

PROCEEDINGS AND PAPER ABSTRACTS  
OF THE  
Himalayan Policy Research Conference (Eleventh Annual)  
Nepal Study Center

Thursday, October 20, 2016, Madison Concourse Hotel and Governors' Club, Pre-conference  
Venue of the 45<sup>th</sup> South Asian Conference at the University of Wisconsin-- Madison

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## Welcome Note from Editors

On behalf of the editorial board of the *Himalayan Journal of Development and Democracy* (HJDD) and the conference organizing committee, I would like to thank all the participants at the Eleventh Annual Himalayan Policy Research Conference (HPRC) held at the venue of the University of Wisconsin's 45th Annual South Asian Conference, Madison, WI.

As usual, we had a very successful event with an enthusiastic participation from all over. A larger number of abstracts were carefully screened and ranked by a team of our dedicated NSC member scholars – Dr. Jennifer Thacher, Dr. Mukti Upadhyay, Dr. Vijaya Sharma, Dr. Sakib Mahmud, Dr. Prakash Adhikari, and Dr. Shikha Silwal. NSC was established at the University of New Mexico in 2004 with the objective to promote policy research related to the South Asian region and the countries of the Himalayan region. The NSC team remains dedicated to creating platforms for the enhancement of knowledge sharing, particularly in the areas of sustainable development, environment, poverty, governance, and health. Among its other prominent activities, NSC publishes an e-portal *Development Journal of the South* which is a peer reviewed journal and maintains an electronic repository *Himalayan Research Papers Archive* to allow scholars to upload, store, and disseminate policy research, coordinates the Himalayan study abroad program, and doctoral and post-doctoral research projects.

Nepal Study Center has added a milestone by facilitating the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the University of New Mexico and the Kathmandu University (KU) and the Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)'s 8-country Himalayan University Consortium (HUC). As a part of the international collaboration, NSC formed an interdisciplinary team at UNM and went to Nepal to advance understanding of the linkages and feedback mechanisms between biophysical and social factors. This is a research initiative developed with the Lumbini Center for Sustainability of Pratiman Neema Memorial Foundation.

Our inaugural HPRC in 2006 was ambitious in ensuring a significant convergence of researchers working on policy relevant issues on South Asia. That foundation work led to consecutive successes in the following years and has now made HPRC a durable annual event. We hope that these conferences, together with research activities performed at NSC and by its research affiliates, will culminate in the formation of an *Association for Himalayan Policy Research*. In recognition of the activities directly and indirectly supported by NSC, many scholars from North America, South Asia, Europe, the Far East, and Australia have joined this network. Our policy research association will continue to expand this global network of scholars, professionals, and policy practitioners interested in the development of the South Asian region.

The Center is undertaking this new initiative to promote scholarly dialogue on issues with a common theme affecting the three continents --South Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The International Development and Sustainability--South-South Initiative (IDS-SSI) is a common platform scholars and students, who are doing development-related research in different cultural settings across the globe.

We are grateful to the University of Wisconsin's 45th Annual South Asian Conference for giving us the pre-conference venue. We are also thankful to those who have provided

financial support to conduct this conference. We appreciate the help from the staff and graduate students of the Department of Economics, UNM, and the goodwill and support of many friends of NSC. We particularly thank UNM students Naresh Nepal, and Soumi Roy Chowdhury for their assistance. Finally, we would like to thank our guest editors Vijaya R Sharma and Soumi Roy Chowdhury for their help in preparing the HPRC proceedings. NSC also would like to thank NSC secretariat Tami Henri for her support.

Sincerely,



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Alok K. Bohara, PhD  
Editor, HJDD  
Professor, Department of Economics, University of New Mexico

## **Acknowledgement**

The Nepal Study Center and the conference organizing team would like to acknowledge financial contribution being made by various individuals and organizations.

Dr. Upendra Mahato, President NRN ICC: \$1000.00

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Prof. Phil Ganderton, Chair, Department of Economics, UNM: \$500.00

Mr. Naresh Koirala, Vancouver, Canada: \$200.00

Dr. Alok K. Bohara: UNM, \$2,500.00 (faculty development funds)

NSC would like to encourage all the friends of NSC to continue their financial support so that it can successfully undertake various tasks: update software, run conferences, produce proceedings, maintain electronic research repository (under construction), advertise and publish journals (HJDD and LDNB). NSC is a not-for-profit organization registered under the College of Arts and Sciences, University of New Mexico.

NSC would like to thank Dr. Jugal Bhurtel, Dr. Dharmendra Dhakal, Dr. Kamal Upadhyaya, Dr. Gaury Adhikary, Maria Daw, Mike Milligan, Mani Nepal, Anand Regmi, and Steven J Archambault for their support and encouragement.

## **PAPER ABSTRACTS**

### **Developmental Issues**

#### **Households in times of war: Adaptation strategies during the Nepal civil war**

**François Libois<sup>1</sup>**

Paris School of Economics

This paper analyses short and medium term consequences of the Nepalese civil war on rural households' livelihood and on the inter-group distribution of income. Conclusions rely on two rich datasets: the Nepal Living Standards Survey collected before, during and after the war, and the dataset on the number of killings by month and village during the eleven years of the conflict. Using the survey timing as a quasi-natural experiment, results indicate that in the short-run all households lose, but high castes by a larger extent. Short-term coping strategies determine medium term diverging recovery paths. Non-high castes allocate more labor in agriculture and loose more in the medium term. High castes diversify their income sources, notably by relying on migration, which allows them to recover.

For full working paper visit <https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3619>

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## **Functional and financial devolution to urban local bodies and their performance in India**

**Brijesh Kumar Bajpai<sup>2</sup>**

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India has headed towards a significant political revolution, almost simultaneously with economic reforms, in the early nineties of the twentieth century. Relative rise of market vis-à-vis state and relative importance of local government vis-à-vis central and state governments may be viewed as extension of the same logic. The import of perpetual existence, ensured with passage of 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Acts, 1992 is yet to be fully realized in terms of complete devolution of functional and financial powers to the elected local bodies across the states in India.

The present paper addresses the issues related to the functional and financial devolution and powers of urban local bodies in the state of Uttar Pradesh in India. An attempt has been made to analyze why urban local bodies have become weak and are not able to perform effectively as vibrant democratic units of self-government. In order to attain this, the Constitution (Seventy Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992, has made it mandatory for the state governments to constitute Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). A new part, Part IX A, has been enshrined in the Constitution after Part IX of the Constitution. It deals with matters like definition, constitution of municipalities and ward committees, reservation, disqualifications, powers and responsibilities, powers to impose taxes, all relating to the urban local bodies. Article 243 Y stipulates that the Finance Commission constituted under Article 243 I shall review the financial position of the urban local bodies and make recommendations regarding distribution of resources between the State and the urban local bodies, determination of taxes, duties etc. grants-in-aid to urban local bodies, among other matters.

To assess the performance of ULBs as enshrined in the *principals of local self-governance*, the paper examines the status of functional and financial devolution to ULBs in the state of Uttar Pradesh and to find out the perception and satisfaction level of the people about the quality of their service delivery. The analysis and results are based on official records, interviews with officials and elected representatives of the ULBs and a detailed field survey to assess the level of satisfaction of the people about the quality of service delivery of ULBs at various levels. Opinion of the public about various aspects of services has been collected on the scale of 1 to 10. The paper is based on a recent study undertaken by the author, sponsored by the Fourth State Finance Commission Uttar Pradesh, India.

The results of the paper show that the local bodies have not been able to fulfil the expectations, which were aroused by the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional amendment. Some basic factors like, lack of own income sources, non-transfer of all mandatory functions, weak administrative system, unhealthy relations between elected representatives and officials of ULBs and unsatisfactory service delivery have emerged as basic bottlenecks in the process of healthy functioning of ULBs. The major reason has been the lack of political commitment and unwillingness to devolve funds and functions to the local bodies on the part of the state

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government. This is sometimes justified on the ground that the local bodies do not have the capacity to discharge the functions. The correct approach would be to empower the local bodies in terms of functions, funds and functionaries. Simultaneously measures are required to build up the capacity of the local bodies so that they can handle all functions expected from them as mentioned in the Twelfth Schedule of the Constitution.

For full working paper visit <https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3601>

## **Gender, class and nation in the foothills of the Himalayas: Student aspirations and the construction of the new middle class**

**Denise Scott<sup>3</sup>**

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As in other places, in India dominant beliefs and ideals largely reflect the beliefs and experiences of the middle class. As such, social constructions like “respectable femininity and masculinity,” find their roots in professional, middle class perspectives and experiences. Likewise, these gender constructions help define and reinforce class. In the face of rapid globalization and increased educational opportunities for both women and men in India, it is important to consider students as actors in the construction of the new middle class as it interacts with definitions of respectable, or ideal, femininity and masculinity.

Researchers have so far focused on those who directly feed or occupy middle class positions, as does Radhakrishnan’s work on IT professionals. I argue that it is no less important to look at the “aspiring” middle class – those who may or may not be able to reach global professional middle class positions, but whose aspirations and attitudes, their hopes and desires – even if they never actually reach them – give credibility to dominant middle class ideologies and hence a new definition of India as a nation.

Thus far, studies of college students in India are largely concentrated on the urban middle class, leaving out a critical mass of non-urban college students who also contribute to the construction of gender and class, albeit perhaps differently than their urban counterparts. This paper examines the extent to which, and how, middle class college students in foothills of the Himalayas, conform to, and thus reinforce, beliefs about respectable femininity and masculinity and what this means for the making of the new middle class in India.

This study draws from 197 questionnaires and 38 in-depth interviews administered to students who attend several well-regarded private and public universities in the Garhwali area of the northern Indian Himalayas to explore how gender and class ideologies express themselves, and are reproduced, in the aspirations and attitudes of students. Questions were asked with regard to students’ work aspirations, family expectations, and the relationship between gender ideologies and career and family aspirations. Although all interviews were conducted in English, I enlisted the help of Hindi-speaking research assistants in all locations in order to clarify and explain concepts and questions.

Both male and female students in my study report aspirations and expectations that are, in important ways, aligned with the new kinds of respectable femininity and masculinity that are emerging in India. The paper discusses the implications of these findings for the development of a new middle class in India. One important implication is that, by reinforcing dominant middle class ideologies, non-urban students in the Himalayan region play an important part in legitimizing middle-class interests, and hence what it means to be a modern Indian – even though they may never achieve middle-class status.

## **Reference**

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Radhakrishnan, Smitha. 2009. "Professional Women, Good Families: Respectable Femininity and the Cultural Politics of a 'New India.'" *Qualitative Sociology*, 32:195-212.

For full working paper visit

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3630>

# Education, Health and Social Safety Nets

## Recruitment in Nepal

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**Oliver Vanden Eynde<sup>6</sup>**

Paris School of Economics

In this research project we examine the long-term economic effects of the recruitment of soldiers from Nepal into the Indian and British Army.

**Motivation:** There is a large literature on the labor market and educational returns to military service. In most countries, the military is a unique employer, not just because of its size (the military is typically one of the largest employers), but also because the military tends to recruit disproportionately more from disadvantaged groups, it offers extensive training on the job, and it requires its employees to live away from their home and family. Hence, voluntary military service in professional armed forces could expose disadvantaged recruits to new ideas and skills, which in turn could improve the economic opportunities of theirs and their families. In the context of the US armed forces, evidence suggests that recruits from disadvantaged groups benefit mildly from voluntary service in terms of earnings (Angrist, 1998). However, very little evidence is available on how these findings translate to a developing country context. Nevertheless, the returns to military service in professional armies could be much higher in developing countries, as the average human capital in their populations tends to be lower. In a recent paper, Vanden Eynde (2016) shows how voluntary war time service in the colonial Indian Army raised literacy rates in heavily recruited communities. In spite of mild evidence of intergenerational transfers, this paper cannot assess long term impacts because of the dramatic population movements that took place during India's Partition. Our project tries to estimate the long-term effects of military recruitment in a country that offers a particularly interesting environment to assess the long-term impacts of military service: Nepal.

The British colonizers were particularly impressed by the fighting skills of the so-called "Gurkha's" during the Gorkha war (1814-1816). As a result, 200 years ago, the East India Company started to recruit soldiers from a large region that is now part of Nepal. The Gurkha soldiers provided many regiments to the colonial Indian Army, and they were heavily relied on during the two World Wars and more recently in the Falklands war or in UN peacekeeping operations. After India's independence, both the British and the Indian army keep on recruiting soldiers from Nepal until the present days. Currently, 25,000 young Nepalese hill-men apply for not more than 250 positions each year. The

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transformational role that Gurkha soldiers played in the development of their villages is well documented by historians and sociologists (e.g., Kergoat, 2008, p.273), who often suggest that they are particularly instrumental in improving the educational facilities in their communities. Our paper aims to provide the first quantitative evaluation of the hypotheses that Gurkha recruitment contributed to the development of rural Nepal. Our empirical strategy, which we will develop in more detail below, relies on the fact that recruitment patterns were first established at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century but are likely to have remained persistent ever since, as the networks of existing soldiers were used to find new recruits. A key constraint that gave rise to concentrated recruitment at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century could have been the reliance on a limited number of recruitment centers, each responsible for the recruitment of certain tribal groups. We propose to use the distance to these recruitment centers as an instrument for the intensity of Gurkha recruitment, in order to identify the impact of Gurkha recruitment on economic and educational outcomes.

While our project naturally contributes to the literature on military service described above, we will also contribute to the literature on the long-term impact of migration on sending countries (Chauvet and Mercier, 2014). Moreover, our work will help to understand the persistent effects of military recruitment during the colonial period, adding to work about the long-term impact of colonial institutions (e.g. Huillery, 2009; Dell, 2010).

**Data and empirical approach:** Our project will use data from the Nepalese census (1991, 2001, and 2011) and the Nepal Living Standard Survey (1995-1996, 2003-2004, and 2010-2011) to measure education, income, and public good provision at the level of individuals and villages (“VDCs”). I have already worked with this data for existing papers (Baland et al., 2015, Libois, 2015).

Our suggested instrument will use distance to the 19<sup>th</sup> century recruitment centers for the relevant tribes. We have already located the 6 recruitment centers on GIS maps (see map in appendix).

To test our first stage, we require information about the recruitment intensity in Nepalese villages. We suggest measuring the exposure of villages to military recruitment from different sources. First, we can use the distribution of World War casualties as a proxy for recruitment intensities, as in Vanden Eynde (2016) and Jha and Wilkinson (2015). We cleaned the casualty data and have now extracted village names for almost all casualties. A second potential source of recruitment estimates are administrative sources from the British administration. We have identified historical sources that can be consulted in the British Library (London) that will probably contain lists of heavily recruited villages.

Empirical approach included instrument, potentially other criteria imposed by the Brits as an IV (see VandenEynde 2016) and potentially exploit changes in the British recruitment rules, especially concerning the minimal educational background of applicants and their ethnic membership, to estimate the aspirational effect of recruitment based on difference-in-difference between cohorts.

**Preliminary results:** As preliminary strategy, we use the location of the two recruitment centers and their outposts created by the British in 1885 (see map in the appendix) and correlate them with measures of education at the household level. The creation of these centers marks a turning point in Gurkha recruitment since Nepal and the British started to cooperate to ease the recruitment process (Rathaur, 2001). Only four ethnic groups of the Hills were recruited by the British: Magars, Gurungs, Rais and Limbus.

Our hypothesis is that the recruitment in these specific communities has long term persistent effects on education and still has some direct influence because past recruitment hugely determines present recruitment, despite the displacement of the new recruitment centers (in Katmandu and Pokhara).

Our preliminary results hold in three tables and are all organized in the same way. The explanatory variables of interest are (1) the interaction between a variable identifying household belonging to eligible ethnic groups (the “Gurkha” variable”) and the distance to the closest recruitment center of 1885 and (2) the share of eligible households in a village and the distance to the closest recruitment center. The first variable intend to capture benefit limited to the historically eligible groups, while the second intend to capture public good type effects. We control for Gurkha eligibility at the household or at the village level, distance to the closest recruitment center in 1885, distance to the Southern border of Nepal and distance to Kathmandu. In all regressions, we also include time and belt-zone (see figure 2) fixed effects to clean our estimations from South-North or East-West effects.

We find that the closest to the historical location of a recruitment center an eligible household lives, the highest is the average education of its teenagers. The first column of table 1 indicates that if an eligible household lives 100km further away from a recruitment center, one’s teenagers loose, on average, 0.4 years of education. The second column of table 1 is consistent with the first, but shows that the effect might be driven by the share of eligible households living in the village. This suspicion is confirmed by the third column. All households living in a village with a large proportion of eligible households have a higher level of education if they live closer to a recruitment center.

The story is less sharp while looking at the average level of education of adults (column 4-6 in table 1), nevertheless average education of adult might suffer more from compositional effect. In table 2, we show that our results hold if we focus on the level of education achieved by the most educated member of the household. Consistently with the story of path dependence in the recruitment, columns 4-6 in table 3 show that eligible households do receive more income from pensions today if they live closer to an historical recruitment center, and less if they are far away. This is not the case for non-eligible households.

One consistent story with our preliminary findings is that former Gurkha soldiers have higher income and use part of it to finance public goods helping all inhabitants of their village to achieve higher level of education. The Gurkha recruitment would have positive spillovers on their immediate neighbors.

Notice that our results are robust if we drop one of the historical recruitment centers. Point estimates are however slightly smaller. This is particularly reassuring in the case of

Tribeni, the recruitment center based within Nepal because is it relatively close to Pokhara (75km).

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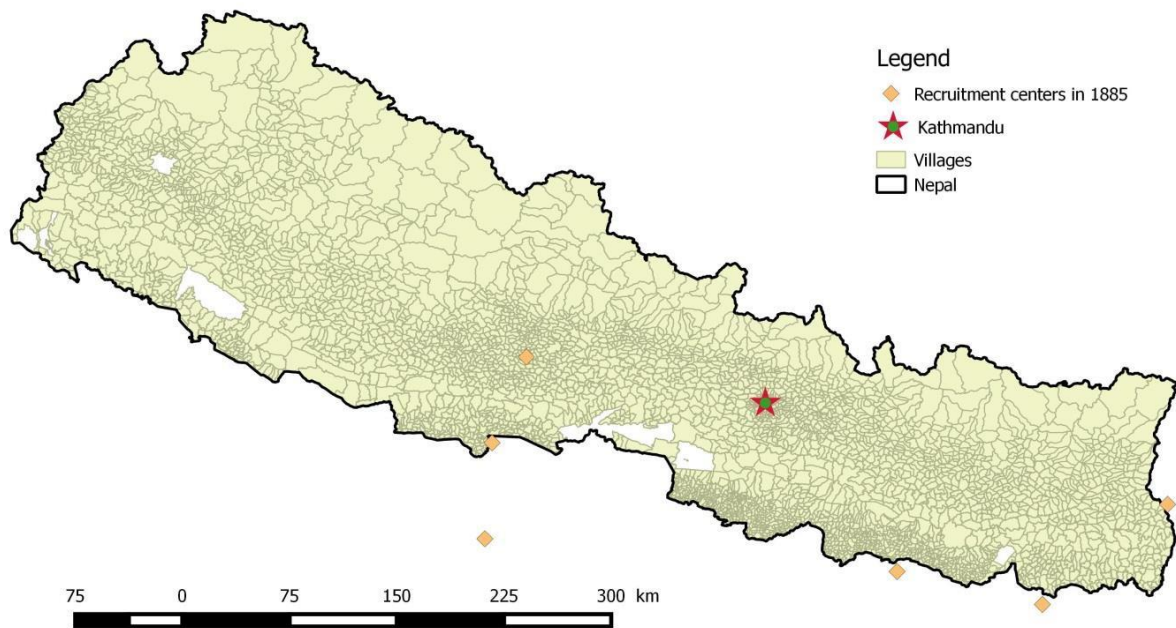
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## APPENDIX

*Map of Nepal and Gurkha recruitment centers in 1885*



**Villages surveyed in the second round of data collection (2003-2004)**

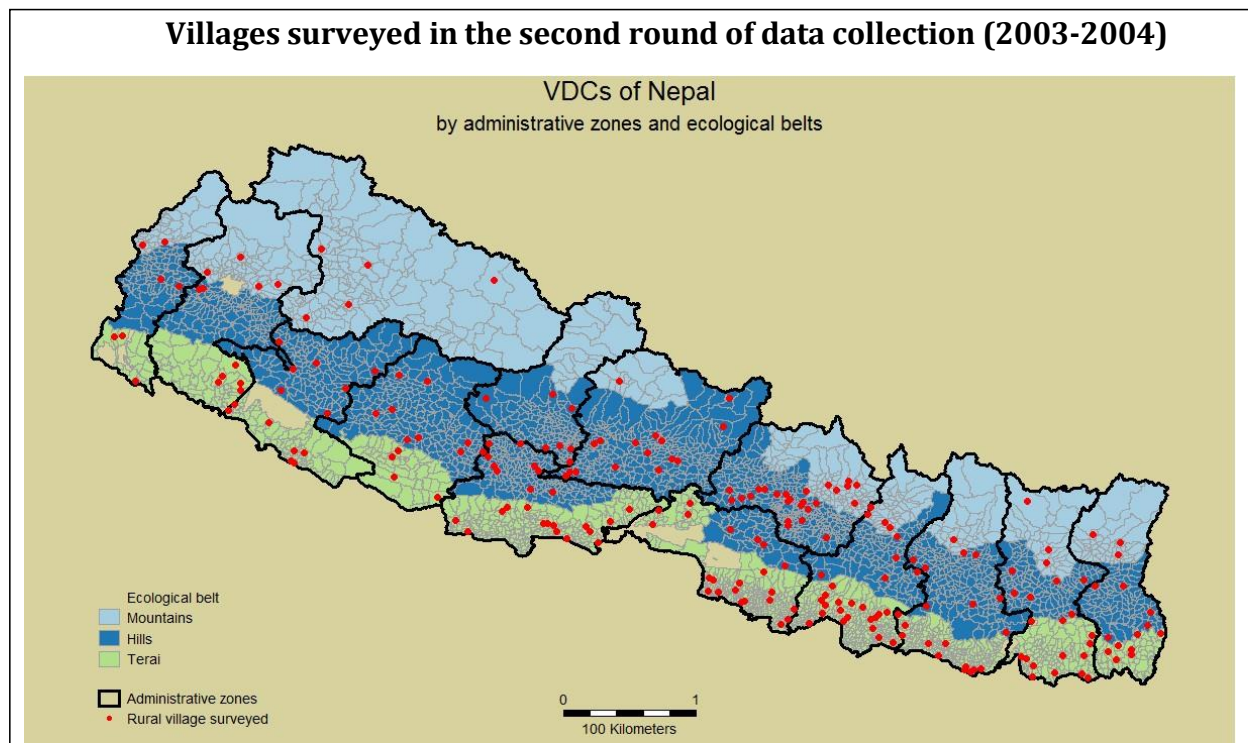


TABLE 1

						(1)
		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Average education of teenagers		Average education of adults				
Gurkha X distanceto 1885 recruitment center	-0.00410** [-2.50]		-0.00141 [-0.92]	0.00181 [1.01]		0.00513*** [2.94]
Village Gurkha share X distance to 1885 recruitment center		-0.00993*** [-2.71]	-0.00852** [-2.13]		-0.00519 [-1.27]	-0.0103** [-2.27]
Gurkha	0.238 [1.50]		0.284* [1.67]	-0.732*** [-3.80]		-0.742*** [-3.47]
Village Gurkha share		0.315 [0.94]	0.0289 [0.07]		-0.560 [-1.38]	0.182 [0.38]
Distance to closest 1885 recruitment center	-0.00145 [-0.63]	-0.000253 [-0.11]	-0.000265 [-0.11]	-0.00377 [-1.44]	-0.00243 [-0.90]	-0.00243 [-0.90]
Distance to India	-0.00692** [-2.27]	-0.00691** [-2.33]	-0.00689** [-2.32]	-0.0101*** [-2.70]	-0.00978*** [-2.67]	-0.00978*** [-2.67]
Distance to Kathmandu	-0.00277 [-1.47]	-0.00317* [-1.71]	-0.00318* [-1.72]	-0.00590*** [-2.63]	-0.00628*** [-2.84]	-0.00628*** [-2.84]
Observations	6365	6365	6365	9217	9217	9217

Standard errors clustered at the village level, t statistics in brackets, \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01  
All regressions include survey wave dummies and belt-zone fixed effects

TABLE 2

		(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(1) (6)
		Highest education level achieved in the household		Highest education level achieved in the excluding household head		
Gurkha X distance to 1885 recruitment center	-0.00300 [-1.16]		0.00226 [0.97]	-0.00497* [-1.95]		-0.000638 [-0.26]
Village Gurkha share X distance to 1885 recruitment center		-0.0142** [-2.55]	-0.0165*** [-2.72]		-0.0145*** [-2.74]	-0.0138** [-2.38]
Gurkha	-0.531** [-2.02]		-0.409 [-1.42]	-0.234 [-0.86]		-0.0888 [-0.30]
Village Gurkha share		-0.451 [-0.88]	-0.0418 [-0.07]		-0.220 [-0.43]	-0.132 [-0.22]
Distance to closest 1885 recruitment center	-0.00495 [-1.33]	-0.00268 [-0.72]	-0.00268 [-0.72]	-0.00328 [-0.93]	-0.00141 [-0.40]	-0.00140 [-0.40]
Distance to India	-0.0172*** [-3.44]	-0.0167*** [-3.45]	-0.0167*** [-3.45]	-0.0184*** [-3.95]	-0.0181*** [-4.01]	-0.0181*** [-4.01]
Distance to Kathmandu	-0.00582* [-1.89]	-0.00661** [-2.20]	-0.00661** [-2.20]	-0.00557* [-1.90]	-0.00629** [-2.20]	-0.00629** [-2.20]
Observations	9221	9221	9221	8948	8948	8948

Standard errors clustered at the village level, t statistics in brackets, \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01  
All regressions include survey wave dummies and belt-zone fixed effects

TABLE 3

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Age of household head	Income from pensions		
Gurkha X distanceto 1885 recruitment center	-0.0269*** [-3.05]		-0.0209** [-1.97]	-105.7* [-4.35]
Village Gurkha share X distance to 1885 recruitment center		-0.0383** [-2.52]	-0.0174 [-0.96]	
Gurkha	3.368*** [3.72]		2.448** [2.21]	15802. [5.20]
Village Gurkha share		4.936*** [3.24]	2.487 [1.34]	
Distance to closest 1885 recruitment center	-0.00602 [-0.75]	-0.00454 [-0.54]	-0.00454 [-0.54]	-44.52 [-2.17]
Distance to India	-0.0105 [-0.74]	-0.0101 [-0.72]	-0.0101 [-0.72]	-10.3 [-0.53]
Distance to Kathmandu	0.0168** [2.38]	0.0173** [2.44]	0.0173** [2.44]	-17.3 [-0.93]
Observations	9198	9198	9198	812

Standard errors clustered at the village level, t statistics in brackets, \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01 All regressions include survey wave dummies and belt-zone fixed effects

**Parental absence, remittances and educational investment of children left behind: Evidence from Nepal**

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This study investigates the causal impact of work-related migration of parents on left behind children's education and investment on schooling. To isolate the direct impact of parental absence, we estimate the effects of parental migration and remittances separately. Using third round of Nepal Living Standard Survey and applying a two-step process to address self-selection into the migration statuses and correct for endogeneity into remittances, we find negative effect of parental absence and positive effect of remittances on education of children left behind. To further explore the heterogeneous impact of parental migration, we extend our analysis allowing the heterogeneity by educational status of mother. We find that the children of educated mother bear relatively less burden from parental migration. Furthermore, we find some evidence for heterogeneous effects of parental migration by child's gender and age.

For full working paper visit

<https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/nsc/article/view/3617>

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## **Geopolitical Conflicts and Human Rights**

### **Global refugee crisis and South Asia's geopolitics: The case of the Bhutanese refugees**

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The exodus of the Lhotshampas of ethnic Nepali descent from Bhutan since the 1990s is another case of forced migration in South Asia. After 17 years in refugee camps in Nepal and failed negotiations by the United Nation High Commissioner of Refugees to repatriate the refugees back to Bhutan, third country resettlement became the only solution. Since 2008, 100,000 refugees have been resettled in the United States, Australia, Canada, U.K. and the Netherlands, with over 86,000 in the United States. This paper seeks to examine the implications of South Asia's geopolitics on the creation and management of this refugee crisis which generated a lot of international attention and concern. The issues at stake were the legality of Bhutan's citizenship policies and the labeling of its bona fide citizens as illegal migrants, refusing repatriation and negotiation for a solution. This also raised the question of the refusal of India to offer asylum to the refugees when they entered India during their initial flight and failure to offer or even find a durable solution to the crisis. The third issue was the deliberate policy of Nepal at 'warehousing' the refugees and finally refusing local integration and insisting on repatriation as the only solution. While assessing the Bhutanese Refugee Crisis one cannot ignore the historic treaty relations of mutual cooperation, understanding and friendship between India, Bhutan and Nepal and the political and economic relations involved. This led to overtly magnifying a crisis that could have been resolved regionally and amicably. Were the Bhutanese refugees victims of South Asia's geopolitics? The Bhutanese refugee crisis was the failure of South Asian countries to amicably resolve a domestic crisis leading to a gross human rights violation and adding to the refugee crisis of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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## **Humans, Hanguls and “Indian Dogs” in Kashmir**

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Joining the "human rights comics" (Hong) genre popularized by Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, and including Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* and Joe Sacco's *Palestine*, Malik Sajad's graphic novel *Munnu* (2015) seeks to expose human rights violations in Kashmir to an international audience. This paper will closely consider how *Munnu* constructs its human rights claims on behalf of Kashmiris by recourse to the non-human. Attending particularly to Sajad's use of the humanoid *hangul* to figure the Kashmiri, and to the presence of (non-humanoid) dogs everywhere in the novel, this paper will ask: how does the non-human come to figure -- in surprisingly gendered ways -- the rights-worthiness of humans in an occupied territory? How does it reinscribe or contest the primacy of the human enshrined in human rights discourses? And how might an attention to non-human figures reconstruct studies of the occupation and claims to human rights in Kashmir?

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## **Searching for the disappeared in Kashmir: Gendered activism and the international human rights framework**

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Since 1989 in the Indian controlled Kashmir more than 10,000 men have been subjected to enforced disappeared in the counter-insurgency actions by the Indian army. Kashmiri women mainly Muslim mothers and wives have organized under the banner of Association of the Parents of the Disappeared (APDP) to search for their disappeared men. In this paper I trace how these APDP activists propagate and sustain their struggle and operate under the rubric of international human rights framework to make a case for their search. This paper will shed light on how the under state violence the political activism of Muslim women evolves through the use of international human rights rubric and its relation with the Islamic injunctions that is stereotypically known for curtailing female public role. I will illustrate how the language of human rights proliferates collectively within the APDP as an organization and in the individual lives of the women. By providing ethnographic evidence of how the human rights framework negotiates with social, cultural and religious aspects of the lives of APDP activists, I will show how the international human rights framework is used to legitimize women's activism in public, and brought at par with Islamic values of mercy, justice and gender rights.

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**Exposing the contradictions of the state: Complexities of legal mobilization in Kashmir**

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This paper draws on ethnographic research as well as critical readings of the legal archive to show how state power is exercised and also contested in landmark cases of fake encounters, disappearance, and custodial killing. In these cases, human rights lawyers have successfully argued for compensation as public remedy for violation of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution that guarantees the right to life. The paper considers how and why human rights lawyers cite precedent in Indian case law as they seek to challenge impunity and expose the contradictions of the state. It also considers the political meanings and consequences of compensation as public remedy under conditions of occupation.

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## **Agro-forestry, Energy and Environmental Issues**

### **Assessing the impact of climate change on farmland values in Nepal: A Ricardian approach**

**Samrat Bikram Kunwar<sup>13</sup>**

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This paper presents an application of Ricardian approach to assess the impact of climate change on farmland values in Nepal. The Ricardian approach is estimated using a panel fixed effects model. The results are tested with two models that account for spatial effects: a spatial lag model and a spatial error model. The findings reveal that Nepalese farmlands are sensitive to climate change. This result is consistent in both the spatial and non-spatial analysis. The inclusion of the spatial effects, however, produced significantly more conservative estimates of climate change impacts. Average temperature in the spring and summer season and the average rainfall in the spring, autumn and winter season had an impact on farmland values. In addition, the existences of non-linear relationships between climate change and farmland values were found in certain seasons. The results from marginal impacts suggested the optimal temperature to be between 23.88<sup>0</sup>C and 29.36<sup>0</sup>C, where the land values increased by Rs.849 per hectare, for every degree increase in temperature. Similarly, for the rainfall, it was found that 1mm increase in average rainfall resulted in an increase in farmland values by Rs.1385 per hectare.

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**Can government-sponsored sustainable agricultural farming practices reduce land decay through crop biodiversity conservation under production uncertainties?**

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Under income uncertainties, agricultural farmers might be influenced by government-sponsored programs that might lead to higher income opportunities by focusing on monoculture at the expense of crop diversification strategy. However, the latter strategy is likely to reduce production uncertainties for agricultural farmers and hence, ensuring sustainable agricultural development in the targeted area. A theoretical model is proposed to understand such possible economic trade-offs between high income-lower crop diversification and lower income-higher crop diversification outcomes resulting from government-sponsored programs and institutions. Empirically testing the findings of the theoretical model in low-income regions that rely on conventional agriculture, such as South Asian countries of Bangladesh and Nepal, could provide new policy insights on encouraging farmers to adopt appropriate crop biodiversity conservation practices that not only reduce land decay but also ensure sustainable income flows under abject poverty.

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## **India's quest for energy security and its West Asia policy**

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India's rapid economic growth is highly dependent on stable access to energy supplies. With increasing growth in the consumption of fossil fuels, India's dependence on imports of oil and hydrocarbons in general would increase substantially in the future which is 37.5 percent of our total imports already, making India search for energy security. Foreign policy therefore has a critical role in ensuring energy security for India. Energy security has, as a result, become a vital factor in Indian foreign policy. However, despite India's ongoing initiatives to secure its increasing energy requirements from all over globe through its policy of diversification, West Asia remains the main source of India's imports providing more than 65 percent of our total imports thereby making energy an important factor in India-West Asia relationship. Since the end of the Cold War India's policy towards West Asia has been governed more by economic and energy considerations and less by the political rhetoric of the past. This paper analyzes India's interests, challenges, and actual energy security policies towards the region and also attempts to study how far India's Quest for Energy Security drives India's West Asia policy.

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## **An analysis of the barriers to cross border trade in hydroelectricity in the Himalayas**

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There are many assumptions held by policymakers and scholars about the potential for hydroelectricity in the Himalayas. The first assumption is that the Himalayan rivers of Bhutan, India, and Nepal are a vast untapped source of hydroelectricity. The second is that the benefits of realizing this potential will provide for a routine cross border trade in relatively clean and sustainable electricity. The third is that despite the perceived benefits there are longstanding barriers that have prevented large scale hydroelectric development.

Oseni and Pollitt (2016) argue that it would be worth understanding what barriers stand in the way of expanding cross border trade in electricity in South Asia and how they can be overcome. There have been, however, numerous attempts to identify and analyze these barriers. This literature includes studies from the Asian Development Bank, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the World Bank as well as individual scholars.

Most of these works focus on certain aspects of the issue but tend to overlook a few important points. This paper will focus on two and argue that firstly the potential for hydroelectricity in Himalayan rivers has been exaggerated and needs to be reconsidered. Secondly, the barriers to hydropower development are not, as often assumed, simply technical questions regarding engineering strategies, environmental impact assessments, regulatory reforms or project financing. Instead, the barriers are much greater. One barrier is the hydroelectric dam itself. The megadams required to sustain a cross border trade in electricity are highly problematic. Another barrier is the legacy of decades of failed hydro-diplomacy especially between India and Nepal.

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## **New Initiative**

### ***Development Journal of the South***

Development Journal of the South (DJS) is an open-access peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journal published by the Nepal Study Center at the University of New Mexico. The journal intends to spur critical debate on issues faced by nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, collectively known as the Global South.

DJS invites innovative papers grounded on theoretical and empirical work addressing sustainable economic, social and political issues of a nation or subnational units. The Journal emphasizes the integration of quantitative and qualitative information from natural, social and behavioral sciences. Insightful reviews of comparative development between two or more regions, between the North and the South, or between South and South are welcome. The goal of the Journal is to inform development debate from public policy and social welfare perspectives. The first issue of the Development Journal of the South (DJS) is out. All the papers published in Vol. 1, No. 1, 2015, of DJS are available in pdf format and are fully downloadable from <https://ejournals.unm.edu/index.php/djs/issue/view/509/showToc>