

Chapter V

Status of social capital

This section describes about social capital endowment at household and community level in vegetable production sites. Social capital is assessed in six dimensions of its expression separately and combined to form social capital index. Within six expressions, trust, network and proactivity which have major implication in agriculture extension, community development and poverty reduction programs are analyzed in detail. The trustfulness of different categories of people in the community is measured as they have important stake in community development programs and household wellbeing.

5.1 Weight of social capital dimensions and questions

The result of AHP shows all the selected six dimensions of social capital carries different weight as a constituent of social capital in the communities (Figure 5.1).

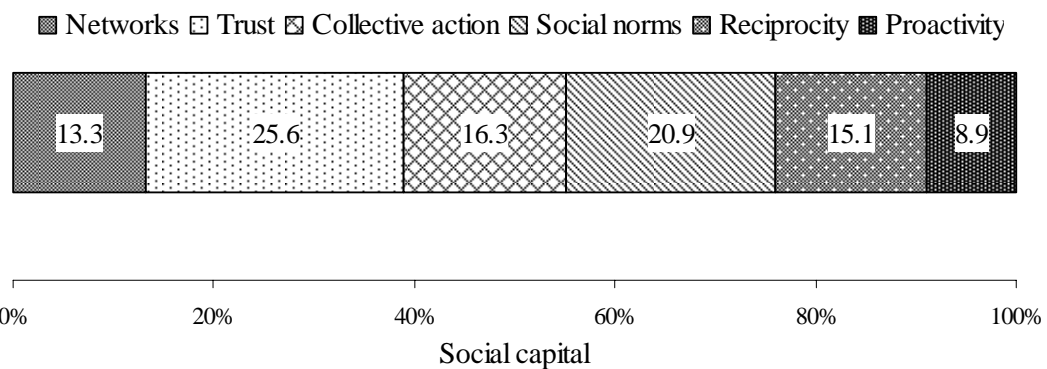


Figure 5.1 Social capital dimensions and obtained weight from AHP

Source: AHP, 2005

The level of trust represents the 25.6 percent of the existing social capital in the communities followed by social norms (20.9%), collective action and cooperation (16.3%), reciprocity (15.1%), networks (13.3%) and proactivity (8.9%). This obtained weight shows that trust, social norms and collective actions are the most counting social resources in the livelihood framework of farming communities in Western Nepal. The assigned weight shows the relative importance of these dimensions of social capital for the individual and community wellbeing. The obtained weights are used to construct the final index of social capital.

The second part of the AHP weighted each question under the dimensions. Here each dimension is considered as objective and questions are as criteria's separately. The results show some questions carry high weight but others low (Table 3.2). Some questions are more important to measure the respective dimensions of social capital than other question. These weights for each question are used to construct dimensional indices.

Table 5.1 Social capital dimensional questions and weight obtained from AHP

Questions under dimensions	Social capital dimensions					
	Trust	Social norms	Collective action	Reciprocity	Networks	Proactivity
Question -1	0.243	0.307	0.316	0.217	0.312	0.208
Question -2	0.183	0.107	0.167	0.167	0.151	0.201
Question -3	0.263	0.192	0.145	0.269	0.256	0.172
Question -4	0.154	0.261	0.371	0.175	0.150	0.178
Question -5	0.157	0.132	-	0.172	0.131	0.241
Total	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
CR	0.017	0.053	0.070	0.036	0.058	0.037

Source: AHP, 2005

5.2 Social capital endowment

5.2.1 Social capital endowment at the household level

Social capital index is constructed in 0-1 scale, which is the summary measure of social capital endowment at the household level. The social capital index at the

household level is found to be 0.71 (Table 5.2). The distribution of social capital index shows that majority of households (90%) have index value more than 0.60 and 60 percent households this value is more than 0.70. This show on an average social capital endowment at household level in farming communities of Western Nepal is good enough to contribute community as well as household well being. The index value ranges from lowest 0.37 to highest 0.88, which shows the large variation in household level social capital endowment among the households (Table 5.2). The households from the same community are more similar in social capital endowment in comparison to the households from other communities. The composition of community and its socio political history has important role in shaping the behavior or activities of households in community.

Table 5.2 Descriptive statistics for the household level social capital index and its constituents

Social capital constituents	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.	Skewness
Social capital index	0.37	0.88	0.71	0.083	-0.599
Index of networks	0.26	0.97	0.66	0.15	-0.001
Index of trust	0.32	0.96	0.69	0.128	-0.294
Index of collective actions and cooperation	0.45	1.00	0.80	0.126	-0.283
Index of social norms	0.33	1.00	0.72	0.156	-0.504
Index of reciprocity	0.35	0.95	0.67	0.103	-0.037
Index of proactivity	0.20	0.92	0.63	0.113	-0.148
Bridging networks	0.20	1.00	0.71	0.25	-0.29
Bonding network	0.20	1.00	0.80	0.19	-1.47
Linking networks	0.20	1.00	0.74	0.18	-0.92
Thin trust	0.25	1.00	0.61	0.23	-0.425
Thick trust	0.25	1.00	0.71	0.23	-0.784

Looking at the dimensional indices of social capital the status of collective action and cooperation is found better than proactivity, network and trust. A higher level of collective action and cooperation index (0.80) shows its importance in farming communities for basic livelihood sustenance. The farming communities are also rich in reciprocity and social norms, which are important part of livelihood system in the farming communities. The lower level of networks shows the traditional

informal ties for the households are weakening and new formal ties are not established well.

5.1.2 Social capital endowment at site /community level

The farming communities in Western Nepal are found rich in social capital endowment. Average social capital index value is found 0.71 with a range of 0.63 to 0.81 (Table 5.2).

Table 5.3 Social capital and its dimensional indices in the study sites

Study sites	Dimensional indices of social capital						Social capital index
	Network	Trust	Collective action and cooperation	Social norms	Reciprocity	Proactivity	
Chapari	0.63	0.66	0.81	0.67	0.51	0.55	0.65
Khalanga	0.60	0.64	0.77	0.72	0.66	0.60	0.67
Bhagwati	0.61	0.70	0.70	0.72	0.70	0.72	0.69
Dehimandu Kumali	0.59	0.70	0.75	0.61	0.63	0.52	0.65
Deval Hat	0.73	0.74	0.82	0.83	0.68	0.58	0.75
Ghurukhola	0.54	0.60	0.72	0.66	0.64	0.60	0.63
Siddhaswer	0.65	0.76	0.79	0.60	0.66	0.59	0.69
Dasrath Chand Municipality	0.66	0.79	0.73	0.84	0.73	0.62	0.75
Amargadi	0.57	0.74	0.83	0.65	0.66	0.61	0.69
Jogbuda	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.70	0.65	0.76	0.71
Bhatkanda	0.74	0.66	0.83	0.83	0.66	0.73	0.74
Dipayal	0.58	0.60	0.68	0.63	0.68	0.60	0.63
Tilachaud	0.62	0.80	0.80	0.66	0.68	0.58	0.71
Suda	0.66	0.69	0.76	0.83	0.71	0.67	0.73
Dodhara	0.70	0.61	0.86	0.81	0.64	0.60	0.71
Malakheti	0.74	0.65	0.89	0.80	0.68	0.66	0.74
Tikapur	0.66	0.66	0.81	0.71	0.71	0.70	0.70
Geta	0.64	0.66	0.83	0.68	0.68	0.85	0.73
Dhangadi	0.72	0.78	0.87	0.70	0.70	0.77	0.76
Pratappur	0.90	0.76	0.97	0.84	0.84	0.70	0.81
Average	0.66	0.69	0.80	0.67	0.67	0.73	0.71

Source: Field survey, 2005

The existing social capital stock has made communities trustworthy, cohesive and cooperative. The individuals in communities have strong obligations, responsibilities, ostracism and rewards for their behavior to maintain self-operating harmonized social system, which is only possible due to rich stock of social capital available in communities. The selected twenty sites vary in their social capital stock and its constituents. The lowest stock of social capital is found in Dipayal (0.63) and highest in Pratap Pur (0.81) (Table 5.3). The range is narrow as the sites are from same region with shared socio economic, cultural and political background. Looking at the expressions of social capital some communities are rich in one dimension and poor in others (Table 5.3).

5.3 Status of social capital dimensions

The six dimensions selected as proxy measure of social capital have their specific importance and role in household and community wellbeing. Looking at status of these expressions of social capital some are in better level than others however the difference is narrow. Among six dimensions the highest status (0.80) is of collective action and cooperation followed by social norms (0.72), trust (0.69), reciprocity (0.67), network (0.66), and lowest for proactivity (0.63) (Figure 5.2).

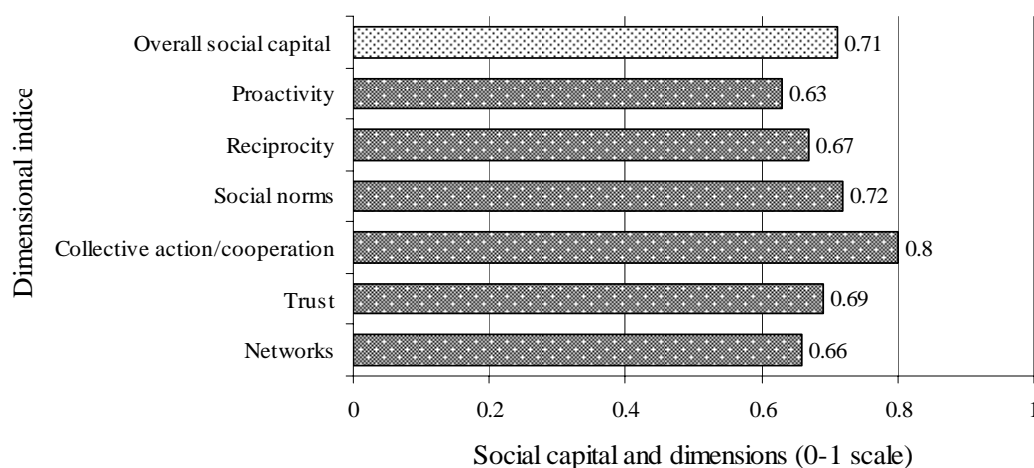


Figure 5.2 Status of social capital dimensions at the household level

Source: Field survey, 2005

Generally, these six dimensions are complementary to each other like better networks can only be established when there is sufficient trust. Trust evolved when there is reciprocity in the networks and reciprocity is guided by norms. This relation indicates there is no tradeoff among these six dimensions of social capital.

5.3.1 Network

The constructed index of network includes bonding, bridging, linking networks, and neighborhood informal interactions of the household in the community. The average value of the network index at household level is found 0.66 with slight negative skewness. The average value of index shows households in the farming communities are well connected in neighborhood and outside. The index of network at the household level varies from lowest 0.26 to highest 0.97, which shows households in farming communities are diverse in their network status (Table 5.2). The majority of household have better neighborhood networks as only 14 percent the households have the index value less than 0.5. There are no formal organizations in the farming communities except some groups induced by development workers to implement their activities. Such recent groups may create better networks or undermine traditional networks based on their functioning. Trust among the group members enhance their networks but when the groups are not self induced and organized to receive external support that might create conflicts ultimately weakening traditional networks in communities. The existing networks of a particular household in the communities are informal based on family, clan, kinship and neighborhood.

Looking at bonding, bridging and linking networks which are the most important measure of social capital households are found stronger in bonding type of networks in comparison to other two (Figure 5.3). The bonding networks occur in family, caste title, neighborhood and kinship based connections. The households in the farming communities are also rich in bridging networks mostly based on their kinship ties. Kinship is most important and strong in Nepalese society, which carries both positive and negative implications.

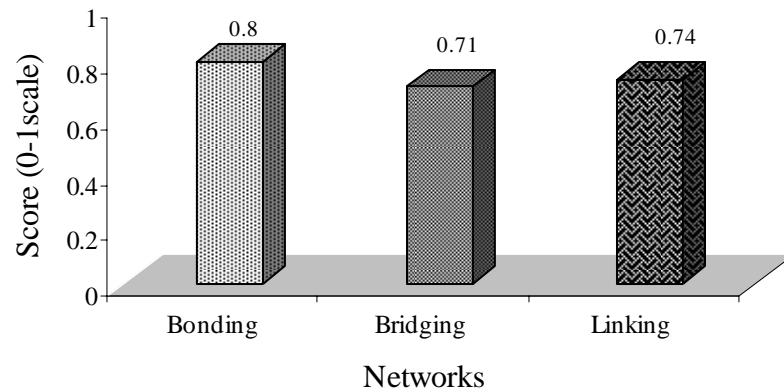


Figure 5.3 Status of bonding, bridging and linking network at household level

Source: Field survey, 2005

The third type of networks which are outside the traditional ties are linking networks, farm households have good links with service delivery organizations and leadership (Figure 5.3). This type of ties might be strong due to the intensive support of government agencies in these sites and households outside these sites might be poor in linking networks.

The descriptive statistics shows some households are very poor in all bonding, bridging and linking networks even within the same community (Table 5.2). Such types of households are more vulnerable with respect to livelihood as they have limited safety nets available through networks. It is difficult to determine the factors behind such poverty of networks for these households however poverty scattered family clans and illiteracy might be the possible reasons. The fundamental source of bonding and bridging and even linking networks in farming communities is family clan and kinship. Bonding, bridging and linking networks based on interest and profession, are scarce and recently initiated by development workers in the communities. The political units of the parties are one major source of linking networks in recent years.

Looking at the community level status of networks the index varies from 0.54 (Gurukhola) to 0.90 (Pratappur) with average of 0.66 (Table 5.3) which indicates

farming communities varies in their network status. Some communities are found very rich in their networks. The diversified communities in terms of composition and economic status are poor in networks than uniform communities. On average communities are found better in bonding (0.81), bridging (0.71) and linking networks (0.74).

5.3.2 Trust

Trust dimension covers a general and interpersonal level of trust endowed by the household. The generalized trust (thin trust) is the trust to less acquainted people and it is guided by existing social norms. Interpersonal trust (thick trust) is based on personal relationships. Trust index is constructed based on questions covering thick and thin trust to know the trust status at household and community level. Households in the farming communities endowed with certain level of thick and thin trust that cumulatively creates trust environment of the community. Generally thick trust is embedded on bonding networks and thin trust spread and extended even outside these network boundaries. The average value of household level trust index is found 0.69 with a range of 0.31 to 0.96 (Table 5.2). Trust index value shows that on average farm households rich in trust endowment making the communities trustworthy. Negative skewness of the trust index shows majority households are trustworthy however some households are very poor in trust endowment. Among the twenty sites lowest trust level is found 0.60 in Doti and highest 0.80 in Tilachaud (Table 5.3).

The farm households in the communities have higher level of thick trust mostly embedded in caste and kinship networks but level of thin trust is lower (Figure 5.4). Further more, outsiders are less trusted by farm households, which is the indicator of poor thin trust level. The embedded thick trust among the community households has increased the loyalty of households to caste and kinship. Higher level of thick trust endowed with household may undermine the thin trust and develop dependency syndrome among the actors.

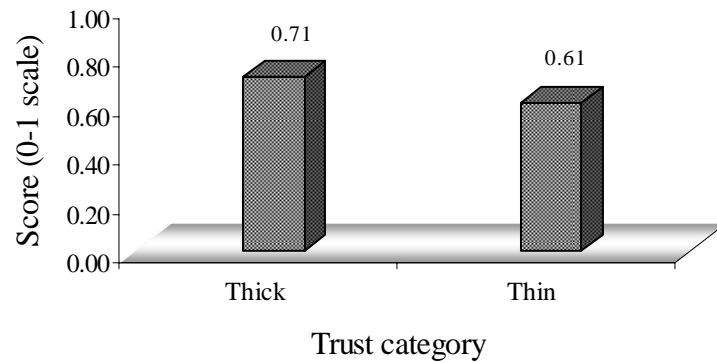


Figure 5.4 Status of thick and thin trust at household level

Source: Field survey, 2005

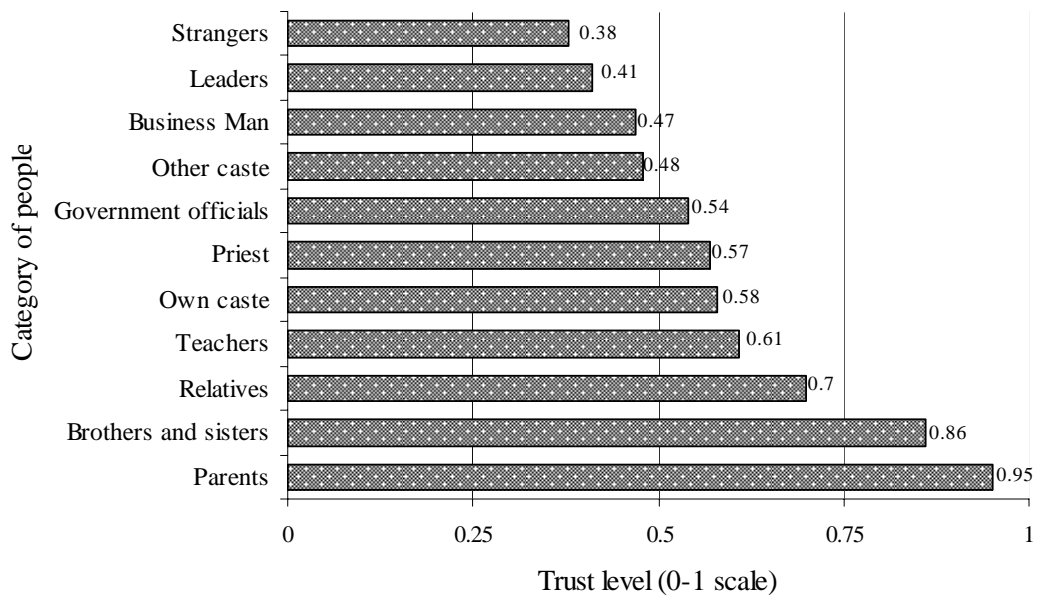


Figure 5.5 Trustworthiness of different category of people in study sites

Source: Field survey, 2005

The trustworthiness of different category of people in the communities' shows parents, family members and relatives are in the highest rank in the communities. The least trusted people in the communities are the strangers followed by leaders and businessman. The government officials are also not well trusted by the farm

households. The teachers are more trusted by community people than government officials (Figure 5.5). Here trust can be divided in two radius, the first one traditional radius which cover parents, relatives, family clans, priest and teachers and other is extended radius which includes leaders, businessman, government officials, strangers and other service providers. The first radius is considered as traditional because these categories of people are trusted by traditional social norms and have important stake to shape the individuals/households behavior in community. Here, trust is more concentrated in traditional radius and trust level in extended radius is poor. The trust level in extended radius has many implications regarding development interventions and public participation in the development programs. The communities where trust level in extended radius is low, people are reluctant to follow ideas of the outsiders. Higher trust level to the traditional trust radius narrow down the individual freedom of decision making due to inward loyalty and obligations.

5.3.3 Collective action and cooperation

The participation of household in collective action and willingness to join in collective action and neighborhood cooperation are measured and combined in collective action and cooperation index. The mean index value at household level is found 0.80 with range of 0.45-1.0 (Table 5.2). This shows households in farming communities are rich in collective action and cooperation. This index value is highest among six selected dimensions. Participation in collective action and cooperation is important livelihood strategy in the farming communities where self-sufficiency in all aspect of life is rare and life is more interdependent. The varieties of collective action exist in farming communities for management of local resources, farm operations, social and religious ceremonies. The causal observation shows collective action in farm operations for cash crops like vegetables and fruits are rare, but very common for traditional subsistence crops. Commercialization of farming reduces the traditional from of collective actions in farm operations but might enhance new professional collectivity. The average community level collective action and cooperation index is found 0.80 with a range of 0.68 to 0.97 (Table 5.4). This indicates some communities are very rich in collective action and cooperation in comparison to others and positive

skewness of the index shows most communities have index value below the mean. Among twenty sites the status of collective action and cooperation is highest in Pratappur and lowest in Dipayal (Table 5.3).

5.3.4 Social norms

In farming communities, social norms generate, guide, evaluate and control collective action, cooperation, trust, responsibilities, and obligations for individual and households. Generally the norms are spread over social environment and affect the individual behavior and activities in the community. The higher value of index indicates better status of social norms regarding common welfare and vice versa. The mean index of social norms at household level is found 0.72 with a range of 0.33- 1.0 (Table 5.2) which shows farm household are embedded with rich social norms in the communities. The wide range in the index value shows some households are very poor with respect to social norms. The social norms may be very specific to generalized one with wider application for all community members. The lower value of index of social norms at household level shows households are less committed to follow the norms regarding common wellbeing. Among the selected communities the lowest value for index of social norms is found 0.6 for Siddhaswer of Baitadi district and highest 0.85 is for Geta of Kailali district with mean of 0.72 (Table 5.3). The higher index of social norms indicates the communities are rich in social norms and community have major stake to shape individual and household activities.

5.3.5. Reciprocity

Reciprocity is the two-way flow of goods, services, information and ideas through the available networks among and between the actors in social space. The reciprocity at household level is measured by measuring involvement of a farm household in reciprocating goods, services, labor, farm tools and techniques in neighborhood networks. Reciprocity index at household level is constructed combining the reciprocity of goods and services occurring among the households within the neighborhood networks. The mean value of reciprocity index at household

level is found 0.67 with a range of 0.35 - 0.95 with slight negative skewness (Table 5.2). Households in the communities vary from very rich to very poor for reciprocity but on average households are better in reciprocity. Mostly reciprocated things among the farm families are farming tools, techniques, seeds, breeds, farm products, milk and milk products and food items which have important role to get by the daily livelihood problems. The reciprocity of labor is also common among the farm households during crop seasons but it is observed reciprocity labor in cash crop production is rare. Among the twenty sites the highest level (0.84) of reciprocity is found in Pratappur of Kailali district and lowest (0.51) in Chappari of Darchula district (Table 5.3). Some communities are rich in reciprocity culture and some are poor, as whole the farming communities are better in reciprocity. Reciprocity is the way of life in farming communities, as farm households are not self sufficient in all aspects of livelihood at all time.

5.3.6 Proactivity

It is the willingness of the households as well as whole community to work for the common welfare activities. It is measured as wiliness of the households to take leadership collective action and level of interest of the households in on going development activities. The mean index of proactivity at household level is found 0.63 ranging from 0.20-0.92, which is negatively skewed (Table 5.2). The households vary from very poor to very rich in terms of proactivity regarding common benefits and development activities. Households filled with high level of proactivity are the fundamental drivers for the social and community development activities. The benefits of higher level proactivity may spread within and beyond the communities. The average community level proactivity index is found 0.63, which is positively skewed (Table 5.4). The lowest (0.52) level of proactivity is found for Dehimandu of Baitadi district and highest (0.76) for Jogbuda of Dadeldhura district (Table 5.3). The low level of proactivity in the communities is the inertia to produce momentum for the development intervention in the communities and need more energy and efforts by the development workers.

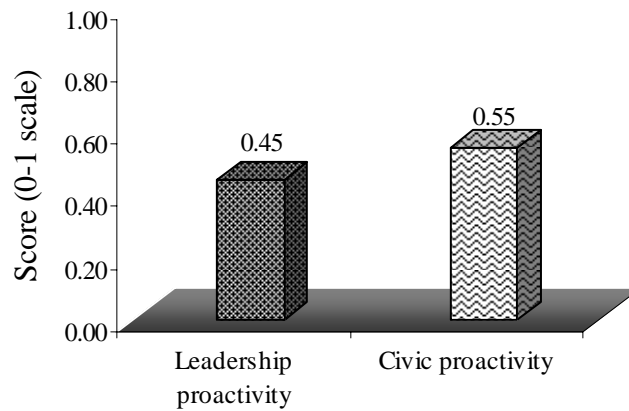


Figure 5.6 Status of leadership and civic proactivity at household level

Source: Field survey, 2005

The proactivity endowed with households and communities have different faces, out of these two are most important. The first face is leadership proactivity which measures the willingness of the households to stand in front and lead collective actions for common benefit. This is important to exploit all latent from of social capital existing in the communities. In absence of leadership proactivity the existing social capital remains idle. The farm households are found poor in leadership proactivity, which is found 0.45 in normalized score value (Figure 5.6). This indicates poor leadership proactivity is one bottleneck to initiate development activities in the communities.

The second important face of proactivity is civic proactivity which shows the degree of interest of the households in ongoing the development activities in their communities, this makes people to realizes it is their right to know and direct the activities occurring in their community. The households with low level of civic proactivity do not keep interest in the development activities and create conducive environment for corruption and irresponsibility among the development agencies. The civic proactivity is also poor (0.55) incase of farming communities however it is slightly better than leadership proactivity (0.45) (Figure 5.6).

Table 5.4 Descriptive statistics for site level social capital index and its constituents in study sites

Social capital constituents	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.	Skewness
Social capital index	0.63	0.81	0.71	0.046	0.086
Index of networks	0.54	0.90	0.66	0.081	1.210
Index of trust	0.60	0.80	0.69	0.062	0.142
Index of collective actions and cooperation	0.68	0.97	0.80	0.068	0.402
Index of social norms	0.60	0.85	0.72	0.083	0.095
Index of reciprocity	0.51	0.84	0.67	0.059	0.022
Index of proactivity	0.52	0.76	0.63	0.062	0.415
Bridging networks	0.58	0.90	0.71	0.10	0.32
Bonding network	0.62	0.93	0.80	0.08	-0.56
Linking networks	0.53	0.88	0.74	0.08	-0.71
Thin trust	0.41	0.81	0.61	0.107	-0.103
Thick trust	0.47	0.88	0.71	0.114	-0.774

Source: Field survey, 2005

5.4 Summary

The farm households as well as farming communities in Far Western Nepal are rich in social capital endowment and there is possibility to foster participatory development activities by using such available stock of social capital. Households and communities are better in collective behavior in comparison to proactivity and networks and reciprocity. Among the networks types, bonding is higher creating cohesive communities but bridging and linking networks are somewhat poor. Thick trust and trust in traditional radius is higher than thin trust and trust in extended radius. In the extended radius the community people least trust outsider and leaders. The communities are rich in ethical norms making the community life harmonic and cooperative.