Daughters-in-law and Mothers-in-law: Determinants of Relationship Happiness

ABSTRACT

Despite much emphasis on the extended family system in many non-Western settings, research on dynamics of these relationships is sparse. This study investigates the impact of family integration on a fundamental relationship in the Nepalese extended family: the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. I hypothesize that when a daughter-in-law is integrated into her husband's family she perceives a happier relationship with her mother-in-law. Using individual interview data, I test two mechanisms of family integration – a daughter-in-law's childbearing experiences and religiosity. Empirical analyses demonstrate that the more children she has born, the happier the daughter-in-law perceives the relationship. The number of sons she has born yields even stronger results. A daughter-in-law's religiosity also increases her reported happiness in her relationship with her mother-in-law. Religiosity retains a strong positive impact even when childbearing experiences are considered. These findings point to the importance of studying in-law relationships as a particular aspect of the kinship system.

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The topic of the relationship with the mother-in-law comes up frequently in everyday conversation, popular culture, jokes and TV shows, but has not been widely studied. Some psychological research has explored feelings about in-law relationships in Western countries. For example, in one study children were found to perceive greater interpersonal distance and have more negative attitudes toward mothers-in-law than mothers (Denmark and Ahmed 1989). Other research in the West has focused on support patterns between in-laws and children in terms of service and financial aid (Stack 1974). There has been even less empirical evaluation of relationships between in-laws and children in non-Western contexts. Key reasons for this gap in research may be that the data are rarely available and that in-law relationships may have very different meanings in different contexts. However, exploration the dynamics of in-law relationships in diverse contexts is likely to yield important evidence of the extent to which factors related to happy relationships are context specific, and insights into what social changes are likely to reshape these relationships over time.

Most research on intergenerational relationships focuses on the parental family. In the Nepalese context however, "affinal" relationships, which are relationships created through marriage, are also likely to be extremely salient to a woman's family and demographic behaviors. Historically, extended families in Nepal have been characterized by patrilocal residence, where married couples continue to reside with or nearby to the husband's parents. In this setting when a young woman gets married she joins the husband's family as an outsider. The new wife comes under the authority of her parents-in-law and husband, and this authority is most exercised by the mother-in-law in daily domestic tasks. Because these women coexist so closely in the domestic sphere, the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship is fundamental to the

Nepalese extended family. Despite its importance as a critical feature of the Nepalese family, the exploration of the specifics of this relationship has been a neglected area of research. The aim of this article is to improve understanding of demographic processes and family dynamics in this setting by conceptualizing the affinal domestic sphere as an important social context.

Rural Nepal is an ideal setting to examine factors associated with happiness in the relationship between daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law because these relationships are central to the family system and because recent dramatic social changes create variation in in-law relationships. The results provide valuable new insights into extended family dynamics in non-Western contexts, and point to the importance of integrating women's relationships with their affinal relations into empirical research on childbearing behavior.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I construct a theoretical framework that combines aspects of theories of in-law relationships from industrialized Western contexts with ideas about family dynamics in rural Nepal, to examine the wife's "integration" or process of becoming an accepted member of her husband's family. I construct a theoretical framework that conceptualizes two broad integrating forces – childbearing behavior and religiosity. I then hypothesize that when a woman is more integrated into her husband's home, she feels more positively about her relationship with her mother-in-law. This framework recognizes that childbearing behaviors and religiosity may be closely related to each other or they may each have independent influences on the daughter-in-law's happiness in her relationship with her mother-in-law.

Childbearing Experiences

In this setting I expect the extent of the daughter-in-law's childbearing to increase her satisfaction with the relationship with her mother-in-law. Historically in Nepal living in a

household with many children has been highly valued. The more children there are, the more they can help with farming and household tasks, and serve as old-age security. The birth of a child proves that the daughter-in-law is fertile. Once the mother-in-law is assured that her daughter-in-law is capable of providing grandchildren, she may treat her more kindly. This may improve the daughter-in-law's perception of their relationship. Also, a daughter-in-law may be able to avoid strenuous household chores while she is pregnant and recovering from a birth. These privileges may improve her sentiments toward her mother-in-law. In addition, the mother-in-law may provide considerable help with childcare, which may cause the daughter-in-law to perceive their relationship more positively.

Furthermore, I expect that the gender of grandchildren born will have differential effects on the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship. In a highly gender-stratified setting such as rural Nepal, sons may be desired for economic reasons (they can provide money to older generations), social reasons (they can provide companionship to older generations) and religious reasons (in the Hindu religion the oldest son performs death rituals for his parents). Because sons offer more benefit to older generations, I expect the daughter-in-law's birth of sons to especially improve her treatment by her mother-in-law and increase her satisfaction with her mother-in-law. However, there are reasons for Nepali parents want at least one daughter as well. For instance, in Hindu culture marrying off a daughter brings religious merit and social status. Additionally, daughters can help with household tasks that are not appropriate for sons. Therefore I expect that the bearing of children in general and of daughters specifically will both positively increase the daughter-in-law's happiness in her relationship with her mother-in-law, and that the bearing of sons specifically will have even greater positive effects.

Religiosity

Durkheim described religion as a force encouraging social interaction and preventing anomie. When people engage in joint activity they tend to feel elated which heightens their sense of group membership. Joint activity reaffirms and strengthens social solidarity because of the shared emotions and feelings it produces. If religiosity integrates society I expect religiosity to integrate family members as well, and thereby increase the daughter-in-law's happiness in her relationship with her mother-in-law.

Many studies have examined Judeo-Christian religions and family relationships. Tolerance for others is an attribute that has been associated with religiosity. Religiosity has been tied to personal happiness and well-being (Steinitz 1980) and marital satisfaction (Hunt 1978).

In Nepal Hinduism is the dominant religion. However, the Hinduism practiced in Nepal is not orthodox; different groups incorporate Hinduism as it suits them, combining it with Buddhism or indigenous religions. Because different ethnic groups have been "Hinduized" over time, I base my theory of religiosity and family integration on Hindu ideas.

Like Judeo-Christian religions, Hinduism also encourages strong family ties. Hinduism has explicit doctrine and rituals encouraging early marriage and childbearing. For example, Hindu law encourages fathers to arrange marriages for their daughters before menstruation. Although the child marriage tradition has been relaxed, parents still try to arrange marriages for daughters as early as possible, to avoid any possible shame of an unmarried daughter even being accused of premarital sexual activity (for the sample in this analysis, the average age at marriage was 16.5 years old).

Also, Hinduism promotes family bonds by organizing activities in which family members interact. In Nepal, most organized religious gatherings and functions take place in homes, thus

family members are typically the others with whom religious rituals are performed. Parents and grandparents often involve children in everyday rituals such as the High Caste Hindu act of smearing a mud and cow dung mixture on the ground in and around the home for purification. They make offerings to statues and pictures of deities and ancestors. They call Hindu priests, Buddhist Lamas, and indigenous healers such as Guraus and Jhakris to homes to perform ceremonies recognizing key life course events such as birth, child naming, marriage, and death, or to perform ceremonies either thanking a deity or asking for good fortune or health (Pearce 2000). Religiosity is a concept with many possible dimensions. I look at one measure of internal importance and two measures of external actions as illustrations.

Internal importance. The importance of religion is the centrality of religion in an individual's life. Previous research indicates that importance of religion is a stronger influence on social relationships than public behaviors like attending services. This is because people who have strongly internalized their religion's teachings are more likely to use those teachings to guide their personal relationships (Pearce and Axinn 1998). I expect that daughters-in-law who place high value on religion will be more likely to translate pro-family religious teachings into behavior, acting in ways that improve family relationships.

External actions. External religious actions are more public forms of religiosity that can put people in contact with the pro-family messages advocated by religion. Or they can be social activities that strengthen family ties (Pearce and Axinn 1998). Spending time together in positive interaction promotes bonding among family members (Rossi and Rossi 1990). I expect daughters-in-law who are involved in these external religious activities to have more positive relationships with their mothers-in-law than those who are not involved in these activities. I

examine two external religious actions likely to be affect relationship happiness: prayer and clergy visiting the home.

Finally, the effect of religiosity on relationship happiness could be explained by childbearing behavior. Religiosity has been linked to family size among people of different nationalities and religious affiliations. Previous research has found that religiosity affects family size preferences and contraceptive behavior in this setting (Pearce 2000). Explicit consideration of childbearing as a potential intervening mechanism is needed to determine the extent to which religiosity exerts an independent influence on relationship happiness.

DATA AND METHODS

I use data from the Chitwan Valley Family Study (CVFS) to test my empirical predictions. The CVFS consists of survey data from a sample of 171 neighborhoods in the western part of the Chitwan Valley in south central Nepal. Neighborhoods are defined as clusters of approximately 5 to 15 households. In 1996 all individuals ages 15 to 59 living in the selected neighborhoods were interviewed. The overall response rate for this survey was approximately 97%, or 5,271 completed interviews. All interviews were conducted in the most common language in Nepal (Nepali); thus question wordings presented are translations of the original text. For this analysis, the sample is restricted to 1405 women who are married, between the ages of 15 and 54, and have a mother-in-law alive at the time of the 1996 interview.

Measures of both independent and dependent variables are limited to 1996 because this is the only year that these data are available for use. Thus the possibility of reciprocal causation is perhaps the greatest threat to my understanding of the relationship between the daughter-in-law's attributes and her relationship with her mother-in-law. However, many of the daughter-in-law's attributes used in this analysis to predict her relationship with her mother-in-law were set at a

point earlier in the daughter-in-law's life course. This proper temporal ordering helps to untangle the issue of reciprocal causation.

Relationship with Mother-in-Law

The dependent variable of interest is the daughter-in-law's report of her relationship with her mother-in-law. Respondents were asked "In general, would you say that your relationship with your mother-in-law is extremely happy, very happy, somewhat happy, or not happy at all?" I code a dummy variable 1 if the respondent answered extremely happy or very happy, and 0 if she answered somewhat happy or not happy at all.

Measures of Childbearing Experiences

I examine previous childbearing experiences with three different continuous measures: the total number of children ever born, the total number of sons ever born, and the total number of daughters ever born.

Measures of Religiosity

I include both a personal measure of the internal importance of religion and two external religious actions: prayer and having a clergy visit the home. My measure of internal importance is based on responses to the question "How important is religion to you? Would you say it is very important (3), somewhat important (2), or not at all important (1)?" Two questions allow me to construct an ordinal measure of prayer: "How often do you pray at home? Would you say more than once a week (3), once a week or less (2), or never (1)?" and "How often do you pray at a Temple? More than once a month (3), once a month or less (2), or never (1)?" These items are significantly correlated with each other ($r = 0.45$, $p < 0.0001$), and I average the two measures to create an overall measure of prayer. To measure a clergy visit I utilize the question

"During the past 12 months did a (Brahmin/Priest/Lama) visit your house for a religious purpose?" A dichotomous measure is coded 1 for yes and 0 for no.[1]

Controls

In order to properly specify the models, I control for various factors that may be confounders between the independent variables of interest and the mother-in-law relationship. To control for household characteristics I include measures of mother-in-law co-residence and household wealth. I code a dummy variable 1 if the mother-in-law is a resident of the same household and 0 if she resides elsewhere (a resident of a household is defined as having eaten or slept in the household for at least three of the past six months at the time of the study). Because much of the Nepalese economy is not monetized, I use a measure of whether the household is electrified as a proxy for wealth.[2]

I include two characteristics of the husband-wife relationship which may have consequences for a wife's happiness with her mother-in-law.[3] First, the degree to which the daughter-in-law participated in arranging her marriage may impact her relationship with her mother-in-law. Respondents were asked, "People marry in many different ways. Sometimes our

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[1] I also examined the impact of incongruence in the mother-in-law's and daughter-in-law's reports of importance of religion, hypothesizing that a difference in answers would be associated with a less happy relationship. Differences in responses to this question do significantly lower the odds of a happy relationship. However, these results are based on only 265 cases of daughter-in-laws in this sample whose mother-in-law answered this interview question. Thus it is difficult to draw conclusions from such a small case base.

[2] I also estimated the impact of whether the household owns the land on which the home is built as another potential indicator of wealth. This measure had no impact on the mother-in-law relationship.

[3] I also tested controls for marital duration and daughter-in-law's birth cohort, but years of marriage and older age are both positively correlated with the total number of children ever born. Moreover when I test these variables in models without the number of children ever born their effects are not statistically significant, and I do not include them.

parents or relatives decide whom we should marry, and sometimes we decide ourselves. In your

case, who selected your (most recent) spouse? Your parents/relatives, yourself, or both?" If they

answered both, respondents were asked a follow-up question: "Although both of you may have

decided, one of you may have had a little more influence than the other. Who had more influence

in choosing your (most recent) spouse? You or your parents and relatives?" Because I

hypothesize that having even partial influence over the choice of a spouse may improve a

daughter-in-law's relationship to her mother-in-law, I code a dichotomous measure 1 if the

respondent had any participation in selecting her spouse and 0 otherwise. Second, the wife's love

for her husband may impact her mother-in-law relationship happiness. My measure of love is

based on responses to the following question: "How much do you love your (husband/wife)?

Very much (3), some (2), a little or not at all (1)?" This item is similar in scope to items often

employed in studies of marital quality (Norton 1983).[4]

I control for the daughter-in-law's education because education has increased

dramatically between generations (in this sample only 3% of mother-in-laws ever went to school

at all, but 43% of daughter-in-laws went to school for 1 or more years). Education may be a

source of ideational change, and a daughter-in-law having new ideas may have important

consequences for how she views her relationship with her mother-in-law. I code a dichotomous

measure 1 if the daughter-in-law has more than 6 years of education and 0 otherwise. Experience

with nonfamily employment may also be a source of ideational change, and may increase a sense

of independence from the family. This may provoke conflict in their relationship, negatively

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[4] Note that this measure of love is not a measure of "love" marriage, which is often thought of as the alternative to arranged marriage in South Asia. This measure of love is not correlated with the measure of having any say in spouse selection, suggesting that wives whose marriage was exclusively arranged by their parents do not report different levels of love for their husbands than wives who participated in choosing a husband.

affecting the daughter-in-law's report of her happiness with her mother-in-law. I code a dichotomous measure 1 if the daughter-in-law ever participated in nonfamily work before getting married.

Theoretically it is possible that those with a high preceding propensity to get along well with a mother-in-law are also most likely to be religious and bear many children. I control for a daughter-in-law's preceding ability to get along well with female family members by including a measure of her happiness in her relationship with her own mother. In the multivariate models I include dummy variables for having a happy relationship with her own mother and an unhappy relationship with her own mother; those daughter-in-law's whose own mothers have died are the reference group.

Finally, I control for ethnicity because Nepalese ethnic groups vary in marriage and family behaviors. I use five dichotomous indicators of ethnicity: Upper Caste Hindu, Lower Caste Hindu, Newar, Hill Tibeto-Burmese, and Terai Tibeto-Burmese. In my multivariate models Upper Caste Hindu status is the omitted category; effects of belonging to the other ethnic groups are relative to this group. In Nepal religious affiliation is not based on exclusive categories, thus a forced choice survey question on religious affiliation does not capture the extent to which the Nepalese combine religions. Ethnic groups are a more precise way to group people according to their sources of religious ideology.[5]

I also hypothesized that ethnic difference may affect the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship, but this analysis sample contains very few cases of a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law reporting different ethnicity. The variables for daughter-in-law's ethnic group and mother-

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[5] I tested for interaction effects between ethnicity and independent variables of interest. A few slightly significant results were found. For example, the effect of number of children born is slightly lower for Terai Tibeto-Burmese, and the effect of prayer is slightly lower for Hill Tibeto-Burmese (analyses not shown).

in-law's ethnic group are almost perfectly correlated with each other (r = 0.986, p < 0.0001). Therefore I use the daughter-in-law's report of ethnic group as a measure representing both her and her mother-in-law's ethnic group. The means and standard deviations of these variables are presented in Table 1.

(Table 1, about here)

Estimation technique

I use logistic regression procedures to estimate multivariate models of a happy relationship with a mother-in-law. Logistic regression is an appropriate statistical technique for analyzing models of dichotomous dependent variables (Kmenta 1986). I report parameters from logistic regression equations in the form

$$\ln[p/(1-p)] = \alpha + \Sigma(\beta_k)(X_k),$$

where p is the probability that a respondent reports a happy relationship with her mother-in-law, p/(1-p) is the odds that a respondent reports a happy relationship with her mother-in-law, α is a constant term, β_k represents the effects parameters of the explanatory variables, and X_k represents the explanatory variables in the model. Coefficients in a logit model give the change in the log-odds of reporting a happy relationship with a mother-in-law for a unit change in the explanatory variables. To facilitate interpretation of the coefficients, I report the exponentiated log-odds coefficients, or the odds ratios, which are interpreted as the amount by which the odds of reporting a happy relationship with a mother-in-law are multiplied for a unit change in the explanatory variable. Thus odds ratios equal to 1 represent no effect, odds ratios greater than 1 represent positive effects, and odds ratios less than 1 represent negative effects.

Finally, because my models are hierarchically clustered, with several individuals living in the same neighborhood, I use a multilevel logit model. Recent research demonstrates that this

modeling strategy is suitable to these data because it accounts for their hierarchical structure (Barber et al. 2000). My estimates are calculated using the GLIMMIX macro for SAS according to the approach described by Barber et al. 2000.

RESULTS

In Table 2 I present the effects of the daughter-in-law's childbearing experiences on her relationship with her mother-in-law. Model 1 shows that the total number of children ever born significantly raises the odds of having a happy relationship: each additional child ever born increases the daughter-in-law's odds of reporting a happy relationship with her mother-in-law by 16%. Model 2 shows that the total number of sons born has slightly larger influence on the odds of a happy relationship: each additional son ever born enlarges the odds by 23%. Model 3 shows that the number of daughters ever born also raises the odds of a happy relationship between a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law: for each additional daughter the odds are increased by 14%. However, this effect is less significant than the effect of sons or that of the total number of children. These findings are consistent with my hypotheses that bearing children engenders a happy relationship with a mother-in-law, and that bearing sons improves this relationship even more so than bearing daughters.

(*Table 2, about here*)

Also in Table 2, Models 4 and 5 show that the total number of children is a more important predictor of relationship happiness than the numbers of sons or daughters. Including these measures in the same model with number of children eliminates their significant effects. I also tried looking at gender composition of children in many other ways. I tested the ratio of sons to total number of children and the ratio of sons to daughters. These effects were not statistically significant. Therefore, the story seems to be more about volume than gender balance. In Model

6, including number of sons and number of daughters in the same model does not eliminate their positive independent effects. This confirms my hypothesis that the bearing of children of each gender each improves the relationship happiness for separate reasons.

Note also that several of the control variables in these models have large and significant effects on the odds of a happy relationship. For example, women whose mother-in-law lives in the same house are much more likely to report a happier relationship (this could be partly social desirability bias – i.e. the woman reports a happy relationship because the mother-in-law is there in the house during the interview. However I do think it also lends support for the notion that people form bonds through doing daily tasks together). Also, women who report more love for their husbands report happier relationships with their mothers-in-law. And women with unhappy relationships with their own mothers also have unhappy relationships with their mothers-in-law, supporting the idea that some people just don't get along well with others!

In Table 3 I estimate the effects of different components of religiosity on the odds of a happy relationship. Model 1 shows that internal importance of religion has the largest influence: for each increasing level in the importance of religion, the odds of reporting a happy relationship with a mother-in-law increase by 76%. Prayer and having a clergy visit the home in the past year also have positive effects, shown in Models 2 and 3. Model 4 illustrates the independent effects of these religiosity components by including them in the same models. The magnitudes of the coefficients decrease but they all retain significance, suggesting that these components of religiosity each have direct effects on the happy mother-in-law relationship.

In Model 5 I test childbearing as a possible intervening mechanism. That is, it may be that a religiosity promotes a happier mother-in-law relationship because religiosity increases the number of children born. The model shows that childbearing does not play a role in transmitting

the effects of religiosity; including them in the same model does not reduce the effects of religiosity.

(*Table 3, about here*)

These findings show strong support for my hypotheses that childbearing experiences and religiosity both foster a happier mother-in-law relationship from the perspective of a daughter-in-law. Given the theoretical reasons for expecting family integration to be multidimensional, these results are fitting. However, these measures were taken at the same time, and the effects can only be fully teased out with measures taken over time.

DISCUSSION

Overall the results of this analysis indicate that different factors each have considerable influence on a daughter-in-law's perception of her relationship with her mother-in-law. There are likely to be other key mechanisms of family integration unmeasured in these analyses, which may impact relationship satisfaction.

Although the extended family is commonly referred to in demographic literature, research on in-law relationship dynamics has been neglected. This is the first detailed empirical examination of childbearing and in-law relationship quality in a non-Western setting where mothers-in-law are especially influential. The dynamics of the mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship identified in this analysis should aid in the theoretical understanding of the extended family system. This is a topic where qualitative work would be very helpful in both forming testable hypotheses and interpreting results.

The study of interpersonal relationships is not a unique discipline. Both social demography and psychology bring disciplinary perspectives to the study of close personal relationships. Social demographers tend to stress particular types of close relationships (e.g. a married couple,

a parent and child) and generally explain their demographic processes within a framework of structure and rationality. Psychologists have theorized across all types of close relationships and have treated emotions as an intrinsic characteristic of these relationships; however these approaches have been accused of lacking recognition that close relationships are shaped by structural circumstances and cultural definitions of the relationship. This analysis crosses the boundaries of these disciplines by incorporating the presence of both emotions and cultural norms in a study of a close relationship that has major implications for demographic behaviors. These results acknowledge the need for demographic surveys to invest in more measures of close personal relationships.

This analysis used family integration as a framework to predict relationship happiness with a mother-in-law. It could be used to predict other aspects of the mother-in-law relationship besides happiness, such as exchanges of financial support. It also could be used to model other outcomes for the daughter-in-law, such as her personal well-being or health outcomes. Furthermore, families have been described as microcosms of the larger societies. Thus studying family integration has broader implications for social integration.

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Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Variables Used in the Analyses (N=1405)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Happy Relationship with Mother-in-Law	0.67	0.47	0	1
Childbearing Experiences:				
Total Number of Children Born	3.01	2.17	0	12
Total Number of Sons Born	1.52	1.26	0	7
Total Number of Daughters Born	1.49	1.45	0	8
Religiosity:				
Internal Importance	2.52	0.60	1	3
Prayer at Home	2.42	0.70	1	3
Prayer at Temple	1.95	0.60	1	3
Prayer	2.19	0.56	1	3
Clergy Visit in the Past Year	0.59	0.49	0	1
Control Variables				
Household Characteristics:				
Mother-in-Law Lives in Household	0.31	0.46	0	1
Household has Electricity	0.37	0.48	0	1
Marital Relationship:				
Any Participation in Choosing Husband	0.26	0.44	0	1
Loves Husband	2.02	0.66	1	3
Wife's Background:				
Highly Educated	0.22	0.41	0	1
Nonfamily Work Before Marriage	0.22	0.42	0	1
Wife's Relationship with her own Mother:				
Happy	0.78	0.41	0	1
Not Happy	0.06	0.24	0	1
Mother is Dead	0.15	0.36	0	1
Ethnic Group:				
Upper Caste Hindu	0.48	0.50	0	1
Lower Caste Hindu	0.11	0.32	0	1
Newar	0.05	0.23	0	1
Hill Tibeto-Burmese	0.17	0.38	0	1
Terai Tibeto-Burmese	0.17	0.38	0	1

Table 2. Multilevel Logistic Regression Estimates of the Effects of a Daughter-in-Law's Childbearing Experiences on a Happy Relationship with her Mother-in-Law

Independent Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Childbearing Experiences:						
Total Number of Children Born	1.16***			1.12**	1.22***	
	(4.46)			(2.44)	(3.58)	
Total Number of Sons Born		1.23***		1.09		1.22***
		(3.91)		(1.09)		(3.58)
Total Number of Daughters Born			1.14**		0.92	1.12**
			(2.90)		(-1.09)	(2.44)
Control Variables						
Household Characteristics:						
Mother-in-Law Lives in Household	1.86***	1.79***	1.73***	1.88***	1.88***	1.88***
	(4.31)	(4.08)	(3.84)	(4.35)	(4.35)	(4.35)
Household has Electricity	0.89	0.88	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.89
	(-0.76)	(-0.87)	(-0.83)	(-0.77)	(-0.77)	(-0.77)
Marital Relationship:						
Any Participation in Choosing Husband	1.09	1.05	1.05	1.09	1.09	1.09
	(0.61)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.60)	(0.60)	(0.60)
Loves Husband	1.55***	1.53***	1.55***	1.54***	1.54***	1.54***
	(4.60)	(4.51)	(4.65)	(4.57)	(4.57)	(4.57)
Wife's Background:						
Highly Educated	1.10	1.04	0.98	1.11	1.11	1.11
	(0.58)	(0.25)	(-0.11)	(0.63)	(0.63)	(0.63)
Nonfamily Work Before Marriage	1.14	1.07	1.06	1.13	1.13	1.13
	(0.82)	(0.42)	(0.39)	(0.80)	(0.80)	(0.80)
Wife's Relationship with her own Mother:[a]						
Happy	1.30†	1.24	1.19	1.31†	1.31†	1.31†
	(1.57)	(1.28)	(1.06)	(1.59)	(1.59)	(1.59)
Not Happy	0.13***	0.13***	0.13***	0.13***	0.13***	0.13***
	(-6.24)	(-6.44)	(-6.41)	(-6.25)	(-6.25)	(-6.25)
Ethnic Group:[b]						
Lower Caste Hindu	0.73†	0.71†	0.72†	0.72†	0.72†	0.72†
	(-1.44)	(-1.53)	(-1.47)	(-1.45)	(-1.45)	(-1.45)
Newar	0.77	0.80	0.75	0.78	0.78	0.78
	(-0.96)	(-0.80)	(-1.05)	(-0.89)	(-0.89)	(-0.89)
Hill Tibeto-Burmese	0.83	0.82	0.81	0.83	0.83	0.83
	(-0.97)	(-1.04)	(-1.10)	(-0.96)	(-0.96)	(-0.96)
Terai Tibeto-Burmese	0.72†	0.73†	0.75†	0.72†	0.72†	0.72†
	(-1.57)	(-1.54)	(-1.43)	(-1.59)	(-1.59)	(-1.59)

Note: Numbers in parentheses are t-ratios
[a] Reference Group is Mother is Dead
[b] Reference Group is Upper Caste Hindu
†p<.10; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001 (one-tailed tests)

Table 3. Multilevel Logistic Regression Estimates of the Effects of a Daughter-in-Law's Religiosity on a Happy Relationship with her Mother-in-Law

Independent Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Religiosity:					
Internal Importance	1.76***			1.62***	1.56***
	(5.57)			(4.46)	(4.07)
Prayer		1.55***		1.24*	1.31*
		(3.65)		(1.69)	(2.11)
Clergy Visit in the Past Year			1.41**	1.31*	1.28*
			(2.76)	(2.16)	(1.92)
Childbearing Experiences:					
Total Number of Children Born					1.15***
					(4.20)
Control Variables					
Household Characteristics:					
Mother-in-Law Lives in Household	1.60***	1.66***	1.58***	1.58***	1.81***
	(3.34)	(3.58)	(3.24)	(3.22)	(4.05)
Household has Electricity	0.86	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.87
	(-1.00)	(-1.05)	(-0.99)	(-1.09)	(-0.91)
Marital Relationship:					
Any Participation in Choosing Husband	1.05	1.02	1.02	1.08	1.17
	(0.36)	(0.13)	(0.14)	(0.50)	(1.08)
Loves Husband	1.47***	1.49***	1.55***	1.46***	1.46***
	(4.05)	(4.21)	(4.61)	(3.93)	(3.92)
Wife's Background:					
Highly Educated	0.99	0.88	0.88	0.95	1.15
	(-0.06)	(-0.78)	(-0.79)	(-0.32)	(0.80)
Nonfamily Work Before Marriage	1.06	1.01	0.99	1.07	1.23†
	(0.39)	(0.06)	(-0.06)	(0.45)	(1.31)
Wife's Relationship with her own Mother:[a]					
Happy	1.21	1.12	1.12	1.21	1.41*
	(1.16)	(0.68)	(0.69)	(1.18)	(2.04)
Not Happy	0.13***	0.12***	0.12***	0.13***	0.15***
	(-6.26)	(-6.53)	(-6.56)	(-6.17)	(-5.82)
Ethnic Group:[b]					
Lower Caste Hindu	0.78	0.84	0.77	0.90	0.92
	(-1.10)	(-0.76)	(-1.15)	(-0.47)	(-0.37)
Newar	0.76	0.76	0.79	0.77	0.76
	(-0.98)	(-1.02)	(-0.85)	(-0.94)	(-0.96)
Hill Tibeto-Burmese	0.81	0.89	0.83	0.87	0.91
	(-1.13)	(-0.64)	(-0.99)	(-0.71)	(-0.47)
Terai Tibeto-Burmese	0.77	0.97	0.75†	0.85	0.83

| | (-1.28) | (-0.17) | (-1.43) | (-0.77) | (-0.88) |

Note: Numbers in parentheses are t-ratios
[a] Reference Group is Mother is Dead
[b] Reference Group is Upper Caste Hindu
[†]p<.10; *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001 (one-tailed tests)