies in a hilly area between 1420-300 meter above the sea level (masl). There are several hill tops with thick forest, which is the source of fodder, timber, and energy for the local people. People have been protecting this forest for a long time as the community owned. The main settlement and cultivated land lies under the hill tops and the forest. This is the land where people live, with their cattle and cultivate their rain fed land. The local people grow two seasonal crops. During the summer they grow maize, millet, soyabean, but in the high altitude people do not grow millet. During the winter people basically grow wheat, barley, naked barley, pea as the major crops. They also grow radish which is used as vegetable for their own consumption as well as to exchange with their fictive kin relatives.

The surrounding landscape looks like honey cakes on opposite side with very steep hills. It is hard to imagine, from one particular corner of the village, that there is next village beside this. Therefore, people living beside river bank have difficulties to see more landmass, but those who live in much higher area, and who climb on the top of the hill could observe people's activities in the village as well as panoramic view of the Himalayas and gigantic view of the forestious hills.

The most lowland area of *Argal* VDC is also very steep, where most of the people have difficulties to take their livestock. Many people take their bullock in the field to plough with great risk. However Angakhet and Ragdam areas are relatively flat and people settled there. The low land is cultivated to grow rice. The rice field is fed by mostly temporary irrigation built by people with their own individual initiation. In this land people grow rice during the summer and leave fallow during the winter. People have started to cultivate potatoes during winter for the last ten years. The fertility of these land is maintained by leaving land fallow during the winter, irrigation and by composting during rice plantation. On the one hand this land is not that important, because the majority of the people lack this type of land, on the other hand, this small amount of land owned by a few number of people is important to the people, because this land supplies rice, a prestigious as well as ritual items for majority of the people in *Argal*. Even today people think that the rice bought from market is not pure ritually to offer to the gods and goddesses. The majority of the people owns land in the middle range where major settlement lies. This land is more demanding because of its fertility, slope and climate. Most of the people own cultivated land around the settlement area. This land was occupied first by *charthare*, Magar of *Argal*, later other ethnic groups like Blacksmiths, Tailors, Chettris, Bahuns, and the other sub-groups of Magars who entered from different areas of Bihunkot and Galkot into their settlement areas as *pasuwa*. The *pasuwa* people agreed upon the conditions of the indigenous Magar people. The agreement was if they do not follow their local customs, they should leave the area, which made the area to some extent a culturally homogeneous.

4.0 Structures of Landscape and Agricultural Processes

People's activities produce material objects and clues of their activities in the natural landscape. Crop cultivation, animal husbandry and settlement pattern are the major cultural processes. These cultural processes are also associated with creating a sacred landscape. This is evident in the case of *Argal*. Crop cultivation and animal husbandry are combined practices in *Argal*. Sherratt (1990) suggests that agriculture requires the continuing commitment to a particular place. This is associated with the territorial consciousness of the people, which is also the result of the shortage and competition for land. *Argali* Magars express the consciousness of the territoriality during the ancestral ritual through two ritual actions. First, they invoke their ancestral deities and the spirits living at different places in the surroundings. Second, they mention the geographical boundaries of their ancestral or communal land and important natural resources which were mostly used by their ancestors and are valuable even for the living people today during the ritual. The territorial consciousness is also associated with the permanence of the settlement. The territorial consciousness is even expressed in the written documents during the conflict on land with their neighboring communities. These events are all associated with the process of agriculture development, ancestral cults and ritual landscape of *Argal*.

In *Argal*, sacred or ritual sites are perceived as having two fundamental qualities, i. e. benevolent and malevolent. People everywhere are always concerned about their comfortable life at present and in the future. Thus, activities towards such sacred sites might be more devotional. Nevertheless, such devotional expressions, as the recognition of a place as sacred can be made permanent by monument building, for instance temples, or miniature sanctuaries. The introduction of a monument into the 'natural' environment can signify that the human institutions that created the monument are taking on the permanence of nature: architecture and nature ideally united to be one, as exemplified in the use of nature's resources in the monument (Cooney 1994: 35). In the following sections, I will

present the structure of sacred places that are associated with cultivation, settlement and animal husbandry.

4.1. Settlement VS Non-settlement Area

There are some limitations for people which do not allow to act according to their own interests or desire only. Those limitations are included geo-physical condition and natural rescues for their niche. In order to adapt in the local environment, *Argali* people have rationalized towards selecting a settlement area. The selection of a settlement site includes: an access track for human beings and domestic animals, the safer land from landslide during the monsoon season and some sources of drinking water. Besides these rationalization, the settlement area has been limited mostly in and around area where dry land cultivation is mostly available. The *Argali* people have not built a house for permanent residence close to the wet cultivated/irrigated land. On the one hand irrigated land is very limited and very narrow valley, and on the other hand only few people own the irrigated land. The wet cultivated land is found in lower altitude between 1600-1750 masl along the bank of Puwadhune Khola and Tara Khola rivers. In these area flooding occurs frequently during the monsoon. People do fear of flood and have not settled in those areas.

Because these valleys are very narrow and rocky, therefore most of places have difficult access for domestic animals. Most of the people own the dry cultivated land, therefore, it is comfortable for them to build a house and cattle-shed near their land. Except for the main clustered village, it is possible to trace the land and their house because they are very closely settled. In *Argal* the main settlement lies in the middle of the dry cultivated area. Most of the settlements are located around the dry cultivated land. Ritual places are found in and around the settlement area. Therefore, one finds more ritual shrines around the settlements than non-settlements area.

4.2. Cultivated VS Uncultivated Land

Most of the people's activities on the land are associated with the cultivation. The agricultural activities are also

associated with ritual performance. The surroundings of *Argal* VDC can be divided into two categories: cultivated and uncultivated land. The cultivated land is cultured than uncultivated. Therefore, the number of rituals activities are found to be performed more on cultivated land than uncultivated land. Basically the family shrines are placed on cultivated land. Since those shrines are associated with the fertility of the crops, livestock and members of family. Therefore, almost every family has at least one shrine in their field, if they do not have a shrine in their own field, they join to their neighbor's shrine for ritual worshipping to protect their family members, livestock and crops from natural calamities and diseases. The communal shrines are located on uncultivated and mostly public areas. Compare to family shrines, community shrines are few but larger in size and they are regarded as more powerful. The communal deities protect all the member of community, domestic animals, wild flora and fauna of the village from natural calamities and diseases. Having a family shrine in a private land does not bring any social status in the community. But building a monument has social economic power in the community. Those families who own a family shrine has to keep his house and farm away from being dirty. This cleanliness provides social and cultural power to the family in the community. *Argali* people believe that the spirit which reside at that particular place gets angry and becomes troublesome for the family if their abode becomes dirty. Therefore, it is always important for them to be aware with their activities in the field and in the house. Such ritual places restrict people's attitude and behavior, but also builds social interaction with his neighboring family as well as among their consanguinal and affinal relatives.

4.3. Wet VS Dry Cultivation

Wet cultivation and dry cultivation are also associated with the cultural as well as social factors. However, my concern in this article is to see about how these two factors are linked in relation to ritual behavior of *Argali* people. In *Argal* cultivated land is divided into two categories a) *bari* (dry cultivation) and b) *khet*, (wet cultivation). Ritual activities are more often

performed in dry cultivation areas than in wet cultivation areas. The dry cultivated land has a longer history of cultivation, similarly people have much closer interaction with it and it is the land in which people depend more for their survival than on wet cultivated land. Wet cultivation started a few decades ago in *Argal*. These areas lies far from main settlement areas. Therefore, the ritual shrines are found more often on the dry cultivated land than on wet cultivated land.

4.4. Higher VS Lower Altitude Cultivation

The location of the cultivated land is associated with the ritual places in *Argal*. Dry cultivated land consists of most marginal upland and semi-marginal land around the village. This land is located in a higher altitude. The wet cultivated land is located in much lower altitude (around 1600-1750 masl). The higher altitude cultivation depends more upon natural climatic conditions especially rain. This fact might have played a crucial role for more ritual activities and for creating believes in the natural or spiritual power. Because most of the natural phenomena like flood, draught, hail stone are considered to be the happening of the wish of the super natural power, such activities are expressed through building shrines and performing rituals as a symbol for invocation to the spiritual power in higher altitude and dry cultivated land.

4.5. Long VS Short Human Interaction with Nature

The *Argali* Magars have been exploring the spiritual quality of land through interaction with nature in the process of crop cultivation and animal husbandry. After a long interaction with the nature when sacred place is identified then a shrine is established to communicate with the spirit as well as to indicate a ritual place. In the history of agricultural practices dry cultivation started first with subsistence economy and later wet cultivation and specialized commercial farming. Therefore, the dry land cultivation has a longer history of cultivation and it has more ritual places than the wet cultivated land in *Argal*. The wet land cultivation does not depend its fertility on nature as does dry cultivation. Thus, the risk with the natural calamities is less

and the chances of food security is higher, which is very important factor in subsistence based farm economy. The process of establishing shrines comes with the interaction between local people and nature or the spiritual beings.

4.6. Public VS Private Uncultivated land

For the ritual performance, it was felt important to look at the land ownership. In *Argal* the land ownership also affects the process of constructing ritual landscape. The location of shrine and participation of the people during the rituals are also significant when they wanted to build a monument. In *Argal*, the uncultivated land is divided into two categories: a) *ban* (public forest owned by the local communities) b) *kharbari* (private forest owned by individual mainly used for fodder collection). The public forest is used more for ritual activities than the private forest. In *Argal*, some special places such as spring of drinking water, forest, cemetery, river and streams are public. These are the places which are possible areas where spiritual places are created and owned by all members of the community. High esteemed gods and goddesses, and the ancestral monuments are also located in public land than the individually owned land. The ritual is performed by participating on the community level. In *Argal* forest means public land. In such a public places high esteem gods and goddesses have been settled down. In *Argal*, such ritual shrines are Mai Than, Chaurasi Mai, Baraha, Siddha, Deurali, Bhume, Deuti and Jimadhani.

5.0 Crop Cycles and Ritual Activities

Crop seasons and some ritual activities are interwoven in *Argal*. The Magars of *Argal* produce only two seasonal crops i.e. winter and summer crops. People generally called *hiude kheti* (*bali*) for winter crop and *barkhe kheti* (*bali*) for summer crops. The *hiude kheti* includes wheat, barley, naked barley, pea and mustard. Pea is cultivated as mixed cropped with any of the major crop like wheat, barley, naked barley. The *barkhe Kheti* includes, maize, millet, paddy, soybeans, amaranths, hemp, potatoes. Maize millet are the major crops during the summer season. Vegetables are mostly grown during the summer seasons. For winter crops *chaite pooja* rituals are performed only

one time in March just before the harvest. This ritual is performed in order to protect their harvest from natural calamities like hailstone and over rain. The people of the area are not allowed to work in their field on that particular day. The summer crop cycle starts from the end of April and last until end of September. For summer crops, people perform rituals at least two times. At first ritual is performed at the beginning of sowing maize and millet and before harvesting. The crops cycle starts with the ritual called *khiyaro pooja*, an auspicious day for starting sowing maize in the field. Similarly that particular day people should not work on the field. In the case of millet plantation *jimadhani pooja* is performed just before transplantation of millet, on that day, people are not allowed to work. For the millet and paddy they perform special ritual before weeding called *harelo*.

6.0 Conclusions

Ritual landscape is a cultural phenomena. The meaning of landscape lies on culture of a particular group of people, which signify their life circumstances and affects their ways of life. Still a confusion exists whether landscape is an array of geographical or geological features per se, or a particular culture which is deeply rooted by the cosmology of the local people. In fact, the ascription of significance to a specific configuration of geographical features is not a self-evident fact conferred by natural processes, but rather a cultural appraisal (Saunders, 1994:172). In the case of *Argal*, the most sacred sites are natural features. These features are springs, trees or rocks. The ritual landscape is created by the experience of the local people. In *Argal* ritual, landscape is not in the textual tradition, but people have constructed the ritual landscape on the ground with indigenous and Hindu religious tradition and faith. Some of the ritual sites are created on the basis of scriptural notion of cosmic space. Open air village shrines are mostly associated with farm but not with Hindu textual image. The farm and family shrines are mostly associated with the fertility of crops, livestock and family members. The rituals are performed to avoid natural calamities such as famine and epidemics. Therefore, development of rituals and the local ritual landscape is

associated with the dependence of local community on agriculture, to pay regards for their ancestors who made land for cultivation and avoid risk of famine and epidemics. At the same time the increased dependence on cultivation stimulates increased concern for the fertility of the crops (Haaland and Haaland, 1995:115). Similarly, in archaeological investigation, sacred sites have frequently been found around the same time as the introduction of agriculture (Scarre, 1996:591). The natural environments are culturally incorporated into the religious world of local communities. The local natural landscape is used to create ritual landscape. The ritual landscape is interrelated with the settled and cultivated lands, crop cycles and rituals activities of local people of *Argal*. Ritual activities of the local people are not rigid. Ritual activities of the people also change according to religious and socio- economics environment of a people in a particular area.

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DEVELOPMENT OF WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION FACILITY IN THE RURAL AREAS OF NEPAL: AN OVERVIEW

Jiba Nath Prasain*

1.0 Introduction

Safe drinking water is the basic necessity for people. Traditionally as well as culturally, Nepali people believe that flowing water is considered "pure" and "safe" for drinking and domestic purposes. Water is a multifaceted symbol in Hinduism. It is regarded as one of the panchatatawa, i.e., five primeval elements of the universe along with the earth, fire, air, and ether...water was sacred precisely because it had the potential to wash away the sin. Just as water dissolves away dirt and mud, so too does it dissolve sin. Water was regarded as papamochana, or that which frees one from sin and impurity. A person was regarded as being clean after a ritual bath, or snana. While the symbols of water as a primal matter, an instrument of purification and expiation, a unifying force and a vivifying element can all be found in Hinduism, in most of the dharmashastras, or Hindu religious texts, the symbolism of water as an instrument of purification and expiation, is pre-eminent (Sharma, 2001:37-38). As water is purifier element, women take bath for purification after delivering baby, during the death observance ritual, people take bath to purify, cleaning sins, to gain religious merits, or to perform any sorts of religious activity, taking bath is most essential part of Hindu rituals. Rig-

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Veda, Atharva Veda, Manusmriti, and Arthashastra are the one those stated the use and importance of water for ritual cleanliness. Sudhindra Sharma, in his book "Procuring Water" (2001) clearly pointed out the importance of water in Hindu socio-cultural life as: among Hindus many of the daily, yearly and life-cycle rites such as daily bathing, bathing in the rivers during certain auspicious days of the year and cremation as well as cremation-related annual rites are conducted along the river banks. Water was and is associated intricately with many religious purification rituals. However, the 'modern concept of drinking and domestic water' has overlooked the ritual purification-aspects of water. And it is seen from the perspectives of easy accessibility, nearness, adequate quantity & quality, reduction of water-borne and water-related diseases, and lessen the drudgery of women and children (The National Water Sector Policy, 1998), rather spiritual purification.

Traditionally, most development activities in Nepal were based on indigenous initiatives. Parma, pareli, guhar, etc --the traditional forms of labor exchange or communal co-operation in rural Nepal (Blaikie, et al., 1982, and Pyakuryal, 1993)-- are the common community efforts in agricultural activities as well social development efforts such as building houses, pati-pauwa, dharmasala, and chautari (different sorts of resting-places) and many other community infrastructural facilities such as irrigation canals, foot trails and drinking water schemes.

The 'so-called' modern model of community development or the organized form of rural development has started along with the Tribhuvan Gram Bikas (Pradhananga, 1991), which was the first government-initiated rural development program in 1950s. Prior to that time, the rural people had managed their community development activities without foreign assistance. Development should be for the satisfaction of essential human needs (Alexander, 1994).

It can be stated that the development is an on-going process. Development implies positive changes. It may be defined as those changes, which are seen as desirables among the particular group of people who are changing (Axinn, 1978)

There is the multiplicity of the sources of rural water supply which comprise river, dhunge dhara (stone spout), kuawa (surface well), pokhari/kunda (pond dug-well), shallow tubewell, spring to gravity feed/overhead water supply system. When people know about advance technology through different ways, they want to have it provided that is affordable, and materials and technologies are easily available or that they have the ability to pay and willingness to pay for it. In the ancient time, most of the human settlements were established and civilizations developed along the banks of rivers. The paper is intent on fulfilling two objectives. They are: (i) to analyze briefly the policy trend and development practices of rural water supply and sanitation activity, and (ii) to assess the roles of the beneficiaries to make the rural water supply and sanitation activity sustainable. The author has tried to fulfill these two objectives of the paper by utilizing the secondary sources of the relevant information.

2.0 Genesis of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Development Activities in Rural Nepal

Drinking water is the most important basic need of the human beings. It remains on the top priority in the agenda of rural development. Given the fact that the 'modern organizational/governmental' efforts to develop drinking water supply sector has not had long history as a systematic approach. The Ministry of Water Resources was originally held responsible for all the drinking water supply under its Department of Irrigation and Water Supply, which was established in 1966, and the department was performing its roles till 1971. And in 1972, under the umbrella of the Ministry of Water Resources, the responsibilities for irrigation and drinking water were separated and the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) was created. At that time, the Ministry of Panchayat and Local Development (MPLD) had been given the responsibility for small-scale village level water supply scheme construction as part of its local development program. Criteria for such schemes developed by MPLD were as follows: (i) a system should serve maximum of 1500 people, (ii) the pipeline should not be longer

than 5 kilometers and (iii) the cost should not be more than NRs. 50,000.00. Those schemes that did not meet the above stated criteria were managed by DWSS through consultants and or contractors' involvement for construction of the schemes under the Ministry of Water Resources (Boot and Heijnen, 1988). This structure lasted for 15 years. Till 1970, the national water supply coverage was only 3.7% of the total population of Nepal (Sharma, 2001) and it was extremely low in the rural area of Nepal. It was out of planners' priority area of improving the water supply and sanitation condition in rural area.

In the decade of 1970s, in the international arena, two women, one British economist-Barbara Ward, and the other American anthropologist-Margaret Mead individually initiated the activity for drinking water supply at the United Nations (UN) Conference on Human Settlement (HABITAT) in Vancouver, 1976. They emphasized for favorable policy formulations and approvals on water supply and sanitation. The following year, at the World Water Conference- Argentina, was carried forward with the specific recommendations so that the UN created a ten-year program to focus on water and sanitation. The General Assembly of UN subsequently passed the resolution creating the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade: 1980-1990 (Bourne, 1984). To express the commitment on the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade, HMG-Nepal's stated its priority concern to have accessible piped drinking water supply by the end of 6th five -year plans. It is mentioned in the Seventh [Five -Year] Plan that only 17.9 % and 79.9% of rural and urban people, respectively, would have access to drinking water. But it did not mention the actual coverage in the achievement of the 6th Five Year Plan. The column of achievement is blank (Seventh Plan, 2042-2047 B.S). Likewise, it was mentioned in the Eight Plan the target was set 72 percent of population coverage of drinking water supply, but actually by the end of the Eighth Plan only 61 percent were covered (Ninth Plan, 1998). The separation of the Department of Irrigation and Department of Water Supply and Sewerage

(DWSS) has been recognized in 1984/1985. These two departments were set up under separate ministries i.e., Ministry of Water Resources and Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning (MHPP), respectively. A few years later (1988), the MHPP had to shoulder the responsibility of formulation and steering the implementation of overall policies and strategies for water and sanitation sector and for inter-related sectoral co-ordination. It is stated that 80% people have access to improved water supply and sanitation coverage is only 27% (UNDP, 2001).

3.0 Organizations/Institutions Involved in Drinking Water and Sanitation Development Activity

During and after the Water and Sanitation Decade, in addition to the Nepali Government efforts, United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF), United Mission to Nepal (UMN), Lutheran World Service (LWS), Red Cross Society, HELVATES, Finish International Development Agency (FINNID)- Rural water Supply and Sanitation Project (RWSSP), Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), European Commission (EC), Water Aid, Save the Children Fund United Kingdom (SCF-UK), Save the Children Fund United States of America (SCF-USA), Redd Barna, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, (RWSS- FUND) FUND Board and numbers of other Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have been involved in providing water and sanitation services and facilities in the rural area of Nepal. These are not exhaustive name list, but these are only some of the principal institutions/organizations working in this sector.

4.0 Directions of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Development Initiatives

Traditionally, Nepal has the strongest and richest heritage of people's participation in community development

activities. History shows that development usually takes place not through external interventions but through ordinary people working collectively to meet their felt needs (whatever pattern of participation). In Hindu societies, the construction of traditional water points is regarded as a sacred activity (Pandey, 1992). They spent money for the construction of temples, water supply systems, rest houses, bridges, and paved roads to gain religious merit (Bista, 1994). It was sporadic, individually initiated, and motivated by benevolent intentions. Or may be to keep the power and influence over the poor by the rich which could give the continuation of traditional patron-clients relationship in a covert way. When the "modern" or "organized planned development" activity started, the "top down" or "centralized approach" took over the traditional form of people's participation. The notion of people's participation in drinking water supply was initiated by MPLD, which had taken responsibility of the construction of small-scale drinking water supply projects like others such as roads, suspension bridges, and foot-bridges. However, it was mainly on the cost reduction approach or "cheap labor", "cost sharing", "contractual obligation" (Srinivasan, 1990). And concept and practice on "community decision-making" was not institutionalized during the course of intervention. Mainly technicians decided the water supply scheme according to the pre-set guidelines and they just asked the community to contribute necessary labor and locally available materials and assigned the role of operation and maintenance of the constructed schemes.

It was the general practice during 1970s that technocrats undermined and even overlooked the importance of partnership approach in development... that the men and women of the village of Nepal are a critical components of the development of the country (Stiller & Yadav, 1979), which was neglected. Any development activity could fail when it fails to involve and encompass the mental attachment and physical involvement of people to decide what they want for them. If neglected, this

certainly creates the "dependency syndrome" rather than the "sustainability". The two decades of these types of conceptual backgrounds, which consequently laid the foundation stones to recognize the importance of people's participation in decision-making. But there is a genuine question: why the crucial idea of "ownership feeling" has not been generated in the mind of the people, who actually benefit from such activity? It could be due to one or a number of reasons such as: the continuous flow of foreign aids without doing proper homework, lack of awareness on the part of people and utilization of development work for political benefits (Giri, 1992). Consequently, "psychic of people" became more dependent on outside assistance and the crisis of confidence was/is common (Prasain, 1996) among the community members and between community and outsiders. But the irony is that those who enjoyed the benefits continued to be increasingly unhappy and asked for more without contributing to the process of development (Bista, 1994). In addition, other reasons behind could be myopic vision and passing responsibilities to others' shoulders by our top politicians/planners, which accentuated in the process of erosion of community self-motivation, and self-help approach. These observations are also corroborated by the researcher's own discussions held with the beneficiaries of LWS project in Baglung and RWSSP project Lumbini Zone. During the later part of 1980s, there were some NGOs, which initiated the process of giving some percentage of maintenance funds (benevolently) to deposit in the users' bank account after the completion of a water supply scheme. It is interesting to note that the Nepal Red Cross & Lutheran World Service (LWS) funded Water Resources Development Project (WRDP) in Baglung (during 1984-1986 project cycle) had deposited half (2.5%) of the maintenance fund in the users' bank account and half was deposited by users themselves to operate and maintain the completed drinking water supply schemes. And for the sake of improving environmental sanitation and personal hygiene, a

concrete slab for pit latrine had been provided free of cost to each family, where drinking water supply schemes were implemented. After a year, it was clear that both the activities initiated with good intention did not work. Then, the project shared the information with community members about the guidelines (formulated in consultation with them) that after the completion of socio-economic and technical feasibility studies of a scheme; the users were asked to collect and deposit the required amount of fund for maintenance. Then, only the project would finalize detailed cost estimate of quantity required for a scheme. Materials for water supply would be disbursed when users' produced the bank voucher for the maintenance fund deposited in the users' bank account, and if household had collected the necessary materials for constructing latrine slab, cement and technicians could be provided.

5.0 User's Participation: A New Paradigm and a Paradox

The word 'community participation or people's participation' has different meanings to different people. It has become 'buzz word' among the development professionals in the recent decades. "Community participation" or "people's participation" does suffer from problems of definition; it means different things to different people, depending upon their perspectives. No threshold point separates "participation" from "nonparticipation". "Community participation" is, therefore, usually defined in terms of a typology that represents increasingly intensive degrees of involvement in: (i) planning programs and projects, (ii) implementing projects, (iii) sharing in benefits of projects, and (iv) evaluating projects. The UN Decade approach to drinking water supply and sanitation stressed that for national projects to be acceptable for external funding, some degree of community participation must be demonstrated in relation to all four criteria (White, 1984: 221-222). But Lohani, (1980) is of the opinion that the closest synonym of people's

participation is popular participation. Various resolution of UN bodies have identified mass sharing of benefits of development, mass contribution to development, and mass involvement in decision-making process of development as the three basic ingredients of popular participation (Lohani, 1980). Selener has quoted (from Conchelos, 1985) two types of participations in his book 'Participatory Action Research and Social Change' (1998), namely, participation of a technical nature can be manipulated by the power holders to fulfill their own needs and thus may not promote empowerment of social change...and participation of a political nature means acquiring power and taking greater control of a situation by increasing options for action, autonomy and reflection, especially through the development and strengthening of institution (Selener, 1998: 204). And another meaning of participation is that the participation by the people in the institutions and systems, which govern their lives, is a basic human right and also essential for realignment of political power in favour of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development. Rural development strategies can realise their full potential only through the motivation, active involvement and organisation at the grassroots level of rural people, with special emphasis on the least advantaged, in conceptualising and designing policies and programmes and in creating administrative, social and economic institutions, including cooperative and other voluntary forms of organisation for implementing and evaluating them (FAO quoted by Burkey, 1993). Analyzing the above definitions, the concerned people's involvement in all project cycles is the meaningful one to decide what they really want and can do to determine their future life.

The philosophy of "top down", "donor driven", "technocratic, bureaucratic", and "provisioning" approaches in rural development could not work well either from the empowerment or from sustainability point of view. Many scholars and development practitioners have collected ample examples in this regard. Among these, Trace and Whiteside

made observations and said that technicians took decisions. As a result, water supply programmes are almost invariably headed by engineers rather than community development specialists ... (Trace, S., et al., 1992). Ultimately, the community members do not hold the "sense of ownership" and consequently after some time, like other development initiatives, water supply schemes are found dysfunctional.

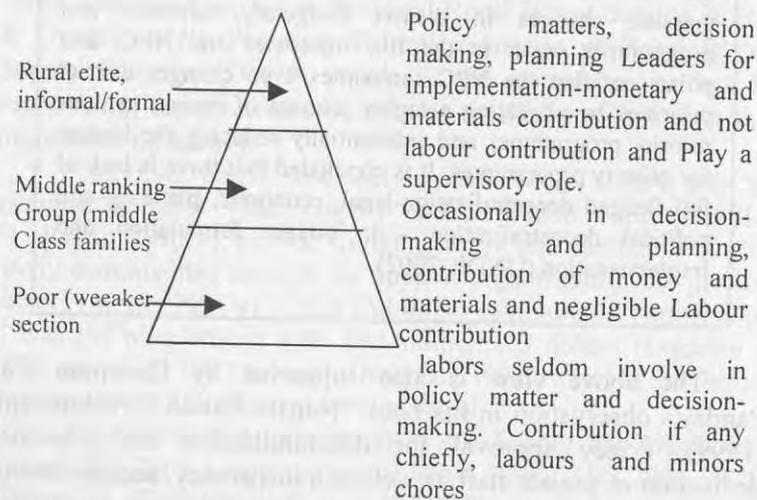
In the decade of 1980s, in rural water supply and sanitation sector, a remarkable step took place, at least in conceptual guidelines, which set criteria on how to make the system more people-friendly. According to the guidelines and set criteria, a request for a drinking water scheme should be lodged with Local Development Department (LDD) by the village Panchayat through the district Panchayat. But, despite this arrangement, in practice, a number of projects were directly requested through political channels or influential leaders. These projects were usually less successful, as implementation was frequently delayed because of disputes about the source of water and tap locations or other internal conflicts, or by a lack of community motivation for voluntary labor. In January 1980, 10 out of 44 projects water supply schemes under construction suffered from these problems. ... However, experience has demonstrated increasingly that the success of a water supply scheme very much depends on a real partnership between program staff and community (Boot & Heijnen, 1988). In FINNIDA/HMG-N- funded RWSS Project (1990-1996 phase) in a village, named Saljhandi of Rupendehi district-Lumbini Zone, it took more than a month to decide one out of thirty-two water points (water taps), but implementation was very smooth after it. This was the result of good facilitation of the interventionists together with the provisioning of appropriate knowledge and skill.

It is still more or less the same pattern or approach as 1980s regarding the sustainability and ownership of any rural development activity. In this regard, D. E Setty holds the opinion that weaker sections of the users' are seldom involved in policy and decision-making activities (except in labor contribution). Conversely, the rural elites are involved in these matters who

neither contribute labor nor play an effective supervisory role. And the consequence is the failure of the project activities (see figure : 1). In this regard, R. Chambers also pointed out that decisions are taken either by the urban-based bureaucrats, technocrats, or "so called" development workers and or rural elites - the non-concerned outsiders. The interests of these may slant towards other direction than the real beneficiary. Such directly non-concerned people could be entrenched by many rural developments biases- spatial, project, person, season, diplomatic and professional biases- (Chamber, 1983). In most of the cases of rural development initiatives like in Nepal, people's participation in the project cycles is a 'token participation' in the context of empowering the poor people (especially women who are the prime users of water). If it is not duly recognized, how can the sustainability be ensured? In such a situation, sustainability of development efforts, including water and sanitation activity, would be rhetoric, myth and or a mockery.

Figure: 1 Pattern of Participation in Rural Development

Socio-economic Category Pattern of Decision-Making



Source: Setty, D. E., 1985, The Indian Journal of Social Work, Vol. XLVI, No.1 (April 1985)

The overall scenario of rural development has been continuously shadowed by the 'top down' or "centralized development model". In Nepal, even though these days, government has put the "decentralization and good governance" on the top priority concern, the genuine people's participation (empowerment) and real decentralization are far-fetched dreams. As the Chairman of Kabre District Development Council (DDC) and President of DDC of Nepal, Mr. Krishna Prasad Sapkota, vividly pointed out the present pattern, practice and psychic of the top policy making body:

Box: 1

What happens to decentralize planning in practice?

That the National Planning Commission (NPC) and line ministries always violets the minimum norms of decentralized planning in several ways. The NPC sets district budget ceiling that often fail far below the minimum needs of the district, and that even writing the total budget ceiling, sectoral ceilings are prescribed so haphazardly that the DDC can not set its district priorities. He contends that massive changes in district budgetary numbers and programmes occur in the line ministries and NPC, and points out that the NPC sometimes even changes district priorities by allocating a higher amount of budget to non-priority programmes and substantially reducing the budget for priority programmes. It is concluded that there is lack of full-fledged decentralization-legal, economic, planning and political decentralization - in budget formulation and implementation (UNDP, 2002).

The above view is also supported by Devendra Raj Panday's observation in his book "Nepal's Failed Development" (1999). Policy approval for decentralization and personal dedication of project staff as well as transparency, accountability and good organization (good governance) of the community are vital elements regarding the sustainability of any activity such as water and sanitation at the community level. Schumacher rightly

mentioned in his famous book 'Small is Beautiful' that the development does not start with goods; it starts with people and their education, organization and discipline. Without these three, all resources remain latent, untapped potential (Schumacher, 1990).

6.0 Significant Step Towards Sustainability - A Reality and Rhetoric

A National Conference in Jhapa, 1980 on "Water and Sanitation Policy Formulation" was instrumental in the matter of formulating policy and procedures to involve the community in all aspects of water supply project, even at least in theoretical framework. The Ministry of Housing and Physical Planning & Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (MHPP/DWSS) had published "Directives for Water Supply Projects, Construction and Management" in 2046 B.S (1989/1990). This was amended after a year and the main points of that could be summarized as: beneficiaries were mainly responsible for requesting a new water supply scheme, formation of users' committee, users' role in operation, maintenance and repair of the constructed drinking water scheme. And, Nepal National Rural Water Supply Policy & Guidelines for Planning & Implementation of Rural Water Supply Program (DWSS, 1994), is the notable step towards recognizing the government's role as facilitator rather than the implementing agency.

Another crucial decision in rural water supply was to establish a Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Fund (RWSS-FUND) in 1990 to provide drinking water and sanitation of the needy communities through the support organizations, the private sectors (mostly NGOs), CBOs and direct communities partnership. It was the pilot project with 18.1 million US dollars (Legarian - 1994, and Pfohl 1993 quoted by Narayan, 1995), which is still being implemented in the different parts of Nepal.

HMG-Nepal/FINNIDA, the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (RWSSP)- Lumbini Zone of Nepal (1990-1996, 1996-1999, 1999-2003, First, Second, and Third Phases respectively) has striven to implement the water and sanitation activity. The implementation procedures followed step-by-step approach

developed during the first phase and continuously streamlined which comprised of: (i) request from users; (ii) first screening; (iii) feasibility study; (iv) training of health workers and school teachers; (v) health and sanitation behavior data collection; (vi) selection of the scheme area; (vii) village preparation; (viii) health education and sanitation campaign; (ix) signing of memorandum of understanding- agreement; (x) detailed survey; (xi) designs, cost estimates and bill of quantities; (xii) tendering; (xiii) construction; and (xiv) completion ceremonies and procedures; and follow-up, to hand over stake to the concern community in all the project cycle of the project implementation and management in order to make scheme sustainable. During this first phase, the counterpart or executing agency of RWSSP was MHPP/DWSS at the central level and District Water Supply Office (DWSO) at the district level. The HMG-N/FINNIDA- RWSS Project in the first phase had put its efforts to implement water supply and sanitation activity by the intended community rather than hiring a contractor. During that period, 54 villages development committees (VDCs) through water users' had implemented 110 drinking water schemes serving 234,052 people and 315 institutional toilets were constructed in the six districts of Lumbini Zone. During the second phase of (1996-1999) the RWSS Project, changed its implementing partner from MHPP to MLD at the central level and at the District level DDC from DWSO. Till 1999, 123,681 (102,181 second phase and 21500 completed from remaining from first phase) people were served by the improved drinking water supply schemes, namely, gravity flow, shallow wells, tubewells and rainwater collection tanks. And in the third phase, it was estimated to serve 216,000 people with drinking water and 52000 people with sanitation facilities. During this phase, two districts, namely, Parbat and Tanhaun, from Dhawalagiri and Gandaki Zones, respectively were also included (RWSSSP Booklet,). In spite of the progress made during the first and second phases of RWSS project tenures, critics pointed out that the process of fostering decentralization has not yet achieved (Sharma, 2001). ADB funded Fourth Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Project (1997-2001) had covered 40 districts and served 850,000 population, much higher than the initially set target. In this phase, the Project Management had given the due importance of capacity building by providing training to 25,000 people. (Paribartan, 2058

BS). A recent survey estimates that 80 per cent of households in Nepal have access to piped or tubewell water (UNDP, 2002).

Almost all the donor-funded projects/agencies working on water and sanitation sector conduct more or less similar types of trainings/workshops/seminars to make the concerned community more aware of their roles and responsibilities. In the series of trainings/seminars/ workshops organized by different support organizations, there are three phases, which comprise the inputs during pre-construction, construction and post construction phases. The example given below is the pre-construction training for Water and Sanitation Users' Committee. The duration of the training could vary according to the emphasis of the organization/s (six days duration is an sample) and the topics are as follows: First day program includes registration of the participants, welcome, opening remarks, introduction about the support organization (SO), indicating the best possible outcome, objective of the training, process of project implementation, (briefing on flow-chart), and role and responsibilities of water and sanitation users' committee on scheme management. Second day includes introduction of scheme area, understanding about the memorandum of understanding and the role and responsibilities of concerned parties, namely, SO and Water Users Committee (WUC), regarding overall responsibilities of WUC on the management of scheme, people's participation and labor contribution. Third day includes how to manage books of account and record keeping, maintenance/operation fund collection and its use, provision of maintenance worker, her/his role and responsibilities. Forth day includes understanding of the interrelationship among water, health and sanitation, connection between drinking water and sanitation activities, techniques/methods on how to keep water safe, its benefits, causes & consequences due to the use of unsafe water, and its methods of prevention, transmission of diseases by fecal oral routes, its negative effects, and its prevention, and importance & urgency of construction, and use of latrine. Fifth day includes construction of latrine (practical), and sharing of experience. And sixth day includes role and responsibilities of women health volunteer/youth volunteers, evaluation of the program and closing remarks. Similarly, during the construction and post construction different training/seminars/workshops could be organized especially to provide support to strengthen the concerned community in the

overall aspects of decision-making and management of any development initiatives focusing more on their capacity building.

The anecdotal cases assembled from a few rural water supply schemes from donor-funded projects indicate the increasing role of users as managers for the design, implementation, operation and maintenance. Since DWSS has formulated guidelines in order to make a drinking water supply schemes sustainable by strengthening users' (users' representatives) roles and responsibilities. In this connection, the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tools have been used (since 1990 in FINNIDA-funded water and sanitation projects) for collecting information, preparing plan, implementation, and evaluation of the water supply schemes. The boxes below give examples on how the concerned people's involvement from information to evaluation phases to sustainability of the water supply and sanitation activities.

Box: 2

Users as Managers

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Support Programme (RWSSSP) emphasizes the active participation of stakeholders at all levels to increase their feeling of ownership. Users are considered as owners and managers of their scheme from the very beginning. Each phase (from inception to maintenance/operation) of the scheme calls for the active involvement of rural communities in a step-by-step manner. This approach has been developed to involve the villagers in the planning and implementation and to maximize the proper use of local resources and facilities. In the step-by-step process the user committee (users' representatives) is trained on -the -job to organize and implement their scheme and to improve sanitation in the community. All construction funds are channeled through the respective user committee account, which it operates independently. Villagers collect local materials (sand, aggregate, stones, wood) and provide unskilled labour for the construction work free of charge. They also contribute money for construction and collect fund for the future maintenance needs of their facilities. Users are responsible for the operation and maintenance of their facilities after the construction is completed. The user committees and users are trained and supported in their activities by local NGOs, private firms and government line agencies.

Source: Booklet, HMG-N/FINNIDA, RWSSSP, Nepal Phase III 1999-2003.

Interactive participation in information collection, planning, implementation, collection of maintenance & operation fund, and participation in different trainings/workshops become generally accepted practices in the donor-funded drinking water supply schemes in the rural areas. The concerned communities, of late, leap forward to use the 'idle maintenance fund' (which has been kept in the bank account) to have access as a revolving loan, to the needy (poor/poorest) members. Among many, the RWSSSP Phase III, 'After Water Supply and Sanitation' "Nayabelhani Stepping Towards Self-Reliance"- (Risal, 2001), is a good example of how people decide what they really want. Similarly, NEWA funded drinking supply scheme management committee had also initiated such activity, which is depicted below in the box.

Box: 3

Increase in Fund by Mobilizing the Operation and Maintenance Fund

Community Service Center-Janakpur, with the financial and technical assistance of Nepal Water Aid (NEWA), had implemented Drinking Water Supply, Health Education and Sanitation Project in Suganikas Village Development Council area. The project management committee had demonstrated the exemplary work in increasing fund. The committee was comprised of 3 women and 7 men and installed 47 tubewells. For the maintenance purpose each household had paid NRs. 400/- and for operation purpose (may be for salary of maintenance worker-clarification is mine) NRs. 5/- per month from each household. The maintenance fund had been deposited in Nepal Bank Limited-Janakpur Branch. After some time, community members realized that if they utilize that fund on revolving basis, the poor would have access to the most wanted capital for their initiation of any income generation activities (IGA). From the first time, they provided loan for 5 people at the 2 % interest per month for IGAs.

Source: Karki, L., et al, PANI (Water), Year-1, Vol.: 2, Water for Health (NEWA) 2057 BS, Quarterly News Bulletin. (Gist translated from Nepali version)

The above mentioned cases provide the examples of the role of users' on water supply and sanitation from data collection phase to management phase.

The quality, quantity and realiability of drinking water supplies is questionable, even in the cities. Very high levels of e. coli contamination have been reported in the water supplies of urban areas of the Kathmandu valley. Nepal spends about 3 per cent of its total national budget on drinking water and sanitation (UNDP, 2002). "Come summer, and there goes the usual tale of woe. Water! Water! People run here and there to collect drops of water, literally. And people of Kathmandu Valley, especially in area such as Naradevi, Yetkha and Chhetrapati (may be all parts of Kathmandu valley, except VIP area/s- within parenthesis are mine) are going through hell. The supply of drinking water is erratic, and even if you are lucky enough to get a bucket of water, it is full of filthy substance. It is yellowish. A letter (Water Woe, The Kathmandu Post: 13 May 2002) sent by Rita Shrestha, inhabitant of Chhetrapati, Kathmandu. Despite the progress made so far even in the capital, the development hub of Nepal, the reality is like this. Another vivid example is the ...Jiri DWSO, installed seven community tap-stands without linking them with the source. Indeed, the source was not even sought - not because the Office lacked technical expertise, but because the budget had already been allocated ... (Box 4.3- Putting the Cart Before the Horse, UNDP, 2002). Therefore, the progress documented on 80% of population coverage by the safe drinking water seems to be intricate, rhetorical and confusing. Even the best theory/law/rule/regulation is fruitless unless it is put into real practice.

7.0 Key Concerns- Knocking Everybody's Door

- ⇒ There should be a full-fledged decentralization-legal, economic, planning and political decentralization - in budget formulation and implementation of any developmental activity at the hand of the grass- roots level organization, i., e., Village Development Committee. The

political will power of the parliamentarians towards the devolution of power to empower the (rural) poor is the prerequisite for fostering genuine people's participation.

- ⇒ To institutionalize the real people's participation from the beginning of the project/program cycle, vision and mission building, organizational management system, financial management systems, organizational accountability norms, linkages, and learning evaluation efforts (Fernandez, 2000), should be incorporated in the project planning and be actually translated into the practice. Unless these components are evolved at the community-based organization, the people's participation may not be institutionalized. Policy makers should facilitate the process congenial to strengthening the grass-roots organization, and be willing to hand over the stake to the local people. There should also be sanction of more resources for public sector investment, keeping in mind the equity issues.
- ⇒ The government should always remember and internalize that the "wearer knows where the shoes pinch" and let the wearer to choose the shoes which could fit (and afford) well on her/his feet. Only then the intended community members may own any project/program/activity, which will ultimately be sustainable. It is true in the rural water supply and sanitation program.
- ⇒ Maximum women participation in all the decision-making bodies should be encouraged, especially in the water and sanitation program.
- ⇒ In every activity, learning, evaluation, and reviewing should be the integral part of any project or program.

8.0 Conclusions

For long, the development practitioners of water and sanitation development program thought that development initiative is a matter of technical issue/expertise and the intended community was given no decision-making role in the design and implementation of the water and sanitation schemes. They could take part in unskilled jobs and minor chores and the contractors and engineers did implementation. Consequently, the intended

people, sooner or later, did not feel that these implemented schemes are "theirs". But gradually, the importance of people's participation in decision-making from information collection to evaluation stages was recognized. However, the weak political will of the top politicians to decentralize the decision-making power at the grass-roots level has been one of the biggest hurdles for achieving genuine people's participation. Decentralization became "a project" to the politicians to be accomplished, and not a behavior, cultural and value system to be imparted (Panday, 1990).

Different organizational options have been emerging to serve the needy people. Looking back to 1960s and having a comparison now, a great progress with 80% percentage coverage has been achieved. Increasing emphasis on "software" i., e., management training to users' representatives on system management, collection of maintenance fund from the users', improving personal hygiene and environmental sanitation, technical training on how to handle operation and maintenance aspects by the village maintenance worker for up-keeping and maintaining constructed schemes, is very positive trend. Women, and intended mass participation in the decision-making level is yet to be incorporated for empowering them. Increase in investment by state as well as community in the drinking rural water supply and sanitation activity is needed to serve more people with 'safe' and adequate drinking and affordable sanitation facilities. There should be guidelines as well as supports by line ministry and private sectors to the facilitators and implementers on regularity of supply, service and facility and reliability of quality to be monitored.

But even in Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal, the focal point of all developments, water quantity and quality for the common people is extremely scarce and contaminated, and progress documented in different reports looks dubious. There should be balanced development with due consideration of equity to the women as well as disadvantaged people to put them in the decision-making level/position. In spite of this, achievement in this sector is encouraging, yet to be more sensitive, responsive

towards the people rather only fulfilling target and building structures in the name of people's development.

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HEALER CHOICE IN MEDICALLY PLURALISTIC CULTURAL SETTINGS: AN OVERVIEW OF NEPALI MEDICAL PLURALISM

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Introduction

Cross-cultural comparison of medical setting around the world led to the formulation of general models of the relationships between the various medical traditions within single settings. The study of human confrontation with disease and illness, and of the adaptive arrangements made by human groups for dealing with ever-present danger has come to be a special branch of anthropology called medical anthropology. It is one of the youngest and most dynamic of the various branches of anthropology. It concerns with a wide variety of health related issues, including the etiology of the disease, the preventive measures that humans as members of socio-cultural systems have constructed or devised to prevent the onset of the diseases,

and the curative measures that they have created in their efforts to eradicate the diseases or at least to mitigate its consequences.

Recently there has been a surge in publications, which address the importance of incorporating the 'body' in theories about the world of 'social reality'. In a given individual or social network, people's understandings of how their body functions influence health practices, symptom evaluation, and taking remedial actions. Help may be sought from a number of sources in the patient's social network, including friends, family, traditional healers, and the professionals (Christakis et al. 1994; Subedi 2001a). This is connected with a growth of medical anthropology and its interest in exploring the interface between natural processes, which affect the bodies we 'are living in' and socio-cultural processes in terms of which 'people understand and cope with the health of their bodies'. Our survival as individual human beings depends on natural processes maintaining the health of our bodies. These processes involve an interaction between natural processes internal to the body organism and processes involved in the physical interaction of our bodies with a natural environment. Like for any other species these processes are subject to 'natural law'. However, in contrast to other species, humans are not endowed with a genetically transmitted repertoire of behaviors, which allow a viable interaction in a natural environment. The genetically transmitted repertoires have been softened and weakened to such an extent that human beings neither orient themselves in their world nor communicate with each other without acquiring a great deal of knowledge through learning (Elias, 1991). In Geertz's words, "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun (1973:5)." These webs are clarified through elaborate symbolic exposition.

Without growing up in a context of cultural webs to interpret the interaction between the embodied self and its natural and social environment, the human animal is impossibility. In other words, humans are situated in an environment that entails both a natural dimension and a culturally constructed one. This "social environment" is an intrinsic system of interaction between nature and culture, which

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is created under the specific physical limits and imposes various material constraints upon human population. As humans we can only experience nature as we culturally construct it, imbue it with meaning, and interact with it in ways that fit within our particular cultural frame of understanding and emotion (Baer et al., 1997:39).

In this context the most important aspect of this cultural breakthrough is that it implies self-consciousness ability to see one's embodied self in the perspective of the unavailability of bodily death. It seems reasonable to assume that the human consciousness of death makes the health of the human body a fundamental concern everywhere, and that this as the general starting point for my description and analysis of the way people in Nepal, cope with health in their natural and social environments.

The impact of a multiple tradition of medicine on health services remains an area little understood in Nepal. Hence, in determining the factors affecting the different types of health-care traditions within a medically pluralistic cultural setting, it is essential to understand how the presence of medical pluralism may be related to or affect the choice and decision to seek different health-care services. I argue that the research on explanation of illness causality sheds light on health care behavior. Examinations of etiologies entail an exploration of folk epidemiology, factors which lead to vulnerability and susceptibility, as well as what can be done to avoid the risks.

Methods and Materials

In order to understand the events of health seeking behavior, I have reviewed Nepali medical pluralism and observed healing and referral process in Kathmandu Valley. I found it necessary to place them in the context of wider traditions of knowledge and institutional arrangements they are embedded in. Specifically, I have focused this study to provide the answers to the following questions:

How do the people in Nepal understand and create meanings on their bodily afflictions?

How do they relate their health problems with social and natural environments?

What sorts of range of therapeutic traditions are available and practiced in Kathmandu Valley?

What are the main causes behind the acceptance of different medical traditions?

What are the methods used by healers in their healing practices in Kathmandu Valley?

How and why are the choices made between and within the various options?

The research I describe here is designed to explore the systematic patterns of healers and laypersons concerning illness categories in relation to actual behaviors involving those illness and help seeking behaviors in Kathmandu Valley, where I intended to study the diverse healing practices from the point of view of both healers and laypersons. The basic method of data collection for this study was observation along with formal and informal discussions with healers as well as patients. Interviews with different healers took place at the medical shops, health posts, doctor's private clinics (both allopathic medicine and acupuncture therapy), and in the home of those (local healers both male and female) with whom I talked. I also discussed formally or informally with different people at teashops, informal gatherings and houses of different informants to understand the lay perception towards different medical traditions as well as within the medical tradition.

Several chains of subjects were developed simultaneously and I followed up those chains that widened the demography. I often followed a sequence of contacts, beginning with local administrators, local health authorities, and the other leaders in the political and administrative hierarchy. The number of conversations and other contacts with these informants varied greatly, depending on their availability, their breadth of information, and willingness to spend many hours with me. My argument here is that the part of people's ideas in terms of which they explain and handle can be seen as their theory of illness. I wanted to know how people (patients as well as healers) describe their health. For example, what are the locally defined illnesses?

What are thought to be the causes and the degree of severity and symptoms? What treatments are sought? From whom? I also wanted people to talk about their explanation for their state of health; what they identify about themselves or their physical or social environments as important, and what, if anything, they believe can or should do to protect or enhance their health.

One further interesting venue of research was the attitude of different healers towards the other healing practices and the extent, which the therapy traditions overlap or diverge. My intention was to focus on the interaction of healers and the patients, and how they deal with the different cases of illness they are confronted with.

Theoretical Framework

People construct multiple and discrepant worlds by means of different traditions of knowledge available to them. We need to discover how much the different constructions are in fact distributed in their action and interactions (Barth 1993:271). Following this idea, I have developed my conceptual framework.

Understanding of Bodily Afflictions and Explanatory Models

Human illness is not only a physical condition but a symbolic one as well. What we experience as health or illness is based on the perceptual judgements we make about the relative quality of our physical and psychological condition. The meanings individuals assign to their health status are strongly influenced by their cultural backgrounds and experiences. These culturally based meanings strongly influence the health care choices and decisions they make, their relative confidence in their health care providers and the treatment regimen, and even their actual physical responses to health care treatment.

In understanding bodily afflictions, it is useful, in my view, to consider the types of questions that people ask themselves when they feel unwell, or when they experience any sudden, unexpected events in their daily lives. My theoretical framework, in this thesis, is mostly based on people's understanding of the culturally constructed reality. I argue that the reality can only be fully understood by examining the specific contexts in which an ill person's socio-economic

organizations and dominant worldviews are patterned. Kleinman (1980) has suggested a useful way of looking at the process by which illness is patterned, interpreted and treated, which he terms the 'Explanatory Models'. This is defined as the notions about an episode of illness and its treatment that are employed by all those engaged in the healing process. Both patients and practitioners hold explanatory models, and they offer explanations of illness and treatment to guide choices among available therapies and therapists and to cast personal and social meaning on the experience of illness. The explanatory model for a particular illness consists of (i) signs and symptoms by which the illness is recognized; (ii) presumed causes of illness; (iii) recommended therapies, (iv) the pathophysiology of the illness; and (v) prognosis (Kleinman, 1980:105-7).

As Kleinman points out, individuals are likely to have quite vague and indefinite models of explanations for their illnesses, depending on past experiences of the patients and his/her circle of kin and friends. This tendency in research arose, in part, in relation to the growth of cultural pluralism, especially in matters of health and illness (Pelto and Pelto, 1996).

Knowledge and Concerns

Knowledge in itself is the result of a learning process that is strongly influenced by a number of factors. Once internalized this knowledge becomes belief. Each medical tradition provides a range of beliefs from which people make their reality and the culturally constructed reality. Healers and lay belief about health and ill-health may differ widely, and these influence the types of conditions that people bring to healers, how they present themselves to the healers, the types and quality of treatment that they are given. A major emphasis here is on exploring the variation within both lay and professional views. Connected to those considerations of knowledge and concerns, I have used Barth's (1993:5) idea of variation to make a sense of it in people's health seeking behavior as:

- *There are variations in the definition of illness, and each medical tradition provides a unique cause and treatment for a distinctive set of illnesses. Thus the over-*

generalization is perhaps the most serious and frequent weakness of research on health seeking behavior.

- *There are variations in level of "expertise" within the same medical tradition in the population. There is no identical, highly rigid pattern of the expertise. That is the interpretation given concerning the causes of illness and medicine prescribed varies within the same medical tradition.*

These variations are important for better understanding of the lives of people, through processes involving those people's own ideas and activities. The different styles of knowledge transmission generate deep differences in the form, scale, and the distribution of the knowledge (Barth, 1990:640). The knowledge that is acquired, retained, and transmitted contains the key to explaining variations.

The Arts of Impression Management

In each medical tradition, we can see the interaction as a "performance", shaped by the environment and audiences, constructed to provide others with "impressions" that are consonant with the desired goals of the actor (Goffman, 1959:17). Each healer promotes the psychological excitement for a realization of a goal. In this way, a healer develops an identity or persona as a function of interaction with others through an exchange of information that allows for a more specific definition of identity and behavior. There is often a tendency for all types of healers to try to present themselves in such a way as to impress their patients in a socially desirable way. Thus impression management has, in my view, considerable implications for areas of health and healing.

Medical Anthropology

Health and ill-health are biological phenomena but their distribution and scale in particular populations are affected by the knowledge (including value pattern, technology, and view of the universe) and the social ties in terms of which people interact with their natural habitat. In other words, there is an intimate linkage between disease, medicine and human culture. In part,

cultures are the responses made by human groups in the path of successful adaptation. Conceptualization of disease, including etiology diagnosis, prognosis or cure, all are part of the cultural repertory and equipment of human beings. Various conceptualizations of ill-health or disease can consequently not be understood apart from an understanding of the culture and social structure of groups holding them (Blustain, 1976; Helman, 1996; Kleinman, 1980; Stone, 1976; Leslie, 1978; 1980; Justice, 1986; Levitt, 1988; Subedi, 1989; Durkin-Longley, 1984; Streefland, 1985; Dixit, 1999).

Medical anthropology looks at cultural conceptions of the body, health and illness. It also focuses on health behavior as a way to learn about social values and social relations. In western research traditions, medical sciences have made important contributions to understanding of the natural laws, which regulate the operation of these processes. A vast institutional complex has emerged directed towards further development of the medical research tradition (often referred to as biomedicine, allopathic medicine, modern medicine, western medicine or cosmopolitan medicine) and training of practitioners qualified to prescribe treatment to health seeking clients. The western medical tradition involves both knowledge about how the general environmental interactions (for example, food habits and hygienic practices) affect the body, and knowledge about how a specific treatment (prescription of medicines and surgical operations) may counteract particular disease. The disciplinary fields include genetic, paleopathology, epidemiology, nutrition and demographic anthropology.

Ethnomedical studies of health and healing are a second major emphasis in medical anthropology. This approach often attempts to discover the insiders' viewpoints in describing and analyzing health and systems of healing. Among the topics studied in this field are ethnoscience, ethnopharmacology, shamanism, and use of alternative therapies, medical pluralism and others. Third, many anthropologists focus their work on social problems and carry out interventions through applied medical anthropology. Among the areas of this subfield are studies of addictions, disabilities, and mental health issues;

public health and family planning; clinical anthropology and health care delivery in pluralistic setting.

Whatever their disciplinary orientation, whether biomedicine, ethnomedicine, or policy and intervention work, many medical anthropologists agree that the concept of adaptation, defined as change and modification that enable a person or group to survive in a given environment, is a core theoretical construct of the field (McElroy and Townsend, 1996). The application of medical anthropology have contributed much to our understanding of the mechanism by which modern medicine and health programs are introduced into, get accepted or get rejected by different societies. The medical anthropological literature abounds with the theoretical discussion and case studies on the persistence of traditional medical practices and practitioners even in the presence of modern medicine, description of traditional medical systems in pluralistic medical setting.

By the early 1960s, the term medical anthropology has come to be used increasingly by anthropologists working in and around problems in health and disease in human societies. Therefore, it is not surprising that an anthropological study of health and occurrence and means of coping with disease can involve one deeply in the manner in which people perceive their world, in the characteristics of the human social system and in social values (Good, 1994). In this perspective, medical anthropology is not only a way of viewing the state of health and disease in society, but a way of viewing society itself (Lieban, 1977). One can not really understand how people react to illness, death or other misfortunes without understanding the type of culture that they have grown up in, or acquired –that is, of the lens through which they are perceiving and interpreting their world. In addition to the study of culture, it is also necessary to examine the social organization of health and illness in that society (the health care traditions) which includes the ways in which people have become recognized as ill, the way that they present their illness to other people, the attributes of those they present their illness to, and the ways that the illness is dealt with.

The particular tradition of western medical knowledge and its accompanying health care tradition represent one way of dealing with illness. Other societies have developed different understandings with different types of healers and medical traditions to deal with the fundamental concern of health. It is within the subject matter of anthropology to deal with socio-cultural contexts of medical traditions and their practitioners and clients wherever they are found whether in so called western or non-western societies. However with its comparative perspective the anthropologists have been particularly interested to understand the conceptualization of illness and healing traditions in different parts of the world. In an applied context anthropological investigations can provide a most important insight into the way different medical traditions are institutionally embedded in particular societies and of the conditions (symbolic as well as material) which affect people's choices with regard to which health practitioner they seek out when illness strike.

The existence of several therapeutic traditions in a single cultural setting, is an especially important feature of medical care in the developing world (Leslie, 1978). Patients may feel uncertain as to what type of care provider can cure their illness, leading them to consult different medical therapists. Or they may decide that treatment of certain illness requires more than one type of assistance. Generally care is sought from several types of providers and medical traditions concurrently or sequentially. The practitioners of different medical traditions may interact with each other in a variety of ways – at times they borrow the ideas and knowledge from one another, compete with and oppose the other system, they may co-operate with one another developing referral systems or they may simply co-exist independently of one another (Kleinman, 1980; Levitt, 1988; Subedi, 1989).

The pluralistic character of health and medical system in almost every one society, be it simple or complex is being increasingly recognized (Minocha, 1980). This pluralism may receive state recognition and patronage, or the state may discourage it or remain neutral to its existence.

Understanding Medical Pluralism

Although medical pluralism has been defined differently by different scholars, most of them have common understanding about it. Firstly, it may mean the coexistence of multiple traditions of medicine, including what are called folk sectors, popular sectors and professional sectors (Kleinman, 1980) which present multiple choices of therapeutic traditions to the individual (Durkin-Longley, 1984; Minocha, 1980). Kleinman (1980) developed a widely used model that recognizes three overlapping sectors in the health care traditions. The popular sector consists of health care conducted by ill persons themselves, their families, relatives, social network, and communities. It includes a wide variety of therapies, such as special diets, herbs, exercise, rest, baths, or over-the counter drugs. Kleinman, who has conducted research in Taiwan, estimates that 70 % to 90% of the treatment episodes on that island occur in the popular sector. The folk sector encompasses healers of various sorts who function informally and often on a quasi-legal or sometimes, given local laws, an illegal basis. Examples include herbalists, midwives, mediums and magicians. The professional sector encompasses the practitioners and the bureaucracies of both biomedicine and professionalized heterodox medical traditions, such as ayurvedic and unani medicine in South Asia, herbal medicine and acupuncture in People's Republic of China. Each sector emphasizes the position of patients and healers within different clinical realities. Each type of healers in such a context typically attracts clients from a cross-section of society. Moreover, clients in these settings often try to seek around for therapy making use of more than one of the different therapeutic types available to them during a single illness episode, either simultaneously or in succession (Subedi, 1989).

Secondly, it may mean the choices within the particular tradition. An individual has not only a choice between consulting an ayurvedic practitioner or one practicing allopathic medicine, but within allopathic medicine, he has a choice to go the hospital (of a particular type) or to a doctor in a private clinic or health post, or medicine seller in a village or a town, in a nearby or a

distant city. Then there is pluralism in the types of personnel who contribute to the practice of same medical tradition. Apart from specialists and other registered medical practitioners, there are other personnel, including nurses, technicians, dispensers and others who not only help the doctors but independently advise and work as medical persons (Dixit, 1999; Justice, 1986; Kristvik, 1999).

Extending the meaning of medical pluralism further, one may notice medical pluralism in people's conception of disease and illness, their resort to medical practices belonging to different systems, and their responses to other medical dimensions. For instance, inhabitants can categorize their illnesses as personalistic versus naturalistic (Foster and Anderson, 1978), natural versus supernatural (Devekota, 1984) dichotomy. Villagers resort to indigenous healers for supernatural causes of illness and to allopathic healers for natural causes of illnesses.

To this extended meaning of medical pluralism, one could add the pluralism among the medical practitioners themselves. There is considerable evidence that the general practitioner draws from varied systems in his medical practice. For example, an ayurvedic practitioner may incorporate the stethoscope, ophthalmoscope and other instruments and drugs from modern medicine into his kit, and germ and virus theories in his explanatory armoury. Similarly, practitioners of the modern medicine may explain dietary restrictions in terms of hot-cold dichotomy of ayurveda (Minocha, 1980).

Medical Pluralism includes both the cognitive and social system aspects of healing and treatment traditions. The cognition dimension relates to a wide range of medical concepts, values, attitudes, and beliefs that serve as guidelines for health action and practices. Thus, it is easily possible that in one illness episode people have different theories of causality among the various medical traditions. The social system dimension refers to the different economic, institutional and organizational aspects of treatment and health-care delivery system. In looking at health care pluralism, wherever it occurs, it is an important to examine

both the cognitive and social aspects of health care available to the individual patient.

A Sketch of Nepali Medical Pluralism

The daily life of health and healing in Nepal is comprised of a wide range of medical beliefs, knowledge and practices, and of distinctive categories of functionaries including medical doctors (specialized in allopathic medicine)¹, health assistants, nurses, dispensing chemists and pharmacists, acupuncture therapists, Tibetan medical practitioners, ayurvedic² practitioners, Unani medical practitioners³ folk healers, tantric healers, spiritual healers, *dhama-jhankris* (shamans), herbal doctors, traditional birth attendants, and other practitioners. Non formal or even illegal medical traditions are available as numerous alternative therapies. In the application of their medical knowledge, these doctors and healers use different

¹ I use the term "allopathy" in this paper to be neutral. Although, here, I am not going to specify the terminological issues, different writers have used the words like "cosmopolitan", "western", "modern", "biomedicine" which is synonymous with *angrezi* (English) system. As Leslie (1976) notes, to call it "modern medicine" suggests a contrastive relationship to some conservative "traditional medicine; to call it "scientific medicine" suggests that other medical systems are unscientific. Similarly, to call it "western medicine" is to overlook its use in other parts of the world. However, these different words are used synonymously to refer to the allopathic medicine. Practitioners of this tradition in Nepal are called doctors (physicians and surgeons), health assistants, nurses, assistant nurse midwives, and so on.

² Ayurveda, literally "the knowledge of life", refers to the vast body of ancient Hindu literature concerned with health and disease. The traditional practitioners in this tradition are usually called *Kaviraj* and *vaidya* in Nepal. Similarly, the word *Vaidya* refers to a wide variety of healers. A broad division can be made between those who stick exclusively to ayurvedic methods and diagnoses, and those who make use of an eclectic mix of ayurveda, astrology and tantric rituals. The latter are called *jahrphuke* *vaidyas*, that is, who use the technique *jharnu* (sweeping) and *phuknu* (blowing). Both ayurvedic practitioners and ritual healers are not sharply distinguished in local usage. However, medical graduates of ayurveda are now called doctors.

³ The Unani tradition of medicine came to Nepal through Islam and its traditional practitioners are usually referred to as *hakims*. Medical graduates of the Unani are also now called doctors.

forms of diagnosis, therapy and medicines. They elaborate, develop and modify the old traditions and make new ones. Although a certain variation in medical knowledge, specialization and curing practices is found in almost all societies, in Nepal this variation is pervasive, and it may be the manifestations of cultural pluralism that characterizes many Asian civilizations.

The state funded health services, for example in Nepal, are also pluralistic in character. There is not only one type of health service in the country, nor is there uniformity among various health services. To name only a few, there are the Police and Army Hospitals preferred for them and their family, Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital and other private or public Medical Colleges Hospitals, Mission Hospitals and numerous others. Within the Kathmandu Valley itself it is estimated that there are more than 350 agencies, government, private, missionary and community managed hospitals, health centers, health posts, sub health posts, and the others. Service charges, outdoor times and indoor facilities and specialties are different in each health institution.

Within the pluralistic medical setting, symptoms and associated causes of illness or health problems determine which practitioner one seeks initially for help and which treatment one expects or requests. However, a single illness may have completely different theories of causality among the various medical traditions. Therefore, it is not surprising that in one illness episode people may seek help from practitioners from more than one medical tradition until they are cured.

In order to understand the health care choice people make during their health complication episodes, it is important to recognize the various medical traditions, which influence people's medical decisions. In Nepal, the several medical traditions with their independent classification of illness, theories of disease causality, diagnostic methodologies, practitioners and treatment therapies present the health seeker with a wide menu of alternatives to choose from. Below are descriptions of three medical settings and their associated traditions. It should be noted that there are wide variations in practices and the beliefs

among different ethnic groups found in the country. The following is a very simplified version of these systems to provide the reader with some sense of distinctions between them.

Household Based Self Medication

The concept of "household production of health" recognizes that a person's access to and use of various forms of treatment are connected to his or her social power in relation to other household members. Here, a "household" is examined rather than a "family", as a household may be easier to define. A household in this case may include, for example, other relatives living in the same house. Household productions of health examine how household members cooperate and compete for resource in order to restore, maintain and promote health. Caretakers attend to the patient through examinations, diagnosis and treatments.

Medical condition necessitates a variety of changes in a household. Indeed, the full extent of the resource and responsibilities, which need to be negotiated, may not be recognized by outside observers. These include fees for medications, analyses and examinations, transportation costs, arrangement for accompaniment, and loss of a worker and more likely of two workers either in wages of housework. All of these factors, and no doubt more, can influence health-care seeking decisions. A consideration of the impact of the medical condition to the household helps explain why patients may come to the hospital too late for treatment.

As mentioned, a member's access to health care is often influenced by his or her position within the household. One member may receive immediate treatment or the more prestigious treatment, while another member may receive care only if the symptoms are prolonged or may receive less prestigious treatments, such as home remedies. Among the characteristics influencing a person's status within the household are his or her age, gender, generation, marital status and work status. Because of the variations in roles and responsibilities within a household, medical condition of various members affect the household differently. Since members' status within the

household vary as does the impact of their illnesses, then their access to treatment also differs.

Further, a person's position within the household not only influences his/ her access to medical care, but also influences his/her sick role behavior. Thus a high status individual or wage earner may receive concern and medical attention over a cough, whereas a lower status individual may have to really moan in order to appear sick enough to receive attention. When an illness strikes, the afflicted person generally does not cope individually- whole network of supporting social ties are mobilized. The composition of members in this network is of course decided by the structural principles according to which right and obligations as well as emotional involvement tie individuals to each other in enduring groups.

In Nepal, the most important group is the patriarchal household (nuclear or joint). Although there is significant variations among households with regard to social, cultural and economic 'capital' (Bourdieu, 1977), one of their dominant concerns is biological reproduction. Socialization of its children and provision of livelihood for their members, households everywhere in Nepal, is the immediate group, which is mobilized when a disease strikes. Important stores of knowledge transmitted within households are brought into play when the health of its members is threatened. Exclusively households support the children, old and disabled members of the family.

Almost all households, at least at the initial stage of illness, utilize a fairly wide stock of intergenerationally transmitted as well as newly acquired knowledge and practices of healing to nurse the ill back to good health. The localized nature of society, limited access to, and relatively low quality of public health institutions and the prohibitive costs of allopathic medicine and modern health services also force most households to rely on home remedies which span from divination to faith healing and the use of local herbs. Increasingly, they also involve the use of off-the-counter allopathic drugs, which remain almost completely unregulated (NESAC, 1998). Using massage, administering herbs, manually removed obstructions, applying heat compresses and recommending dietary restrictions and

prescriptions are the major self-medication practices in Nepal. Generally such medical problems are first treated at the home with some remedies suggested by relatives and neighbors. It is only after several attempts fail that a specialist is called in.

While access to the health post or hospitals are easier than in the past (MoH, 1997), home based system of remedies are playing an important role in health seeking behavior. For example, almost 90 percent of the childbirth in Nepal take place at home rather than in such facilities (NESAC, 1998). The rise and expansion of institutions for enhancement of individual-based knowledge (for example, hospitals and other health institutions) can be expected to change in its structure.

Local Indigenous Medical Traditions

In general, when the home remedy to cure an ill person fails, a larger net of intervening agents are brought in, namely community level healers. They may vary among and within religions; ethnic groups and locally they operate without any government recognition of formal coordination. Their medical traditions and practices may be based on religion and beliefs regarding cosmos, ideas about cultural construction of persons, personal relationships between humans and the environment, and diet. Healers often specialize in particular techniques and which specialist is consulted depends on the nature of illness itself.

In terms of religion one's health or ill health can be attributed to one's relationship with the spirit of world of anti-gods (demons) and gods (whether one has satisfied or angered them), the relationship between the deeds of one's past lives and one's present life's predestination (fate), and one's deeds according to Hindu and Buddhist scripture (virtuous or sinful (Hitchcock and Jones 1976; Dietrich 1998; Miller 1979). In this tradition one explains illness in terms of *dharma* (religion) or *karma* (fate), prevents illness by properly attending to ritual, making promises to the gods, giving offerings and doing sacrifice, through prayer, and by following the scripture. Illness is diagnosed and cured by *gyotisis* (astrologers), *guru-purohitis* (priests), or monks through prayers and rituals.

The magical spirit world affects health and can cause illnesses through the network of angry ghosts (spirits of persons who have died in violent or other unnatural deaths), monster-like *bhut-pretis* (spirits), angry gods and anti-gods, and *bokshis* (witches-person who can cast evil spells by performing inverted religious rituals). Illness in this tradition is believed to be caused by "supernatural attacks (*lagu, lagu-bhagu*) resulting from jealousy (especially in the case of witches) or one's having ignored or offended a spirit. Attacks can be in the form of possession or some type of physical harm. Specialists who help to diagnose and cure illness brought on by such attacks are commonly referred to as faith healers including sorcerers (those who can cast and break spells and have the ability to communicate with the spirit world), shamans (those who go into spirit possession trances, can perform exorcism and can act on the behalf of spirits), and mediums or *jannemanche* (those who can act as transmitters between the spirit world and the non spirit world). One study (reference year 1977) estimated the number of various categories of faith healers between 400,000 to 800,000 in Nepal (Shrestha and Lediard, 1980) for a population of Ca. 13 million people, which roughly translates one faith healer for every six households. The number of doctors at the same time was 500, and the number of nurses 334 (Shrestha and Lediard, 1980:34). This figure can itself be taken as an indication of the legitimacy of the tradition. Different research findings (for example, Okada, 1976, Durkin-Longley, 1984, Gellner, 1994) show that even next to the hospital in Kathmandu Valley, traditional healers are many, and in high demand. Diagnosis is done by going into trance, divination, and by inquiring about and observing physical symptoms. Prevention of attack is done through rituals, by providing the individual with an amulet, by being careful not offend spirits or persons suspected of being witches, by keeping a fire lit, by being cautious of persons seen at night and by staying away from haunted places. Treatment is done by chanting mantras and shouting at the spirits to leave the person's body, violent exorcisms by which the patient is burned, frightened and beaten until the spirits flee the patient's body, and by giving offerings and doing sacrifices. The significant role of

local healers has been widely noted (Blustain, 1976, Okada, 1976; Wake, 1976, Stone, 1976) in different parts of Nepal. The majority of sick persons in the rural area, who eventually visit the allopathic healers, consult the traditional healers first as the hierarchy of resort.

Ayurvedic, Homeopathic and Unani Traditions

The ayurvedic medicine is based on the classical Sanskrit medical tradition of 'Ayurveda' (literally "science of life"). This tradition of healing has been practiced in South Asia since ancient times. It bases itself on a well-developed system of physiological characteristics of the ill person, symptoms of illness and detailed pharmacological knowledge of herbs and their processing techniques.

Within the ayurvedic medical tradition a person's body is composed of *prakriti* (the female component of the cosmos which forms the body) and three *dosas* (humors) (wind, bile, and phlegm) which are responsible for all bodily processes. The equilibrium of the *dosas* maintains health and imbalance results in ill health. In this tradition, diseases or disorders are caused by physiological imbalances resulting from poor food habits, environmental changes, and shock to the system. Diagnosis is done by pulse reading, physical examination, and appraisal of symptoms. Disorders are treated with herbal medicines, diet control, lifestyle control, surgery, meditation, and changing one's environment. Many Nepalese believe in its efficacy in the long run, that is, as capable of achieving more permanent healing with no harmful side effects.

The government of Nepal has formally recognized this medical tradition in Nepal. There are several government-affiliated institutions of ayurveda. For example, there is an ayurvedic campus in Kathmandu under the Institute of Medicine, Tribhuvan University, and the Department of Ayurveda in the Ministry of Health, and some recognized health centers and pharmacies. Some ayurvedic practitioners have their own private clinics. Ayurvedic doctors attend the medical schools either in Nepal or in India for a degree in Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery. As early as the mid-eighties it had been estimated that

there were 1500-2000 ayurvedic practitioners in Nepal and 113 government ayurvedic dispensaries (Streenfland, 1985). Most ayurvedic healers in Nepal work within the private domain. Recently, ayurvedic healing in the public sector is performed through one central ayurvedic hospital with 50 beds, one 15-bed zonal hospital, 172, dispensaries in 55 districts, and a central drug-manufacturing unit (MoH, 1997). However, fewer resources are devoted to them than to allopathic medicine.

Homeopathy was introduced in Nepal as early as 1920 as a natural healing system. Homeopathic healing is largely a private sector initiative, which encompasses approximately 500 practitioners and 100 clinics (MoH 1997). Within the public sector, there is only one homeopathic facility with hospitalization facilities for six patients.

The unani healing tradition, with preventive, promotive and curative services, has an extremely limited reach. In addition, the Tibetan healing tradition, acupuncture therapy, Japanese healing cults (Seimeiko), and naturopathy are also practiced in the selected areas of the country.

Allopathic Medical Tradition

This tradition is based on the germ theory of disease and studies of anatomy and physiology. The worldview that has shaped the allopathic medicine is commonly referred to as the mechanistic paradigm⁴. The characteristic of this mechanistic paradigm is the separation of the component part and emphasis on the detail study of it. According to this tradition illhealth, manifested by various signs and symptoms, results from pathological processes in the biochemical function of the body. In this medical tradition health and normality are defined by reference to certain physical and biochemical parameters, such as weight, height, blood pressure, heart rate or visual activity. For each measurement there is a numerical range-the normal value-

⁴ The mechanistic paradigm describes the notion of the body as a machine, disease as the consequence of the breakdown of the machine, and the doctor's task as a repairer to the machine.

within which the individuals are normal and healthy. Above or below these ranges are abnormal condition. This model is the conceptual tool for the analysis of the bodily problem for allopathic medical practitioners in Nepal.

In this tradition, medical treatment is based on the theory that a disease can be carried from person to person, through the air, the blood or bodily secretions or from contact with a septic object or substance. Officially, the allopathic medicine was introduced in Nepal at the end of the nineteenth century when the Bir Hospital was established in Kathmandu. Organized development of allopathic services started in mid-1950s. This system is formally associated with the public health care delivery in Nepal through the Ministry of Health and a number of private offices staffed by physicians, public health professionals, nurses, midwives, health assistants, pharmacists, village health workers, and trained volunteers. Diagnosis are made by the physical examinations, appraising symptoms, taking blood pressure, doing the laboratory test of blood, urine and stool, taking the body temperature, taking X-ray, and doing cathscans. Treatments are given through the injections, medicines, blood transfusion, surgery, and electric shock, bed-rest, recommending changes in behaviors or diets, and physiotherapy. Prevention of diseases and illnesses are done through immunizations, health education and promotion, birth control, dietary restrictions, and an early examination and screening tests. Nepali people have a considerable faith in the technology of allopathic medicine, particularly in injections and antibiotics (Gellner, 1994). A wide range of allopathic medicine manufactured in India and Nepal are freely available without an authorized person's prescriptions. The in-charge of medicine sellers at medical halls (so called pharmacies) who lack any formal training are selling the "prescription only" drugs.

Allopathic medical facilities, pharmaceuticals, and trained personnel, however, are neither reliable nor easily available in rural areas. Almost fifty percent of the country's doctors, most sophisticated and large private nursing homes and hospitals, trained medical professionals, and the health facilities are concentrated in Kathmandu Valley. Government-run health

services provide care unevenly in the countryside; it is remote and inconvenient for allopathic practitioners (Macfarlane, 1994; Pigg, 1995). Maintaining a supply of drugs to remote health posts is a constant problem, as is keeping health posts and district hospitals staffed with trained, active practitioners (Justice, 1986).

In my view, Biomedicine must be seen in the context of capitalist world system. Some of the particular agents of the world system operating in the biomedical sector include international health agencies, foundations, national bilateral aid programs, all multinationals (especially drug firms, medical technology producers and suppliers, polluting and exploiting industrial firms, agribusinesses, commercial baby food suppliers, purveyors of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and seller of population control devices), and a medical cultural hegemony supportive of the activities of these agents on the world scene and in particular nations and locales (Elling, 1981 quoted in Baer et al., 1997). At all levels the state care systems of advanced capitalist nations reproduce the structure of the class relations. The profit making orientation caused allopathic medicine to evolve into a capital-intensive endeavor heavily oriented to high technology, the massive use of drugs and the concentration of services in medical complexes. The state legitimizes the corporate involvement in the health arena and reinforces it through support for medical training and research (Baer et al., 1997).

There are a number of tendencies that are the characteristics of allopathic medical tradition in Nepal. The first tendency is that the locations of medical hospitals and research institutions, allocation of resources are centralized in urban areas. The largest, most prestigious, most specialized and most money consuming curative institutions are located in the large urban centers (Streefland, 1985; Subedi, 2001b). The same applies to the location of institutions where medical knowledge is developed, stored and taught. It is difficult to find medical schools, libraries and research centers outside the larger towns. The politicians and administrators who steer and take decisions regarding the health policy of the country stay in Kathmandu, the

capital city. Similarly, the drugs to be used are generally manufactured in the urban centers or in the rich countries. The ruling elites that control country collaborate with international agencies, foundations and bilateral aid program to determine health policies (Justice, 1986). These elites and the agents they deal with often advocate nationalize and preventive medicine, but their actions favor curative rather than preventative approaches to health care for themselves and even for the lower social strata. This situation clearly shows that the further away people live from the center in physical and / or social distance, the more difficult it becomes to get good quality and sufficient quantity of medical supplies, facilities and staffs (Streefland, 1985). This holds for a peripheral village and for an urban slum. Although for the urban poor health-care institutions and medicines are at a reasonable distance, the costly nature of allopathic medicine plays an important role for not consulting the allopathic medical practitioners.

The second tendency of the allopathic medicine is that in the developing countries like Nepal, allopathic medicine is capitalist and commercial in orientation. Many curative institutions, pharmaceutical companies and medical equipment industries are privately owned. The goal of many medical practitioners is to work privately and earn more money. Profit making is an important consideration in the delivery of health care, and production and sale of drugs and materials. The consequence of such factors is that, broadly speaking, the best services and facilities are available in those places where most people are living and where most wealth is concentrated. For the rural villages it means relatively low numbers of drug sellers and relatively unqualified medical practitioners (Subedi, 2001b). On the other hand, the large demand for curative services create an excellent environment for the activities of unqualified medical practitioners and unlicensed drug sellers.

Factors Influencing Development and Acceptance of Medical Traditions

Different medical traditions in Nepal are co-existing very well. Each tradition has own expertise, especially in certain illnesses. In many cases, the question of which specialist to consult depends on the nature of illness. For example, most of the people seek ayurvedic vaidya or Kaviraj for jaundice, and *dhami-jhankri*, *janne manche*, *jharphuke vaidya* or other local

healers for *lagu* or evil spirits. Minor discomfort, wounds and sores are often treated at homes with foods and herbs; more serious injuries, the hospitals, clinics or health post (allopathic healers) are consulted. But except for this, the larger pattern is not a matter of who consult when, but whom one consult first and why.

People's actual health behavior in situation offering choices is the outcome of the weighing process. Various factors are known to be taken into account. One such factor is the perception which villagers have of health care personnel. This study, has, for instance, made clear that people's performance largely explains why certain healers who belong to the same village and relate to their clients also as kinsmen, neighbors or *afno manche* are often more popular than the healers from outside. Other determining factors are the cost of treatment in relation to what people can afford and to the quality of service they will get. The actual cost of using the services, those of reaching the services, the opportunity cost (loss of money which could have been earned in the same time) all are important in this respect.

Cultural and Historical Forces

People's understanding of the bodily affliction and searching for cure is one of the most powerful forces in maintaining the continued acceptance of any medical traditions. The members of each cultural group have deep rooted beliefs that their own tradition must be useful if not the ideal system for handling the illness recognized by the culture. Many informants say that allopathic medical practitioners have no curative treatment for illnesses caused by ancestors, *bokshi* caused illnesses, *Ajima* and other types of *lagu* illnesses. According to them the *jhakphuke* or *jannemanche* do have such treatments. In particular, since the illhealth is defined some what differently from culture to culture, and certain diseases state reputedly due to supernatural causes including *phut-pret* and *bokshi*, are therefore recognized only by its own members. These types of understandings serve to reinforce the value of the particular medical tradition. Some culture bound syndromes, such as *sarko*,

janaikai, *bokshi bigar* play an important role to continue the existing medical traditions. In the contexts of each culture, certain illness phenomena, particularly in relation to psychological illhealth, are best explained and dealt with within the cultural context of its concept of the universe. Where the cultural concept differs very substantially between the sick individual and the therapist, this will be extremely difficult. Many informants think that they should try to find different types of healers within as well as between the traditions simultaneously, altering or sequentially in the hope that one, if not all, will eventually rid him of their illness.

Most of the patient's version on the relative performance of different healers was varied according to the nature of the culturally perceived diseases and their expertise. For instance, patients with constipation, jaundice or respiratory problems preferred ayurvedic healers due to long term and durable action whereas allopathic drugs relieved them temporarily. According to them, allopathic remedies were mostly effective on accidental injuries. Likewise, *trantric* healers or *jharpuke vaidya* are perceived more effective against *lagu* and *bokshi bigar*. After they consult the varieties of healers with a range of remedial actions, their experience with the relative performances compel them to feel, perceive and value those healers they employed.

Economic Forces

Cost and accessibility of the medical care is an important factor in influencing the choice of a tradition of medical care. In the developing countries like Nepal, where the bulk of people live in poor economic conditions, the cost of specialist medical doctors' fees, pathological test, and medicines are usually beyond their means. The government expenditure on health is generally low. The large numbers of people living in the village remains beyond the reach of this medical sector. When illnesses are minor, most people in Kathmandu Valley seek local healers or take over-the-counter, easily accessible and affordable medicines. Consequently, people often have to depend upon locally available medical facilities which are within their geographical and economic reach. In such areas, locally

available healers and their medications are only forms of cares that are within the economic means of people.

Influence of Other Medical Traditions

If the dominant medical tradition is unable to provide adequately for the care of the population, other medical traditions fill these gaps. If a patient uses a variety of remedy but is unable not recover, he tries to find the alternative therapies or cure the disease. They adapt the behavioral aspect of medical tradition without fully grasping and accepting the theory behind them. They may, in other words, seek them for the purely pragmatic reason that they perceive it as being effective. For example, acupuncture, as an alternative medical tradition became accessible to them via different sources of informants. Most of the patients responded that they approached acupuncture clinics as the final attempt before the death. They were frustrated with a painful life with chronic sufferings. They have spent thousands of rupees and visited a number of medical specialists in the country and "why not once go or experience acupuncture?" were responses of many people.

Finally, procedures employed for diagnosis, treatment or cure in different health care practitioners is closely related to the performance of efficacy. Besides, knowledge and value perceived by healers and patients on physical, mental or spiritual concerns, healers behaviors play the decisive roles, whether patients seek them or not. For example, patients during discussion commented that they prefer kind-hearted, smiling or cheerful, friendly healers who listen to their sufferings. This way, patients search for relatively expert, senior and experienced health professionals. As most of the patient's view, remedy in any way from which could recover them quickly is desirable. And if the remedy reacted with harmful side or after effects they seek other healers, which could help them, recover without such side effects or after effects.

Interaction of Medical Traditions

These different medical traditions do not exist as closed cultural systems. Their practitioners interact with one another in

a variety of ways, and at times they borrow from one another, compete with and oppose each other. They may cooperate with each other in moving patients through particular referral systems. Through such interaction there may develop a certain integration of elements of knowledge from different traditions. Other elements in their traditions and practices may remain insulated and co-exist independently of one another. For example, traditional healers may give modern medicine, faith healers and traditional birth attendants are being trained as village health volunteers and community health leaders, physicians prefer ayurvedic medicine for hepatitis, local ayurvedic healers or herbalists after being unsuccessful in curing a patient refer patients to the hospitals, whereas spiritual healers or shamans condemn beliefs about ghosts and witches as superstitious. Durkin-Longley (1984), in a study of urban Nepal, shows that specific illness ideally are brought to practitioners of one medical traditions; Jaundice (*kamalpitta*) is brought to the ayurvedic doctor, mental illness to the *dhami-jhankris* and *jharpshuke vaidyas*, and accidents to the modern (allopathic) medical practitioners.

Not all systems exist to an equal extent in all parts of Nepal. The local indigenous system exists to a far greater extent in rural areas than either the modern medical or ayurvedic systems do. However, wherever one is in Nepal, there is a pluralistic medical setting in which people must make their health care choice.

Concluding Remarks

A number of studies in Nepal have shown that persons seek different types of healers based on their perception and beliefs regarding the illness problem, which in turn are influenced and defined by their social surroundings and network of relationship. The most widely prevailing medical system in Nepal is faith healing. The fatalistic nature of people play a distinct role in Nepali society, especially when someone in the family suffers from chronic illness, mental illness, or is not able to have even a single child. Hence faith healers or shamans such as *Dhami*, *Jhankri*, *Lama*, *Guruwa* and the like receive wide

public acceptance and play a significant role in meeting the health-care need of the villagers. The patients in the hilly regions of Nepal are more likely to contact "*dhami-jhankri*" first than other health-care providers.

Most patients in Nepal use home remedies and delay seeking professional help. These remedies included the herbal remedies and foods to eat / avoid. If the problem continues, the next resort is a traditional healer. The modern health care services are only sought as a last resort, usually for the serious and persistent problems. This finding also shows that patients who do seek treatment at health facilities use both traditional and modern medicine according to their perception of effectiveness. The point here is that treatment decisions in medically pluralistic settings typical of the developing countries like Nepal are complex. The choice of healers is shaped by a wide range of factors, among them perceptions of efficacy, practical considerations (such as distance), symbolic considerations, the perceived cause of the ailment and whether it is viewed as life threatening, and personal attributes of the patient. This body of research shows that the existence of biomedicine is only as a treatment option. The presence of alternative sources of health care can significantly effect the choice of health care services. It is apparent from this paper that anthropological knowledge and research method have not yet realized their full potential for contributing to contemporary health issues. Thus, in assessing health care service utilization, various factors associated with medical pluralism need to be considered seriously.

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QUANTIFYING "PEOPLES' PARTICIPATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT": A MODEL OF INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR IN NEPAL

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Introduction

The term "Empowerment" has been interpreted as consisting of many levels of interaction. Principally, these characteristics include (a) community dynamics and issues, (b) institutional or organizational aspects, (c) individual and community dynamics and perceptions. For a full understanding of "empowerment", researchers must assess, quantitatively and qualitatively, the various levels of interaction within the construct of empowerment theory. However, this study focuses primarily on the concept of Psychological Empowerment (PE), as a basis for future research into the multi-faceted phenomenon of "empowerment theory". This investigation will determine if the present study concurs with and improves upon previous research. Past research identifies a relationship between the outcome variable (participation) and predictor variables (control), which may help explain patterns of behaviour. The

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qualitative information gathered will allow a certain degree of triangulation in the results from the statistical analyses.

There is a need for further refinement of empowerment theory which would enable researchers to discern those settings in which individuals are empowered or, in some cases, disempowered. The theory could, furthermore, (a) determine which interventions, designed to empower individuals, are effective or ineffective, (b) study the mechanisms or dynamics involved in the empowerment process and though rarely given attention, (c) identify contextual characteristics that may inhibit or promote the development of *Psychological Empowerment* (PE).³ It is clear that empowerment theory lacks a coherent structure and nomenclature to address these multiple levels of analysis.

In the development discourse, empowerment is most frequently used, generically, to refer to raising levels of self-reliance and equity within communities and, in development especially, to ensure long-term sustainability of project objectives.

More specifically, it is described as relating to gender issues, disenfranchised groups, equity, allocation of resources and local institutions. It is apparent that these vague references are often manifestations which evolve out of attempts to implement empowerment at the field level. In fact, empowerment is elusive to define and may apply, variously, to a wide range of activities and people.

Rationale

The main objective of this study is the definition of a relationship between perceived elements of control and actual or measurable behaviour. The method employed in this study replicates some previous research by examining how different measures of perceived control may combine to form a single

construct that distinguishes individuals participating in community organizations and activities at different levels. The study also employs Zimmerman's (1992) "method" of developing meaningful behaviour profiles which combine six measures of participation in community and project organizations

Uphoff (1992) notes that the social sciences have long borrowed from the natural sciences but as Simon (op. cit.) states, a model based on the equivalent of the "laws of motion" no longer seem the best available. Contemporary criticism does not seek to undermine the potential usefulness of previous theories and ways of thinking but only their "reductionist claims to a monopoly of explanatory power" (Uphoff, 1992:388). Social sciences can accept its own theory of relativity or perhaps, social relativity – but accepting it more as the co-existence of "divergent truths" and not concrete fact. That is, however, as long as each truth can be validated within some intelligible frame of reference, some set of coherent concepts and premises and most of all, some compelling purpose that hold these truths together (Ibid., 1992).

Subjective interpretations can shape objective outcomes (Uphoff, 1992:393). This, of course, has to be a fundamental assumption in this study. However, the uncertainty that attends all individual and collective action is not only a matter of lacking enough knowledge about all the actors and all their goals, strategies and resources. Uphoff points out that systems are normally not linear; there are ordered and random influences that interact cumulatively, and may accelerate or cancel out each other's effects. This phenomenon is referred to by Uphoff as a "chaos" within the social patterns identified; a non-linearity that requires caution against the mechanistic or reductionist modeling of social dynamics. As a result, perhaps, what social scientists can derive from current re-thinking in the natural sciences is not a full-blown theory or a set of methods but instead a more appropriate world view. However, this does not preclude the use and need for mechanistic approaches. Rather, the re-thinking in research methods suggests that they be accompanied by many

³ Psychological Empowerment (PE) has been discussed principally in the community psychology literature. Rather than relating to individual human deficit, PE focusses on the positive intrapersonal characteristics (e.g. personal control), which affect an individual's motivation or willingness to engage in voluntary participation (behaviour).

explicit qualifications and should be regarded as tactical exploration rather than as producing strategic conclusions.

Throughout this study, the researcher drew on the strength of the quantitative methodology but was always conscious of the current arguments in this field and the possibility of weakness where qualitative triangulation was not applied. As mentioned in this paper, such triangulation was carried out where it was deemed appropriate. However, the primary focus was on quantitative assessments of behaviour, based on subjective and empirical data; partly because this was an "exploratory" study. There are, of course, weaknesses and strengths in this approach. The primary strength, perhaps, is in this study's exploratory nature itself, which places a limitation on the scope and usefulness of the study. The research results do not claim to reduce the nature of man to fit into a pre-determined set pattern of behaviours. Rather it illuminates areas of probable significance in a dynamic that may characterize community behaviour. Factors that may inhibit or enhance individual and community action are explored and this lends valuable information to future research and policy-makers alike. All projects are or should be considered, experimental by nature, Rondinelli states. In a nonlinear world, blueprints (Tanner, xxxx) can't succeed because the situation is inherently uncertain. This implies an on-going need to address new issues and unexpected and unforeseeable diversions in project plans. However, herein again lies a potential weakness in this study. The notion of probabilities leaves the results of the research wide-open for criticism. This limits the type and scope of comments that can be made about any one finding (discussed further on page 263).

This study has developed "empowerment theory" and has contextualized the model of psychological empowerment (PE) to the development field in Nepal. This, in itself, is a significant step forward in empowerment theory and research. It is hypothesized that (a) a univariate analysis of individual predictor variables (dependent variables) would yield a significant result in predicting the outcome variable (defined as "participation") and, (b) a multi-variate relationship between

these variables would produce a coherent definition of psychological empowerment (defined as an "underlying dimension"). The latter might help to interpret the dynamics and characteristics of the current practice of "popular participation" in the rural regions of Nepal defined in this sample. The results of this study validate the relationship between the outcome and predictor variables (participation and control variables), indicating that there was a significant relationship between the two. Combined variance of the psychological factors of control and certain demographic and socio-political variables, are able to predict the level at which an individual is likely to participate on a scale of low, medium and high participation.

This study drew extensively on prior research in community psychology, social work and recent community development literature, which incorporates "empowerment" as a critical phenomenon of interest. Upon close examination of this literature, it is apparent that significant cognitive and intrapersonal factors are implied in the term "empowerment," which determine certain behaviour. This is especially evident amongst the most poor and powerless, those with little education and little control over resources through which to direct their own destinies. (It is probable that these perceptions are perpetuated even when the physical conditions of their poverty are alleviated). Through the identification of "causal agents" and their relation to behaviour, it was proposed that one could discern how people are motivated or inhibited from engaging in voluntary activities which affect their personal development. Once identified, the dynamic relationship (or process) of psychological factors of *empowerment* and *participation*, could be incorporated into a policy of intervention. This intervention can be identified as "Psychological Empowerment" (PE) and forms the basis of a broader and more coherent "model of empowerment". Such a model would greatly enhance development initiatives by explaining why an individual would or would not take steps to address the negative consequences of poverty.

This study set out to (a) examine certain factors that constitute "empowerment" and its evolution in the development

field, (b) determine factors that encourage voluntary participation in project and community organizations and (c) identify and test the relationship between these factors and participation.

The Method Employed

This study merges the psychological constructs of (a) self-efficacy, (b) motivation to exert control and, (c) perceived skills development, with actual participatory behaviour in individual and collective actions (including individual reliance on community elders or those in positions of authority). This moves beyond the original assertion that "empowerment" was only a psychological state marked by positive perceptions of self-worth or esteem, self-efficacy and an internal locus of control. It includes the latter but goes beyond this into developing an increased sense of control within one's environment - be it the family, organization or community within which one is involved. This has demanded more complex methods of study and the use of multiple intervention points that go beyond the narrow individual level. In addition, the method used allows researchers to examine subjective information relating to "empowerment" by linking self-report data to measurable "behaviour data". While some might argue that this study is not truly "empirical", it does take a step beyond "the subjective" and provides an innovative approach to and possible tool for, the evaluation of empowerment projects in the field.

Sample Definition in Nepal

The sample group used in this study was taken from differing development (hilly) regions of Nepal (Central and Western). This was an attempt to diversify the respondents, within the methodological framework and time/resource boundary of this study. Due to Nepal's exceptionally varied geography and culture, can study in a limited region of the country lend itself to larger conclusions about the whole? The answer relates to the size of the sample that could be used in this study; "too little or too much". Both instances might prove awkward at such an early stage of defining a more coherent

model of empowerment theory. From the perspective of "too much", the areas of the country that were excluded from this study should be mentioned. They would include, most obviously, (a) the High Himalayan range, home to the Sherpas and numerous other tribes, (b) the Far Eastern area of Nepal and, (c) the Terai or plains area. This list of excluded regions does not reflect the countless ethnic groups, scattered across seven levels of mountain ranges of Nepal, which were, necessarily, ignored in this study. There are dwellings on 45 degree slopes and there are those living near the fast-flowing rivers emanating from the glacier ranges. There are those areas where the inhabitants eke out a subsistence living from the fast-eroding slopes of the hill-sides, forcing them to supplement their diet with slugs and frogs. There are those, in comparison, who live at lower altitudes on the prolific flat plains (Terai) near the Indian border. The people of some villages exist with a constant flow of fresh water rushing through their well irrigated fields and flushed sanitation canals, while those on the outskirts of other villages have a tainted well as their only source of water supply. Determination of the areas in which to conduct research in the face of the aforementioned variants, was not easy but was important to the achievement of valid data. Including all the areas of Nepal would obviously not be possible, within the scope of this study. As the sample area grows, the number of additional elements arising, indeed confounding the study of the empowerment equation, would increase to unmanageable numbers, rendering the study impracticable within the time-frame. There was, necessarily, a need to establish the maximum parameter of the sample size. Before addressing this, however, there is the problem at the other extreme, of too small a sample. Diminishing returns are rapidly encountered if research is isolated to one specific project or community. Any result or conclusion that might be gleaned from the study area would be so localized and context-specific as to lend little of value to the concept of extending empowerment theory and contextualizing hypotheses to more general participatory practice in Nepal.

The first consideration, therefore, was to examine the immediate needs of the model, presented in the methodological

section and render sufficient data to address the hypotheses. In addition, a second major consideration was to extend previous studies on empowerment theory, while maintaining consistency with that research. This study, given the sample chosen, does extend previous study into Psychological Empowerment. In accomplishing this, certain variables were added to Zimmerman's model and further sub-hypotheses were developed from an exhaustive search of the literature. The new and old variables were adjusted for contextual specificity. The question at the outset was, therefore, "what sample group would provide the necessary information to test this model and hypotheses, (without overly confounding the results) and would provide data which would be useful to more than a singular part of the population or development process?"

A wider sampling would have provided more variation, thus lending more credibility to the results and would possibly be of greater use. Also, secondary examination of the various communities and projects would lend immeasurable information to the process of piecing together ideas for a "psychological empowerment model". In addition, there could be undoubted value from the research, to existing projects (though these are extraneous to the study at hand). It was acknowledged from the beginning of this study, however, that it would be self-defeating to attempt to make universal statements about all but a specific group (the extant sample) because of the multiplicity of contextual variations that exist. Similarly, it was not the purpose of the work to embark on a study which identified problems or made recommendations for a particular community or project; nor to make conclusions about the behaviour of particular villages. These factors complicated discussion with project staff. Theory is essential and interesting but does not have an immediate benefit for those trying to initiate and maintain various elements in the villages. In working with these experts, there was a constant conflict between the practical and the academic ramifications of the study. However, for the purposes of this study, it was necessary to recognize that the study was fundamentally exploratory for the identification of additional and

significant variables which play a part in a theoretical model of Psychological Empowerment.

In any exploration of a "new" model such as this, a wider sample group, "characteristic" of the region studied, would have been preferred. However, a study such as this could not claim to "characterize" a region of Nepal or the country as a whole, any more than western researchers could hope to characterize North America or Europe or even a moderately large western city. It was considered that as the sample grew, it would have become even more difficult to characterize the behaviour of individuals within that group, due to increasing diversity. The objective, then, was to obtain a suitable sized sample group in order to make a useful model without complicating that model with the introduction of too many confounding factors. By this method, one can create a model which might provide a "characterization" of a given area and which can form a suitable platform upon which future study can expand.

Quantifying Peoples' Participation - The Outcome (Dependent) Variable

The definition of "Participation" was broadened as much as possible. Restricting the study to (a) political participation or (c) community/organizational participation, might have confounded the results of the study by being too narrow. The types of "participation" to be found from community to community varies considerably, thus complicating any narrow classification system for participation. In fact, as the study showed, anomalous readings did arise from those respondents who were involved in project activities versus community activities (see page 222). In addition, the opportunity for participation was often limited in village life. Thus, the broadest scale needs to be employed in order to identify "some" participatory behaviour for each individual interviewed.

In order to obtain the fullest possible measure of participatory behaviour (which is referred to as the Independent variable of this multi-leveled model), six measures of participation were used. Four of these measures denoted actual

participation and two measures denoted a subjective evaluation of the individual's participation in community and project activities. Actual participation includes, (1) the total number of organizations of which the respondents reported being a member, (2) a community check list which allowed for a diverse range of community activities with which the respondent was voluntarily involved, (3) a project check-list which listed a variety of activities in which the respondent has been involved with the project and, (4) leadership positions held in community organizations. Leadership was also included in the project and the community checklist but given a double weight in relation to other items listed (i.e. 2 points instead of 1). The subjective measures used in this study included, (5) the amount of organizational activity that the respondent reported as pertaining to his/her most active organization, (6) the amount of activity the respondent estimated as pertaining to the development project in his/her community. All six categories were combined into an aggregate participation score. The checklists were empirical measures of actual participation but the respondents were also requested to assess their relative participation in both the project activities and their "most active community organization." While the subjective category generally matched the actual reported behaviour of the individual, there were instances where the checklists reflected low actual levels of participation, despite the fact that the individual felt quite active in that organization or project. Some individuals had been active in the past and would, perhaps, be active again. For various reasons, they were not active at the time of this survey and therefore, as it was felt that this would modify the data findings without direct control, the participatory variable was widened to allow a more subjective element of participatory behaviour. In other words, it was considered that a person's subjective assessment of his/her overall behaviour was as important to this study as actual behaviour.

For the purposes of more specific analysis relating to project or community activities separately, the aggregate score could be re-defined by excluding 1 or more of the above categories (i.e. project-related findings may only include categories 3 and 6, above). In these cases, it will be indicated if the aggregate score has been modified.

Finding an Aggregate Participation Score

The first stage in the analysis required finding a useful composite score that represented the "participation" or "behavioural" variable for this experiment. The 6 sub-categories listed above did not, because of their unequal weighting, lend themselves to simple addition of all values. The principal difficulty was that each category of participation was based on an unequal response scale. For instance:

Community Activities	- 20 items maximum (i.e. 20 possible activities)
Project Activities	- 12 items maximum (i.e. 12 possible activities)
Most Active Org.	- 3 item maximum (i.e. not active, active, very active)
Activity in Project	- 3 item maximum (i.e. not active, active, very active)
Leadership Positions	- 0-2 (i.e. 0=no membership, 1=membership, and 2=leadership)
Total Organizations	- Limitless items (i.e. varying according to individual membership)

The community and project activity checklist elicited a response pertaining to actual activities that the respondent was engaged in over the last two years. A score was given based on actual indications of activity (total community = 20 and total project = 12) and fell along a distinct or fixed continuum (respondents varied between 0 - 20 and 0 - 12 possible points, respectively). The number of organizations of which the respondent reported being a member, varied amongst respondents but again, the numbers resolved themselves along a continuum. Organizational activity (in most active organization) was a static number on a 3-point Likert scale indicating perceived involvement in the respondent's most active organization (1 = not very active, 2=somewhat active and 3=very active) and leadership was scored from 0 - 2, ranging from no involvement, to basic membership, to any leadership positions held in voluntary organizations. Given the uneven weighting of these components, it was clear that an aggregate score could not be

developed solely on a summation of the four categories. Those who were high participators in voluntary community activities would clearly dominate all other categories and would not give the widest picture of the total participatory nature of each individual. It was regarded as very important, especially in the context of rural life, where opportunities for participation are low, that the widest possible scope be given to varying types and degrees of participatory activity. These could range from political activity to simple discussion of community life with one's neighbour. It was realized, therefore, that a standardized weighting should be calculated for each category. To accomplish this, an aggregate score was devised based on the Sum of the Standardized Scores (Z-Scores)⁴ for each of the six participation categories. For this study, the score represents the level to which an individual "participates" within various areas of political, economic and social life.

In all project sites visited, participation was based on voluntary activities only (there were no pay or "food-for-work" programmes). It was useful, therefore, to include both participators and non-participators in the projects examined. In every case, individuals were at least "aware" of local projects in their community and in most cases had one other family member who was involved in a project. The "project" was considered another variable amidst several possible intervention points for individuals wishing to participate. In addition, every individual had the opportunity to participate if s/he wished (i.e. no one was excluded from some form of participation).

Table 1, following, provides an illustration of the database categories for the participatory variable. The six categories are standardized and then an aggregate score is calculated (z_{total}). Using the latter total, a cluster analysis can then be performed (cluster), which allocates each individual ($id\#$) to one of three possible participatory levels of activity (low, medium or high).

⁴ $Z = a + b \dots (X-X)$ (where $b =$ an arbitrary constant by which $Z = (X-X)/S$ is multiplied. $a =$ an arbitrary constant to be added to the product.

Table 1: Excerpt from Database

id#	zorg_c	zleader	zorgs_#	zpart_co	zpart_pr	Zorg_p	z_total	cluster
1.00	1.2518	1.4323	1.8303	1.8959	1.2458	1.394	1.51	1
2.00	.48092	1.4323	1.1388	2.0806	1.5269	.4354	1.18	1
3.00	-1.061	-1.017	-.9358	-.8743	-1.003	-.523	-.90	2
4.00	-1.061	-1.017	-.9358	-1.059	-.7222	-.523	-.89	2
5.00	1.2518	1.4323	1.1388	.97252	.96464	1.394	1.19	1

Cluster Analysis

Once a Standardized Score is established for every individual (z_{total}), it is possible to categorize the 218 subject sample into groups. In order to determine the optimal categorization of this sample, lending itself to a reasonable configuration through which an analysis with the predictor variables becomes possible, a cluster analysis was performed. Before running the analysis, however, it was anticipated that the sample would lend itself to a 3-cluster solution. This would allow the study to maintain consistency with previous research on empowerment theory. However, it was not immediately certain that this solution would be appropriate for the present research in Nepal. Ward's method of cluster analysis was used for two reasons: (1) consistency with previous research (Zimmerman, 1992) and (2) because it provides the maximum between-group differences and minimum within-group differences for the classification.

The 3-clusters represent, for the purposes of this study, low, medium and high participators. The sample distribution ($n=218$) resolved itself as Low ($n=92$), M ($n=64$), and H ($n=62$). The use of a 3-cluster solution in this analysis is consistent with previous research (Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988, 1992).

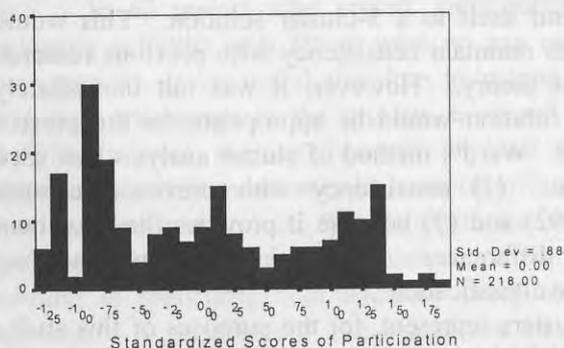
Table 2

Standardized Scores of Total Participation (by 3-Cluster Solution)

Levels of Participation								
LOW			MEDIUM			HIGH		
M	N	%	M	N	%	M	N	%
-.8600	92	42	.0950	64	30	1.178	62	28

Spatially, the cluster appeared to lend itself to a reasonable (theoretically logical) 3-cluster solution (see Chart 1) and statistically logical, because of the significant proximity measures of the first and second and the second and third groups (see Table 3).

Chart 1



It was necessary to provide further statistical justification for using the 3-cluster solution. First, the 3-cluster solution did not represent a perfect distribution above and below the means and therefore, needed to be tested for this reason alone. Second, a bias existed, at the outset of this study, towards using a 3-cluster solution. This was primarily a result of maintaining consistency with previous studies in empowerment theory. Thus, the following univariate analysis of outcome and predictor variables was run on several variations of the cluster solution, in order to confirm a sound 3-cluster solution (i.e. 2-

cluster solutions v.s. 3-cluster solution was generated, as shown below).

Univariate Analysis of 1, 2, and 3-cluster solutions

Each dependent variable used in the following univariate analysis was compared to the (a) 3-cluster solution, (b) (1+2)-3 cluster solution, (c) (1+3)-2 cluster solution and (d) (2+3)-1 cluster solution. This would help verify that the three clusters were statistically logical groupings of the whole sample. For the purposes of this analysis, only variables from the Intrapersonal scales (i.e. personal control, effectiveness, difficulty, benefit, skill and project satisfaction) were tested in this univariate analysis.

Results of the analysis reinforced the validity of a 3-cluster solution, as opposed to using a two-cluster solution (e.g. low and high participation). While a 2-cluster solution of 1+2 - 3 is possible, (statistically stronger), there is little difference between this solution and a 3-cluster solution (i.e. both are very significant). It is valid, therefore, to maintain a 3-cluster solution for consistency with previous research. The following results were found:

Table 4

ANOVA (on multiple clusters) :

Variable (P<.05)	Cluster #	Significance
Personal Control	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0000
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0000
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.7458
	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.0000
Effectiveness	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0005
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0011
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.5596
	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.0003
Difficulty (Men)	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0233
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0061
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.3233
	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.1081
Difficulty (Women)	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0002
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0000
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.1100

	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.0078
Skill Development	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0000
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0000
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.0260
	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.0078
Perceived Benefit	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0016
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0006
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.5833
	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.0077
Project Satisfaction	3 Cluster (1,2,3)	P=.0001
	2 Cluster (1+2 vs. 3)	P=.0001
	2 Cluster (1+3 vs. 2)	P=.7285
	2 Cluster (2+3 vs. 1)	P=.0001

Random Sub-Clusters

In order to test the validity of the overall sample cluster, random sub-clusters were generated and tested for consistency with the overall sample. The solutions for each of the 50% subsamples were very similar. Over all three groups, individuals were 96.6% correctly classified in 3 random sub-samples (selected from the whole sample). Most discrepancies were found in cluster 2 (medium). In the subsample analysis, 3.4% of the sample was placed in cluster 1 (low) but were placed in cluster 2 (medium) in the total sample analysis. These discrepancies had minimal total effect.

The Predictor (Independent) Variables

Three measures of perceived control have been shown in previous research to correlate with the dependent variables. With some modifications in method and size of scale, these variables form the basis of this study:

Personal Control. An 8-item measure of the respondents' sense of personal control in community decision-making was utilized. The measure uses a 7-point Likert scale (7 = strong personal control). Examples of this scale are (1) I have control over decisions that affect my life. (2) I can influence decision that affect my community. (3) I think the more influential people in the community can influence what effects this community.

The variable will expand upon previous research by including not only the respondents perceptions of his/her personal control but his/her perceptions of the community as a

whole (i.e. the community's ability to influence decisions that affect its development).

Perceived Effectiveness. An 11-item measure of the respondents' perceived effectiveness in taking various actions to influence community decisions (e.g. protest demonstrations, writing letters, attending meetings, etc.) was used. This measure also uses a 7-point Likert scale (7 = very effective). Examples of this scale are (1) I'd like to be included when people come to our community to discuss ways of improving things. (2) I don't feel it matters if I attend meetings on social or economic issues effecting this community. (3) I trust the elders of our community to do the right thing and improve our situation all round.

Unlike previous research, the individual's perceptions of the "community's" ability to effect change is also measured, in addition to "personal" effectiveness.

Perceived Difficulty. A 10-item, 7-point Likert scale was used to measure perceived difficulty in solving problems in the community. General and context-specific items will be formulated to address problems in the communities visited. It is important to note that not all communities perceive the same problems. However, the scale must be identical for every community tested. Future research may address this possible deficit in questionnaire construction.

This item includes perceptions of difficulty for the respondent and for others, to resolve certain issues. Unlike previous studies, this study expands on previous research by including aspects of discrimination, prejudice, sexism and other related items which will likely account for a large part of the perceived difficulty of individuals to participate and influence issues relating to themselves and the community. Examples of this scale are: 1. Day-to-day problems are so difficult that I do not feel there is time for schooling. 2. My caste position does not allow me to take certain jobs in my community. 3. I feel that community problems are often so complicated that even informed people can't figure out what should be done about them. Five additional items were added to the scale which will be answered only by women and will relate to gender-specific issues. These items include, for example: 1. If I were a man, I

would be able to raise my position in this community with my own initiative. 2. Even if I were a man, I feel that life is too difficult to raise my status higher.

In addition to the above, three new variables were examined in relation to "participation."

Perceived Benefit. A 10-item, 7-point Likert scale was used to measure perceived benefit from participation in community activities. This scale addresses the motivation of respondents due to the perception of monetary gain. It also addresses time constraints, which may influence an individual's ability to participate. Scale items include: 1. My main reason for participating in community/project activities is the extra money it brings. 2. I wouldn't participate if I wasn't paid. 3. I would like to participate in community projects but I just don't have the free time.

Skills Development (Interactional). The interactional component, (or skills development), has not been tested in previous studies in empowerment theory. However, it was hypothesized that this variable would have a significant impact upon the behavioural component and may account for significant variations in perceived control. Skills development may include some understanding of factors that hinder or enhance one's ability to influence community decisions, as well as decision-making and problem-solving skills and resource mobilization. Through a study in which 15 individual leaders of non-profit organizations were interviewed (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990), it was suggested that these skills are necessary to participate effectively in community decision-making and comprises elements of self-esteem, a sense of causal importance and perceived efficacy. Studies indicate that more highly involved individuals report more benefits of participation - learning new skills, gaining information, helping others, increasing social contact, and fulfilling obligations (Kieffer, 1984; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1989; Prestby *et al.*, 1990). The acquisition of such skills will, it is hypothesized, have an effect on perceived control, which in turn effects social interaction and level of sustained participation.

A 10-item, 7-point Likert scale was used to measure the impact of skills development in project and community activities (at a singular point in time). The purpose of the scale was to assess whether an individual's perceived level of skills development predicts the level at which an individual will participate in community and project activities. It was anticipated that the individual who participates is motivated by a desire to increase his/her skills and/or position in society through participation. Items will include: 1. Since I have participated in community organizations, I have found many new skills that are useful for my everyday life. 2. It is through organization that I have really come to learn new information and skills.

Project Satisfaction. This scale was designed to measure the overall perception of project success and individual and community improvement, as a direct result of project activities in the community. It will contain 10-items on a 7-point Likert scale. Examples of the items include: 1. My status has not changed in this community since the project began. 2. Before the project, I was always looked to for information and guidance. Now, I feel that people don't need my advice as much as before. 3. I always was involved in my community. This project is just another activity.

Demographic Factors

Socio-economic status (SES), age and gender were statistically "controlled" in previous research, because they were evenly distributed across the 3-cluster participatory solution. However, in light of Nepal's unique context, it is hypothesized that gender, caste, ethnicity, SES and age will correlate with the participatory variable. These factors will be analysed individually and in relation to the overall direct and indirect influence they have on the predictor and outcome variables.

Method of Analysis

Multiple Regression

A linear regression determines an equation that will relate values of an observed dependent variable Y to values of a second independent variable X. It determines whether these Y values are related to the X values in a linear relationship, estimating the coefficients of the linear equation. A linear relationship means that

if the Y values are plotted against the X values in a graph, the resulting trend of the plotted points can be represented by a straight line.

It is hypothesized that measures of perceived control may combine to form a single construct that distinguishes individuals participating in activities and organizations. These measures may provide a tool for predicting behaviour based on perceived levels of control, effectiveness, difficulty, skills development, perceived benefit and socio-political factors. It was further hypothesized that all of the predictor variables would significantly predict participation. The combined effect of these variables, then, is expected to be a strong predictor of behaviour, over and above the individual effects of the dependent variables. The degree of variance explained by the predictor variables can be computed and the significant variables in this analysis can be entered into a discriminant function analysis (DFA). in order to classify the three participatory groups by the independent variables.

The individual variables in this study were tested for statistical significance and/or theoretical meaningfulness in a univariate analysis with the "Total Participation" score. The variables that were accepted were then entered into a "step-wise multiple (linear) regression". This process enables the researcher to go beyond the "individual effect" of the predictor variables and observe each variable in relation to the "group effect" of all the predictor variables. The group effect may increase or decrease the level of importance of an individual variable by examining its effect within the group.

The variables that were entered into the step-wise regression include:

Personal Control	Helplessness
Perceived Effectiveness	Chance
Perceived Difficulty (general)	Powerful Others
Perceived Skill Development	External Political Efficacy
Powerlessness	

Demographic Variables

Gender was not equally distributed across the three participatory groups Low=39, Medium=22 and High=17). However the Chi Sq. was not significant in predicting levels of participation ($X^2(2) = .158$). Gender was significant in a univariate analysis with total participation scores ($P=.003$). This indicates that

while it is possible to predict whether an individual is male or female by their participatory score (for this sample), it is not possible to predict where that individual is likely to participate on a 3-tier participation scale, using gender alone. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) is interesting from the perspective of illustrating that women are, in general, low participators. However, it does not assist in developing a more meaningful model which predicts the level at which women are likely to participate. Given that women are low participators (i.e. 50% of women were in the low participation group, compared to only 38% of men) and in view of indirect effects that were apparent in the univariate analyses, gender will be included in the step-wise regression to determine if gender interacts with other variables to predict levels of participation.

The Chi Square analysis for caste was beyond significance where $X^2(3) = .061$. Similar to gender, the univariate analysis was significant ($P=.019$) in predicting caste based on actual scores in participatory activities. Due to the importance of caste in Nepal, a certain degree of flexibility will be allowed in significance levels for caste (significant under .1). Thus, caste and gender will be entered into the step-wise regression with the control and socio-political variables.

The number of years that an individual had lived in a community had a strong correlation with total participation ($P=.01$) and levels of participation ($P=.001$). It was hypothesized by project consultants and determined in this study, that those who had lived longer in a particular community were more likely to be involved in community activities than those who were more recent immigrants. This is apparent due to an individual's awareness of community issues and commitment to change within their community. Thus, the variable that determines how long an individual has lived in a given community will be entered into the regression analysis.

Age was not significant in determining participation or levels of participation. There were some indications that those participating were generally in the mid-range (32-48 years) and that participation declined in the younger and older bracket. However, it was also found that age and gender formed an indirect relationship which predicted participation. When age

was correlated with gender, it was apparent that younger women tended to participate at a higher level than older women (i.e. 15-31). This was surprising since these women are also likely to be married and to have a number of children, which would restrict their time and ability to participate. Thus, while age did not have a significant impact upon the outcome variable (participation), it did appear to relate to gender and thus was considered important to enter into the regression analysis with gender.

SES was not significant ($X^2=.479$) in predicting participation. There did not appear to be any direct or indirect relationships that warranted keeping this variable in the regression analysis.

Demographic Variables Entered into the Regression

Gender	Percentage of Time Lived in Community (PercentR)
Caste	Age
Education (Formal)	

Step-Wise Regression Analysis

All variables listed above were entered into the step-wise regression. Table 1 lists those variables excluded by the analysis and Table 2 lists the variables which were retained by the analysis and the significance of each variable in relation to the group effect.

Table 1: Variables Not Entered Into the Multiple Regression

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Variables not entered into the equation (P<.15)	Control	.087	1.077	.283	.084	.558
	Helplessness	.014	.173	.863	.013	.549
	Powerful Others	.023	.218	.828	.017	.343
	External Pol. Ef	-.060	-.671	.503	-.052	.456
	Age	.092	1.276	.204	-.099	.708

^a Dependent Variable: Participation Clusters (Low, Medium and High)

Table 2 : Variables Entered Into the Multiple Regression

		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Variables entered into the equation (P<.15)	(Constant)	-2.746	.757		-3.627	.000
	Skills Dev.	.423	.065	.490	6.474	.000
	Education	.026	.010	.177	2.509	.013
	Caste Group	.111	.062	.114	1.792	.075
	Powerlessness	.153	.058	.222	2.623	.010
	Effectiveness	.282	.108	.185	2.625	.009
	Chance	-.138	.057	-.190	-2.401	.017
	Gender	.242	.119	.141	2.040	.043
	Difficulty	.121	.075	.134	1.618	.108
	Percent Res.	.003	.002	.105	1.556	.122

^a Dependent Variable: Levels of Participation. * Variables omitted from the analysis are listed in Table 4

The variables selected by the step-wise multiple regression explain 39.1% of the variance in the model (Figure 9). The variables that were selected for the Regression Analysis, included:

Intrapersonal Skill	Socio-Political Powerlessness	Demographic Gender
Effectiveness	Chance	Education
Difficulty		PercentR
		Caste

Discriminant Function Analysis

This statistical technique computes a linear composite of the dependent variables based upon the discriminant function loadings of the individual variables (Tatsuoka, 1971). The linear composite is a theoretical construct that can then be interpreted much like a factor in a factor analytic solution. It is important to point out that the discriminant function algorithm forms one less function than the number of groups included in the analysis (e.g. three groups - low, medium and high participation, for example,

form up to two discriminant functions) and then tests each for statistical significance (Tatsuoka, 1971).

The nine variables listed in Figure 9, above, were entered into the discriminant function and a step-wise process was used to delineate the significant function. One significant function was produced, from eight of the variables, by this method ($P=.000$) and 60.2% of the groups were correctly classified by the eight predictor variables (Table 46). Caste was rejected from the analysis. The significance of the variables accepted in the function are listed in Figure 10.

Variables Significant in the Discriminant Function Analysis

Variables	Significance ($P<.10$)
Skill	.000
Effectiveness	.0083
Difficulty	.0316
Powerlessness	.0068
Chance	.0447
Gender	.0822 *
Education	.0188
Percent Res.	.0338

* Gender was the least significant and contributed little to the overall function.

Table 3

Discriminant Function Results of Group Classification

		Predicted Group Membership			
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	
Actual Group	LOW	Numbers	48	21	5
		%	64.9%	28.4%	6.8%
	MEDIUM	Numbers	15	26	14
		%	27.3%	47.3%	25.5%
	HIGH	Numbers	6	13	38
		%	10.5%	22.8%	66.7%
% of Groups Correctly Classif		%	60.2%		

186 cases were used to form the discriminant function out of the total sample of 218 subjects. 32 cases were omitted from the analysis due to missing data (Figure 11).

Missing Cases in the DFA

Participation	Missing Data
Low	= 18 (19.6%)
Medium	= 9 (14.1%)
High	= 5 (6.5%)

Most of the above subjects were from the low participatory group, which fortunately already comprised the largest group of the sample. Overall, the sample was reduced by 15% for this method (sample size = 186).

Table 3 indicates that the model correctly classified the low and high groups over 64% of the time. The medium participation group, however, was only classified correctly 47% of the time. Those incorrectly classified in group 2 were distributed evenly between group 1 and group 3. This is an improvement on previous study (Zimmerman's group 2 predicted 23% of the time) but indicates that there are still some problems with the model. It may be that the clustering technique used is not adequate to capture the "middle-of-the-road effect" for medium participators. Indeed, the fact that the model only captures 39.1% of variance would indicate that there are variables that have yet to be examined which might further explain participation. In general, it is evident that the combined variance of the intrapersonal variables skill, effectiveness and difficulty, with larger socio-political considerations and demographic variables, are significant predictors of participation in Nepal for the sample chosen.

Outcomes

The variable for Control (dominant in Zimmerman's study) was not significant in this analysis but was very significant in the univariate analysis. This is also to be expected. From a statistical point of view, the multiple analysis is more sensitive to the spread between the variables and will discard those variables which are too closely correlated. In Nepal, it is

possible that "personal" control is not as major a consideration to the resource-poor farmer who struggles to cope with difficult relationships in the community which have resulted from poor education, position in society and lack of control over the resources to influence one's own life. If the ability to influence your own life is out of your grasp, there is little attention paid to personal control. Perception of effectiveness in achieving a task is clearly of great importance and the desire and pursuit of knowledge and skills has been identified, both qualitatively and quantitatively, as very important to the rural population in this sample. Gender is not a strong variable in the discriminant function analysis (dfa) but it appears to help in the classification of the "low" participatory group (contributes approximately 6% to the classification of this group). This is probably because 50% of the sample in this group were women. Overall, gender does not greatly influence the overall classification in the model and could, thus, be omitted from the dfa (without gender, 59.7% is correctly classified, compared with 60.2%).

The statistical findings indicate that perceptions of powerlessness and helplessness in the sample were exceptionally high overall. However, there were clear differences between groups defined by levels of participation and by caste. Those individuals who had improved their station in life through education and skills development had lower mean scores of powerlessness than those who did not have similar opportunities. Similarly, there were differences in mean scores of powerlessness between those who were low status versus those who were higher status, with correspondingly higher levels of perceived control. In general, though, these scores were still very high and indicated that there is an overwhelming perception of "powerlessness" amongst the rural sample despite their relative class and position.

There was no indication that economic status influenced the level at which an individual was likely to participate or the levels of control and skills development they would have. The principal reason for this is probably the type of sample chosen. In general, all the participators in this study could be classified as "resource-poor". Most individuals in this study were earning

under 1000 Rupees (20 US\$) per month and were engaged in agricultural work. While, for the most part, they owned their own land, there was very little disposable income in the villages visited. In fact, there were very few shops where cash could be used to purchase items. Much of the purchasing of goods is carried out through barter and exchange and money is used only for items which have to be brought from outside the area.

Overall, the most important factor in this model was "skills development" as has been hypothesized by various researchers. In general, most of the respondents were aware that they must attain a certain degree of education and skills in order to change their existing situation. In fact, without being prompted, most of the sample stated that they had become involved in community and project activities in the hope of attaining such education. While this is a common phenomenon amongst people, it was also tested for its effect in predicting a respondent's level of participation. Skills development was highly significant in predicting levels of voluntary participation in both community and project activities. That is, those individuals who reported higher levels of perceived skills development were also high participators. Those reporting low levels of perceived skills development were lower participators. This variable accounted for the largest influence in the model, as was hypothesized at the outset of this study.

Therefore, the combined variance of effectiveness, difficulty, skills development, chance, powerlessness, education, gender, and length of time spent in a community, form an underlying function that may be termed Psychological Empowerment (PE). The resulting function formed by these variables is extremely powerful (60.2% accuracy) in predicting levels of peoples' participation.

Project versus Community Effects

Throughout the analysis phase of this research, there were continual reminders that people behaved differently when faced with opportunities to participate in external projects. That is, the variables that are used to predict voluntary participation in community activities, do not always apply to project activities or

at the least, are not as strong predictors. This was true of the variables in univariate tests. For example, control variables such as “personal control, effectiveness and difficulty did not have as strong an effect on project participation, as Table 4, below, suggests.

Table 4

Univariate Analysis by Levels

Project			
Community	Control	Effectiveness	Difficulty
	0	0	0

It is apparent that the variables used in this study are stronger for “normal” community-related activities than for “aberrations”, such as externally-driven projects. This observation is not a new one, however it is an important one for future research that is aimed at focusing empowerment research in development activities. In particular, the question of how projects relate and interact with communities is paramount. Do the activities generated by “empowerment/participatory” projects carry over to community activities? It is apparent from this research that people enter into “contracts” with the project for very different reasons from what they would in their community organizations. Expectations are different and the effects of activities and more importantly, results, are critical to an individual. Future research must keep in mind these inherent differences no matter what region is under exploration. It is particularly important in Nepal because of the findings that certain variables, related to “fatalism”, are influential. That is, the resource poor in this study demonstrate a high degree of powerlessness and belief in chance or luck, which is in keeping with both Bista’s (1992) findings and with the general assumptions about the Hindu culture.

Personal Control and Project Satisfaction

While personal control was a strong predictor by itself, it was not included in the overall model when related to other, more effectual, variables. The variables of control, effectiveness and difficulty did not combine in any manner to form a significant discriminant function that determined participation in project activities. Skills development was the strongest variable and was significant in both community and project participation. This is also in keeping with qualitative findings which indicated that 90% of the respondents joined a project in order to pursue knowledge and skills. Overall, there was a very high perception that there was benefit in participation, particularly in project activities. Individuals perceiving higher gains in skill, through participation, are more likely to participate in community and project activities. In addition, those who are participating and learning new skills are more likely to perceive higher benefits from that participation and will continue to pursue involvement in voluntary activities. The fact that control did not figure prominently in the overall model may be due to the “dampening” effect of the project activities. It was indicated in the univariate analysis that control was a factor in community-related activities but was not a strong predictor in project-related activities. This may be the reason why personal control was not a factor and difficulty was a relatively weak predictor in the overall model (total participation). If the intrapersonal variables (personal control, effectiveness and skills development) are entered into a discriminant function for community and project activities separately, it becomes apparent that these variables do not form a significant function for predicting project participators but form one function of at least two of the variables for community participators. The latter function is strongest between control and difficulty, which predicts individual participation levels in community activities 48% accurately. This would indicate that “personal control” (and faith in one’s elders to effect change), perceived effectiveness and difficulty, is a stronger predictor of

an individual's level of participation in community-related activities.⁵

The variable "project satisfaction" was not included in the overall analysis because it was designed for a specific type of activity (i.e. project participation). However, some of the items in the project satisfaction scale might be useful in exploring changes in people's perceptions as a direct result of the project and how this affects actual behaviour in community activities. This would be an important area for future empowerment research, focusing on project activities, characteristics and impact. For the purposes of exploring project behaviour, project satisfaction could be included in the multiple regression. However, it is uncertain what effect this variable would have in relation to other variables affecting behaviour in community activities. For instance, 17% of the sample was not involved in project activities, which would affect two aspects: (a) it would reduce the overall size of the sample tested and (b) it would compare two distinct groups using different combinations of variables (i.e. project satisfaction is not included in a multiple analysis with community participation). Therefore, while limited comparative comments could be made about the overall "model-fit" to project and community activities separately, these must be limited in view of the sample and variables entered into the equation.

Contextualizing a Western Model

There are two important elements to keep in mind whilst investigating the concept of empowerment. Firstly, Nepal has only recently emerged from a regimented system of social class. Secondly, projects which facilitate empowerment in Nepal are often doing so within a Western framework of "individualism and independence-building". This is the nature of empowerment in the West. However, as Stone (1985) and others have pointed out, there is strong evidence of "inter-dependence" in Nepal and a need by the individual to structure his/her behaviour within a

highly elaborate social framework. This study also set out with an agenda to test Western-oriented notions about empowerment within a Nepali context. However, additional variables were included in the analysis which were contextually specific and sought to investigate certain aspects of Nepali culture. The findings of this study indicate that these factors were very important in Nepal. In addition, the variables demonstrated that "personal control", while very important in the Western context, is not as significant in the Nepali sample investigated. At least, one can say that the importance of personal control is diminished in relation to other variables investigated. The overall pattern of the model is in keeping with the hypotheses made about the Nepal context. The importance of caste, while not seen as critical to influencing behaviour, is clearly dominant through the control of education systems and influence and in the creation of a general environment of helplessness. However, at the social level investigated in this study, (i.e. the resource-poor farmer), it is clear that other elements of empowerment are more dominant. Resource-poor farmers are generally disempowered and powerless to make change in their environment. This sentiment was shared by an overwhelming proportion of the sample investigated (Mean=5.6, on a 7-point Likert scale). Personal elements of control and effectiveness are perceived quite differently by the resource-poor in this sample and the overall effect of control, related to Western notions of empowerment, are not very strong within the framework of external projects.

Conclusion

While it is important to lay a foundation of empowerment theory that explains the relationship of behaviour to psychological elements of control, quantitative modeling will never illustrate the entire story. Future models will continue to improve the accuracy of subsequent models but it is unlikely that they will ever provide the complete picture. Thus, while there is a relationship of multiple variables of control in relation to behaviour emerging, new techniques will need to be developed which triangulate existing data in order to provide a fuller illustration, perhaps using a combination of

⁵ The three variables, together, do not form a single underlying function. Control and difficulty form a strong predictor of participation in "community" activities only.

qualitative/quantitative and empirical methods. Nonetheless, it is hypothesized in this study that the variables used would help to classify correctly more than 60% of the subjects interviewed; a significant improvement on previous research.⁶

Uphoff (1992) points out the "chaos" in social, behavioural patterns studied and hence, would likely describe the results of this study as merely an approximation or probability of behaviour; how an individual is likely to act is, as described in the body of this research, based on perceptions and values. These dispositions to one end of a "likelihood scale" or the other, are like probability distributions. For some, they are normal curves and for others, they are skewed towards one side or the other, in spite of or because of what else is going on in one's environment (Uphoff, 1992:338). Uphoff stated that "people seldom act without thinking about what others are likely to do or think" (Ibid: 339). To this end, one could say that our decisions and actions are based both on what values we give most weight to and on others' values; acting, therefore, within a convoluted network of preferences, anticipations and adjustments.⁷ Thus, the argument could be taken farther on the individual level and to suggest that we never know how much of our behaviour is really "ours" and what is due to the actions and statements of others. A model of individual behaviour, therefore, may well be cautious to claim indisputable rights to exact predictability or to the isolation of an individual from his/her society/community.

As indicated in the statistical analysis, there is sufficient evidence to validate this model of empowerment, although there are certain identified limitations. Within the parameters of this study, however, the predicted combined measures of control did correlate positively with behaviour. While there were discrepancies between project and community activities, the overall assessment of the model was sustained. While personal

⁶ Zimmerman (1992) - 43% correctly classified, using 3 measures of perceived control.

⁷ Munro (1928:4) observed that "even as every molecule of physical matter is conditioned and directed by those with which it interacts, so the individual citizen is similarly motivated and controlled by the influence of those with whom s/he associates.

control did not have a significant influence in the overall model, it was significant in univariate tests. Perceived effectiveness and difficulty were, statistically, very significant and contributed to the overall model.

It is probable that Psychological Empowerment modeling can be developed and used as a means to predict and evaluate participation at any one point in the empowerment process, or across the entire time-frame of a project cycle, in order to assess the overall nature and evolution of the process itself. At present, there are limited reliable or tested means by which this can be accomplished in "subjective" project planning and implementation. With the evolution from strict "blue-print" guidelines for project implementation (in which "rigidity" does not allow for flexible project planning and hence, tools), "to a more "process-oriented" approach, developing tools to monitor and evaluate every step within the project framework, becomes ever more important (Tanner, 2001). PE may provide one such means to aid project implementation and guide development policy. In addition, specific groups of the population can be targeted for programmes which are designed to their specific needs and the effects of those programmes could be measured.

Scientific-style research can not offer complete explanations for the sources of dynamic and change within social relations. The ultimate questions in a study such as this one, as to where ideas, values and idealism, altruism and cooperation, come from are, perhaps, beyond scientific reach. As Uphoff states, they have elements of both randomness and order, much the way market [commodity] price patterns or political conditions have. How individuals relate to their community and vice versa will create a cause and effect relationship which create outcomes that are both predictable and indeterminate. However, they are not completely random. If they were, there would be no point in acting purposefully and no point in studying the area. Perhaps, therefore, the best that one can hope for is to understand the dynamics of behaviour within the limited framework of the "new (social) science" (Tanner, 2001:161). We accept the inherent "chaos" (Uphoff, 1992) in the patterns studied and attempt to apply qualitative and quantitative approaches to triangulate an approximation or probability of behaviour.

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CORRUPTION: A PSYCHOSOCIAL ISSUE

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Introduction

The word corruption is very universal. Today social researchers are indulging to deal corruption in their own ways. Especially, psychologists argue that nice and clean man may change his or her behaviour on the basis of social and family pressures and circumstances. American psychologist, David G. Myers (1994) has stressed in his book entitled "Exploring social psychology" that nice people also become corrupted through excessive social pressures. Basically, in developing countries like Nepal, the people are always trying to accumulate money and want to be rich persons by different means. In day -to day practice, family members begin to put pressure on the nice and clean service man to get money by any means. Actually, such types of daily pressures of the family may disturb the mental balance of government and non-governmental personnel. In fact, in every aspect of life the man is negatively imitating others behaviors in different way of actions like marriage ceremony, thread wearing ceremony, birthday, construction of huge buildings, purchasing lands, cars, diamonds, gold etc.

Corruption is an antisocial activity, which is learnt through nastiest parenting. Effective parenting by implication,

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aims at primarily the best type family climate for a congenial socialization of the individual, as well as, a healthy development of his or her personality and self. Every one's personality is the creation of his or her family. Family provides a frame – work within which human being may find roots, continuity and sense of belonging. Parents serve as the first socializing agents. Especially, sound family environment always persists disciplines, moral and obedience lessons. Mainly, such diversified effective lessons impart good manner, corruption free mind, and acquired integrated personality. At the same time, it is essential to say that psychosocial approach is purely interlinked with social behavioral phenomena and which is product of society. So, in this article I have managed to deal various disciplines pertaining to corruption. Basically, man is influenced by various factors and those factors disturb his entire personality. Consequently, he or she may be diverted towards wrong path.

Corruption is a major obstacle to development .It undermines democracy and destroys the credibility of government. Effective democracy requires a comprehensive attack on corruption as a factor of social disintegration and distortion of the economic system that undermines the legitimacy of political institutions. Transparency International has done exceptionally remarkable work in creating worldwide awareness about the dangerous implication of the growing menace of corruption, especially for billions of people living in developing countries.

Corruption in Nepal is so rampant that in spite of many efforts to reduce it, it exists at all levels of public bureaucracy. This is really a great challenge to the campaign of national development (Administrative Reform Commission's Report, 1975-76). Basically, right from the inception of Rana rule in Nepal, public servants had become bold enough to collect and save the money any how for the personal use of the Ranas, their immediate bosses and themselves. The proverb “ one who takes honey out of the beehive, licks his hand” also became popular and it boosted up their courage to gain some personal privilege from their respective positions in civil service (Poudyal, 1984). This psychological encouragement was also supported by the

fact that the large amount of such undue goods and services used to go directly to their respective masters. Because of all these reasons, the noble sermon (or the Dinya Upadesh) of Prithibi Narayan Shah, the founder of modern Nepal, was undermined and violated right from that period, though the words of the sermon regarded both the bribe –receiver and bribe – offerer as enemy of the nation. Now they are thrown into the dustbin of history leaving a legacy of protected type of corruption and institutionalization of all sorts of malpractices. As a result, social status remained only on the money and power irrespective of its source. People with black money gained power and emerged as elites of the nation. This situation also gave a positive chance for the emergence of wing of contractors and sub –contractors within the institutionalized pattern of corruption in Nepal.

Studies have shown that a very open economy is significantly associated with lower corruption. An economist, Paolo Mauro (1997) introduces a research article on “Why worry about corruption?” in the Economic issues Series. In that article he stresses that when civil service pay is too low, civil servants may be obliged to use their positions to collect bribes as a way of making ends meet.

HMG has initiated important steps towards good governance and corruption control in this fiscal year. The government is committed to prepare a Comprehensive Anti Corruption Strategy and its implementation for corruption control in the next fiscal year. The strategy regarding the corruption eradication had to be prepared and implemented by mid-October 2002 (Public Statement on Income and Expenditure on the Fiscal year 2002-2003, His Majesty's Government, Ministry of Finance, Bagdarbar, Kathmandu, Nepal).

Recently, (2002 year) Upadhaya introduces an article on “A fight for corruption control in Nepal” in the Journal of the Nepal Administrative Staff College. In that article he remarks that in the case of Nepal although people may have the temptation to flout the law for their political gain, if the law is implemented rather sternly it may be difficult in the initial period but in the long run that gets settled and the politics gets its own course of action. Furthermore, there is necessary to make a law

that requires a person to declare the legal source of the wealth acquired by him. Such strategy will greatly contribute to the fight for controlling corruption. In this subject, Chief Commissioner presents following figure, which shows the involvement and relationship of diversified agencies pertaining to corruption control.



Figure 1. Relationship of Ministries, departments and semi-government agencies in corruption control (Adapted from Upadhyay, S.N., A fight for corruption control in Nepal, Administration and Management Review, Volume 14, No.1, 2002, Nepal Administrative Staff College, Jawalakhel, Lalitpur Nepal).

Ghimire, H. (2001) has recently introduced an article on Pro-poor governance as good governance in Kathmandu Post. He states that the government is, of course not bad in everything.

But, it is suffering from a bad image among the public. A recent survey of NGO postulates that people see corruption thriving under political protection. As high as 84 percent of the survey respondents were pessimistic about the possibility of corruption control. They do not even file a complaint against corrupt behaviour, as no remedy would be available.

Particularly, poor societies with heavy state intervention and regulations create numerous monopoly rents with discretionary powers bestowed on government officials. Some economists have come up with a simple equation placing corruption, C, as a function of monopoly (M), discretion (D) and accountability (A): $C = M + D - A$. This demonstrates clearly how corruption exists in an environment where a state organization has monopoly power over the distribution of goods, discretion to decide who receives them and is not accountable for its actions (Wagle, 1998).

Nepalese administration is characterized by different kinds of pathological traits such as the pathology of persistence, pathology of conservatism, pathology of growth, pathology of status, pathology of self-service, pathology of buck-passing, pathology of delay, pathology of nepotism and favoritism and pathology of corruption. The existence of these bureau-pathologies have been recognized the major reasons that impede public bureaucracy on its developmental role. Poudyal, (1986) stresses that corrupt environment of the country has been one of the major reasons for the existence of the pathology of corruption. Pervasiveness of corruption in Nepalese society has not left any circle untouched from below to top levels. It is moreover institutionalized and has been accepted as mode of life. At the same time people within the country do not bother about the source and nature of income, they worship money and all are behind it. Because of this corrupt environment, developmental undertakings of the country are facing lot of problems and the bureaucracy is caught within the corrupt circle.

Chiefly, to secure an efficient civil service, it is essential to protect it from political and personal influences. In countries where this principle has been neglected, and the spoils system has taken its place, an inefficient and disorganized civil service

has been the inevitable result and corruption has been out of control. It is a leading hindrance to progress. It deteriorates democracy and destroys the creditability of government. Effectual democracy requires an abundance attack on corruption as a factor of social disintegration and distortion of the economic system that undermines the legitimacy of political institutions. Recently the government of Nepal has formulated governance reforms policy. Some of such envisioned reforms are anti corruption measures, reform management and capacity building, improvement in the overall efficiency of the civil service, enhancing competence and motivation of civil servants and performance improvement in key ministries. In the new program of anti corruption, the government aims at strengthening the legal framework for combating corruption through the involvement of civil society.

Corruption Scenarios of Developed and Developing Countries

Even the economic development of the country is severely handicapped by an inadequate, inefficient and ill maintained infrastructure whose functioning is hampered by indescribable malpractices (Sriwastava, 2001). Sriwastava further adds that correction process must therefore begin at the topmost political and administrative levels.

There is corruption in developed countries as well but, in relative terms, it is marginal and it does not affect the day-to-day life of the common people. In developing countries, corruption is pervasive and frustrates all efforts to provide relief to many millions of common people who, even today, are suffering from abysmal and degrading poverty. The International Herald Tribune (1999) states the relevant pictures of developing countries. Tribune further adds that among the 4.4 billion people in developing countries around the world, three-fifth live in communities lacking basic sanitation; one-third go without safe drinking water; one-quarter lack adequate housing, one-fifth are undernourished, and 1.3 billion live on less than \$ 1 a day.

In 1999 Transparency International carried out a Survey of as many as 99 countries spread over five continents. On the

basis of this survey, the 1999 Transparency International Corruption Perception Index (CPI) was published. At the top of this index table is Denmark, which has the distinction of being regarded as the most honest country in the world. At the bottom of the table is Cameroon that is assessed being the most corrupt country of the world.

The problem of governance presents itself in many forms both as a social pathology and as outcomes, creating anxiety in all responsible quarters about the future of the nation. Corruption driving strong of avarice and myopic quest for personal power knows no ideology, nor does it recognize any religion, language, ethnicity or constitutional system. It can be regulated, contained and controlled only by a sense of social responsibility (Pandey, D. R., 2001). Many social researchers have urged that anti-corruption laws and offices alone will not be able to cope with corruption. In the democratic environment "Corruption culture" is widely exercised in different forms of action and social behaviour. Psychologically, man is always imitating others pomp and show behaviours. Actually, such behaviors demand illegal way of thoughts and it disturbs mental balance of the individual. Consequently, the man drives toward illegal path. Especially, for controlling such types of behaviour the family members must follow the moral proverb "Cut your coat according to your cloth" and never insist to the elders for necessities and demands.

Public Servant and Corruption Practice

Mere receipt of money by a public servant raises the presumption of illegal gratification, which in plain words is bribery and corruption. It is not necessary that such a payment should be definitely concerned to a particular case or contract or a positive or identifiable favour done. Personnel expert, Mahshukhani (1979) focuses that a public servant is expected to be a cautious man. He or she must conduct in a manner so as not to create traps or suspicious situations. In the context of corruption, The New Encyclopedia Britannica (1997) states that corruption, the act of promising, or agreeing to receive money or some other thing of value with the corrupt aim of influencing a

public official duty. When money has been offered or promised in exchange for a corrupt act, the official involved need not actually accomplish that act of the offense of bribery to be complete.

Personnel management expert has emphasized that a civil society must prevent itself from getting accustomed to poor governance. The major barriers to good governance are the bloated size of the career bureaucracy, lower productivity, poor accountability, transparency and integrity. It is said that governance can be seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanism, process and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. "Governance" is a continuum, and not necessarily unidirectional: it does not automatically improve over time. It is a plant that needs constant tending. Like democracy, governance remains particularly difficult to operate. Actually, Good governance possesses diversified features i.e. transparency, accountability, public sector management etc. Nepalese management researchers pinpoint that good governance without good bureaucracy will remain a myth.

Due to the rampant corruption in Nepal, the socio-economic and political system of the country is heavily deteriorated. Psychologically, government must impart awareness-building lessons to the general public as presenting the diversified pictures of developed and developing countries as referring their success in various disciplines. Also government must disseminate its policies regarding corruption and publish those events to the general people through different media. Transparency International Nepal stresses that a corrupt man cannot be a democrat, a leader and a parliamentarian. Accordingly, corrupted persons should be expelled and socially boycotted. Regmi, (2001) has introduced book entitled "Firing Corruption" in his book he has stressed about the prevailing irregularities or corruption in government offices. Primarily, to secure an efficient civil service, it is essential to protect it from political and personal influences.

Tactics of Controlling Corruption

In Nepalese context, Transparency International Nepal is running various multidimensional programs and tactics pertaining to corruption control. In this course of actions, it combats in all forms at national and international levels through advocacy, civic pressure, professional interaction and awareness building. Some other objectives that regularly covers like discouraging abuse of public posts and authority for personal interests and motivating movements for an active role against corruption.

Yet the government undertook several measures that corrected the distortions in the economy and social structure. In the context of corruption, the daily English, Space Time Today has remarked that if Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) is indeed to play its designated role to popular expectations by really punishing the corrupt and guilty, some fundamental rethinking will have to be done. The CIAA has at its disposal to carry out its duties is inadequate to curb corruption. Corruption, lack of character, incompetence and abuse of authority have remained some of the glaring trademarks of too many of those in the country's public life. This has to be corrected. But, ambiguities surrounding some of the laws for dealing with such personages as well as the absence of an effective authority to check wrong doing at high places has, in fact resulted in widespread disillusionment with the country's democratic polity itself. Beyond this, the all pervasiveness of corruption has pre-empted the aspirations of the people to move forward to a better quality of life. The country has made too little progress in all fronts. Developments efforts have been moving at too slow a pace to meet the minimum expectations of the people. Anti corruption efforts have remained merely a convenient slogan, which people have come to view as not even amusing. All this obviously has to be straightened out. This will not be possible until every body, particularly the high and the mighty in public life, are made accountable to the laws of the land.

Despite frequent assertions of intent by political leaders, Nepal has yet to develop an effective anti-corruption agenda. All of these deficiencies, particularly the absence of effective institutional arrangements to enforce accountability, together with the incentives for short-lived governments to maximize personal gains as quickly

as possible have created a fertile environment for corruption. Although there is little statistical evidence to conclusively prove whether corruption in Nepal has increased or not, there are enough examples to indicate the frequency of its incidence and how widespread the problem is (Nepal Public Expenditure Review, Document of the World Bank, 2000).

Conclusion

Psychologists advocate that good and dirt free man may modify his or her behaviour on the basis of community and family pressures and situations and consequently he or she may pursue the wrong path. Social scientists argue that such kind of people also get corrupted through unnecessary social pressures. In principal, the developing countries like Nepal, people always try to collect cash and want to be wealthy person by unusual way. Psychologically, family members initiate the nice and spotless man as compelling to obtain currency by any means. In fact, such types of day-by-day pressures of the family may upset the mental equilibrium of general man or government and non-governmental personnel.

Corruption is an unfriendly doings, which is learnt through worst parenting. Effective parenting by implication aims at primarily the best type family environment for a friendly socialization of the individual, as well as, a healthy growth of his or her personality. At the same time it is necessary to say that psychosocial approach is purely interlinked with social behavioral phenomena and it is the product of society. Primarily, man is influenced by diverse factors and these factors upset his entire personality.

Nepalese administration, is characterized by different kinds of pathological traits such as the pathology of persistence, pathology of conservatism, pathology of growth, pathology of status, pathology of self-service, pathology of buck-passing, pathology of delay, pathology of nepotism and favoritism and pathology of corruption. The existence of these bureau-pathologies have been recognized the major reasons that hamper public bureaucracy on its developmental role. Psychologically, government and non-governmental organizations must impart awareness-building programs pertaining to corruption control.

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NGO/INGO CENTERED APPROACH: AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Harihar Ghimire*

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a social organization motivated to work in sectors like religion, socio-cultural, economic, educational, environment, women, children, etc, irrespective of any political ideology and belief. It is a non-profit social institution established formally after registering at the Chief District Officer's office and affiliated with the Social Welfare Council (SWC) to work for the socially and economically backward people. In other words, apart from those governmental institutions working collectively for any social works, other organizations and institutions registered formally and lawfully at the government offices and which get renewed every year in district administration office are known as NGOs. These are voluntary, non-profitable, service oriented, and autonomous organizations. The objectives, thoughts and visions of these organizations may vary as per the targeted areas and their areas of concern.

In different countries various terms are used for NGOs, such as private voluntary organizations in the United States, civil organizations in Latin America, voluntary development organizations in Africa and peoples' organizations in some parts of Asia. The World Bank treats them as private or voluntary organizations. These different terminologies denote what is referred to as NGOs in Nepal. The Social Welfare Council

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(SWC) and NGOs Federation are the NGOs' apex bodies in Nepal.

Any organization that is registered in any country as per its rules and regulations is known as international non-governmental organization (INGO). According to the resolution No. 288(x) passed on February 27, 1950 by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, those organizations not organized or inter-related through treaties are known as INGOS. The article 1 of the draft bill for international non-governmental organization treaty of the Union of International Association has pointed out the following characteristics of the INGOS:

- a) Not having any objective of economic benefit,
- b) Recognized at least by one nation,
- c) To be an international forum,

The members of the INGOS might consist of individuals or national social organizations. The Prospectus/Constitution of the INGOS at the time of registration becomes the major guideline or directive for work. The INGOS do not become the subject of international law nor do their prospectuses or constitutions become formulated through international treaties. But, these organizations become the subject of national law. The INGOS can keep tangible and intangible assets and become the party in any judiciary agencies. In some countries like Belgium, the special laws and acts govern the formal status while in countries like England and France simple laws and acts govern the formal status included in references (Ghimire, 2001). The World Bank defines NGOs as "a wide variety of groups and institutions that are entirely or largely independent of governments, and characterized primarily by humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial objectives"

Globalization and development can be sustainable and beneficial to the people only if it is growing below as a process from inside to outside, based on principles of cooperation and complementarily, rather than imposed from outside and based on the relationship of dominance and competition. Such an inclusive process of globalization will not juxtapose the macro with the micro, local with the national and the material with the spiritual.

Democracy, nevertheless, is only a necessary and not a sufficient condition for people focused development. This is because democracy, like the market, provides opportunity mainly to the socially strong and economically rich. The weak and the poor need to organize themselves for solidarity and collective action for betterment of their own opportunities and scope of action. This is where the NGOs/INGOs can play a catalytic role (Acharya, 1997).

Likewise, the experience of the 20th century indicates that the state intervention cannot play positive and efficient role all over the nation. But, it could play positive and efficient role only in certain spheres of development initiatives. In the state centered approach, the process of development goes like this - macro policy making, rules and regulation, formation and promotion of necessary social and physical infrastructure are the most appropriate spheres for state intervention. But, modern states, with a vast and rigid bureaucracy, are hardly capable of micro-policy reforms and power sharing. Further, states are often captured by the powerful and the wealthy and should maintain a political balance among various interest groups. Likewise, the market-centered approach provides opportunity mainly to socially strong and economically rich. Therefore, decision-making must be shifted from the state and the market to the people.

People's participation and empowerment of the people to control their own destinies should be the primary objective of development. This is possible only in NGO/INGO centered approach. This approach puts people at the center of the development efforts.

Ghimire (2001) has pointed out the following distinguished features of NGOs/INGOs:

- a) Participatory planning: the local people are made to participate in the planning process right from formulating, to implementation and monitoring. It is thus participatory in nature.
- b) Financial and technical assistance: they provide financial and technical assistance to the people.

- c) Development by the people and for the people: the programs are not directly implemented from the top level. The local people are also involved in various processes of the programs. The local people develop their own plans rather than other agents deciding on their needs.
- d) Mass mobilization and creating awareness: all plans and programs are based on the involvement of the total mass. This process of involving the masses is effective in getting the results as awareness programs are also launched side by side.
- e) People as an active and responsible agent of development: the local people get the feeling that they have to be involved in their programs as they are the ones to get the maximum benefit out of it. Hence, they feel more responsible and act as an active actor of development.
- f) Income generation and empowerment: various income generating and empowerment programs are launched through NGOs/INGOs. All the people are involved in some development activities so that they can perform sustainable economic activities. For this to be effective, empowerment programs have to be meaningful and powerful tools for development. The local people are involved in the income generating activities by forming groups and users' groups.
- g) Lacks long time perspective and low area coverage: the weak aspect of NGO/INGO programs is that they are usually for short term and cover only a small area. Most of the programs are stopped in the middle and all the investment in it becomes useless and less effective. It also does not help develop all areas of the country.
- h) Welfare, basic human need and sustainability: the basic features or characteristics of NGOs/INGOs is that they focus on human welfare and basic needs. They work as non profit organizations and thus can be said to be of welfare motive. When the programs are handed over to the community after a lot of guidance and trainings, the

programs seem to be sustainable and well functioned and people seem to take the responsibility of sustaining the programs as they are the ones who get the maximum benefit.

- i) Priorities in rural area, remote area, poor, disabled and women: another distinguishing feature of NGOs/INGOs is that they work for the poor and people living in remote and rural areas and who are unable to improve their living standard. Disabled and people who are looked down upon by the society and government are the focus of NGOs/INGOs.

Government attempts at social mobilization in many developing countries attempted during the 1980s have mostly been a failure because they are top-down, service delivery oriented and often elite dominated. Cooperatives are an excellent example in this context. Further, such groups are not sustainable because they are organized in the first place for efficient delivery of services and not for self-help and self-development of the people. Capacity and efficiency in social mobilization is the greatest advantage the NGOs have. Many governments and donors are looking at the NGOs as a "means of getting benefits more directly and cheaply to the poor than governments have been able to accomplish on their own" (Korten, 1987).

INGOs/NGOs have been able to start from a small scale and expanding the scope of their activities slowly. NGOs/INGOs put people at the centre of the development discourse. Specially, they focus on poor, deprived women, children, marginalized groups etc. and their neat sectors are agriculture, health, education, environment etc.

NGOs in Nepal

The concept of NGOs is not new to the Nepalese people. Ancient social institutions like Guthi, Dhikuti, Parma, Dharmabhakari, Murdaguthi, Pujaguthi, Pati, Pauwa, Kuwa Rotating credit associations or self-help banks were run by different communities. Pati, Pauwa- a cottage was built by the local community with trees planted for shade which provided rest for tired travellers. Kuwa- wells were dug by the community

for drinking water. And these initiatives can be considered now as NGOs in the Nepalese context.

"Shree Chandra Kamadhenu Charkha Pracharak Mahaguthi" is considered as the first NGO to be formally established in Nepal with the objective of social work. It was established in 1983 B.S. Similarly, the "Charkha Pracharak Sanstha" established in 1985 B.S by Tulshi Mehar Shrestha can also be regarded as an NGO. In 2004 B.S, social worker Dayabir Singh Kansakar had established a "Paropakar Aushadhalaya (Now known as Paropakar Sansstha) regarded as an NGO, to help the physically incapacitated people. It was only after the political turnover during 2007B.S. that the NGOs were established in a formal and organized manner. In this regard, the first elected government in 2016 B.S adopted Association Registration Act 2016. This Act has profound importance in the history of the NGOs. But, while the people were still to know about the NGOs, and as the foundation of democratic government was in the process of setting up, Late King Mahendra adopted the Panchayat system on Poush 1, 2017 B.S by restricting establishment of political parties and organizations/institutions. Then the status of the non-governmental organizations became weak. Still, during the time of Panchayat system social organizations like Paropakar, Red Cross, Nepal Jaycees etc were established. Likewise, the tradition of nominating the Royal Family members as the Chairperson of such organizations started (Ghimire, 2001)

From 2041/42 B.S, there has been a constant increase in the number of NGOs. There were 106 registered NGOs in the Kingdom of Nepal in 2041/42 B.S. and it increased to 191 before the establishment of democracy in 2046 B.S. In a real sense, the establishment or registration of NGOs increased rapidly after the political change of 2046 B.S. In 2049 B.S. Social Welfare Act was adopted. Then the SWC was established to monitor and coordinate and evaluate the works of national and international non governmental organizations. SWC keeps the updated records, helps and provides suggestions to the government regarding the plans and policies relating to the NGO/INGOs.

There is no doubt that the NGOs are the actors of development. Therefore, NGOs have been recognized as important avenues for development promotion and for the first time in Nepal, the Eighth Five Year Plan (2049-2054 B.S) emphasized the importance of NGOs in enhancing production activity and socio-economic development. The current Five Year Plan (2054-2059 B.S) also has continued and recognized the important role of NGOs in development.

In the early 1990s, new policies were formulated which have made registration of NGOs much easier than in the past. As a result, the NGO sector is growing fast. There are three Acts which govern NGO/INGO activities in general. First, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990 ensures the right to open associations by all citizens. Second, the Social Welfare Act (1992) has established the SWC under the chairmanship of the Minister or Minister of State of Social Welfare which is to coordinate, facilitate, promote and mobilize NGOs for social welfare activities.

After the amendment of the Association Registration Act (1977), the new law provided for registration of NGOs, at all the CDO offices with minimum of restrictions. Any group of seven Nepali citizens may apply for registration specifying the name, address, and objectives of the organization. The NGOs are required to present audited accounts each year for the registration renewal of the organization.

Third, DDC and VDC Act (1992) tries to regulate DDC/VDC in coordinating the NGO/INGO activities in their respective areas to provide grants to NGOs and to enter into agreements with them for conducting programs and projects. VDCs are authorized to demand plans and programs from NGOs operating in their areas. NGOs are required to receive clearance for their projects from VDCs and through them, from DDCs. They are also required to work in close collaboration with the DDCs.

Presently, it is estimated that there are around 25 thousand NGOs working in the Kingdom of Nepal. But, according to the record of the SWC, there were 7,389 NGOs registered till 2055/3/23. This number increased to 8,880 by

Ashad 2056 B.S. Likewise, the statistics shows 11,036 NGOs affiliated with the Council by the year 2057 B.S. The Council's 2058 B.S. record shows 12,388 NGOs registered. If we look at the developmental practices in Nepal, we see that the national and international non governmental organizations have played a vital and key role. These organizations seem to be helping (being the partner in development activities) the government in development efforts as they are working and focusing in areas like the least developed regions, ethnic minorities, downtrodden women, children, etc. But, NGOs/INGOs cover only selected areas and sectors, it is unable to develop equally in all areas and sectors of Nepal. There seems to be the prevailing trend of stopping or leaving the programs in the middle of implementation and the practice of earning without work. Also, we find the lack of coordination between the government and the Social Welfare Council and between the national and the international Non-governmental Organizations.

Kinds of NGOs in Nepal

From a developmental perspective with the analysis of various NGOs, there are mainly national welfare oriented NGOs, professional NGOs and district/ village based NGOs.

1) National welfare oriented NGOs

Some welfare oriented NGOs operate on a national scale and have long histories. Nepal Red Cross Society, Family Planning Association of Nepal, Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh, Nepal Anti T.B. Association are some examples of the welfare oriented NGOs in Nepal. They have developed strong institutional structures, for example, equipped hospitals and clinics. Such NGOs have local offices and programs in many parts of the country. Even though their annual expenditure is around a million dollars they miss long term visions.

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS)

Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS) was established in 1963. It has a chapter in all the 75 districts of the nation. It is supported by more than 500 sub chapters and coordination committees and more than 432 thousand members (as of 1995

AD). Program areas include community development including water and sanitation programs and community based first-aid programs; health services including blood transformation, health education, health service, family planning, ARI and AMS programs; disaster management including prevention, mitigation, preparedness, and rescue and relief activities.

Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN)

FPAN was established in 1959 A.D. It has grown to cover 27 districts. Its objectives include promotion of family planning as basic human right, empowering both men and women to make voluntary and informed choices and to support government family planning programs. Its activities are focused on family planning education, training, family planning promotion and services; mothers and child health services; and community development activities.

2) Professional NGOs

These kinds of NGOs are generally staffed with highly qualified personnel. Most of the professional NGOs are involved in research and action programs. Institute of Integrated Development System (IIDS), Rural self-reliance Development Centre (RSDC), Nirdhan, etc. are some examples of professional NGOs. Usually, an executive director is hired for day to day management of the organization.

3) District/Village based NGOs

These kinds of NGOs have often evolved out of the effort of a single charismatic leader. The leader is usually involved in various activities of the organization including fund raising, planning, coordinating as well as implementing. Their plan depends upon the availability of donation. Thus, long term visions are often missing and they often have to be guided by the interests of the donors. Social and health and environmental institutions are the examples of district/ village based NGOs.

INGOs in Nepal

INGOs have been recognized as important avenue for development promotion. A large number of INGOs operate in Nepal. The United Mission to Nepal (UMN) and Helvetas have

been operating for more than four decades. Strategies of NGOs/INGOs of local intervention are similar. But, INGOs also function as donors to NGOs. Priority of funding and input components depend upon the objectives of each INGO and its leadership's vision, group awareness raising, group formation and credit are to all programs.

Most of the INGOs working as direct implementers has a fairly large number of staff and a complex organizational structure. CARE-Nepal works mostly as direct implementer of programs. UMN also implements programs by itself. It has a fairly large working network at community, district and central levels. Even though, Lutheran World Service (LWS) has a large establishment with more than 350 employees in its six project areas, it works in coordination with local partners in each of its project areas. LWS partners include national level NGOs like the Red Cross, the UN agency like UNHCR and grassroots development institutions.

In Nepal, INGOs have been working for the last four decades. The INGOs like UMN and Helvetas Nepal have been working for the development activities. According to the Social Welfare Council, there were 82 INGOs in the year 2056/57 B.S. working in Nepal. This number reached 103 in the fiscal year 2057/58. The amount spent in various programs by these INGOs in 2057/58 was Rs. 1.45 billion. In 2058/59 the amount reached Rs. 2.4 billion.

Weaknesses

No principles, assumptions, and concepts can remain away from limitations and criticisms. The NGO/INGO approach to development also has certain limitations of its own though it seems working perfectly in the twenty-first century for the downtrodden and poor people. It also seems to be working hand in hand with the international governments to bring positive and constructive results. Still, this approach has following limitations and criticisms:

1) Lack of sustainability:

As programs rely upon international donors and technical supporters, such programs have to be stopped when the

donors stop the fund or technical help. It does not in any case help sustainable development.

2) Covers limited sectors only or less coverage:

The NGOs cover only the limited selected areas and sectors as per their objectives and convenience. They do not help in equal development and in up-lifting the socio-economic conditions of all the people of a country.

3) Lack of local people's actual need in the programs:

Almost all the programs give priority and emphasis to the interests of the donors rather than giving priority to the actual felt needs of the targeted people. It does not in the long run help solve the problems of the needy people.

4) Lacks social welfare motive:

Though the NGOs promise to work with the social welfare motive, most of them operate with the objective of making profit. This will not help in reaching the objectives as targeted.

5) Lack of execution of set goals:

The records of all the NGOs remain in the CDO office and in the SWCI, but there is a lack of a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the works done by those organizations. Only some NGOs are practically in existence and working as per their objectives. This trend will certainly not lead to positive changes in the society.

6) Political affiliation (affiliation to certain political parties):

Many NGOs in the country seem to be directly affiliated to one particular party. They follow the political directives given to them by their leaders and work for the interests of such parties. Many NGOs have been opened by a direct link with international traders and they are mobilized to preach on religion.

7) Lack of special provision to establish a NGO:

As any person can establish NGOs, and there is no provision or process of sustaining the established NGOs, there remains a trend of dismissing them at any time they like.

8) Lack of coordination:

There is a lack of coordination between the government and the SWC and between the INGOs and NGOs. It creates misunderstandings and duplication of work within such organizations. The government seems to be losing even the legal control and monitoring of the NGOs and INGOs. The SWC which has the responsibility of guiding the NGOs/INGOs in right track is unable to do so due to lack of infrastructure and other capabilities.

9) Lack of monitoring:

There is no mechanism to evaluate, supervise and guide the NGO/INGOs working throughout the country. Hence, some organizations seem to be gaining a national status without performing designated and set goals. This trend does not help motivate hard working organizations as they always remain in shadow.

10) Differences in Setting of priorities:

Some of the INGOs seem to be giving priority and attention to the interests of their own country rather than focusing on the interests of the local people.

11) Change (modification) in local culture and technology:

The local problems may not be solved as INGOs introduce and implement technologies not suitable to the necessities of the local people. It lacks the application of suitable technologies in the existing socio cultural and geographical environments and conditions. The local culture, tradition, practices and technologies also either change or modify or become extinct.

12) High expenditure in remuneration of foreign experts:

The INGOs employ foreign citizens as local consultants. This leads to allocating most of the financial resources to the foreign employees which should have been allocated to the development projects. The foreign employees may not be familiar with the local problems and the appropriate method of solutions.

13) Not able to reach the targeted people:

With some exceptions, most of the INGOs have not been able to reach down to the real and actual targeted groups

and poor people who are in need of help. They are unable to mobilize the resources properly.

14) Lack of accountability:

The INGOs and NGOs are not accountable to any agencies in practice. They ought to be accountable to the working groups while doing work and accountable to the SWC too.

15) Lack of transparency:

Regarding the funds and financial mechanisms, INGOs/NGOs are not transparent. Many INGOs have denied giving their statements of annual income and expenditures to the SWC.

Conclusion

The NGOs/INGOs are non-profitable institutions. NGOs mostly focus on sectors like: agricultural expansion, irrigation, forestry, drinking water, basic and primary education, primary health care etc while INGOs focus on awareness raising, group formation and credit, area development, health and humanitarian assistance etc

There is no doubt that NGOs/INGOs play a pivotal role in nation building, but, due to the lack of sustainability and accountability the beneficial and effective results have not materialised. Channel of their funding and financing mechanisms are not transparent. For solving this problem the government should be able to monitor, guide and facilitate their activities to empower the people.

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THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF PATIENTS SEEKING HEALTH CARE FOR INFANT AND CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES AT NEPAL MEDICAL COLLEGE AND TECHNING HOSPITAL

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Abstract: This paper presents the demographic characteristics of 424 patients and their parents/guardians over a four month period seeking health care for infant and childhood illnesses at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital which is located at the outskirts of the Kathmandu Valley. The objective of the paper is to find out the health care of infant patients at Nepal Medical College. Out of a total of 424 patients seeking health care for infant and childhood illnesses over a four month long period at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital, only 42 percent were females and the remaining 58 percent of the patients were males. Despite the fact that Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital is located in an area that is home to many of the large carpet factories located in the Kathmandu Valley which employ a lot of people that belong to various "tribal" and "ethnic" groups, the findings from the study point to the fact that almost half of the patients came from higher caste groups-mainly Brahmins and Chettris (214 out of 424 patients). Only 105 patients stated that they belonged to a Hill Tribal Group and another 36 patients stated that they belonged to a Terai Tribal Group. The most overlooked group consisted of

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the Dalit Group with only 10 patients. The overall school attendance rate of patients seeking health care services for infant and childhood illness as reported in this study appears to be very high. Only 8 patients out of 176 patients that were 6 years and older stated that they had never attended school so far. This points to the fact that the school attendance rate of patients that are seeking health care services for infant and childhood illness at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital is quite high. This hospital-based study with very limited resources is a proof that very high quality research can be conducted that highlights many of the positive as well as negative aspects of health care services Nepal Medial College and Teaching Hospital has to offer. This study also points to the fact that various departments within the parent institution and professionals with different backgrounds and interests can conduct collaborative research.

Key words: Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital, health services, opportunity costs, infant and childhood illness, Kathmandu Valley.

1. Introduction

While there are numerous factors that contribute to infant and childhood illnesses, this paper outlines the demographic characteristics of patients seeking health care for infant and childhood illnesses at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital (NMTCH). This paper presents the findings of a hospital-based study of 424 patients that came to seek health care for infant and childhood illnesses during a four month period (March-June, 1999) at the Out patient Department at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital. Various factors affect the interval between the onset of the illness and its outcome. It is generally assumed that if prompt, and adequate treatment is provided, the outcome will usually be satisfactory, therefore, the outcome is most adversely affected by delayed treatment (Deborah, 1994).

At the time this research activity was conducted, it had been only a little over a year since Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital had started to provide health care services in both its out patient department and hospital based services. This

paper outlines the findings of one of the very first research activity that was carried out at the Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital. At the outset, it was decided that it was of paramount importance to both the department of pediatrics and department of community medicine to have sufficient empirical data on the demographic characteristics of the patients seeking health care for infant and childhood illness. These two departments would not be able to plan to expand services in the areas of immunization, counseling and maternal child health in absence of such data.

2. Data and Methods

The data used in this paper were collected as part of a larger study that sought to solicit information on the factors that affect the interval between the onset of the illness and the timing of arrival at NMCTH to seek health care to the parents/guardians of the children with illness. The research design employed a combination of survey questionnaires and "focused in-depth interviews" (Knodel, 1997) to analyse categorically the health seeking behaviour of infant and childhood illnesses at the NMCTH. On the outset it must be noted that infants and children do not seek health care on their own. Data was collected over a four months period (March-June, 1999) with a total of 424 parents/guardians that accompanied their infants and children to seek health care services at NMCTH. The "focused in-depth interviews" were conducted with the parents/guardians upon receiving their verbal "informed consent". Certain broad themes were developed prior to the study and pre-tested. Necessary interviews were free flowing and lasted between 20 and 30 minutes. These "focused in depth interviews" were conducted by a trained nurse who has had many years of experience in health and social research.

Survey questionnaires were administered to all 424 parents and guardians that accompanied their infants and children to NMCTH. The survey questionnaires collected vital information of the following topics:

- (1) demographic characteristics of the clients;

- (2) actors involved in decision-making (father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncle, aunt, other relatives, etc);
- (3) Costs, time and means of transportation used to travel to the NMCTH;
- (4) distance travelled from home to NMCTH;
- (5) financial and opportunity costs;
- (6) previous experience with NMCTH; and
- (7) their perceived quality of care at NMCTH.

The survey questionnaires were pre-coded and administered by the trained researchers. It must be noted here that information obtained through the survey questionnaires were complemented through "focused in-depth interviews." Furthermore, it was vital that the same trained person conducted both the qualitative and quantitative components of the research.

3. Findings of the Research

3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Patients

Out of a total of 424 infants and children seeking health care services at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital over a period of four months, data were collected from 180 female and 244 male patients

Table 1 presents the number and percentage according to caste/ethnicity of patients seeking health care for infant and childhood illnesses at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital. A total of 424 infants and children received health care services during the four month long period of which the largest group were Brahmins (N=121) which were closely followed by Hill Tribals (N=105). It must be noted here that the smallest number of health care seekers during that time period were the Dalit Group(N=10).

3.2. Living Arrangement of Patients

Table 2 presents the number and percentage of patients stating that they live with their family members or have other living arrangements. Of the 424 patients, 411 stated that they live with their immediate family members. only 13 patients stated that they have other living arrangements.

3.3. Schooling of Patients

Out of a total 176 patients were 6 years of age and older. Table 3 presents the level of schooling completed by patients 6 years and older and the number of patients enrolled at the pre-primary level. When these 176 patients were asked about their level of schooling 8 stated they have received no schooling so far. 157 patients stated that they are currently attending or have enrolled at the Primary School (classes 1 through 5) level in the past. Similarly, another 11 patients stated that they are currently attending or have enrolled at the Lower Secondary School (classes 6 and 7) level in the past. Another 93 patients stated that they were attending school at the Pre-primary level at the time of the interview.

Table 4 presents the number and percentage according to the type of school attended by 168 patients 6 years and above. A vast majority of them (N=136) stated that they attended a Private Bording School.

None of the patients stated that they attended a Religious School. Only 24 of the 168 students that were currently enrolled in any school stated that they attended a Government School.

3.4. Occupation of the Person the Patient is Living with

Table 5 presents the occupation of the person (in numbers and percentage) the patients is living with. A little less than half of the respondents (N=169) stated that they were either unemployed or underemployed. One hundred and seventeen respondents stated that they were employed in the private sector or the non-governmental sector. Another, 70 respondents stated that they were government employees. 40 respondents stated that they were self-employed and another 28 respondents stated that they were farmers.

3.5. Employment Status of Patients

Finally, Table 6 presents the number and percentage of patients 6 years and above who stated that they have worked for wages or were unemployed in the last one week. Out of 176 patients that were 6 years and above, 173, patients stated that

they have remained unemployed in the last one-week. Only 3 patients stated that they worked for wages in the last one week.

4. Conclusion

First of all it must be noted that out of a total of 424 patients seeking health care for infant and childhood illnesses in a four month long period at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital, only 42 percent (N=180) were females and the remaining 58 percent (N=244) of the patients were males. This finding points to the fact that Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital has not been successful in bring about "gender balance" as it provided health care to infants and children despite the fact that 50 percent of the infant and child population of Nepal consists of females. This finding also points to the fact that Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital must take extra efforts in the coming days and months to encourage parents and guardians to seek health care for both male and female children. Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital may need to take extra steps so as to encourage parents/guardians to bring both their male and female children to seek health care services at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital.

Despite the fact that Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital is located in an area that is home to many of the large carpet factories located in the Kathmandu Valley which employ a lot of people that belong to various "tribal" and ethnic groups, the findings from the study point to the fact that almost half of the patients came from higher caste groups-mainly Brahmins and Chettris (214 out of 424 patients). Only 105 patients stated that they belonged to a Hill Tribal Group and another 36 patients stated that they belonged to a Terai Tribal Group. The most overlooked group consisted of the Dalit Group with only 10 patients. Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital must work harder to attract patients from all strata of the Nepali society. So far, most of the patients belong to the higher caste groups- mainly Brahmins and Chettris.

The overall school attendance rate of patients seeking health care services for infant and childhood illness as reported

in this study appears to be very high. Only 8 patients out of 176 patients that were 6 years and older stated that they have never attended school so far. This points to the fact that the school attendance rate of patients that are seeking health care services for infant and childhood illness at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital is quite high. It has already been pointed out in the section above that Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital is located in an area that is home to many large carpet factories that employ "migrant" population from various "tribal" and "ethnic" groups. From the findings of this study we are not able to say for sure if infants and children from these carpet factories are seeking health care services for infant and childhood illness at Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital. Various studies that have been reported by various non-governmental organizations highlight the fact that as much as 50 percent of school age children have never attended school.

Finally, this hospital-based study with very limited resources is proof that very high quality research can be conducted that highlights many of the positive as well as negative aspects of health care services Nepal Medical College and Teaching Hospital has to offer. This study also points to the fact that collaborative research can be conducted by various departments within the parent institution and professionals with different backgrounds and interests. The findings from this hospital-based research has also assisted both the Department of Pediatrics and Department of Community Medicine to develop new strategies to plan, develop and manage other services in the areas of child immunization, counselling and maternal child health.

Note:

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Tables

Table 1 Caste/ Ethnicity of Patients

Caste/Ethnicity	N	%
Brahmin	121	28,5
Chettri	93	21,9
Tarai Caste	9	21
Hill Tribal Group	107	24,8
Terai Tribal Group	36	8,5
Dalit Group	10	2,4
Others	48	11,3
Total	424	100

Source : Hospital survey, 2002

Table 2: Number and Percentage of Patients Stating Tahat They Live With:

Category	N	%
Self with Family	411	96,9
Have Other Living Arrangemnt	13	3,1
Total	424	100

Source : Source : Hospital survey, 2002

Table 3 : Level of School Completed By Patients 6 Years and Older

Level of Schooling	N	%
No Schooling	8	4,5
Primary(1-5)	157	89,2
Lower Secondary(6-7)	11	6,3
Total	176	100
No. of Patients Attending School at the Pre-Primary Level	99	N/A

Source : Source : Hospital survey, 2002

Table 4 : Type of School Attended by Patients, Number and Percentage

Type of School	N	%
Government School	24	14,29
Private Day School	7	4,17
Private Boarding School	136	80,95
Other, Specify	1	0,60
Total	168	100,00

Source : Source : Hospital survey, 2002

Note: Only 186 of the 424 patients were 6 years and older

Table 5; Occupation of the Person the patient is Living with, Number and Percentage

Patient's Guardian's occupation	No.	%
Government Employee	70	16,51
Private sector/INGO/NGO employee	117	27,59
Self Employed	40	9,43
Farmer	28	6,60
Employed	1	0,24
Other, Specify	168	39,62
Total	424	100,00

Source: NMC Hospital Based Study

Table 6: Number and Percentage of Patients Who Stated That They were Employed or Unemployed in the last one week

Situation	N
Worked for Wages	3
Have not worked for wages	173
Total	176

Source: NMC Hospital Based Study

Note: Out of a total of 424 patients and/or parents interviewed, 176 responded to this question. This is due to the very low ages of the remaining patients.

AN OBITUARY TO PROF. GS. NEPALI

Ganesh Man Gurung*

"I will never forget that cold Kathmandu morning in January 1994, when Madam Lajja offered me a cup of tea. At that point, Prof. Nepali mixed a spoon of khukuri rum in my black tea. Not only was taste quite different, and cheery on a chilly morning – the man himself was a unique individual, cheerful and jolly with his many friends and colleagues."

Today the Department of Sociology has lost a renowned professor, an amiable colleague and a knowledgeable scholar, a man well known in Nepal and abroad. Especially noteworthy is this scholarly achievement in his book, "The Newars".

For 10 years, Prof. Nepali taught in our department with zeal and enthusiasm, after his retirement from Benaras Hindu University. I always found him alert, enthusiastic, energetic and interested in his teaching work. He was well respected by colleagues and the administrative staff of the department, and revered by his students. Despite his age, he rarely missed a class and was always attentive of his duties. He was equally popular among professors and scholars of Nepal and abroad, due to his open-hearted cooperation to all. He was always smiling and jolly with colleagues and juniors. However, among the professors in Kirtipur, he especially loved to conduct lengthy discussions with

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Dr. Ram Niwas Pandey of the culture department. These two excellent scholars had become close friends.

His home at Balkhupul was never closed to visitors. Prof. Nepali welcomed equally friends and colleagues of the department, students and others. To visitors, offering of tea/coffee and biscuits was normal in his house but if the tea were a bit delayed, he would say his wife..... :

Lajja..... . . . abhi chaya nahi mila ... kya huwa ?

Madam Lajja used to say..... OK OK I know well Getting ready.

Madam Lajja, herself a well-educated lady, was really supportive. She always showed her hospitality to the guests and visitors. Sometimes the old couple used to joke like newly-weds! I first met Dr. Nepali at Benaras Hindu University when I was looking for a university where I could register for my Ph.D. research. I visited Delhi University, Poona University, Madras University and Nagpur University, Ultimately, I decided to choose the Department of Sociology in Benaras Hindu University, Varanasi due to easy access from Kathmandu. One of my friends indicated who Prof. Nepali was. When we met, he was just taking a seat in a rickshaw. I saw an elderly gentleman, well-dressed with tie and nice shirt, neatly combed hair all in all, a pleasant and smart-looking fellow. He greeted me courteously and agreed to discuss my registration as a research scholar in Benaras Hindu University. Next morning I went to his residence and Madam Lajja served me a cup of tea with few biscuits. I was highly impressed with the rooms provided at BHU, quite sophisticated in comparison to my own Professor's quarter in TU, Kirtipur. After a short meeting, he assured me that he would help me in my research work.

He was not unhappy with the academic performance of my supervisor Prof. Srivastava. But he was more inclined to the anti-Srivastava/Kayastha/Lala group of Varanasi mini-politics due to his affiliation with Rajput group of Benarsi professors. Perhaps he was interested in power politics too. Prof. Nepali,

being a versatile genius, was never looked down on by the "lala group". They would never dare to go against him.

Prof. Nepali was proud of having been a student of the renowned sociologist Prof. Ghurey at Bombay University, from where he received his Ph. D. degree in 1959. He devoted his whole life in academic exercise both in teaching and research, and was an active participant in the seminars of BHU.

And then one morning in the month of Chaitra, I received call from Prof. Rohit Nepali, but with different tone. It was about the sad demise of Prof. GS Nepali in a hospital in Bombay. What a shock ! I remembered the days when I was him together in BHU as a student and as a colleague in the department. For all his colleagues and friends, the news came as a blow. It was day of sadness for all.

Thus we lost a versatile and brilliant friend and colleague. Prof. G.S. Nepali born on June 18th 1926. He taught for 2 years (1965-67) at Gorakhpur University and 19 years (1967-86) at BHU. He died on 20th January, 2002 at the age of 76 in Candy Hospital in Bombay.

May he rest in peace.

**ORDERING SHERPA LIFE THROUGH THEIR
RITUALS: SYMBOLIC/INTERPRETATIVE
PERSPECTIVE
(A REVIEW OF "SHERPAS THROUGH THEIR
RITUALS" BY SHERRY B. ORTNER)**

Bishnu Prasad Dahal*

Background

Descriptive approach and interpretive approach are the commonly used approaches in anthropological or cultural study. The descriptive approach/perspective help readers by describing the cultural phenomena associated with particular culture. The goal of interpretative approach/perspective is to interpret or to open the cultural events and phenomena into different meaning according to time, context and conditions. Among these two, first one tries to familiarize the readers with the particular culture while another tries to interpret the same culture into different situation with different meanings.

A symbol is something verbal or non-verbal, within a particular culture (language, communication/conversation, sign articulation) that comes to stand for something else. The verbal symbols are the linguistic, sign or some representation of certain meaning. There are non-verbal symbols, such as flags, dress, etc., which stand for a nation's representation. Holy water is a potent symbol in Roman Catholicism. As is true of all symbols, the association between a symbol (e.g. water) and what is symbolized (holiness) is arbitrary and conventional. Water is not

intrinsically holier than milk, blood or other liquids. Holy water is not chemically different from ordinary water (Kottak, 1994). Symbolic/Interpretive Anthropology as an alternative approach in anthropological theory or perspective was developed after 1960s. There is no single paradigm of this theory or approach/perspective because symbolic/interpretive anthropology "as a level" was never used by its founding anthropologists, Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner. Advocating a different approach Symbolic/Interpretive anthropology or perspective criticizes the generalized view of culture as suggested by Functionalists in answering questions like, How does institutions help to fulfill the needs of the society? How is social life possible? What keeps society in equilibrium/order? Functionalists find the solutions of these questions, however, they cannot interpret the symbols of the culture. Symbolic Anthropology claimed that we can understand whole functional phenomena using cultural materialism because all cultures have different symbols.

Symbolic/Interpretive Anthropologists offer different views of culture asking about meanings of symbols and how these symbols shape people's way or patterns of life. So anthropologists, rather than describing the culture, must dig out the meaning of the symbols that constitute the cultural whole. Culture is an abstract concept or adaptive strategy. Symbols used in every day life (in culture rituals, festivals and important social events etc.) carry out the meanings for operation of the particular culture. Thus, investigation and interpretation of meanings used in the context of action (i.e. social action) is the primary concern of Symbolic Anthropology.

Culture is not something locked inside people's head but rather is embodied in public symbols - symbols through which the members of a society communicate their own view. It is value orientation ethos (characteristic features of any culture and community) to their further generations (by means of socialization). To anthropologists, they are social processes that pass from generation to generation. For example wearing white dress by a man symbolizes the death of his father or mother and

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the dress if wore by a woman symbolizes the death of her husband in Hindu culture.

For Geertz, reading culture is like doing archaeology; culture is exposed and explained layer by layer until it gives the significant meaning (i.e. interpretation understanding). By the interpretative understanding of culture, Geertz also implies the context (situation, time, condition) of the symbols used.

The interpretation of Balinese cockfight is a classical example of Symbolic Anthropology or interpretive approach. For Geertz, 'The Balinese Cockfight' is a symbolic event, which offers a window to Balinese culture through which it is possible to see "What keeps Balinese society in order? There are two contradictory relationships within the Balinese society. He interprets the event as a cultural "text" through which one attempts to understand the inner nature of Balinese society. The cockfight symbolizes the social relation (kin/village, community), conflict, rivalries between different communities and the social solidarity within a single Balinese community. Betting as a cockfight expresses the villagers' and kin's "we-feeling" which also relates to the existing labour, economic and ritual cooperation between the members. It is not only the fight between two animals (cocks) but also between the two communities in the "game form".

Before going to documentation of the task of religious rituals: first of all we have to define religion. Durkheim was perhaps the first sociologist to recognize the critical importance of religion in human societies. In his view "religion is a collective act and includes many forms of behaviors in which people interact with others". Durkheim initiated sociological analysis of religion by defining religion as a "unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things". Compromising the definition put forward by Durkheim, I want to raise the question, "How can human societies be held together when they are generally composed of individuals and social groups with diverse interests and aspirations?" The probable answer may be that "religious bonds often transcend these personal and diverse forces". But readers may have further questions "Why should religion provide the societal glue?" Religion provides societal

glue because it offers people meaning and purpose for their lives. It gives them certain ultimate values and end to hold in common. Although subjective and not always fully accepted, these values and ends help a society to function as an integrated social system. That's why people believe in religion either for "hope" or by "fear".

In fact religious rituals are practices required or expected of members of a faith. Rituals usually honour the divine power (or powers) worshipped by believers; they also remind adherents of their religious duties and responsibilities.

Theoretical Perspectives

Clifford Geertz – pioneering figure in the symbolic anthropology – recognizes anthropology as the science of culture. Geertz's interpretive anthropology claims to be a scientific study, however it must be able to excavate or dig out the meanings.

Symbols usually signify many things: to use Turner's phrase (*The Forest of Symbols*, 1967) they are multi-vocal. According to Geertz, human behaviour is fundamentally symbolic and therefore laden with meaning for social actors. The primary task of ethnographer is to understand the "webs of significance" which people themselves have spun.

Symbolic/interpretive ethnography focuses on the meaning of behaviour and rely primarily on verbal data in support of their interpretations. So, it is not inaccurate to say symbolic ethnographies have been similar to neo-structural in style.

Geertz in "thick description" argues the aim of anthropology is to interpret the meaning of behaviour to explain actions and attitudes that appear puzzling. According to him, culture consists of "structures of significance", "frame of interpretation" or "socially established structures of meaning". For Geertz, culture is "context" and it is the object of the ethnography to describe it.

Ortner's symbolic interpretation account of the Sherpa rituals thus provides a clear framework for conceptualizing the cultural-symbolism through Sherpa rituals. This frame provides

the clear cut picture of interplay between the "idealistic" and "realistic" explanations of social and cultural Sherpa life because it reveals the abiding issue to be not one of the "anti-social behaviour" as opposed to their socio-cultural values (which is the "ideals" of Sherpas) but of "social behaviour" in society.

Ortner's symbolic interpretation persuasively demonstrates that explanation demands not simply discerning symbolic meanings of culture through particular events, but also accounting for how something as improbable for symbolic communication. Her work in general has sought to articulate a "common ground" as early interpretive/symbolic theorists hold.

Ortner's "Sherpa through their Rituals (1978)" aims to understand the nature of Sherpa society through an analysis of the meanings of certain rituals in Sherpa culture. As such it resembles Geertz's "cockfight" for the Balinese world. It also resembles Pritchard's structural analysis in "The Nuer". Ortner's goal in her ethnography is to "open" Sherpa culture to readers "unfolding it, revealing it, not only a sense of surface and rhythm, but also a sense of inner connections and interactions. She approaches her goals by focussing on rituals, because she claims that they are events that dramatize and make Sherpa social life intelligible for both participants and observer.

The Argument of the Ethnography

Ortner develops her analysis of the meanings embodied in Sherpa rituals by identifying the problems of Sherpa life. The basic problem of the Sherpas is the challenge to the social stability and social solidarity of communal life. The principles of Buddhism encourage tendencies towards isolation and atomization that she saw "threatening the fabric of Sherpa society".

The problem of social cohesiveness among the Sherpa is magnified by the lack of devices for conflict resolution. The Sherpas have "no formal mechanism of social control". It weakens the basis for community stability. So, with these fragile relationships within the community, nuclear families, and absence of formal institutions that deal with social control,

Ortner identifies the problem "What keeps things in order? Or "How Sherpa society possible?"

Ortner addresses these questions in two parts. She first claims that – the Sherpas depend on internalized constraints to prevent anti-social behaviors or disorder to maintain social order. However she observes, "inner constraints do not always constraint". Therefore, she looks elsewhere for the basis of Sherpa social order. In second part she finds it in their rituals: she concludes then that rituals resolve conflict by offering solutions to the problems. These solutions function psychologically. In this sense, rituals among the Sherpas serve the same function that cockfights do among the Balinese. The rituals are models of and models for social reality. Ortner's interpretation follows Geertz's paradigm "ritual manipulate and shape consciousness and they create meanings"

Textual Organisation

Ortner uses the first chapter to introduce the readers to the theory and methods of Symbolic Anthropology. In the second chapter, she states the analytical problems of her study – the problematic nature of the society and outlines the rituals that provide a means for resolving the conflicts and contradictions of Sherpa life and thereby contributes to social solidarity and stability. The next four chapters include the core of her symbolic analysis - the meaning of Sherpa rituals: (i) Nyungne; (ii) Hospitality; (iii) Exorcisms; and (iv) Offering rituals. The brief discussion on these rituals being suitable is presented here.

Nyungne: Problems of Marriage, Family, and Asceticism

Ortner views Nyungne as the problem of marriage, family and asceticism. Four days holiday called Nyungne is observed once a year in late spring and involves "becoming like monks" to gain religious merit towards a good birth. The key vow of Buddhist asceticism is absenteeism from sexual relations. Nyungne is a period of atonement. It brings powerful merit to the participants. It involves fasting and abstentions experience, ascetic ethic voluntary participation purely on individual basis. Nyungne

begins with "Sang" ceremony; at the first day volunteer-sponsors give a big evening meal to the participants. From second day, they recite Lamic text, taking refuge in the religion and they perform prostration, which is central to the observation of Nyungne.

From the "point of view of the Sherpas, the point of observing Nyungne is to get merit (Dharma). They follow abstention of food, drink and conversation, no sex, no work, no wearing of metal ornaments or leather. The rite is directed to the God Cherenzi (Avalokeshawor). Pawa Cherenzi is peaceful, compassionate God symbolizing that, initiating him grants salvation. God himself does not erode away the sin. Ideally, Nyungne is a best way to merit making, but how do problems arise in reality? Ortnier claims that atomized family/closed household syndrome proves it that families are very closed and self-contained. A married couple by itself is responsible to have and rely on no one's support.

Cherenzi is the symbolic meaning of parental figure who created the world. In Sherpa society, male mercy and compassion are "feminine" attribute. So, perfect parent's sex brings marriage and marriage seems exciting but this pleasure will not last further. Marriage brings children and children bring joy but children fail to reciprocate in one's declining years. According to Ortnier, Children's marriage pose threat at various levels in Sherpa society-

- i. For mother, rupture of the "Nyinj Bond" (compassion bond)
- ii. Hard economic realities - labor decreased, property divided and cattle shared
- iii. Marriage at six distinct stages
- iv. Old couple - depend on the son
- v. Friction of two-in-laws

She acknowledges that the crisis of children's marriages and problems of the aged in Sherpa culture is a crisis of personal identity as well as of personal survival. All these issues were signaled by the symbolism of the Nyungne ritual.

All these problems are resolved by offering rituals (Nyungne). Symbolically it involves extreme condensation of

complex and profound feeling and meanings. In fact, Nyungne transforms from worldly material life to merits of spiritual world. Nyungne offers satisfying refuge.

Hospitality: Problems of Exchange, Status, and Authority

Why hospitality is important in Sherpa society? Ortnier believes that there is a lack of cohesion in Sherpa society. The key fact of Sherpa social structure is its relative atomization into nuclear family units. A household will give a formal hospitality at wedding, funeral, new year, etc. Hospitality is the most generalized form of "being social in Sherpa society". At the core of any hospitality event there is a material transaction: a host gives food to his guests. Feeding is culturally considered to be an act of great power and they are manipulative work. In "Yangzi" transaction, an individual brings a token gift of beer or food and asks for a favour. According to Ortnier, the symbols of hospitality are to (i) maintain order in the status of hierarchy, (ii) produce order in the political functions of party interactions, and (iii) the reciprocity.

Ortnier begins her account with an analysis of a ritual (Nyungne) that addresses strains within the Sherpa family. Ideally the Sherpa family is autonomous and self-sufficient, a closes unit, differentiated from and opposed to the rest of society. Its members are economically independent of other families, but dependent on one another and with strong ties to one another emotionally especially child and mother.

In contrast to these ideals, in reality relations within the Sherpa family are weakened (undermined) by several factors:-

- (i.) Marriage: Children grow and got married and separated learning emotionally and physically.
- (ii.) New family creation causes economic problems for the old ones resulting in division of land, labour and cattle.
- (iii.) Conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law

- (iv.) The children take place for householder in place of aged parents (parents do not feel to accept children as adults and hence their decision).

This discrepancy (difference) between ideal and actual creates tension/conflict/dis-equilibrium/disorder that is supposed to be relieved in a ritual (Nyungne) atonement. It is supposed to help the elders see themselves not as deprived but as approaching religious/cultural ideal autonomy. Cognitively and emotionally, loss is transformed into gain.

The same forces of "atomism" disrupt relationships between families. Ortner argues that this threat is overcome by Sherpa belief about hospitality, "a way of being social" that is normatively governed by rules of "etiquette". Sherpas are reluctant (unwilling) to engage in the exchange of material goods suspicious (wary) of the attachments that it may generate. This attitude weakens social relationships - a situation that is overcome in the Sherpa customs of Yangdi and hospitality that facilitates to regain order or equilibrium. Yangdi is an institutionalized transaction consisting of a gift of food (or beer), which obligates its recipient to reciprocate with a favour of some sort. Ortner concluded that Yangdi is the basic mechanism for generating exchange in Sherpa society that hospitality, "dramatizes" order... ..produces order... .. and reproduces a mechanism, Yangdi - for generating order... .."

In sum, in chapter three and four, Ortner addresses anti-relational tendencies within and between families, the threat to family relationships and especially the feelings of less experienced by the elderly as the issues and the answer as embodied in the rituals of atonement. Between the families the issue is how to resolve the threat to communal relations associated with "atomism" and self-sufficiency, and the answer is embodied in the rituals of hospitality and institutionalized gift giving "Yandzi" to foster reciprocity between households.

But, even with these efforts to overcome the tendency toward atomism there are still obstacles to the maintenance of social order. As, Ortner argues, the "forces of anarchy and disruption periodically return in the form of demons to wreck, chaos and pollution in society. Therefore, she turns to an

examination of the ritual mechanisms by which demons are controlled. She does this in the next two chapters: fifth and sixth. Chapter five describes the ritual of exorcism in which Sherpas directly confront, by symbolic means, the disruptive forces represented by demons. Chapter six describes rituals of offerings (oblation) in which Sherpas attempt through acts of giving similar to those of "Hospitality" to persuade Gods to assist them in combating the demons that plague them.

Exorcism: Problems of Wealth, Pollution, and Reincarnation

Exorcism held annually is connected with funerals. In exorcism there is always direct enactment of confrontation with the forces of evil. The "do dzongup" is a heterodox exorcism in which an effigy of tiger is made of mud and dough; a man leads it and the other rides dragging the tiger away in a room. It is placed on a plank and "road" is made of flour and driven away by the Lama with the music and scenting and is destroyed finally.

The Gyepshi rite is an orthodox exorcism. Rich people do it the opposite of "do dzongup" because they lavish the demons by valuable, beautiful and tasty offerings to pacify and gratify them rather than to threaten them.

Demons are insatiably greedy, vicious, and predatory creatures who roam the world causing troubles - illness, death, corruption and destruction. They are everywhere in the world. In Buddhist ideology, however, the demonic behaviour is the behaviour of the self. They should be driven away. Ascetic person defeat demons by learning to control "quiet" and ultimately eliminate these interior impulses. It is concentration and self-control. If demons are greedy for material wealth, luxury and satisfaction so are the peoples. They are to be eliminated.

Offering Rituals: Problems of Religion, Anger, and Social Cooperation

Offering rituals are done all-round-the year. The Gods are humanised, embodied in material world. Hen offering is observed. "Torma" is made, incense, music and sprinkling of

beer invites the God. All phenomena or mechanisms of rituals act for maintaining the social order in fragile social relationships without any formal social institutions.

An exorcism ritual helps the individual to overcome the anxiety produced by anticipation of physical deterioration and death. And an offering ritual tends individuals have insight into their emotions, thereby producing a constructive way of dealing with their feelings of anger. Thus, the potential social disorder that might be created by "death" or "anger" are overcome by the rituals of exorcism and offerings and thereby the order is maintained in the Sherpa society. Therefore the phrase "Sherpa religion is the religion of fear" as used by writer seems more relevant in real life.

Claims and Data

The claims are repeatedly stated and systematically interwoven.

1. Textual arrangement is good.
2. The writer has included Sherpas' concepts, proverbs, myths, legends and native terms.
3. The argument of the monograph is nearly present.
4. All arguments of the book are essentially correct, sequentially presented and excellent theoretical interpretations.

Evaluation

There are some methodological pitfalls in spite of the good arrangement of photographs, drawings, verbal dialogue, dialects, etc. representing various facts. No clear-cut methodologies are addressed, so that graphical interpretation could not be found. Ortner's cultural interpretation or analysis of Sherpa culture from an internal or emic view is not possible by using traditional scientific methods of systematic observation, data collection and hypothesis testing used by pioneering anthropologists like Radcliff-Brown, Malinowski, Geertz, etc. The account of ritual scenes does not provide evidence for their alleged functions. Ortner presents no data about changes in attitudes or actions and about transformations. People are

supposed to be experienced. The claims are simply stated and restated, again and again.

She could have shown some examples of where and how disorder was resulted due to less acts of hospitality and again solidarity was maintained through rituals.

Viewing Sherpa society only through their rituals can neither be understood at microscopic level nor can one analyze Sherpa social-cultural life in broader sense or macro level. The Sherpa society was studied with the help of the other perspectives also. For example Stevens Stanley studied the Sherpa society with the help of human ecological perspectives. His analysis focused on the Sherpa subsistence with the change in the environmental conditions. Thus analysis of Sherpa society only through their ritual is not enough to open the Sherpa society in the comprehensive or broader sense. The book has totally failed to analyse the Sherpa material life, Sherpa economy and environmental conditions. Her approach failed to try to analyse the material Sherpa culture while Julian Steward focused on the interplay among the population, economic subsistence, technology and environment. He argued that the relationship of the material components of culture is primary and non-material components of culture are secondary. So rituals only cannot play the prominent role for maintaining social order.

Thus, Ortner's account of the Sherpa based on a claim that they exhibit antisocial tendencies that are contained by their rituals is not grounded empirically. The conclusion could not be claimed as drawn from the "Sherpas through their rituals" as she has dealt with certain rituals only. The conclusions would have been different had that been drawn from "Sherpas through the weddings or any other institutions". For she herself says that weddings have contrasting interpretations.

Ortner views "marriage" as a problem in Sherpa life because marriage produces children and higher the number of children, less is the accessibility or availability of economic and environmental resource, social status etc, but Ortner ignores the polyandry marriage practices of Sherpa. It is not clear that they are either practicing polyandry marriage nor has developed other means. Many studies proved that population growth can generate

dynamism and economic prosperity rather than problems or poverty. Growing population will adopt their changing conditions either by intensifying agriculture, adoption of probable cash crops, increasing use of marginal lands, developments of other sources of income or various kinds of fertility control if possible.

Just as there are no data to support Ortner's interpretation of the psychological function of Sherpa rituals, there is little evidence to support her view of problematic features of Sherpa society. She frequently used qualitative data rather than quantitative one. I think Ortner's idea is the synthesis of the idea of Functionalism and Symbolism as she uses the function of the rituals of the Sherpa society.

Her core analysis of "How Sherpa society is in Order? Or How Sherpa society is possible? Or Why Sherpas through their rituals, why not through other institutions?" etc. provide the clear picture in theoretical level. She claims that Sherpas society is atomistic; divided into isolated, antisocial nuclear families themselves composed of individuals whose view of human nature is fundamentally penurious (poor) avaricious (greedy), materialistic and emphatically egocentric. But, this view is not based on empirical facts.

Sacherer J. (1977) in his book "The Sherpa of Rolwaling: a Hundred years of Economic Change in Himalayas" has emphasized the adaptation of Sherpa to the harsh environment of Rolwaling valley. Ortner's arguments do not review Sacherer's analysis anywhere, even though his concepts, ideas, perspectives would definitely support her symbolic interpretation. Hence her idea, concepts and interpretation cannot be generalized and extended to all other Sherpa communities.

Similarly, Ortner ignored the new cultural adaptation of Sherpa's alternative cultural strategies. She has just expressed them by the process of change, but she did not try to explain the changing patterns of symbols in Sherpa life.

The disparity between the views of the Sherpas (insiders) and that of the analyzed project (outsiders) is another problem. For example, while Ortner sees Sherpa parties as full of

competitions and tension; Sherpas describe them as having "fun".

Furthermore, she asserts that generosity is highly valued ... but rarely practiced. This discrepancy between ideals and self, between thought and action raises problem. Should Sherpas be interpreted in terms of how they are **supposed to behave** or in terms of how they **actually behave**?

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