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Migration From Rural Nepal: A Social Exclusion Framework

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MIGRATION FROM RURAL NEPAL: A SOCIAL EXCLUSION FRAMEWORK

This paper seeks to answer two questions with reference to migration in rural Nepal: “who migrates?” and “where do they migrate?” It argues that social exclusion as measured by economic assets and human, cultural, social, and geographical capital may explain or is correlated with the migration decision and the choice of destination. Using data from the Nepal Living Standards Survey 2003/04, I use a probit regression model to examine migration choice and a multinomial logit model to examine the choice of destination. The models are based on the presumption that social exclusion may explain the migration and the choice of destination. The indicators of social exclusion are found to provide both opportunities and constraints for migration and the choice of destination.

INTRODUCTION

Rural people in Nepal have a long history of migration. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, young hill men used to go to Lahore in Northern Punjab to be recruited to the army of Ranjit Singh. These recruits were popularly called *Lahure*. After the war between the British East-India Company and Gorkha in 1814, the British Army in India recruited Nepali men. After Indian independence, the British retained some Gurkha regiments and transferred others to India. Since then, Nepali men have continued to be recruited into the Indian and British Armies. At the same time, civilian migration also expanded to Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri districts and Sikkim, Assam, and Meghalaya for labor in tea estates.

Even today, migration to India continues to dominate the pattern of migration in Nepal, due to the open border between the two countries.¹ The latest census of 2001 recorded that 3.3 percent (762,181) of the total population was absent,² of which 77.3 percent were in India. These days, however, other countries have also emerged as destinations for labor migration.

1. After Indian independence, India and Nepal signed a treaty to permit the free movement of people between the two countries.

2. Absent population, as defined by the census, is the population that is absent from the household for a period of six months and more.

Census 2001 recorded that of the total emigrants, 16 percent went to the Gulf countries, 1.6 percent to Hong Kong, 1.8 percent to Malaysia, Singapore, and South Korea, 1.3 percent to the USA and Canada, and about 1 percent to the UK (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002).

Migration within the country has also been important since the beginning of the nation building process. In the early stage, internal migration was heavily directed towards the east Tarai, especially from the mountain and hills. Internal migration from mountain and hills to the Tarai was due to the availability of agricultural land at the destination. Now, there is a shift of migration from the saturated eastern sector to the new frontiers of the west (Gurung, 2002). This is evident from the more than six fold increase of population in the western Tarai from 1952/54 to 2001. However, the origins of this migration were mainly from the western hills and mountain. Similarly, migration to urban areas has also increased over the years. Of the total migration streams, rural to urban migration was 17.2 percent in 1991 (KC, 1995), increasing to 25.5 percent in 2001 (KC, 2003). Kathmandu valley towns alone received 40.9 percent out of the total rural to urban migrants in 2001 (KC, 2003).

This demonstrates that migration is a phenomenon of long standing in Nepal, and provides the context for the more recent

migration at the internal and international level. It is now an emerging trend determining the social and economic development of the country. Migration is a source of remittances that contributes to increased household income. The share of remittances in total household income of recipients was 26.6 percent in 1995/96, increasing to 35.4 percent in 2003/04 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004). Remittances are invested, in particular in housing, education, and consumption, and thus contribute to poverty reduction. Work-related migration has contributed to almost 20 percent of the decline in poverty in Nepal between 1995 and 2004 according to Lokshin et al. (2007).

In this paper I investigate who migrates and who does not. Classical migration theories such as Ravenstien (1889), Lee (1966) and Zelinsky (1971) argue that migration is selective in terms of age, sex and other socio-economic characteristics at the individual level. Lee focuses on the push-pull hypothesis and Zelinsky on kinship ties and ethnic networks as determinants of migration. Neo-classical economic theorists believe that migration is a “rational choice” of individuals based on the demand for labor and wage differentials between the origin and destination (Lewis, 1954; Fei and Ranis, 1961; Harris and Todaro, 1970; and Todaro, 1976). Relative deprivation is the basis for a new approach called “new economics of labor migration”, which regards the household as the primary decision making unit for migration. Stark (1984, 1991) utilises this approach to explain migration from the perspective of households migrating for improving their livelihood compared to other reference groups. In this approach, households migrate when they feel that they are relatively deprived of livelihood compared to reference households.

These theories provide insights into possible causes and consequences of migration but fail to include the socio-political and interpersonal context of the migration process in their analyses (Dustdar-Sinclair 2002). There is a wide range of political, ideological, and cultural factors that affect migration. The livelihood approach incorporates most of these factors. This approach relates to conditions of poverty, well-being and the capabilities, resilience, and natural resource base of households and communities (de Haan et al., 2002:38). Migration is one of the strategies of households to improve livelihoods by way of remittances and use of human capital (knowledge, health, skills, labor, etc.), which reduces risk and vulnerability and increases assets (human, physical, social, and environmental) (Ellis, 2003). In a similar vein, Kothari (2002) argues that poverty related capital (e.g., economic, human, social, cultural, geographical and political capital) may explain migration.

As migration occurs between two spatial areas, the

question of “where do people migrate” is implicit to the question of choice of migration. Some migrate within the country, some to India, and some to third countries. Thus, the question, “who choose where to migrate” is pertinent but less discussed in the literature. Choice of destination depends on linkages between the origin and destination. Migration systems theory stresses the linkages between countries, such as security alliances, colonial ties (Portes and Walton, 1981 cited in Faist, 2000), and flows of goods, services, information, and ideas (Faist, 2000:51). The linkages may be based on historical as well as cultural affinity. These linkages help to establish social networks and these networks are the basis for the decision on where to migrate. Davis and others (2002) suggests that the location of migrants from their own network has a positive and significant influence on the migrants’ choice of destination within Mexico and to the US.

Thus, this article tries to answer two questions of migration choice and choice of destination in the context of the existing socio-economic situation in Nepal. In other words, the choices are determined by the socio-economic context of the actors.

Section two presents the theoretical framework for the analysis. That is, it describes social exclusion in the context of Nepal and how migration can be analysed within this social exclusion framework. Section three formulates empirical hypotheses based on the theoretical framework and previous empirical evidence, and section four deals with data and methods of analysis. Section five presents findings on the migration decision and the choice of destination and the final section concludes and explores policy implications.

FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Social Exclusion Framework

There is a common global discourse on social exclusion related to social and economic development policy. The use of the terms social exclusion began in France in early 1970s as a response to the contemporary social disintegration, especially on the issue of immigrants. It became a main policy thrust for the European Commission from 1989 as a mean to foster social integration in the European countries.

Various forms of social exclusion have been described in the literature. These forms vary with social, economic, and political structures and the extent of cultural diversity of a country. Peace (2001:26) outlines the concept of social exclusion and how it relates to income poverty in the paid labor market. Citing Silver (1995), he describes exclusion as multidimensional and as more than poverty and denial of social rights. It is a dynamic process resulting in multiple deprivations, ranging from breaking of family ties and social disintegration to the

loss of identity and purpose. DFID (2005) focuses on social exclusion as a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged because they are discriminated against on the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, caste, descent, gender, age disability, HIV status, and migration status. UNDP (2004) sees social exclusion as cultural exclusion and separates two types. The first occurs when the state or social custom suppresses a group's culture, including language, religion, traditional customs, and lifestyle. The second occurs when the state has discriminatory policies, and discriminatory practices are in existence in the society.

Social exclusion is thus a broad concept that can be useful for policy analysis, rather than a specific social science theory. It has been applied by social scientists, policy makers, and politicians in order to understand economic and social processes. Peace (2001) argues that a broad definition of exclusion is useful for the analysis of multidimensional and complex issues in developing countries. In this study we will focus on migration as an outcome of these complex dynamics of social exclusion.

Social Exclusion in the Nepalese Context

In Nepal, people's access to politics and to social and economic development differs according to their social identity (e.g., caste, ethnicity, and gender), economic status and location (urban, rural and remote areas). The nation building process of Nepal has been largely discriminatory in practice in every sphere of life. The state favored a single language, religion, culture and a particular region. The exclusion of large numbers of people belonging to other languages, religions, cultures and regions from the mainstream political, economical, social, and cultural development is the result of these discriminatory policies and practices (DFID and the World Bank, 2006).

DFID and The World Bank (2006) outline the dimensions of exclusion in Nepal based on religion, caste and ethnicity, language, gender and geographical regions. Economic and political power in Nepal is concentrated in the dominant Brahmin, Thakuri and Chhetri castes. Other groups, especially *Janajatis* (but not Newars), *Dalits* (untouchables), non-Nepali language groups, women, and Tarai people are excluded. Gurung (2005, 2006a) draws similar conclusions although focusing more on caste and the ethnic dimension, using statistical evidence from various sources. For instance, the Hindu high caste group comprises 90 percent of the governing elite of Nepal, and that of people of hill

origin is two-thirds (66.2 percent). Among those who have achieved higher education, 73.8 percent are Hindu high caste, 22.2 percent are *Janajatis*, and 2.9 percent are Dalits (Gurung, 2005, 2006a). Among those who passed the gazetted post exam by 2000/2001, 87 percent were Hindu high castes, 8.7 percent were Newars, 3.2 percent were Madhesis, 0.5 *Janajati* and none Dalits. A similar situation exists in terms of economic wellbeing. The Newars have the highest level of annual income per capita (NPR 38,193) based on NLSS 2003-04³, followed by Hindu high castes (NPR 24,399), with other groups far behind. Geiser (2005) argues that structured inequalities based on gender and ethnicity, especially when it comes to political representation and access to economic resources, have been the main forms of social exclusion. Paying attention to the issues raised by social scientists and national and international organisations, the Government of Nepal has realised that social exclusion is one of the obstacles to poverty reduction, and outlines caste/ethnicity, gender, geographical location and extreme poverty as the major dimensions of social exclusion (National Planning Commission, 2003).

Migration and Social Exclusion

A very limited literature is available on the study of migration based on a social exclusion framework. Kothari (2002) analyses migration through this lens to examine the interrelationship between chronic poverty and migration. She argues that moving from one place to another implies economic and social costs, and requires a certain level of human, physical, social and economic capital. Different forms of capital are produced by various forms of social exclusion, by way of inequitable access to resources and institutions, which in turn affects the migration choices of poor people. The forms of capital include economic assets (e.g. land ownership and savings), human capital (education and skills), social capital (kinship networks), cultural capital (ethnicity, caste, gender, and language), geography (natural environment and rural remoteness) and political capital (political participation and citizenship). She incorporates most forms of social exclusion as structures that are both constraints and opportunities for people to migrate. Table 1 summarises Kothari's framework with some modifications in the context of availability of data that can be measured in this study. However, this paper does not utilize social capital consisting of networks because it does not have data on social networks.

3. Nepal Living Standards Survey 2003-4 conducted by Central Bureau of Statistics, Government of Nepal.

Forms of Capitals	Discursive Categories	Forms of Exclusion	Who Moves and Who Does Not
Economic: assets and resources	Ownership of property and productive capital (<u>land</u> , cattle); savings	Exploitation, marginalization, deprivation, and unequal distribution of resources and assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor are less likely to migrate because they cannot afford to; when they migrate the destinations may differ from those of the rich. Rich households migrate more but the destinations may differ from those of the poor.
Human	Knowledge/skills – <u>literacy</u> / education Life stage - elderly and children <u>Household size</u> and structure	Disadvantage of certain groups through social/ cultural representations and limited access to opportunities and services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Literates and illiterates migrate, but the destinations may be different. Large family households are more likely to send migrants.
Cultural and Identity	Identity: <u>Ethnicity</u> , <u>caste</u> , class, gender, and religion Cultural capital: knowledge/ skills and language.	Elements of injustice; social patterns of representation, interpretation and communication; cultural-devaluation disadvantage; structural inequalities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excluded cultural groups are more prone to migrate Included groups also migrate but destinations may be different from excluded groups.
Social	<u>Networks</u> , Contacts, Affiliations, (union, labor agencies, religious etc) Community based organizations	Participation in social, community life, social isolation; rules and norms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Those with social networks in receiving areas and contacts with prospective employers, contractors or middle-men, access to intermediaries and brokers migrate more. Destinations may be different among migrants according to social networks based on migration history.
Geographical	Remote rural and urban, Natural environment and region <u>Eco-development region</u> (Nepal)	Unequal distribution of resources and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People from rural remote regions tend to migrate less than those from advanced regions.

Table 1: Poverty-related Capital, Forms of Exclusion and Migration

Source: Adapted with some modifications from Kothari (2002), Table 2 and 3, pp.12-13.

Note: This study utilizes only the variables that are underlined among the discursive categories.

Migration is an outcome of interaction between social structure and agency (Goss and Lindquist, 1995; Wolfel, 2002). It depends on the existing social, political, and economic structures as well as the degree of social exclusion/inclusion. Propensity to migrate varies with the severity of exclusion and the extent of inclusion (Waddington and Sabates-Wheeler, 2003). Migration appears to be a nonlinear function of economic resources. Adams (1993) identifies an inverted-U shaped relationship between initial household income and migration probability. Poor households are less likely to migrate because of risk involved in the absence of productive household members, whereas wealthier households are more likely to benefit from migration in terms of both educational and employment opportunities (Lipton, 1980). On the other hand as demonstrated by Adams, not all the rich households are likely to migrate, because opportunities in the destination are relatively not much better than at origin.

Choice of destination also varies among households, depending on existing social and economic structures at the origin, historical linkages, as well as the institutional networks at the destination. Gurung (2006b) suggests that out-migration has an inverse relationship with the human development index. The magnitude of migration to India is higher in the mid- and far-western districts of Nepal that are associated with a low index and migration to third countries is higher in eastern districts that are associated with a higher index.

HYPOTHESES

The basic hypothesis of this paper is that migration choice and the choice of destination vary among households according to the degree of social exclusion/inclusion, given that social exclusion implies both constraints and opportunities for the households. Kothari (2002) argues that certain groups are discriminated and disadvantaged based on social and cultural representations

and limited access to economic opportunities and social services. Households that have less access to or control over resources at the origin are more likely to migrate. However, some poorer households may not be able to afford to migrate because of the risk and cost of migration. Below we will describe a set of specific hypotheses that are developed from this general hypothesis.

Economic assets and migration

Migrants are not necessarily the poorest (Lipton, 1980; de Haan, 2000). The poorest may not choose migration because they are not able to invest in migration. However, when there is scarcity of wage labor opportunities around or near the village, they tend to migrate in order to diversify their income opportunities. The poor tend to go to destinations nearby, mostly on a seasonal basis, that involve relatively low costs and risk. Poor people also choose short distance migration because they need to earn to feed their families regularly, and are not able to invest in far-distance migration. On the other hand, wealthier households are more likely to migrate because they have relatively higher access to available resources, are able to afford the costs of migration, and thereby they have better educational and employment opportunities. However, the reasons for migration and the choice of destination may be different from those who are poor. Thus the hypotheses regarding economic assets are:

- Poor households are less likely to migrate, whereas rich households migrate more.
- When poor households migrate they are less likely to migrate far, whereas rich households are more likely to choose destinations where earnings are relatively higher.

Human capital and migration

According to Kothari (2002), human capital consists of education, knowledge and skills, and depends on the life stage as defined by age, household structure and disability. There is a common assumption among economists that human capital is taken as a migrant's human capital at individual level. However, our study includes family size and literacy of the household head to represent human capital at the household level. Rural households attempt to diversify their opportunities by pursuing a variety of strategies to improve their livelihoods (de Haan, et al., 2002). The household approach treats migration as a decision taken "for the good of the family", which is made by the family (Mincer, 1978; Katz, 2000). Thus, the head of the family or household is the decision maker as well as the manager of the household. She or he has a major role in deciding whether a family member will migrate, and the decision is influenced by his or her level of knowledge represented by his or her literacy. For instance, according to Aryal (2005), only about 10

percent of the total households have out-migrants who have no education. In this regard, the literacy level of the household head is a contributing factor in the decision of a family member to migrate. In this particular case, literacy is a better indicator. The reasons behind it are: a majority of the household heads in Aryal's study are illiterate (57 percent); only 11 percent are literate; 13 percent acquired primary education many years ago, which is functionally no more than being illiterate; and 19 percent have some primary education. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

- Literate household heads with some level of education, and knowledge of work and travel, choose migration more and tend to choose migration over greater distances.
- Illiterate household heads also tend to choose migration, but they choose shorter distances not requiring knowledge of travel and work.

Bigger households are more likely to have a labor surplus, which can be sent outside for work. So, the hypothesis in this regard is:

- Households with a large family size have a higher tendency to send migrants abroad for work employment.

Cultural capital and migration

In Nepal, caste and ethnic categories represent cultural capital that affects the dynamics of social exclusion (Gurung, 2005, 2006a; DFID and the World Bank, 2006; Geiser, 2005; National Planning Commission, 2003). The major categories are caste groups as well as *Janajati* (ethnic groups), and religious groups, in particular Muslims. These can be further classified into two groups, those of mountain/hills and of Tarai (plains) origin. Analysis based on caste and ethnicity is necessary to understand social exclusion in Nepal. *Dalits* and *Janajatis* are considered to be socially excluded groups in relation to the high caste groups. Tarai *Dalits* and *Janajatis* are excluded even more in relation to all other groups, such as high castes from both the hills and Tarai, and to some extent also in relation to the hill *Janajatis* and *Dalits*. Muslims are in a similar position to the Tarai *Dalits*.

The exclusion of these groups is explicitly cultural, that is, the caste and ethnic division was established legally by the Old Legal Code (*muluki ain*) of 1854 based on the Hindu code system. It divided society into vertical strata, from untouchables and impure (*Dalits*) at the bottom to the high caste and pure (Brahmin) at the top. This was the legal framework until 1963, as well as the social framework until the restoration of democracy in 1990. Even today, it is deeply rooted in socio-cultural practices that exclude *Dalits* and *Janajatis* from social and political participation, which in turn explains the lack of access

to resources and opportunities. Potentially, those groups may also be discriminated against by the manpower recruitment agencies and in the credit markets, since credit is necessary for third country migration. Manpower agencies are occupied by dominant groups, because they have better political and economic access. Similarly, excluded groups have less access to both formal and non-formal credit markets (Hatlebakk, 2009). Accordingly, the basic premise here is that social exclusion based on caste and ethnicity has a determining role for migration and the choice of destination. The hypotheses are:

- Socially included (dominant) groups are dominant in migration and they tend to migrate to longer distances where opportunities are relatively better.
- Socially excluded groups also tend to migrate but they are more likely to choose destinations that require relatively fewer costs and risks for the migrants.

Geography and migration

Regional disparity is one dimension of social exclusion in Nepal (National Planning Commission, 2003). The exclusion of the mid-and far-western hills is relatively high compared to other regions in the national development process. Moreover, these areas have a relatively higher proportion of hill *Dalits* who have been excluded culturally, socially, economically, and politically. On the other hand, people in the far-western region have close relationships with the people in Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh of India. They share a similar language and were part of the same social systems before the border between modern Nepal and India was demarcated. Furthermore, from this region it is easier to go to Delhi than to Kathmandu due to better transportation facilities. So the west is excluded from Kathmandu based on distance, but not necessarily from foreign migration.

Geographically, the Tarai is more accessible than the mountain and hill regions. People living in each region have intra-culture affinity, while there is less cultural mix between people from the mountain/hills and Tarai. Although more than half of the population living in the Tarai are of mountain/hill origin, people of the Tarai are relatively more excluded from the mainstream social, political, and economic development of the country. In addition, people of Tarai origin are much closer to their neighbors in India than to hill and mountain people, due to shared culture and kinship relations. Among the eco-development regions of Nepal, the eastern Tarai is relatively better off in terms of socio-economic development, as shown by the recent human development indicators. Households with better economic status are better able to invest in migration, and to send family members to a destination where income is relatively higher. Therefore, the corresponding hypotheses are as follows:

- Households from the western regions are more likely to send members to India for labor due to cultural and historical affinity and lower economic status.
- Migration beyond India is higher among households in the eastern Tarai due to relatively better social and economic development.

Additionally, the distance to the market center is also important, especially for remote rural areas of Nepal. This is because the market center is where the recruitment agencies are located and is better linked to other parts of the country and even foreign countries. It is probably not the distance itself that is the problem, but lack of access to social network in the market area. Then, the hypothesis is:

- The shorter the distance to the market center, the higher the probability of migration for a household.

DATA AND METHODS

Introduction

Social exclusion is a group rather than an individual phenomenon (Kabeer, 2000), and migration decisions are taken at the household level. Thus, the household is the unit of observations. The analysis is based on the Nepal Living Standard Survey (NLSS) conducted in 2003/04 by Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS). It follows the methodology of the World Bank Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS) (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2004). This is the second multi-topic nationally representative NLSS survey in which 3,912 households were enumerated. The survey mainly focuses on collecting data for the measurement of the poverty level. However, it also collected data on education, health, demography, and access to various facilities.

When it comes to migration, the remittance section is the most extensive and has also been used by others (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006; Lokshin et al., 2007). We define migrant households as those that have received remittances during the last 12 months preceding the survey. This excludes recent migrants and those who did not receive remittances. However, the discrepancy is small (Lokshin et al., 2007). These papers (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006; Lokshin et al., 2007) are different from ours as they focus on poverty, while we go deeper into the determinants of the migration decision.

Dependent variables

Migration status and destination will be the dependent variables. Migration status refers to whether a household has received remittances during the last 12 months. Migration based on destination refers to the origin of the remittances received by a household. This study covers the four main destinations: (i) rural Nepal (ii) urban

Nepal, (iii) India, and (iv) other countries. Other countries include Middle-Eastern countries, Malaysia, and some developed countries such as Hong Kong, Japan, the UK, and the USA. The four destinations differ in terms of distance, costs, risk, opportunities, and the status of the migrants.

Some households in the sample have more than one migrant and in multiple destinations. In this case, one destination is identified for each household based on the cost of migration. Destinations are ordered from farthest to nearest in the following order: other countries, India, urban Nepal, and rural Nepal. The farthest destination is defined as the main destination, and will be used as the dependent variable.

Independent variables

As mentioned, we consider social exclusion as the result of access to different types of capital, which will be represented by the independent variables discussed in section 3. We only use capital variables that do not change fast, so that they are likely to reflect pre-migration assets. Economic capital is represented by landholding status, meaning the monetary value of the land.

As the household head has a vital role in decision-making, the literacy level and age of the household head will represent human capital. Household size also reflects human capital as discussed in the previous section.

Caste/ethnicity of the household head represents cultural capital. The major categories of caste and ethnicity are hill caste, mountain/hill *Janajati*, hill *Dalit*, Tarai caste, Tarai *Janajati*, Tarai *Dalit*, and Muslim.

In order to represent the regional dimension of social exclusion, eco-development regions are used, composed of both horizontal and vertical locations. Vertical refers to ecological regions such as mountain/hills and the plains (Tarai), and horizontal to development regions such as the western and eastern development regions. Four categories will be used in the analysis, western mountain/hills, eastern mountain/hills, western Tarai, and eastern Tarai.

Method of Analysis

We report both descriptive statistics as well as regression analysis in explaining the migration patterns. The migration choice is a binary variable, and we use the probit regression model to examine the effect of changes in the independent variables on the probability of migration. We estimate robust standard errors that are adjusted for clustering at the PSU (ward) level, using STATA. Adjustment for clustering allows for observations to be dependent within the cluster. Interpretation of results is easier when marginal effects are computed. The marginal effects are the changes in the likelihood of migration for a small change in each independent continuous variable and a discrete change in the independent dummy variables (Long and Freese, 2003).

We do not only study the migration decision, but also choice of destination, that is where people migrate. The choice of destination is a multinomial response variable with four different choices. The choices are rural Nepal, urban Nepal, India, and other countries. Multinomial logit is an appropriate model for multiple choices (Alvarez and Nagler, 1994; Dow and Endersby, 2004). The model needs a reference category and, in our case, households with migrants destined for rural Nepal are considered as the reference so that other destinations are compared to rural Nepal.

The multinomial logit model assumes that the disturbances are independent across alternatives, which imposes the *independence of irrelevant alternatives* (IIA) property. This means that adding or deleting alternative outcomes should not affect the relative probability of choosing the remaining outcomes. Hausman and Small-Hsiao⁴ tests demonstrate that adding or deleting categories of choice of migration does not violate the IIA assumption, in our case.

THE RESULTS

Choice of Migration

First, we study the decision to migrate, that is, whether a household sends a family member for work irrespective of destinations. It reflects the need of a household to send its family member on one hand, and whether a household has the capacity to invest in migration on the other hand. Both sides are determined by the socio-economic status of a particular household within the prevailing social structure.

The NLSSII data shows that 33 percent of the households have at least one migrant that sends remittances, while it was 23.7 percent in NLSS I (1996/97). In eight years, the prevalence of migration thus increased by about 40 percent. The Foreign Employment Act 1983, the Maoist insurgency, increased opportunity for labor migration to the Middle-East, South-east and Far-east Asia (Lokshin et al., 2007), and lack of employment opportunity within the country, are the underlying reasons for increased migration.

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics. The percentage of migrants is slightly higher, but not significant, among those who have land (33.6 percent) than those with no land (30.3 percent). According to the quintile of land value, richer households are more, and poorer households are less prone, to migrate. The probit regression (Table 3) supports the descriptive findings that households that have higher land value migrate more. A significant positive but declining marginal effect is observed for land value.

4. See Long and Freese (2003:207). Hausman and McFadden (1984) proposed a Hausman-type test and McFadden, Tye, and Train (1976) proposed an approximate likelihood-ratio test that was improved by Small and Hsiao (1985).

	Background Characteristics	Non-migrants	Migrants	N
Economic Assets	Landlessness			
	Landed (R)	66.5	33.6	2,300
	Landless	69.7	30.3	447
	Quintile of Land Value			
	Poorest	71.0	29.0**	592
	Poor	70.4	29.6**	522
	Middle (R)	64.8	35.2	549
	Rich	61.6	38.4	537
	Richest	66.7	33.3	546
Human Capital	Literacy of HH Head			
	Illiterate (R)	61.9	38.1	1,575
	Literate	73.8	26.3***	1,172
	Family Size			
	Small Family (1-5)	66.1	33.9*	1,433
	Medium Family (6-7) (R)	69.8	30.2	784
	Large Family (8+)	65.1	34.9*	531
	Age Group of HH Head			
	<46 (R)	72.3	27.7	1,483
	≥46	60.7	39.3*	1,264
	Mean Age of HH Head	44.6	47.8*	2,747
Caste and Ethnicity				
Cultural Capital	Hill High Caste	62.0	38.0***	840
	Hill <i>Janajatis</i>	68.5	31.5	802
	Hill <i>Dalits</i>	63.4	36.6**	237
	Tarai (Middle & High) Caste	70.3	29.7	328
	Tarai <i>Janajatis</i>	75.2	24.8	265
	Tarai <i>Dalits</i> (R)	74.4	25.6	121
	Muslims	64.3	35.7*	154
	Migrants in PSU			
Social Capital	No migrants in PSU (R)	95.5	4.5	352
	Multiple Migrants in PSU	62.8	37.2***	2,395
	Eco-development Region			
Geographical Capital	West Mountain/Hill (R)	59.3	40.7	713
	East Mountain/Hill	73.9	26.1***	697
	West Tarai	67.7	32.3***	443
	East Tarai	67.3	32.7***	895
	Total	67.0	33.0	100.0
N	1,840	907	2,747	

Table 2: Migrant Status by Background Characteristics

Note: Percentages are significantly different from reference category (R) at 0.01(***), 0.05 (***) and at 0.10 (*) level; Mean age of household head is significantly different from zero at 0.01 level.

Source: NLSS II (2003/04) Data Set.

Illiterate household heads are more prone to send their family members for work outside home (38.1 percent) as compared to 26.3 percent among the literate. Migration is relatively low from medium-sized households. The probit result supports the descriptive findings. The probability of being a migrant is 0.150 larger if a household head is illiterate. The marginal effect of household size on migration is negative and significant (-0.015), which indicates that the larger the household size, the lower will be the probability of migration. The literacy finding is surprising. Caponi (2006) suggests, with evidence from Mexico, that the highest and the lowest educated (no education) tend to migrate more than the middle educated. Applied to the Nepal case, this may have two reasons: First, migration from rural Nepal is characterised by unskilled manual labor, so literacy is less important for such labor migration; and second, illiterate household heads are usually associated with households that have less access to local level opportunities and thus tend to send their family members for work. However, literacy matters for migration when the choice of destination is considered, which is discussed later. The household size finding is even more surprising. When we control for a number of factors it is still a negative effect. It may reflect that small households are new households with a need for income and a young household head. Age of household head may be vital in taking a decision

to send a family member to migrate, based on the household head's knowledge and experience. Mean age of household heads for migration households is quite older (45.7 years). Percentage distribution by age category according to the cut-off point based on the mean age (less than 46 and 46 years and above) also supports this statement that households with heads aged 46 years and older (39 percent) are significantly higher than those with household heads of less than 46 years (28 percent). Probit also demonstrates the age of household head has an increasingly marginal effect on migration. Both findings indicate that households with older head have a higher chance of being involved in migration.

The variation in migration between castes and ethnic groups, representing cultural capital, is significant. Migration is higher among hill high caste, hill *Dalits* and Muslims than it is among Tarai Dalits. The probit regression follows a similar pattern. Migration of all hill groups is significantly higher as compared to the reference group of Tarai Dalits. The probability of migration is quite high among the hill high caste (0.202) compared to Tarai Dalits. Historically, migration of hill groups has been higher than that of Tarai groups. There may be two reasons: first, economic viability of hills and mountain is limited; and second, the state policies have been in favour of the hill groups. The former reason compels hill groups to look for new

Independent Variables		Marginal effect (dF/dx)	Robust Std.Err.
Economic Assets	Land Value (in millions)	0.140**	0.049
	Land Value Squared (in millions)	-0.036*	0.016
Human Capital	Literacy of Household Head#	-0.150**	0.022
	Household Size	-0.015**	0.004
	Age of Household Head	-0.013**	0.004
	Age of Household Head (Squared)	0.000**	0.000
Cultural Capital	Hill High Caste#	0.202**	0.073
	Hill Janajatis#	0.156*	0.072
	Hill Dalits#	0.159*	0.078
	Tarai High Caste#	0.057	0.065
	Tarai Janajatis#	0.033	0.071
	Muslims#	0.135	0.075
Geographical Capital	Western Mountain/Hill#	0.165**	0.035
	Western Tarai#	0.140**	0.046
	Eastern Tarai#	0.159**	0.042
	Distance to Market Center (hrs.)	-0.004*	0.002
Wald c2=148.40		Prob>c2=0.000	
Pseudo R2=0.0558		N=2,747	

Table 3: Probit Estimates, Marginal Effect in Probability of Choosing Migration.

Note: Standard Error Adjusted for Clustering.

** P>|z| is 0.01; * P>|z| is 0.05.(#) dF/dx is for discrete change of dummy variable from 0 to 1.

opportunities and the latter facilitates their grasp of the new opportunities. In case of eco-development regions, migration is significantly higher in the western mountain/hills (40.7 percent) than the eastern mountain/hills (26.1 percent), western Tarai (32.3 percent) and eastern Tarai (32.7 percent). In the regression, the eastern hills are the reference, with the lowest level of migration.

Distance to the market center has a negative effect on migration. This may be because the market center provides employment opportunities, which give income; it provides access to other areas through transportation and communication; and network and labor agencies for migration mainly concentrate in the market center.

	Background characteristics	Destinations			
		Rural Nepal	Urban Nepal	India	Other Countries
Economic Asset	Landholding				
	Have Land	79.2	86.3*	85.4*	90.0***
	Landless	20.8	13.7	14.6	10.0
	Quintile of Land Value				
	Poorest	26.2	16.3	19.7	11.1
	Poor	17.4	12.3	18.8	18.2
	Middle	20.0	21.1	24.1	16.9
	Rich	15.7	20.9	26.1	25.8
Richest	20.8	29.4	11.3	28.0	
Human Capital	Literacy of HH Head				
	Illiterate	63.2	61.7	74.8**	55.0
	Literate	36.8	38.3	25.2***	45.0
	Family Size				
	Small Family (1-5)	62.6	48.9**	50.1**	55.4
	Medium Family (6-7)	21.2	30.9	28.3	21.4
	Large Family (8+)	16.1	20.3	21.6	23.2
	Age Group of HH Head				
<46	44.2	37.8	51.4	41.4	
≥46	55.8	62.2	48.7	58.6	
Mean Age of HH Head	49.7	50.9	45.0	48.1	
Cultural Capital	Caste and Ethnicity				
	Hill High Caste	33.5	34.3	40.9	25.2
	Hill <i>Janajatis</i>	31.9	35.3	15.4**	42.5
	Hill <i>Dalits</i>	5.0	6.4	14.3	8.1
	Tarai High Caste	10.6	8.6	11.9	10.8
	Tarai <i>Janajatis</i>	8.8	9.4	6.0	5.5
	Tarai <i>Dalits</i>	5.8	1.2	4.4	0.7
Muslims	4.4	4.8	7.2	7.2	
Geographical Capital	Eco-development Region				
	Western Mountain/Hill	21.7	19.3	47.7***	23.8
	Eastern Mountain/Hill	24.7	36.8	7.1*	24.1
	Western Tarai	18.6	11.2	17.9	12.9
	Eastern Tarai	35.1	32.7	27.4	39.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	
Row percent	21.8	20.8	40.0***	17.4	
N	198	189	363	158	

Table 4: Percent of Households Having Migrants by Various Destinations

Note: Percentages are significantly different from reference category (Rural Nepal) at 0.01(***), 0.05 (**) and at 0.10 (*) level.

Source: NLSS II (2003/04) Data Set.

Choice of Destination

This section tests the hypotheses regarding choice of a particular destination over others in the context of social exclusion. Both descriptive and multinomial logit analysis are carried out to examine the hypotheses. The logit results are presented using relative risk ratios (RRR) instead of coefficients. RRR is the ratio of the probability of choosing a particular destination as compared to the reference category, which is rural migration. In other words, the reported parameters measure how one unit change in the independent variable would change the relative likelihood of choosing a particular destination as compared to migration to rural Nepal.

Of the total migrants (33 percent), 42.6 percent have destinations within Nepal (21.8 percent in rural and 20.8 percent in urban destinations), 40 percent went to India and 17.4 percent to other countries (Table 4). Anecdotal evidence suggests that, excluding India, there are more than two million Nepalis currently working in the Middle-East, South-East and East Asia.

Choice of destination is correlated with landholding. Among households that send migrants only to rural Nepal, 21 percent are landless, while only ten percent are landless among those going to third countries. Choice of destination based on economic class represented by quintiles of land value shows the same; the richer households migrate to urban Nepal and other countries, whereas the poorest go to rural Nepal, while India is in an intermediate position. Furthermore, the multinomial logit results show that the probability of all destinations increases with land value (Table 5). Thus, the choice of destinations according to economic assets, with the poor households choosing shorter distances where earnings are relatively low, and the richer households choosing either urban Nepal or longer distance migration where earnings are relatively better. For instance, households with more economic assets are more likely to choose other countries and then urban Nepal as against rural Nepal. India does not seem to be a choice of the richer households over rural Nepal.

The proportion of migrants with an illiterate household head is higher than those with a literate head for all destinations. The gap is considerably wide for households sending migrants to rural Nepal (63.3

percent vs. 36.8 percent) and India (74.8 percent vs. 25.2 percent) meaning that illiterate households are more prone to send migrants to these destinations. Migrants from small families go to rural Nepal, while migrants from medium sized families go to urban Nepal and India. The multinomial analysis supports the binomial findings for both literacy of household head and size of the household. Migration to all destinations is higher for smaller households and households with an illiterate household head. The percentage of households with older heads is relatively higher for those who migrate to urban areas in Nepal and to other countries. However, multinomial logit depicts no clear indication of age of household head in choosing destinations.

Of the Hill high castes and Hill Dalits who migrate, 40.9 percent and 14.3 percent respectively go to India, while 42.5 percent of the hill *Janajatis* who migrate in search of work go to other countries. Tarai *Dalits* go to rural Nepal and India while Muslims go to India and Middle East. When we control for other variables in the multinomial analysis (Table 5), the results are slightly different. In particular, the hill *Janajatis* have a high likelihood of choosing other countries and are less likely to choose India over rural Nepal. Compared to their preference for rural Nepal, Tarai *Janajatis* are less likely to choose India and other countries, and Tarai *Dalits* are less likely to choose urban Nepal and other countries over rural Nepal. The findings support the hypothesis that socially included groups are more likely to choose destinations where opportunities are relatively more developed.

Interviews in the field suggest that Tarai *Dalits* and *Janajatis*, especially Musahar, Bantar, Jhangad, and Santhal regularly go to India for seasonal works, planting and harvesting paddy. Some people who are familiar with the destination go first and arrange employment, to be joined later by relatives and fellow villagers. People of hill origin mostly go to other countries, because their relatives and friends are already there. Even though hill origin migrants at the destination are not able to obtain visas for their friends and kin, they are able to educate them in the procedures to follow for migration to that destination. And even if they are unable to do this, new migrants will be helped by the presence of relatives and friends at the destination.

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable: Migration Destinations		
	Urban	India	Other countries
Economic Assets			
Land Value (million)	2.72** (1.38)	1.13 (0.90)	3.59** (2.21)
Land Value Squared (million)	0.77 (0.14)	0.49 (0.29)	0.71 (0.16)
Human Capital			
Literacy of HH Head (Y=1)	0.97 (0.23)	0.51*** (0.13)	1.10 (0.29)
Household Size	1.05 (0.06)	1.21*** (0.05)	1.15*** (0.06)
Age of HH head	1.04 (0.04)	1.01 (0.04)	0.97 (0.04)
Age of HH head (Squared)	0.99 (0.00)	0.99 (0.00)	0.97 (0.00)
Cultural Capital			
Hill High Caste (Y=1)	0.89 (0.50)	0.72 (0.39)	0.58 (0.36)
Hill <i>Janajatis</i> (Y=1)	0.91 (0.50)	0.34** (0.18)	1.27 (0.74)
Hill <i>Dalits</i> (Y=1)	1.40 (0.96)	1.14 (0.72)	1.76 (1.17)
Tarai High Caste (Y=1)	0.67 (0.40)	0.92 (0.45)	0.56 (0.31)
Tarai <i>Janajatis</i> (Y=1)	1.11 (0.62)	0.37** (0.21)	0.38* (0.23)
Tarai <i>Dalits</i> (Y=1)	0.23* (0.21)	0.54 (0.38)	0.10** (0.11)
Geographical Capital			
Western Mountain/Hill (Y=1)	0.55* (0.18)	7.00*** (2.75)	1.31 (0.48)
Western Tarai (Y=1)	0.40*** (0.15)	2.87*** (1.19)	0.85 (0.38)
Eastern Tarai (Y=1)	0.75 (0.28)	1.73 (0.85)	1.68 (0.65)
Distance to Market (hrs.)	1.05 (0.03)	1.02 (0.02)	1.03 (0.03)
Wald $\chi^2=221.04$	Pseudo R ² =0.1254		
Prob> $\chi^2=0.000$	N=905		

Table 5: Multinomial Logit Estimates of Relative Risk Ratios for Choice of Destination

- Note:
1. RRR less than 1 indicates the relative risk is negative.
 2. Base category is non-migrant households.
 3. Standard Error adjusted for clusters and Robust Standard Errors are in parentheses.
 4. *** P>|z| is 0.01; ** P>|z| is 0.05; and * P>|z| is 0.10.

The choice of destination differs among migrants from different origins. Rural Nepal (35.1 percent) and other countries (39.2 percent) have the highest percentage of migrants who originated from eastern Tarai; urban Nepal has the highest percentage of those who are from the eastern mountain/hills (36.8 percent); India has the highest percentage of those from the western mountain/hills (47.7 percent) and rural Nepal and India have the highest percentage of those from the western Tarai. Multinomial result shows that the probability of choosing India as the destination over rural Nepal is 7.0 times higher for migrants from the western mountain/hills, but the effect is negative in choosing urban Nepal. Migrants from the western Tarai are less likely to choose urban Nepal and more likely to choose India. In other words, migrants from western mountain/hills and Tarai are far more likely to choose to go to India rather than elsewhere in rural Nepal. This finding is similar to Gurung (2006b), that more people from far- and mid-western districts migrate to India, and more people from eastern districts migrate to third countries. Both descriptive and multinomial results support our hypothesis regarding choice of destinations for eco-development regions. The distance to a market center is positively correlated with the choice of destinations—urban Nepal, India, and other countries over rural Nepal—but they are not statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

We investigate whether social exclusion affects migration, that is, whether the decision to migrate and the choice of destination are functions of different forms of social exclusion and inclusion. Social exclusion may provide opportunities and constraints for migration. The choice of both migration and destination vary with different forms of social exclusion and inclusion as represented by the socio-economic status of the households. Richer households are more prone to send migrants, and their choice of destination is preferably urban Nepal and third countries. Poor households also send migrants but their preferred choice of destination is India over rural Nepal.

Illiterate household heads are likely to send migrants, but mostly as unskilled labor. Regarding cultural capital, hill people migrate more and they choose destinations that have relatively better economic opportunities, such as urban Nepal and third countries. Tarai people also migrate but to destinations where earnings are relatively lower. Hill *Janajatis* go to the Middle-East, Malaysia and other developed countries. Even though Hill *Janajatis* are considered to be socially excluded, they appear to be included in the migration process, compared to other excluded groups. However, Tarai *Janajatis* and *Dalits* are less likely to choose other countries over rural Nepal. This means the finding supports the hypothesis that socially included groups are more likely to choose destinations where opportunities are relatively more developed.

People living in the mountains and hills go to urban

Nepal and to other countries. India is the preferred choice of destination for migrants from the western mountain/hills and Tarai, whereas urban Nepal and other countries are the preferred choice for eastern Tarai migrants.

To conclude, we find that social exclusion, as defined by access to different types of capital, shapes migration. But it affects both benefits and costs, so in sum the estimated effects are not always obvious; for example, illiterate people migrate more than the literate. Social exclusion is not a theoretical framework *per se*, but it is one of various perspectives that can be applied to understand processes and outcomes of social and economic development. As we have attempted to illustrate, it is a useful framework for understanding migration as a social and economic process.

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FIGURE 1: STUPA MARKING TRAIL IN KUTANG, GORKHA DISTRICT. (PHOTO: G. CHILDS).