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

Philip Tanner[1]
Dhirendra B. Parajuli[2]

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

[1] Dr. Philip Tanner worked for UNDP in Nepal from 1990-92 and subsequently carried out extensive research in Nepal during the period 1993-1997 on the relationship of Empowerment and Participatory development concepts in Nepal. He is now working for a development INGO in Nepal.

[2] Mr. Parajuli is a Lecturer at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Patan Multiple College, Tribhuvan University, Nepal .

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

[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).

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-existance 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

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 usefullness 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 illucidates 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 unforseeable 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 signficant 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... (X-X) (where b= an arbitrary constant by which Z= (X-X)/S is multiplied. a=an s 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).

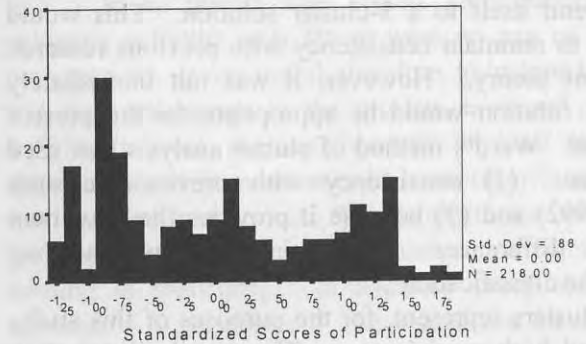
Table 2

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 (X2(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 X2(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 (X2=.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]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
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]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
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	Demographic
Effectiveness	Powerlessness	Gender
Difficulty	Chance	Education
		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 signficance 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	Con .0	Effectiv .0	Diffic .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 Hindhu 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 developmenet) 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

[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.

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

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 parametres 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

Niranjan Prasad Upadhyay*

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,

* Chief Psychologist (Joint Secretary) Public Service Commission