CHAPTER III
THE SETTING

This chapter presents a brief survey of the structural characteristics of the village communities selected for the study. In order to see things in their right perspective, the village setting is divided into two sections. The first provides a general overview of the localities in relation to their physical features, history, composition and characteristics of the population, institutions, occupational functions, social relationships and neighborhood life. The second section deals with the characteristics of the samples in a comparative frame of their structural differentials.

I. THE VILLAGE LOCALITIES

The localities selected for the study were the two village panchayats in Seti Zone of the Far Western Development Region of Nepal, namely Siddheswor Village Panchayat and Sripur Village Panchayat. The former belonged to Doti district of the Hills and the latter to Kailali district of the Tarai (Map I). Thus, they belonged to two different topographies, viz. the Hills and the Tarai of the country. A brief sketch of each locality is presented in the following.
MAP I. MAP OF NEPAL

(Showing Locations of the Two Village Panchayats)

Districts and zones of Nepal.
The Hill Locality

Physical Features

This locality is situated in the western part of Doti District. It is surrounded by Latamandu Village Panchayat on the east and south-east, parts of Mastamandu Village Panchayat and Dadeldhura district on the north, Dadeldhura district on the west and the Mahabharat mountain range on the south-west (Map II).

The land of this locality consists of mostly hilly terrain. A small portion of flat land, locally known as Sain, stretches along the Seti river basin. The monsoon starts usually at the end of June and lasts till August. Occasional showers are also received during winter when the southern mountains have a snow fall.

The main crops of this locality are paddy and wheat. Besides these, barley, millet, maize, pulses, mustard and potato are also produced. Irrigation facilities are partially available and have been harnessed by the villagers themselves. The agricultural production is barely sufficient for its own consumption requirements.

Historical Sketch

The early history of this locality has not yet been studied. But according to some local sources, this locality was a part of the Jadh territory in early days. Then, it came under the rule of Kshatriya kings forming a part of Doti principality which was ultimately ceded to the kingdom of Nepal in 1990.
During the Rana period, Doti district was divided into a number of administrative areas known as Garkhas. Two of them were Banedungra and Dankot. After the enactment of the Panchayat constitution 1962, the district was reorganized into panchayats. Consequent upon this arrangement, Dankot was divided into three panchayats, namely, Latsamandu, Jijodamandu, and Tijali. But the whole of Banedungra was placed under Banlek Village Panchayat. Again, following the panchayat constitution amendment of 1975, Jijodamandu and Banlek Village Panchayats were combined to form the territory of this locality i.e. Sidheswor Village Panchayat.¹

Social and Economic Features

Population. In Nepal, panchayat-wise detailed information is not yet available in the form of published reports. The available census data presented only population figures. The 1971 census figures showed that the population of the area comprising this panchayat locality was 3983.² A more detailed census was held in 1981, but the detailed report was not published till the time of this writing. However, according to the preliminary results, the population of

¹ This panchayat locality has been further divided into two separate panchayat localities, namely, Jijodamandu and Banlek in 1982 in consequence of the new arrangements made in the panchayat organization in the wake of the historic referendum of 1980.

² At the time of the census, the constituents of this panchayat locality were Jijodamandu and Banlek, their respective populations being 1660 and 2323. See National Planning Commission, HMG, Doti Jilla Ko Gaon Panchayatharuko Wada Anusarko Janamankha, 2031 B.S. (Nepali Central Bureau of Statistics, 1975) pp. 9,20.
this panchayat locality was 45963. This indicates a growth of 15 per cent over a period of ten years. The population was found distributed among 25 villages varying in size.

**Settlement Layout.** The general layout of the village settlements was very congested. They were close clusters of stone-built houses with slated roofs. The houses of the Harijans were small with thatched roof. Generally, a single house was found to have been shared by two or more families. In former times, it seems, people preferred to live in collectivities of villages. They used to settle on or by the side of a ridge. Therefore, most of the old villages were found still presenting the nucleated structure of settlement. In recent years, as the forests have thinned out, people have started to settle in lowlands. For instance, Koral and Banesungri, situated by the side of the river Seti were newly settled areas which presented a little bit scattered village structure4 than most other villages.

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4. Of the three recognizable spatial types of village communities, namely, Nucleated, Line, and Scattered Village structures found in different geographical settings, the villages of this locality closely correspond to the first category. The Newar community of Nepal is found to follow the line village pattern. The third pattern is commonly found in eastern Nepal. For a discussion of village structures, see Bardin, H. Nelson, "Neighbourhood and Community Organization and Trends" (pp. 76-87) in Alvin Bertrand (ed) Rural Sociology: An Analysis of Contemporary Rural Life (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1956) p. 78-87.
In general, the village settlements were found to have been based on castes factor. On the basis of the two dominant castes groups - Brahmins and Kashatriyas - the locality could be divided into two distinct parts. A small stream known as Ghatte Gadh separated them (Map II). The villages on the north-west of the stream were mostly kshatriya villages whereas those on the south-east were mostly Brahman villages. The Harijan population seemed to be more or less distributed on both sides with more preponderance on the west part.

Owing to kinship ties, people living in a village were found to have been linked by bonds of cooperation and amity. The size of the village was considered in terms of the number of households dwelling in it. It was learnt that most affairs of common interest were collectively undertaken by the villagers. In collective campaigns, one person from each household was required to participate. Most villages had their traditional headmen who, in most cases, happened to be the panchayat members also. Some of the villages had two headmen, especially if two caste groups were inhabiting them. Usually, the decision made by the headman was binding on all households of a village.

**Social Structure.** The social structure of this locality was found to have been based on castes system. The main caste groups were Brahman, Kashatriya, and Sudra (Harijan). Each of the groups had further subgroups. The various caste groups were hierarchically stratified. The Brahmans belonged to the top, the Kashatriyas
in the middle and the Sudras at the bottom of the status hierarchy.

The whole social structure of the community cut into two
distinct caste strata. The Brahmans and the Kshatriyas with all
their ramifications were called upper castes. The various occupa-
tional castes of Harijans were called lower castes or Duni in the
local usage. They were considered as untouchables by upper
castes.\(^5\) Obviously, there was no question of upper castes eating
food with or prepared by the lower castes. Commensality or eating
of food together was restricted within the equivalent groups of
the upper castes. Similar was the case with establishing marital
relationships.

Cultural Traditions. Despite caste differences, the people of
this locality were found to have been bound with common cultural
ties. Living together for many years, they had developed very
close and neighbourly relationships. By religion they were Hindus.
Their mother tongue was Doteli. Most people could speak and
understand Nepali. It was learnt that, besides national festivals,
local festivals were celebrated in their own traditional manner.
These festivals were connected with their belief in the local
deities. Management of traditional festivals was made by conven-
tionally assigned functionaries.

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\(^5\) Charles Mc Donsal, *Village Economy in Far Western Nepal:*
A Preliminary Report of Doti and Kailali District (Kathmandu:
September 1967) p. 3 (Mc Donsal studied a sample of six villages
of Doti. One of the villages in his study – eg. Banlek – was a
part of the sample in this study).
Economic Condition. The economic condition of the people of this locality largely depended upon the size of their landholdings. Regarding economic well-being, the Kshatriyas, especially the Thakuris and Belayars were relatively affluent groups. The Thakuris, being the descendants of the former rulers, possessed vast areas of fertile land. Second in rank with respect to landholdings were the Belayars. Some of the Brahman households also had relatively larger holdings. In general, majority of the families in this locality had only small landholdings. Most backward economically were the Harijans. Many of them were landless. Even those possessing land had only meagre holdings without irrigation facilities.

The main sources of income consisted of a few animal and agricultural products such as ghee and mustard oil. Some labour class people also worked as porters whenever they were free from domestic work. The characteristic feature of the household economy was that annual expenditure tended to exceed locally derived income.

Occupation. Irrespective of caste considerations, the major occupation of people in this locality was found to be agriculture. Some occupational caste groups were engaged in their traditional occupations like smithy, tailoring and shoe-making. But they

6. Ibid. p. 4.

did those occupations only in partial fulfilment of their requirements. Although many of the lower caste households were landless, yet they were dependant on agriculture supplemented by wages earned by working on the fields of the landowners. Quite a few people were also found to have been engaged in service and business. However, there existed virtually no family which was solely dependant on any other occupation other than agriculture.

*General Condition of Life.* Life in this locality was very hard. People worked hard throughout the year. Much time and energy was required to do farming in a hilly terrain. People procured supplies of essential commodities like cloth and salt from distant markets. Generally, they took two to three trips to the market places in order to procure adequate quantity for the whole year. They transported the loads of different commodities in cone-shaped wicker back packs over hilly foot trails. Thus, they did not have much leisure to enjoy. Particularly, women were more busy as they had to do other domestic work in addition to the farm work. Child labour was a common feature in this locality. Mostly, school age children were employed in cattle grazing and baby-sitting while parents worked in the farm.

Adult literacy was very low in this locality. It was observed that literacy among females was negligible. Similarly, the Harijans were mostly illiterate. But there were quite a few population pockets, especially among Brahman villages, which had
even college graduates. Joint family system was prevalent and it was the eldest male who generally headed the family.

Service Institutions

Owing to its location in the interior hills, this locality was very backward in ordinary amenities of transport and communication. The nearest road was at a distance of nearly 25 kilometers. The district headquarter was also 20 kilometers away from here. However, some institutions provided a few services to the local people. There were 4 schools, one health centre, one post office, and one cooperative society. General health services were available through the health centre. The postal services were quite inadequate. The cooperative dealt mostly in distributing fertilizers and improved seeds to the farmers. There was also a religious Ashram attached to a temple of Lord Rama. This was managed by a local trust known as Naresh Ramayan Sabha. It was learnt that this organization was a pace-setter in the development of education in this locality.

The panchayat had no building of its own. So the office usually remained in the house of the incumbent gradhan panch (chairman). Besides, chairman and vice-chairman, the panchayat had nine members one each from a ward covering one or more villages depending upon their size.
Development of Education

Development of school education in this locality had started with the establishment of Mastamandu Bhaskarpathashala at Uchakot village in 1947. Later, another primary school was set up at Banik village in 1951. However, the real impetus for educational development in this locality had started with the embarkation of a massive campaign by local people under the aegis of Mahesh Ramayan Sabha in 1957. Consequently, two secondary schools came into being. Of them, the high school was still operating at Uchakot whereas the second school - a sanskrit pathashala - was closed by the government during the implementation of the NESP in this locality in 1975. Two other primary schools were established - one in 1968 and the other in 1975.

Thus, at the time of the field survey, there were four primary schools and one high school in this locality. All the schools had their own pucca buildings. While one primary school was attached with the high school the other three were independent. The primary school at Bansdungrisain was in the process of being promoted to a middle school. The number of students enrolled in schools at primary and secondary level was 357 and 203 respectively. The teachers were mostly local except a science teacher in the high school. Some of the teachers were also found to have received teacher training.
The Tarai Locality

Physical Features

This locality is situated in the western part of Kailali district. This is surrounded by Chowmala village panchayat on the northeast and Urma village Panchayat on the southeast, Godavari Village Panchayat on the north, Geta Village Panchayat on the west and Dhangadi Town Panchayat on the south (Map III). The river Khutia flows across the east forming a common border with Chowmala and Urma panchayat.

Nearly 60 per cent of the land of this locality is under cultivation and the rest is either fallow or covered by forests. Monsoon usually starts around July. Being a part of subtropical zone, it is very hot during the summer and monsoon.

The main agricultural produce of this locality are rice, wheat, maize and mustard. Although modern irrigation facilities are not available, most of the land under cultivation is accessible to locally harnessed canal system particularly during the monsoon. As the land is flat and fertile, agricultural production is usually more than sufficient.

Historical Sketch

Although much of the ancient history is yet untraceable, it is generally believed that the territory around this locality was a part of Doti principality in the medieval times. It was
MAP III. SRIPUR VILLAGE PANCHAYAT
merged into the Kingdom of Nepal during the national unification in 1790. Consequent upon Sogauli treaty, this territory was further ceded to the British Imperial power in 1846. The British, however, returned it to Nepal in 1858 in token of their gratitude for her military support in the Indian Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. This area has since been known as Naya Muluk, meaning the new territory. But it remained almost uninhabited for many years especially due to unfavourable climatic conditions. In course of time, Tharu migrants cleared some of the forests and started cultivation. Meanwhile, the government also promulgated an ordinance providing for the clearance of forests and starting of cultivation. Soon some enterprising hill-people cleared the forests and acquired vast fields of land. This practice gradually evolved into a Zemindari system which was abolished by the Land Reforms Act of 1964.

Before the introduction of Panchayat System, Kailali district was divided into a number of administrative areas known as Tappa. This locality was a part of Railwar Tappa. After the promulgation of the Panchayat constitution in 1962, the district was reorganized into Panchayat areas. Two of them were Beladevipur and Shivmandir Badeha Panchayat. This panchayat locality was formed by combining these two village panchayats after the panchayat reorganization in 1975.


9. Following the new organizational arrangements under the third amendment in 1980, this panchayat locality has been divided into two panchayats namely, Sripur and Beladevipur, in 1982.
Social and Economic Features

Population. According to 1971 census, the population of this locality was 5222. Population rapidly increased during the preceding decades. The preliminary results of 1981 census showed that there were 7869 people in this panchayat locality. This indicates a growth of nearly 51 per cent in a period of ten years. This was the outcome of a large scale in-migration during the recent years.

At the time of field survey, the main constituents of population in this locality were three different ethnic groups, namely, the Parvates (the hill-people), the Dangaura, and the Rana of the Tharus. The population of Tharus outnumbered Parvates in most villages. There were 16 villages most of which were inhabited by different ethnic groups. Quite a few villages were also found to have been inhabited by a single ethnic community.

Settlement Pattern. Although the villages in this locality were not very congested but the general pattern demonstrated a nucleated structure. Houses were usually made of wood and mud with thatched roof. Owing to deplation of forest resources in recent years, brick-built houses were gradually taking the place of wood and thatch constructions. Each family had generally two houses as

10. National Planning Commission, Kailali Zilla Ko Gaan Panchayat Haruko Vada Anuwar Ko Janaasekhya 2051 B.S. (Nepal Central Bureau of Statistics, 1979) pp. 12,18 (At the time of Census, Shivmandir Badeha and Bela devipur were part of this locality).

the animal were kept in separate sheds. The Tharu families were large as compared to the hill-people. In former times, the Tharus used to live in separate villages from the hill-people. With the coming of different people from various parts, the pattern of Tharu village settlements had considerably changed. Although quite a few hill-people had been living since long, heavy encroachments started only during the middle of the sixties. Hoards of people had since acquired land and settled in Kailali district including parts of this locality.

The Tharus had their own village headman, known as Bhalmansa (the nobleman). Advent of the hill people had and slightly changed this practice. In mixed villages, the Bhalmansa usually worked in consultation with the Zaminder or Patwari. However, it was found that the functions of the village headman had been gradually transferred to the members of the panchayat.

Social Structure. On the basis of ethnic background, the people of this locality could be classified into three groups. They were: Dangaura, Rana and Parvate. The people who migrated from the hills were called Parvate, especially by the Tharus. Among the Tharus, those who had migrated from Dang were called

Dangaura. On the other hand, the Rana Tharus claimed themselves as the descendants of the Ranas of Mewar in India. Among the Parvates, all the three caste groups - Brahman, Kshatriya, and Sudra - were found in this locality.

The caste structure among the Parvates was analogous to what was prevalent in the hills. No caste hierarchy was found among the Tharus. Moreover, untouchability did not seem to prevail intensively in this locality. Marital relationships were found to exist among equivalent caste groups. Even the Tharus were very particular to keep marital relationships within their own community.

Cultural Characteristics. The general pattern of life in this locality was found to be a mixture of three distinct cultures. The Dangauras were uniquely different than the rest including the Ranas. They had a dialect of their own. They worshipped their own tribal deities. They had their own tribal costume. Singing and dancing was most common with these people, especially during festivities.

The Ranas were also unique regarding their cultural identity. They had their own language similar to Awadhi. It was a general feeling among many people of this locality that the Ranas had a stronger ethnic affinity than the other groups.

The migrant hill people were not found very different from their counterparts in the Hills. Coming from different
villages, they exhibited some differences particularly in lingual accent and orientation. The differences were not very distinct. Their mother tongue was Doteli and they observed the Hindu rituals and practices.

Despite their distinctive features, people were observed to have constant interaction with one another. Most Hindu festivals were observed uniformly by all ethnic communities. The Parvates had also started to observe some of the Tharu festivals such as Maghi and Holi. The Tharus could communicate in Doteli and most Parvates were also found to be conversant in Tharu tongue. Nepali was understood by the majority and was used extensively at formal occasions.

**Economic Condition.** Economic activities in this locality were found associated mostly with agriculture. Majority of people had their own land although varying extensively in size. As the agricultural production was more than sufficient, people hardly faced any hand-to-mouth problems. In fact, most landowners of this locality were in a position to dispose surplus farm products after having stored required quantity for domestic use.\(^\text{14}\) Some households, especially the Tharus, were landless. Some of the landless Tharus worked under a *Kesaiya* system according to which a fixed amount, usually in kind, was given to the peasant labourer by

\(^{14}\) Ibid. p. 18.
the land owner. The local people had the feeling that the number of Kenaiva households was gradually being reduced for the last few years. Although quite a few landlords were found to hold more than 20 bighas, on an average most Brahman and Tharu households held more than 1.5 bighas of land. On the other hand, large number of Kshatriyas except the Thakuris had their holdings less than 1.5 bighas.

**Occupation.** Major occupation of the people of this locality was found to be agriculture. Even the landless labourers were dependent on land. They worked in the fields of land-owners either as labourers or share-croppers. Most of the Kenaiva labourers came from the Danga brahmin families. The share-croppers worked under a tenancy agreement with the land owner. Besides agriculture, a few people of this locality were also engaged in other occupations like business and service. The occupational castes of the Harijans were engaged in some semi-skilled occupations such as smithy and tailoring. However, they did other work only in partial fulfilment of their requirements.

**General Condition of Life.** Life in this locality was relatively comfortable. People did not work very hard because they had no problems of making both ends meet. Market facilities were easily available. Animal carts provided transportation. The peak period for hard work was during monsoons only. Therefore, the people had plenty of leisure to involve themselves in social activities.

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15. Mc Dangaal, Village and Household Economy in Far Western Nepal. op. cit. p. 61.
In general, level of literacy was low. Most people belonging to share-cropper and labourer households were illiterate. However, heads of landowning families were mostly literate. Quite a few of them had some sort of formal schooling also.

Service Institutions

The Panchayat headquarter was located at Sripur where it had its own pucca building. There were quite a few institutions which provided their services to the local people. There was a small library run by local people. It had some news-papers and periodicals. The postal services were available. There was also a village cooperative which dealt mostly in fertilizers and other provisional commodities. General health services were available through a health centre. Besides these, there was also a temple managed by a private land trust. Four schools were operating in different villages of this locality.

Development of Education.

The development of school education in this locality had started somewhere around 1955. But rapid growth in school enrolments was marked only after the implementation of the NESR in 1972.

At the time of the field survey, there were four primary schools of which two were independent whereas one each was associated with the high school and the middle school. All schools had their own pucca buildings. The middle and the high schools had
also some land property which had become a source of their income. The number of students enrolled in the schools was 546 and 423 at primary and secondary level respectively. About two-thirds of the teachers employed in those schools were local whereas the remaining were from outside the locality. Although some of the teachers had received teacher training, most were without any training experience.

A Comparative Review

The preceding discussion on the general features of the two localities highlights some of their specialities and commonalities which make them similar as well as different in many respects. Therefore, it would now be useful to review them in a comparative frame because it may provide a right perspective in understanding the nature of people’s participation in education in their respective village communities.

Taking the difference first, it was found that the Hill locality had a very long history of habitation whereas the Tarai was of relatively recent origin. The second difference was found in the physical features of these localities. While the Hill locality was a remote area lying in the interior part of the Hills, far away from the district headquarters, the Tarai locality was a part of the plains area just attached to the district headquarters as well as prominent commercial and industrial centres of the region. These historical and physical differences had their bearing on the social and economic features of the two localities. The third
difference was related with cultural ethos. It could be seen that despite inherent casts differences, the Hill locality was culturally homogeneous locality. On the contrary, the Tarai locality presented three different cultures with varying ethnic backgrounds. The fourth difference was related to the amenities available to the people. The Tarai locality's nearness to the regional centre had considerably enhanced its access to various amenities such as marketing, transport and education. The Hill locality, by its very location with poor transportation facilities, was somewhat isolated and less exposed to outer world. Finally, so far as economic condition was concerned, the people of the Tarai were comparatively well off than those of the Hill.

Inspite of these differences, the two localities were similar in quite a few other aspects. The first similarity could be seen in the location. Although they were located in two different geographical regions both belonged to the Far Western Development Region of the country. In other words, both localities were a part of the same region regarding the general level of development. Second, despite their historical differences, both localities represented village communities having face to face communication and closeness in relationships. Third, it was found that the way of life in both localities was characteristically traditional in nature with their nucleated clustered village settlements, widespread illiteracy and extensively prevalent joint family system. Fourthly, so far as the mode of production was concerned, both of
them presented predominantly agricultural economy. And finally, both localities were similar in terms of the availability of health, postal, cooperative and educational services in their respective panchayat areas. Above all, the development of education was also found to have started almost simultaneously in both localities.

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

In the earlier section physical and social structural features of the two localities have been highlighted. On the background of those features, this section has sought to highlight the characteristics of the sample populations of the two localities that may be relevant for the study of people's participation in education. The emphasis is, however, on analysing them in a comparative frame and thereby providing a perspective for the subsequent analysis of participation as a function of its associates. For this purpose, eight characteristics related to the socio-personal background of the people were identified. They were: age, education level, caste, size of landholdings, size of family, role position, nature of residence, and ethnic background. The relevant data were collected through structured interviews with the respondents. Therefore, the comparative analysis of the socio-personal characteristics of the two sample groups was based on the primary data.
A Comparative View of the Sample Characteristics

Table 3.1 presents the distribution of the sample populations of the two localities on the basis of age, education level, casts, size of land-holdings, size of family, role position, nature of residence and ethnic background of the respondents. It shows that the two localities are comparable in some respects while they differ in quite a few others. The item-wise composition of the two localities is presented in the following pages:

Age

In the Hill locality, the proportions of respondents in the young (21-35), middle (36-50) and old (51- ) age groups were 26.2, 50.0, and 23.8 per cent respectively. On the other hand, the respective proportions of their counterparts in the Tarai were 40.0, 44.3 and 15.7 per cent. This shows that the Hill locality had fewer people in the young age group in comparison to those of the Tarai. However, no significant difference\(^{16}\) was discerned between the two localities with respect to the distribution of the age factor in their sample populations.

Education Level

The enquiry on the level of education acquired by the

\(^{16}\) Henry F. Garrett, Statistics in Psychology and Education (Bombay: Vakils, Feiffer and Simons Pvt.Ltd. 1973) (The levels of significance for all Chi-square values in this study have been tested on the basis of the values given in Table F at p. 462 in the book reported above).
Table 3.1
Distribution of the Sample on the Basis of Sociopersonal Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Hill N=80</th>
<th>Tamil N=70</th>
<th>$X^2$</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Level of Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young</td>
<td>24(26.2)</td>
<td>26(40.0)</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>40(50.0)</td>
<td>31(44.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old</td>
<td>19(23.8)</td>
<td>11(15.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>40(50.0)</td>
<td>24(34.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>21(25.2)</td>
<td>18(25.7)</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educated</td>
<td>19(23.8)</td>
<td>26(40.0)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>27(33.8)</td>
<td>47(67.1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>29(36.2)</td>
<td>13(18.6)</td>
<td>16.12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>24(30.0)</td>
<td>10(14.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Land holding</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>16(20.0)</td>
<td>11(15.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>36(45.0)</td>
<td>10(14.3)</td>
<td>62.084</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>8(10.0)</td>
<td>49(70.0)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Family size</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>28(35.0)</td>
<td>10(14.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>38(47.5)</td>
<td>33(47.1)</td>
<td>12.40</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>14(17.5)</td>
<td>27(38.6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-leader</td>
<td>54(67.5)</td>
<td>46(65.7)</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>26(32.5)</td>
<td>24(34.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant</td>
<td>0(0.0)</td>
<td>32(45.7)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>80(100.0)</td>
<td>38(54.3)</td>
<td>46.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dangaura</td>
<td>0(0.0)</td>
<td>29(41.4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rana</td>
<td>0(0.0)</td>
<td>14(20.0)</td>
<td>69.10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parvats</td>
<td>80(100.00)</td>
<td>27(38.6)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N.S. = Not significant)
(Figures in the parentheses are percentages)
respondents was made in terms of the three categories, namely, (i) illiterate (ii) literate with no formal schooling, and (iii) educated with formal schooling. On the basis of these categories, it was found that 50 per cent of the respondents in the Hill locality were illiterate whereas the respective percentages of literates and those with formal schooling were 26.2 and 25.8 only. In the Tarai locality, the respective proportions were 34.5, 25.7 and 40.0 per cent. Thus, the overall picture of the two localities in terms of respondents' education level was not completely different although a tendency was visible as the Chi-square value approaches nearer to .05 level. However, significant difference was noticeable between illiterate and educated categories in the two localities if the literate category was dropped ($X^2 = 5.25$, significant at .02 for df = 1). The Tarai locality was superior in terms of the proportion of the educated people in the sample population. This is understandable in the case of the Tarai locality. Because of its greater exposure to outer world and the composition of the population with varied ethnic backgrounds, life in the Tarai is relatively competitive. Therefore, acquiring of some formal schooling has become a necessity. Besides this, the relatively comfortable living conditions there have attracted educated people in recent years from the Hills.

Caste

As shown in Table 3.1, the distribution of the lower (Harijans), middle (Kshatriyas) and higher (Brahmans) caste groups
in the Hill locality was 33.8, 36.2 and 30.0 per cent respectively. The proportions of these three groups in the Tarai were found to be distributed as lower castes (Harijans and Tharus) 67.1 per cent, middle castes 19.6 per cent and higher castes 14.3 per cent. The statistical difference was significant at .01 level. Thus the two localities were not comparable in caste composition of the population. While the Hill locality had an evenly distributed proportion of the three caste groups, population in the Tarai was constituted by an overwhelming majority of the lower castes mostly with Tharu preponderance.

Size of Landholdings

Regarding landholdings, three categories were identified, namely, (i) no land (ii) small holdings, and (iii) large holdings. The holdings up to 20 ropanis (in the Hills) or 1.5 bighas17 (in the Tarai) were categorized as small holdings and holdings more than this limit were categorized as large holdings.18 On this basis, the distribution of the Hill-respondents in the respective

17. The equivalent metric measure has been defined as 1 hectare = 1.48 bighas = 19.65 ropanis. Thus, 20 ropani is equivalent to 1.5 bighas. See Khagendra Nath Sharma, Involvement of the Poor in Rural Development through People's Organizations in Nepal (A Report presented to FAO of the UN) Kathmandu 1978) P. e.

18. His Majesty's Government of Nepal has categorized small farmers as those farmers whose holdings do not exceed 20 ropanis (in the Hills) or 1.5 bighas (in the Tarai). Those holding more land are categorized as large farmers. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, categorization of landholdings was made on similar basis.
categories was found to be 20.0, 70.0 and 10.0 per cent. On the other hand, the distribution of the Tarai-respondents in the same categories was 15.7, 14.3 and 70.0 per cent. Thus, the majority of people in the Hill had small holdings whereas the majority in the Tarai had large holdings. The proportion of landless respondents was, however, similar in both localities. The statistical test showed a highly significant difference ($X^2 = 62.084$, significant at .01 for df = 2) between the two localities regarding distribution of land. In view of the fact that size of landholding is a good indicator of one's economic well-being in a predominantly agricultural economy, the Tarai locality seems to be an economically heterogeneous community having a big gap between the large farmers (many of them holding more than 20 bighas) and the small as well as landless farmers. A contrast can be seen in the Hill locality where economic disparity does not appear to be very wide because the large land-owners are few in number.

**Family Size**

Regarding the size of family also, the composition of the two localities was different from each other. In the Hill, the proportions of small (1-5 members), medium (6-10 members), and large (more than 11 members) families were 35.0, 47.5 and 17.5 per cent respectively. On the other hand, there were only 14.3 per cent small families as compared to the respective proportions of 47.1 and 33.6 per cent medium and large families in the Tarai.
Thus, the two localities were significantly different in respect of the size of family. Despite this general difference, one interesting common feature was discerned between them so far as the composition of family was concerned. As is shown in Table 3.1, more than 60 per cent families in both localities were found to have been composed of more than 6 members. This seems to indicate a widely prevalent joint family system in both localities. Anyway, this is but natural as well as understandable in the context of the traditional social set up prevailing in these localities. But this joint family system was found to be more prevalent among the Tharus. Some of the Tharu families were found to contain more than 50 members. The difference between these two localities in regard to family size was the result of the large family system prevalent among the Tharus.

**Role-position**

For the purpose of analysis, role position was categorized as (i) leaders, and (ii) non-leaders. Any person having a membership in the panchayat organization such as ward member or office bearer or any of the class organizations' member was considered as a leader. Similarly, members of the school committees and village headmen were also considered as leaders. Those with no such designations were taken as non-leaders. The analysis showed that almost two-third majority in both localities were non-leaders whereas the remaining one-third were leaders. Thus, the two localities were quite similar regarding the distribution of role
position in the sample. A panchayat being a basic unit for all educational and political purposes in Nepal, the observed uniformity of role distribution indicates that the two localities obviously form a part of the larger socio-political system of the country.

Nature of Residence

The information regarding the nature of residence was collected on the basis of the length of stay in the locality. Respondents staying for more than 20 years in the locality were classified as natives and the rest as migrants. In this regard, the Hill locality was completely different from the Tarai because all the respondents belonging to the Hill were natives in contrast to about half as many (45.7 per cent) in-migrants in the Tarai.

Ethnic Background

On the ethnic background also, the two localities were completely different because all the respondents in the Hill sample were Parvates (hill people) whereas in the Tarai there were 41.4 per cent Dangauras, 20.0 per cent Ranas, and the rest 38.6 per cent Parvates.

Thus, the overall picture that emerges out of this comparative analysis suggests that the two localities are fairly comparable to each other in terms of age groupings, educational level and role position. Differences, however, emerge when
factors such as caste, size of land holding, family size, nature of residence and ethnic background are taken into consideration. The Hill locality is characterized by its overwhelmingly large share of native population and low and medium economic status people. The Tarai locality is marked out for a considerably greater proportion of in-migrants and generally high economic status of its residents with diverse ethnic backgrounds. The analysis of the data, particularly size of land holdings, shows that the Tarai locality can be rated as comparatively high on economic status than the Hill locality. As these factors have a large influence on the community life, they may be helpful in explaining the nature and extent of people's participation in the development of education in their village communities in a comparative perspective.