Place & Perceptions: Egalitarian Beliefs & Activity Spaces in Chitwan, Nepal

CVFS Webinar
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Overview

- Activity space/neighborhood + social beliefs literatures

- Activity space belief interdependency
- Activity space exposures associated with positive beliefs

- Such findings have yet to be published/acknowledged in active space literature

Background – Neighborhoods & Beliefs

- Individuals are influenced by those around them, particularly those in their primary group (Cooley, Durkheim, etc.)

- Neighborhood climates toward e.g., sexual activity and smoking are associated with teen behaviors (Warner et al., 2011; Musick et al., 2008)

- In Nepal:
  - Neighbors' beliefs toward family sizes are associated with individual fertility behavior (Jennings & Barber, 2013)
  - Neighbors' beliefs about marriage are associated with individual marriage timing (Yabiku, 2006)
  - Neighbors' behaviors are also associated with attitudes toward marriage (Barber, 2004)

Background – Mechanisms of NBH & Beliefs

- Socialization
  - Social learning theory (Bandura, 1977)
  - Exposure to other ideas (Levitan & Wronski, 2014)
  - Social pressure (Janowitz, 1975)

- Selection
  - Homophily (McPherson et al., 2001)

- Levitan & Visser (2009)
  - While we may initially select our groups, we are continuously shaped by them
  - Heterogeneous belief networks -> malleability of individual beliefs

Background – Intergroup Contact & Beliefs

- Contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954)
  - Individual beliefs toward “others” are related to intergroup contact
  - Positive intergroup contact reduces bias between groups
- In-group members with more out-group friends are more likely to have less prejudice (Hewstone et al., 2006)
- Greater NBH ethnic diversity is associated with positive out-group beliefs (Phinney et al., 1997)
- Indirect intergroup contact has similar results (e.g., Dasgupta & Rivera, 2008)

Background – Moving beyond the NBH

- Primary relations -> social organization of the city (Park et al., 1925)
- Places may be apt for different relationships
- Activity space (AS) research
  - Looking outside the NBH
  - AS vary by sociodemographics
- AS expose individuals to differing social and physical environments (Jones & Pebley, 2014)

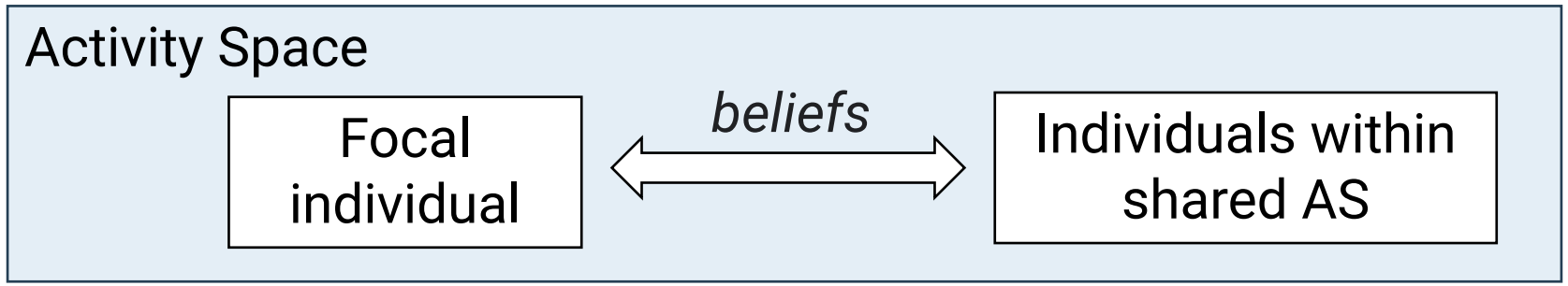
Shared Activity Space Networks

- Individuals who share an AS
  - Overlapping AS
- Ties exist between individuals if they share a geographic space
  - *Geo-ties*
- Geo-ties represent in/direct social contact between individuals

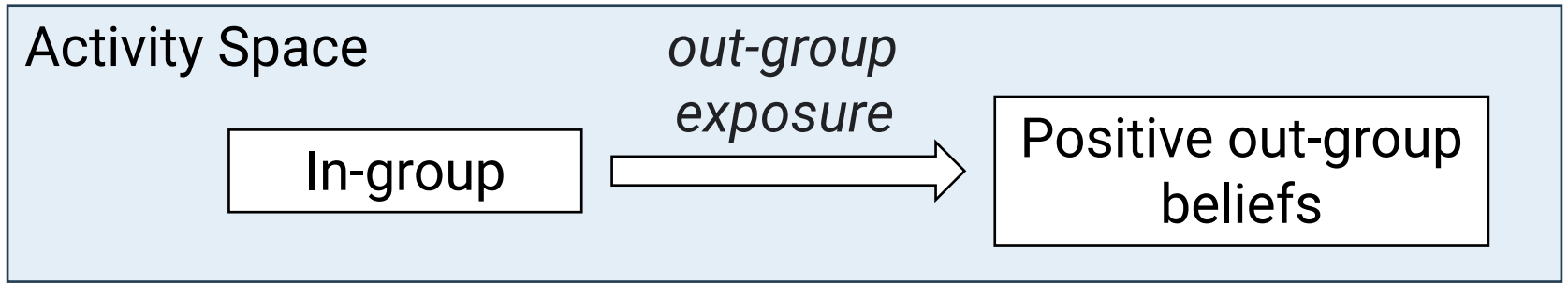
- *Are beliefs clustered among shared AS networks?*
- *Are positive out-group beliefs more likely among diverse shared AS networks?*

Hypotheses

- *H1.*



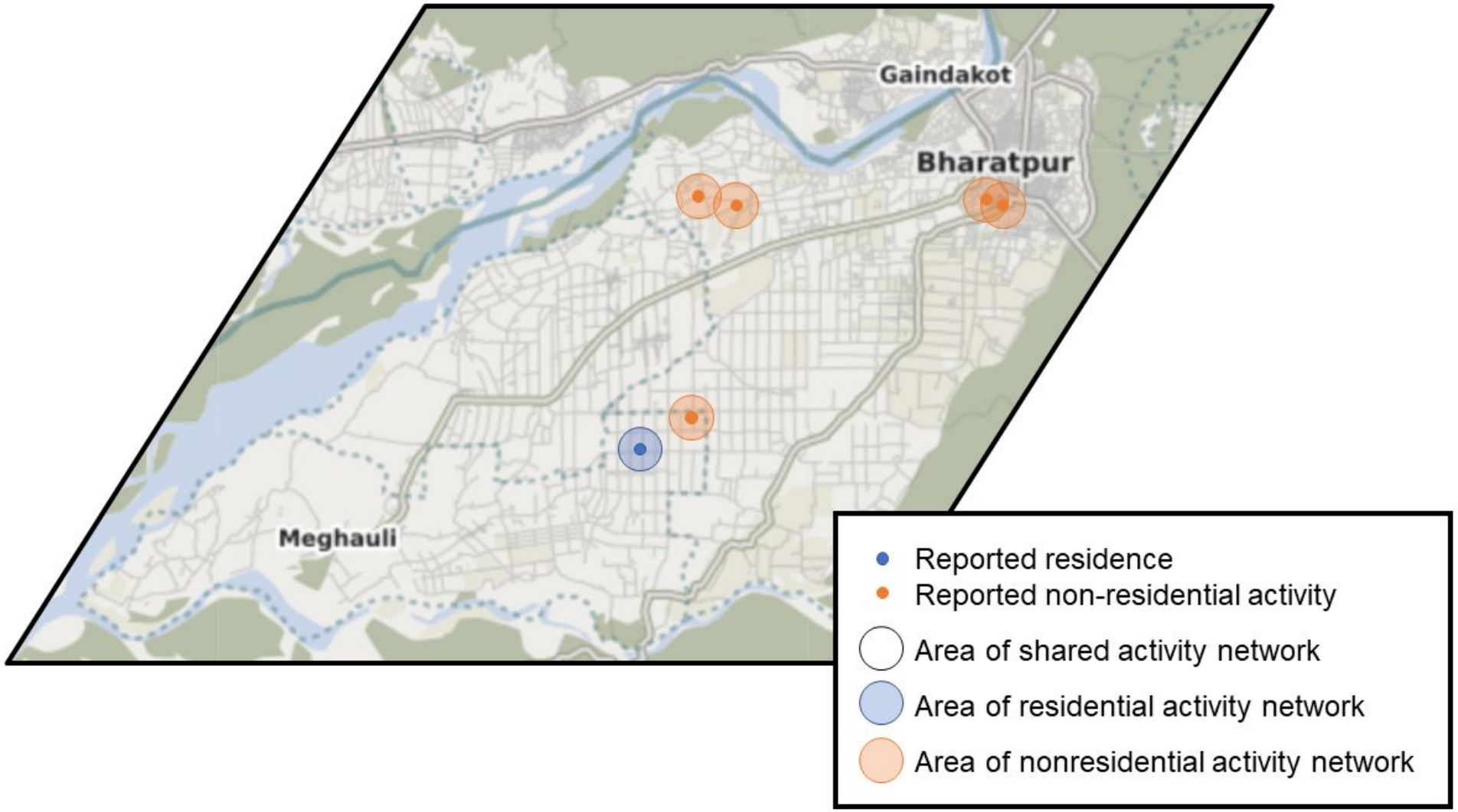
- *H2.*



Data

- Spatial data from Chitwan, Nepal
- Conducted by the Institute for Social & Environmental Research-Nepal in 2015
- Representative sampling
- Semi-structured interview
  - Questionnaire
    - Demographics & beliefs
  - Computer-assisted activity space interview
    - Activities done in the last week and their spatial location

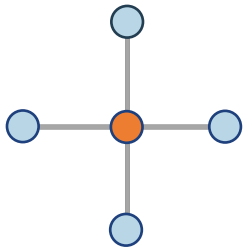
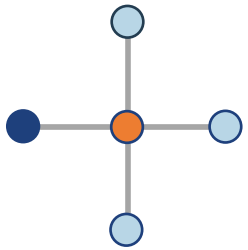
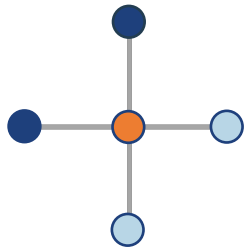
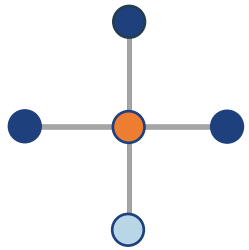
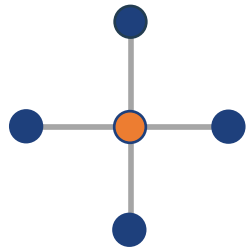
Data - Chitwan Activity Spaces



Independent Variables

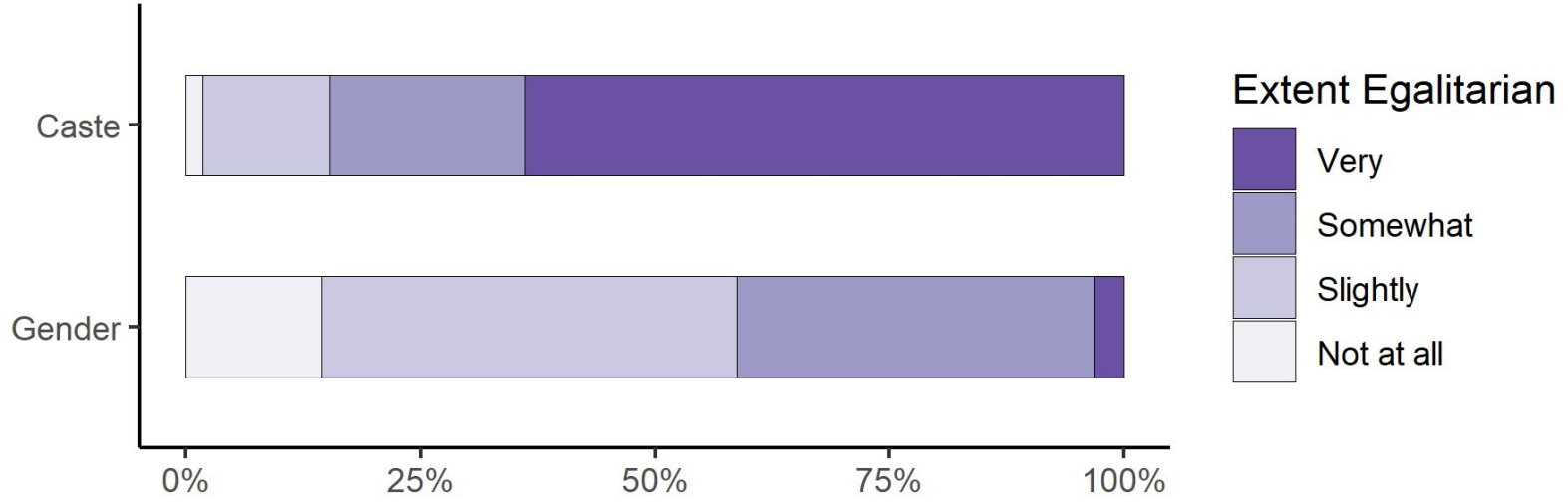
- *H1:* Average of geo-ties' beliefs

- *H2:* Level of exposure to "others"
  - Wong & Shaw (2011)

Exposure Index	0.00	0.08	0.25	0.75	1.00
Focal Individual In-group Out-group					

Dependent Variables – Beliefs

- Caste = *"People should not be treated differently based on their caste."*
- Gender* = *"Most men are better suited for political leadership than are more women."*



Participant Demographics

	Total		Chhetri/Brahmin		Non-Chhetri/Brahmin		Male		Female	
	mean	(sd)	mean	(sd)	mean	(sd)	mean	(sd)	mean	(sd)
Focal Individual										
Egalitarian Belief										
Caste	3.5	(0.8)	3.4	(0.8)	3.5	(0.8)	3.5	(0.8)	3.4	(0.8)
Gender	2.3	(0.7)	2.4	(0.7)	2.2	(0.7)	2.1	(0.8)	2.4	(0.7)
Age	31.1	(10.6)	31.6	(10.6)	30.8	(10.6)	30.7	(11.2)	31.4	(10.2)
Educational Attainment	7.6	(4.3)	9.1	(3.9)	6.4	(4.3)	8.4	(4.0)	7.0	(4.4)
Chhetri/Brahmin	0.42						0.41		0.43	
Male	0.40		0.39		0.41					
Shared Activity Network										
Egalitarian Belief										
Caste	3.5	(0.3)	3.5	(0.3)	3.5	(0.3)	3.5	(0.2)	3.5	(0.3)
Gender	2.3	(0.3)	2.4	(0.3)	2.3	(0.3)	2.3	(0.2)	2.3	(0.3)
Exposure Index										
Caste	0.2	(0.3)	0.1	(0.2)	0.3	(0.3)	0.2	(0.3)	0.2	(0.3)
Gender	0.1	(0.2)	0.1	(0.2)	0.1	(0.2)	0.1	(0.2)	0.1	(0.2)
N of network	30.5	(34.4)	35.1	(38.2)	27.0	(30.8)	37.2	(38.6)	25.9	(30.3)
N of respondents	957		406		551		387		570	

Results – *H1* – OLS Regression Predicting Individual Egalitarianism

	Caste Egalitarianism	Gender Egalitarianism
Shared Activity Space Caste Belief	0.30** (0.09)	
Shared Activity Space Gender Belief		0.17 (0.09)
n	957	957

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$
Models include controls for age, gender, educational attainment, & caste

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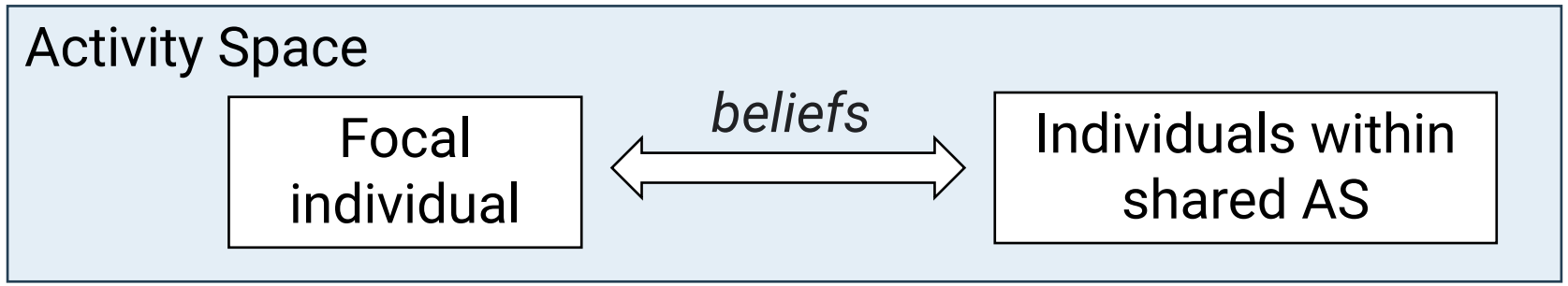
Results – *H2* – OLS Regression Predicting Individual Egalitarianism

	Caste Egalitarianism	Gender Egalitarianism
Shared Activity Space Caste Exposure	0.44* (0.21)	
Shared Activity Space Gender Exposure		0.19 (0.16)
n	406	387
	(Chhetri/Brahmin only)	(Male only)

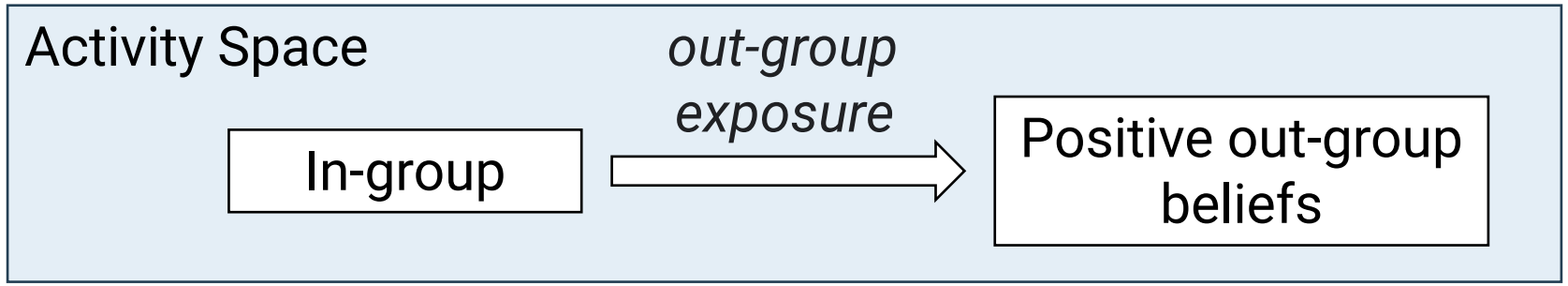
**p <0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001*
Models include controls for age, gender, educational attainment, & caste

Hypotheses

- *H1.*

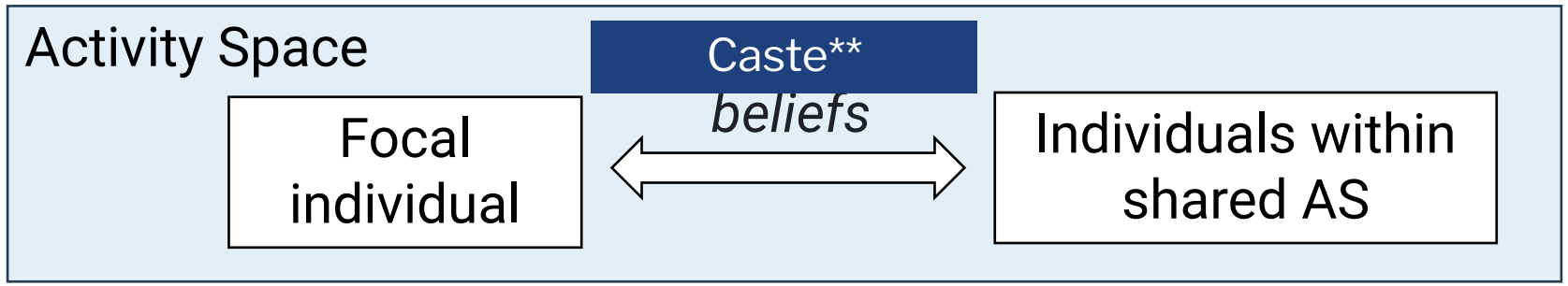


- *H2.*

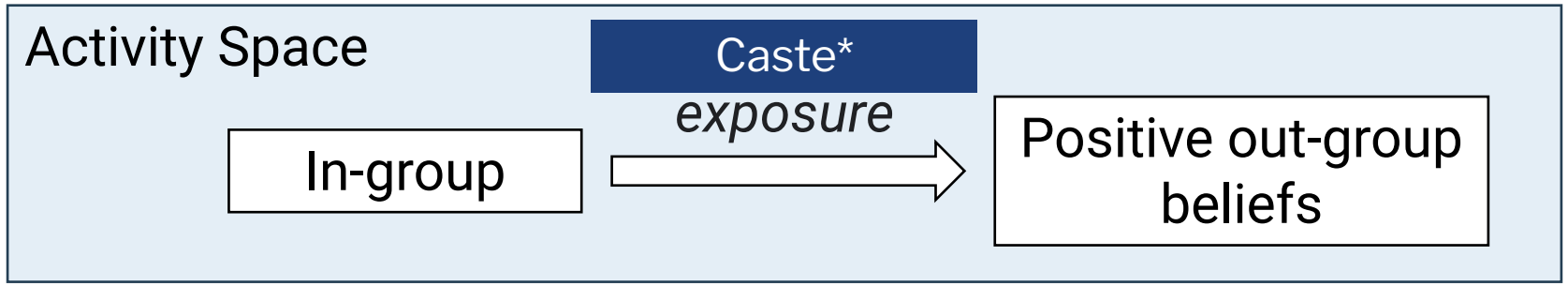


Discussion

- *H1.*



- *H2.*



Discussion

- Similar caste beliefs among shared activity networks
- Greater caste exposure associated with higher caste egalitarianism

- Additional findings
  - Dalit caste = ↑ caste egalitarianism
  - Higher education = ↑ gender egalitarianism
  - Females = ↑ gender egalitarianism
  - Newar caste males = ↓ gender egalitarianism than Chhetri/Brahmin

Limitations & Future Directions

- Causation vs. selection
- Temporal specificity of the data
  - Activities of the past week
- Caste and gender as complex concepts
  - Measured here with only one question

- Study broader beliefs
- Extend research to other locations

Thank you!

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