

Development partners and political settlements: bystanders or key actors?

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During this presentation I will discuss:

- ∞ political settlement theory
- ∞ familiarise you with the situation of Nepal
- ∞ focus on affirmative action and its application
- ∞ before concluding.

Political Settlement Theory



- ❧ ‘A political settlement is commonly defined as a dynamic bargain (primarily between elites) on the distribution of power and resources that is subject to changes and re-adjustments over time.’ (Castillejo 2014)
- ❧ As such a political settlement ‘describes the informal power arrangements or the “social order” in a country.’ (TAF 2011)

Significant events & signed agreements in Nepal

- ☞ On 1 February 2005 the King suspended the Parliament, appointed a government led by himself and enforced martial law.
- ☞ On 22 November 2005 a 12 point understanding was signed with the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) that represented mainstream political parties and the Maoists who were the rebel leaders of the ten-year civil war - all wanted the King gone.
- ☞ A large-scale people's movement forced the King in April 2006 to reinstate the 2002 elected parliament and renounce his powers.
- ☞ On May 26, 2006 a Ceasefire was signed
- ☞ On June 16 2006 an 8-point Agreement was reached between the SPA and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist).
- ☞ In November 2006, the SPA and the Maoists signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that officially ended the 10-year Maoist insurgency and committed Nepal to becoming an inclusive state.
- ☞ January 16 2007 an interim constitution was agreed.

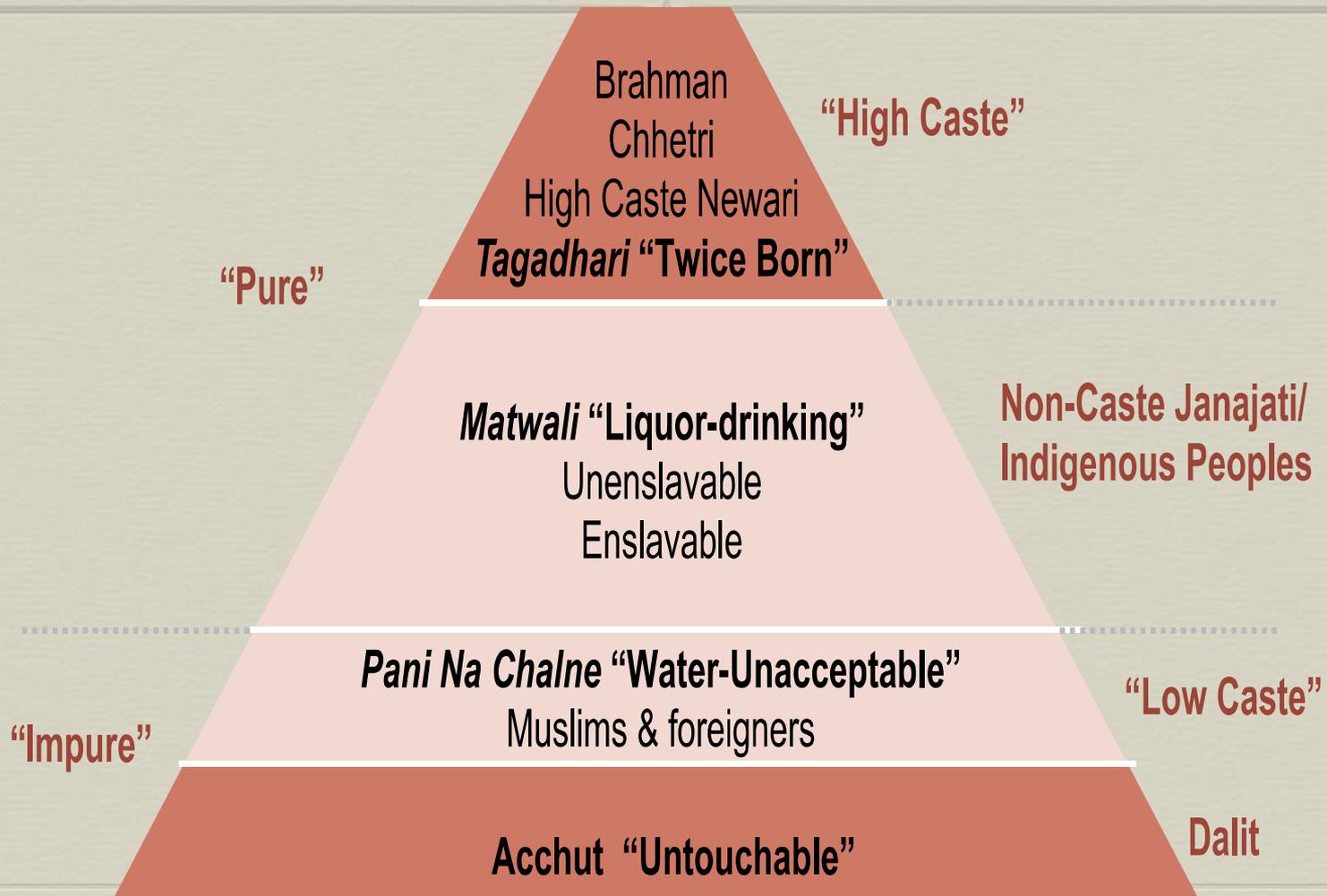
Significant events & signed agreements in Nepal

- ☞ From January 29 – On May 9, 2007 violent clashes broke out repeatedly across the Madhesh region that borders India.
- ☞ On August 30, 2007, a recently formed Madheshi party agreed to a 22-point deal with the government, which included proportional representation in politics and the state and a mixed election system.
- ☞ December 23, 2007, a 23 point agreement between the top leaders of the SPA agreed to abolish the monarchy and become a federal democratic republic with a Prime minister as head of state. This agreement clearly mentions proportional representation, among other changes.
- ☞ A string of smaller agreements were then signed with different agitating identity groups making various demands of the state - most included proportional representation.
- ☞ In 2008 the most representative Constituent Assembly (CA) elections were held and tasked to write the new constitution. The Maoists formed their majority with Madheshi parties and declared Nepal a federal democratic republic.
- ☞ The CA ended in May 2012 without a new constitution.
- ☞ New CA elections were held in Nov 2013 that gave the traditional political parties the majority.

Inclusive political settlements

- ☞ Inclusive political settlements are foundational for the institutional transformations necessary for longer-term, sustained development (Walter 2004 and 2009, Licklider 1995, Wagner 1993, Call 2012, Laws 2012, Hartzell and Hoddie 2007, Lindemnn 2011).
- ☞ The question how inclusive is ‘inclusive enough’ concerns donors
- ☞ Donors are using a ‘political settlement framework’ as it allows them to ‘recognize that they have a degree of influence in shaping the direction and balance of power in elite politics that in turn shapes development, security, and governance institutions’ (TAF 2011).

Nepal: The caste system



Affirmative action



- ✧ Affirmative action refers to plans to safeguard equal opportunity, to protect against discrimination, to advertise positions openly, and to create scholarship programs to ensure specific groups can be recruited in the future (Pojman 1992).
- ✧ It is typically associated with quotas and preferential policies that target specific groups, (such as women or minorities) although initiatives can vary (Beauchamp 2002:210).
- ✧ Without tackling the institutional culture and other behaviours that may (consciously or unconsciously) discriminate, support for affirmative action within organisations may be minimal even with leadership support.

Diversity



- ❧ Diversity is good for decision-making. The private sector and business schools have completed a number of in-depth studies:
- ❧ “Inclusive and diverse boards are more likely to be effective boards, better able to understand their customers and stakeholders and to benefit from fresh perspectives, new ideas, vigorous challenge and broad experience. This in turn leads to better decision making.” (Lord Davies, 2011)
- ❧ The London Business School found that companies need a mix of men and women to achieve the best results in most areas that drive innovation because a diverse group is more likely to experiment, share knowledge and complete tasks (LBCWIB 2007).
- ❧ Diversity can avoid ‘group think.’

afno manchhe



- ☞ Nepal's *afno manchhe* (one's own people) social system of organisation operates like a web of privileges and favours (Bista 1991).
- ☞ It is desirable to have an *afno manchhe* in a decision making position because it ensures your needs will be met.
- ☞ In the negative it results in alliances that can lead to patron-client type relationships, exclusionary tendencies, factionalism, failures in cooperation and corruption (Bista 1991:4).

Affirmative action statistics

- ☞ Brahmin, Chhetri and Newars represent 36.37 % of population & hold:
- ☞ 95 percent of total civil service positions;
- ☞ 91 percent of the judiciary;
- ☞ 72 percent of cabinet positions;
- ☞ 68 percent of parliament;
- ☞ 89 percent of academic leadership; and
- ☞ 91 percent of civil society leadership.

Civil service

Description	Total Posts		Total Applicants		Those appeared in written examination		Those appeared in interview		Recommended by PSC***	
	09/10	10/11	09/10	10/11	09/10	10/11	09/10*	10/11**	09/10*	10/11**
Women	495	367	55,902	44,137	NA	29,297 (66.38%)	181	987	86	471
Adibasijanjati	368	286	22,196	18,694	NA	10,593 (56.67%)	124	803	59	371
Madesi	319	235	13,734	12,597	NA	6,894 (54.73%)	78	547	36	300
Dalit	142	119	4,155	4,284	NA	2,349 (54.83%)	10	210	10	105
Disabled	64	45	2,106	2,348	NA	1,346 (57.33%)	23	132	9	59
Backward Areas	43	34	2,830	2,167	NA	1,241 (57.27%)	20	127	6	43
Total	1431	1086	100,923	84,227		51,720	436	2,806	206	1,349

Civil service affirmative action data for 2012/13

Description	Total posts	Total applicants	Appeared in written examination	Appeared in interview (central level)	Central level recommended by PSC	Appeared in interview (Regional/zonal)	Regional/zonal recommended by PSC	Total selected
Women	617	70450	37758	164	76	595	296	372
Janajati	482	36384	16803	134	62	556	256	318
Madheshi	369	26584	11489	112	51	427	203	254
Dalit	165	6317	3208	33	17	201	89	106
Disabled	97	2509	1630	14	7	117	44	51
Backward region	66	3936	1990	11	5	90	30	35
Total	1796	146180	110478	468	218	1986	918	1136

a myriad of ways to manipulate control

- ❧ ‘The 33 percent government jobs allocated for women is being misused because the seats are represented by the family members of the politicians belonging to the hilly areas. Educated and qualified women are not getting an opportunity.’
- ❧ ‘High caste men have been manipulating their surnames to sound more like prominent indigenous and Janajati surnames. For example, the use of “la” at the end of surnames (e.g., Dahala, Nepala, Khanala) has spread in order to secure the control of the traditionally dominant groups over state bureaucracy and resources’ (Chaudhary, Tamang and Leslie 2014).

Workforce Diversity in International Organisations

Identity Group	Female	Male	Grand Total	Percentage of Staff in Participating International Agencies	Percentage of National Population in 2001 Census
Hill Brahman/Chhetri	129	403	532	37.3%	30.9%
Hill Dalit	14	37	51	3.6%	7.9%
Hill Janajati	111	211	322	22.6%	21.9%
Newar	139	264	403	28.3%	5.5%
Tarai Janajati	8	28	36	2.5%	9.8%
Madhesi Brahman/Chhetri	6	23	29	2.0%	1.0%
Madhesi Dalit	1	6	7	0.5%	3.9%
Other Madhesi Caste Groups	5	17	22	1.5%	13.6%
Muslim	3	14	17	1.2%	4.3%
Others	1	5	6	0.4%	1.3%
Grand Total	417	1008	1425		

Donors are 'captured' by upper castes

One respondent said,

- ❧ 'After foreigners the second level officers of development agencies are all Brahmin-Chettri. Even the translators they use when they come to the Madhesh are Brahmins and Chhetri, so how can they understand Madheshi problems?
- ❧ 'Look we have had reservation in India since 1947 and they are implementing it quite well there. There is diversity but diversity and difference is not seen as a problem, it is beauty. But in our context it is projected as a problem as something that creates violence and this is because everyone in the bureaucracy and donors too are Bahun-Chettri.'

Donors rely on their upper-caste staff

- ☞ ‘Every time something blew up we would go and ask our Nepali advisory staff what they thought and what the implications would be for us.’
- ☞ ‘We had this governance adviser who was Brahmin. I don’t know his political allegiance but I did get the sense that he offered a biased view. When he left only one person applied for his position - a Brahmin GoN secretary. We were stupid enough not to do anything about it. I heard later that he told everyone who inquired about his position that it was going to this person which is why no one else bothered to apply.’

Ex-pats are blind to discrimination

- ☞ “Often those who define ‘merit’ represent a select and privileged minority of the population rather than the broad citizenry.” (Bennett 2005)
- ☞ “The agenda of inclusion is very complex. It is all about acceptance but people don’t get that. Inclusion is about behaviour change. You cannot just preach inclusion - you have to practice what you say. It is difficult for a Nepali who has been brought up in this culture to suddenly change.”
- ☞ “I was so dumb because I didn’t even realise that some of the higher caste groups who were agreeing with me didn’t really appreciate what I had been doing.”

Development partners are not key actors but.

- ❧ Development partners are never just innocent bystanders.
- ❧ Development partners can become key actors if they are not aware of the position of their staff.
- ❧ Development partners are unable to determine if a settlement is 'inclusive enough' to bring about stability when a biased workforce advises them.
- ❧ Their lack of action can reduce the inclusiveness and stability of political settlements as much as their insight can achieve the opposite.

Thank you



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