Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity Construction Process in Nepal

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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on the review for my doctoral dissertation and the field work conducted for a study entitled "Ethnic Politics in Nepal." The ethnicity and ethnic identity construction process, a movement that took more than two decades to be heard and identified from the government addressing their distinct identity among caste groups in Nepal after 1990s political change. To address the issues of diversity, equal opportunities and equal access to the resources, the Nepal government focused on affirmative action bringing quota reservation while applying for government positions, development related sectors and university position based on their groups' social and economic positions in the country. Besides this, the issues of definition of what ethnicity and ethnic identity constriction process are, this paper also tries to address Nepal's indigenous ethnic identity construction process. In addition, the government's affirmative action will be also discussed in the present situation. In this way, the paper will help to understand meaning and its process to understand the Nepali ethnicity and ethnic identity construction process in Nepal.

INTRODUCTION

Ethnicity is associated with the word 'ethnic' which is derived from the Greek word 'ethnos' (ethnikos) denotes the meaning of heathen or pagan. The American Sociologist Davis Riesman (Glazer and Moynihan, 1975: p.1; Malesevic, 2004: p.1; Eriksen, 1993: p. 3) used this word for ethnicity in 1953. Ethnicity took its new place in social science from the mid-fourteenth century to mid-nineteenth century (Eriksen, 2010: p.46). The issues of ethnicity are attached with minority issues and race relations but anthropologically it is taken as the sub-national units associated with classification of groups and their relationships. Eriken (2010) stated that ethnicity is formed from social relationships between people who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from other groups with whom they have regular interactions. Both gaining and losing interactions create political, organizational and symbolic identity of groups to be district from each other. Ethnic groups are essential components of ethnicity which tends to have common origin that encourages endogamy (2010: p. 51). Marx sees ethnicity as false consciousness that can be replaced in due course whereas Tonnies (1963) and Durkheim (1933) contrasted it with traditional and modern societies, as "Geminshaft" and 'Gesellshaft' or 'mechanical solidarity' and 'organic solidarity' (Guibernau & Rex, 2010: p. 1-2). Thinking differently other than Marx, Durkheim and Tonnies, Max Weber talked about the distinction of ethnicity from race. Max Weber (1864-1920) gave importance to events. Individuals interpreted the meaning of their behavior and acted according to these interpretations. He believes that sociologists must inquire into

people's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions regarding their own behavior emphasizing on Verstehen or interpretation based on empathetic understanding through participatory examinations of social phenomena; subjective meanings are associated with every action.

Ethnic groups play an important role in forming ethnic identity. Max Weber considered ethnic group as racial identity consisting of inherited traits derived from common origin. Group is created by race when it is perceived as common origin. The common traits are linked with cultural traits that can serve as starting point of monopolistic closure. When people believe in group affinity targeting political community, they form ethnic groups. Belief plays an important role for propagation of group formations despite of not having relations from same blood line. Kinship and ethnic membership stands differently. A person from the same ethnic group comes together with feeling of being the member of the same community and forms group as political entity. Interpersonal relationship plays important role to bring communal consciousness of being the member of the same community creating communal consciousness through interpersonal relationship. Ethnic language works as the important traits to be identify as the group member besides political memories and time space. This trait carries attributes to bring people into the group developing new kinship even among the unknown. The customary excellence within the group with conviction for the sense of ethnic honor identifies the distinctive status groups is open to anybody who carries the same ethnonym after their name (Magar, 2013; 2014). The unorganized identical tribes associating political groups were called ethnos and presumed blood community, lived from the memory that it once engaged in joint political actions constituting the tribe with political memories through experiences. The groups demand its loyalty during any kind of problems and have penalties of throwing out of the group as punishment even though there is not a strong political system. Communal strategy of group formation is to strengthen the membership for the collective power to seek power from the state (Weber, 1997: p. 15-26).

Anthony D. Smith has differentiated the state, nation and ethnic communities in his book Nationalism (2001), stating, "nation is not a state and not an ethnic community. State relates to the institutional activity while that of the nation denotes a type of community. State can be defined as a set of autonomous institutions, differentiated from other institutions, having the monopoly of coercion and tax extraction in a given territory. The concepts of the nation are felt by communities whose members share a homeland and a culture" (Smith, 2001: p.10-15). Following Miller, nation or nationality is understood as community that is constituted by those people who shared same beliefs of common origin, give strong mutual commitments, active role within the community as member of the group, connected with a particular territory and marked off from other communities as distinct group publicly. Shared belief of coming from same origin, give commitment for the development of group, joined in collective works, Ethnic groups constitute shared beliefs and commitments, have shared memories and continuity, engage in joint actions and connected usually to a particular territory even if they do not occupy but lack public cultures (Miller, 1995: p. 27). In the above definitions, homeland is essential for both nation and ethnic groups' formation. The nation carries common myths of having common history, common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members. Ethnic group also carry common myth with ancestry, with shared memories but needs shared culture and solidarity among the elites'' (Smith, 2001: p.13).

In studying ethnicity, anthropologists have mainly concentrated on relationships between groups through participant observation and personal interviews focusing on the local community. The study of others using terminology of tribe to ethnic group differentiating us and then dichotomy maintained boundaries between groups. Ethnic groups are understood as nations. Nation is defined as cultural unit. Lewis (1985: p. 287 in Eriksen, 1993) sees no distinction between, tribes, ethnics and nations in general.

Nationalism is seen as sentiment, or a movement that can be defined in terms of political principle that is raised against the violation of the state principle (Gellner, 1983: p. 1; 2006: p.1). The notion of group membership is crucial for a group identity. This process reconsiders the integration of new social group membership and negotiations. During this process, merger of organizations helps to bring all actors on to a common platform to bring social change. During this process different social identities are created through the configuration of multiple individual identities to bring significance changes overtime (Catherine et. al., 2007). Differing ethnic identities, particularly linguistic, tribal, racial and religious groups are seen as major political state problems in many countries around the world. They express their existence by demanding to be addressed as separate entities. Ethnic identity poses severe challenges towards the diverse yet peaceful democratic societies these days (Young, 2006). In this context, Richard Jenkins (2008) thinks that ethnic identity has been seen as a basic capacity rooted in language that they speak bringing differentiation of being who they are and who the others are. Individuals are seen as members of collectivities in a multi- dimensional world. Identification is a process in which behavioral motives are also connected with individuals in collectivities. In this process of constructing individual and group identity, transactions and negotiations play an important role over the activity generating identification and collectivity along with group boundaries (Barth, 1969).

Lineages, clans and tribes are associated with members of groups where culture plays an important role to maintain collective identity (Jenkins, 2008). Identity construction process is not only associated with group identity connected with history, culture, and language, as the process of making group identity to be distinct from others. Group identity is not only identifying oneself but also trying to be different from others and compete on resources mobilization. So, identity is constructed by a particular group in the context of outsiders. Identity construction is a long process that begins from the point of identification and development through creating new identities through inclusion as well as exclusion of codified cultural features (Hall and Gay, 1996: p. 4). Identity is seen as problems of modernity that creates its own margins for access to the resources which need to be reconstructed and redefined when it is in the process of disappearance (Douglas Kellner in Zygmunt Baumann, 1996). Ethnicity is commonly used for groups who were once known as tribal groups. Tribes are connected with politics and have become political artifacts carrying all tribal symbolism and tribal cult. The tribal consciousness is constituted with common political experiences but not by descent (Weber, 2010: p. 24).

ETHNIC IDENTITY ISSUES AND ITS CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

Identity has become a common issue related with group identity. Many social scientists have published many research papers, books and reports over identity issues[1]. Identity has become a powerful group construction that guide for collective decision towards collective identity. It helps to draw collective strength among the members through their affiliation with social groups of their same kind. While defining identity Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoles (2010) in *Handbook of Identity Theory and Research* explained that identity comprises both individuals and groups collectively, answering 'who am I' and 'who are we', 'who you think you are' and 'who you act' as with are major interpersonal and inter group interactions that makes your social and acceptance in your society. They also expressed that among the popular and academic discourses, identity can also capture other labels for physical characteristics, personal behaviours and socio- demographic positions. They have

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[1] "Identity" is the most common studied issue in the social sciences. The print capitalism on identity has steadily increased in few decades. There are Journal articles, books, book chapters, and doctoral dissertations were published from 1960s with1,999 records , 5,295 from the 1970s, 11,106 from the 1980s, 44,557 from the1990s, and 98,933 from 2000s. The scientific publications from 1960 and 2000s are cover for the literature in general, but the identity research publication increased by 49.5 percent (Schwartz, Luyckx and Vignoloes, 2010: 2).

identified three different levels of identity through reviewing various literatures which are individual, relational and collective process of identity formation and change.

Self-definition at the level of individual person is known under Individual or personal identity which attached to goals, values and beliefs system, religion, standard of personal behavior. Relational Identity refers the roles of individuals, encompassing identity that is located within interpersonal relation. The social audience for their security and people's identification generally recognizes relational identity with group and social category that belong under collective identity. Collective process is most important for examining moment-to-moment changes in inter group contexts. It can shape people's self-perception leading them on looking themselves as group members (V. L. Vignoles et.al. 2010: p. 1-29). Fearson (1999) writes about identity stating that either (a) it is a social category defined by membership rules and (alleged) attributed characteristics or expected behavior; or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential; or (a) and (b) at the same time. Identity is a modern formulation of dignity, pride, or honor that implicitly links these to social categories. Under social identity, it is generally understood with "social" and "personal" categories. In personal identity, an identity is some distinguishing characteristic that a person views with special pride or views it as socially consequential but more or less unchangeable.

THEORIES RELATING TO ETHNIC IDENTITY ISSUES

Ethnic identity study is viewed from different perspectives using different components with different methodology. Joan Nagel (1994: p. 152) has explained in detail that while studying ethnic identity, culture is automatically attached with it. The position of ethnic identity is always dynamic, fluid, situational, volitional, and constantly evolving and is incomplete without the existence of individuals and their affiliation with ethnic organizations. The construction of ethnic identity is directly and indirectly affected by both structure and agency- a dialectic role played out by ethnic groups and the larger society. Individuals and groups are always conscious about their ethnic boundaries and the meaning they create during interactions with other groups. Ethnicity is seen as the product of actions undertaken by ethnic groups while shaping and reshaping their self-definition and culture. By reshaping the group with self-definition, they differentiate themselves from others based on language, religion, culture, race, and nationalities bringing critical situation among the groups (Young, 2006) for claiming of being different. This situation helps to create a group with a separate identity during the process of social change. This social change emerges when new groups appear on the arena. They negotiate and renegotiate with the new situation while creating different social identities. In this process of constructing identity, multiple identities are constructed through intra-individual interactions and become the changes within an existing situation (Catherine et. al., 2007).

Transactions and negotiations are the main emergent "activities that generate identification and collectivity along with group boundaries" (Barth, 1969: p. 119). In the study of Pathans in North West Pakistan, Fredrick Barth found that, they shared cultural traits to constitute the necessary features to consider oneself as Pathans. It was achieved through sharing patrilineal descent from common ancestors, shared religion and a category of Pathan customs with common language, oral literature and sets of attributes revolving around masculinity, aggressiveness, autonomy and equality. The reification between the geographical boundaries of the population and the conceptual boundary of its ethnic identity has enabled Pathans to have centralized and politically organized lineage councils. Lineage, clans and tribes allow members of a group to develop an identity (Jenkins, 2008). Similarly, Hall and Gay defined constructing identity is instrumental using resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming distinct group. It allows them to be represented to others and how others perceive them. The identity construction process allows

them to be constituted as a group to outsiders (Hall and Gay, 1996: p. 4). The impact of mass media, print capitalism, rise of industrial state, requirement of cultural hegemony (Young, 2006; Gellner, 2008), or competition over state resources (Brass, 1991 in Gellner, 2008) and networking (Cohen, 1974) create opportunities for people to work for their own group.

Cohen writes that ethnicity has ubiquitous meaning, defined according to the disciplinary educational background, methodology and methods applied to collect information. The question arise which to give emphasis for the valid on analyzing and solving theoretical problems. In general, ethnicity is operationally defined as a collectivity of people who share some patterns of normative behavior forming part of a larger population, interacting with other people within a social system with certain degree of conformity through sharing of norms by members. Marriage, kinship, friendship, rituals and other types of interactions form symbolic patterns of normative behavior. Cohen sees ethnicity in urban areas as very dramatic in both developing and developed countries. The division of labor in developed countries is highly advanced and struggle for resources, in search of employment, wages, housing, education and political ideology. Ethnicity is a complex phenomenon that is involved in psychological, historical, economic and political factors. The psychic system or selfhood is achieved perpetually through social interactions (Cohen, 1974).

Ethnic identity and ethnic mobilization processes are important for members to bring them into a group. Group solidarity is established by constructing social identities. The social movements created by ethnic groups are connected to political action. These political actions are initiated through collective organizations going beyond the daily routine of socializing members of the identity itself (Fenton, 2003). Fenton also tried to clarify that ethnicity cannot be a theory. To become a theory it has to incorporate the sense of motivation (with recognition and allocation of emotional ties either rational or instrumental), principal forms of social organizations (as in the USA and South Africa, inclination towards binary division of black and white with dominant form of structuration and exclusively referring to ethnic opposition) including autonomous and fundamental principles of action (primary source of action where ethnic differences are seen as being a form of 'fundamentalism' (Fenton, 2003: p. 181). According to Barth (1969), ethnic identities are maintained and sustained through delineating ethnic boundaries of one group from the other. He explained ethnic groups as largely self-perpetuating, sharing fundamental cultural values, and having communication, interaction and a membership. They identify themselves and are also identified by others constituting a category that is distinguishable from other of the same order. Barth give primary emphasis to the fact of ethnic groups categories of ascription and identification by the actor themselves and characteristic of organizing interaction between people relating other characteristics of ethnic groups at first, exploring the different processes that seem to be involved in generating and maintaining ethnic group identity as second, and observe these processes investigating internal constitution and history of separate ethnic groups and their boundary maintenance. In this process, ethnic dichotomies have been analyzing as cultural content. One with overt signals or signs to exhibit to show identity often featuring cultural markers such as dress, language and life style that reflect their cultural attributes in house structure or general style of life with basic value orientation (morality that is judged. He observes the persistence of boundaries as focused despite a flow of information across members. Ethnicity is reflected through personal and group interactions while maintaining symbiotic relationship with each other as among Pashtuns, Baluch, and Afgans in Afghanistan in the form of social organizations (Barth, 1969: p. 13-15).

Cohen (1974) also expressed that, migration, adaptation and assimilation in a new environment or forming a new state by many ethnic groups with mutual adjustments and integration helps to construct new identities or loss of group identity in a new place. In contemporary situations, groups can initiate reorganization of their traditional costumes and symbols, using traditional norms and ideologies to enhance their distinctiveness. The group

becomes cohesive by reviving their old customs and incorporating them into the basic organizational function with distinct communication, authoritative structures and decision-making procedures following certain ideology and socializing behavior through their participation. In this process, some specific segmental roles together with rationally planned bureaucratic structure become the most efficient and effective type of organization. The group into informal boundaries making use of kinship, friendship, ceremonial rituals and other symbolic activities that are implicit within a group articulates them. According to Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983: p. 1), "traditions which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented" it invented, constructed and formally institutionalized in a less easily traceable manner within a brief period establishing them rapidly'. The assumption of invention of tradition is essentially a process of formalization and ritualization of group to be the member and give commitments with reference to the historical past. Every tradition that we follow and celebrate must have been invented and reinvented by incorporating new events and activities for the group's recognition. Every tradition is deliberately invented and constructed by a single initiator tracing their past through their memories for the collective cause. In general, there are types that are overlapping within invented traditions from the industrial period showed that: as establishing or symbolizing social cohesion or the membership of groups, real or artificial communities, establishing or legitimizing institutions support from the state authority; and, socialization. Invented traditions have significant social and political functions that come into existence with support from political function (1983: p. 307). Bruner (1974), in his study of ethnicity in Indonesia, explains that while studying ethnicity in urban areas, unit of analysis has been shifted from the isolated ethnic groups defined by its cultural content to the ethnic unit as a social category, a form of structure, embedded within a larger system. Patterns of interaction and communication has been more important for individual to present oneself and give impression for the attachment towards the groups and win the heart of the groups to make space to adjust as part of the whole. Bruner studied two cities in Indonesia where ethnicity was manifested and experienced differently in the two urban contexts. Individuals' constructing their identity depends on the context, situation, and place. Their actions project of their self-identity, and their places reflect their behavior in two cities in the same county. The example of two cities, Medan and Bandung, of Batak and Sundanese, and their acculturation within a social system when they live among other communities respecting others' culture and continue their own behavior after retreating to their own community. Due to not having an admirable historical past, Bataks are always looked down by Sundanese as uncivilized for talking loudly and being untrustworthy, eating dog meat, along with having pursued cannibalism in the past. Culture and strong hold of authority, makes Sundanese domination create competition for economic and political resources among ethnic groups. Thus, relations between groups in Medan are tense while in Bandung, the superiority and inferiority between groups produced open and relaxed interactions, openly accepting intermarriages, and greater respect towards social relationships between the young and the elder generation.

Ethnic groups are always eager on maintaining their culture and their boundaries. Boundaries and culture were never in threat assuming that, "culture is to be always maintained" or ethnicity based immigration from rural to urban or other countries are re-tribalized at a particular instance. Particular processes of social change resulting from migration (Hannarz, 1974: p. 39) discuss about theoretical points derived from Abner Cohen shows that, urban ethnic groups are interest groups engaged in struggle with other group competing for the resources. Interest sharing arises from situations in which ethnicity is at the basis of extensive role summation with overlapping of economic, political, and religious alignments. Due to competition, ethnic groups become interest groups and idioms of ethnicity can be used as expressions of the conflict between the privileged and under privileged. In the

case of ethnic groups, cross cutting social strata play an important role in ethnic identity. It enables an ethnic group to cooperate with the less privileged ethnic groups against the privileged from the same ethnic group (Cohen, 1974). Competition over resources within the structural niches forces competitors to align with each other to compete for the resources with complementary interest. Scarcity of resources combined with ethnic consciousness may lead to continuous ethnic rivalry. Ethnic groups change their group status based on the situation especially focusing on the niches, which could be single or interrelated depending upon the availability of niches to cooperate (Hannarz, 1974).

PRIMORDIALISM, CIRCUMSTANTIALISM, INSTRUMENTALISM AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

The issue of ethnic identity is analyzed through different perspectives. Scholars studying ethnic identity are divided into given perspectives. Those who believe that ethnic groups are distinct from others and mainly differ through their physical and cultural attributes are categorized under primordialism or essentialism. People believing in these perspectives defend that due to being distinct races following traditional and cultural practices, they carry similar sentiments with their activities. Edward Shils (1957) is known as the pioneer to establish these perspectives. Those who follow Shils believe that people come into the group because of their physical characteristics and sentiments. Primordialists postulate that there are always inherent features of ethnicity that carries territory, language and recognizable membership along with shared group values (Fenton, 2003: p. 73). In addition, there are certain physical characteristics that are assigned to groups that make them different from others. The belongingness of a group of individuals forms a strong group that represents the whole community based on a name reflecting shared cultural codes. The primordial model, coined by Edward Shils (1957) was highly influenced by Emile Durkheim (1893) and Ferdinand Tonnies (1963). Fenton (2003) has argued that ethnic groups come together to work and adapt with new innovations and creativity to deal with any situation. Some kind of pride, attachment, moral obligation and primordial affiliation with loyalty is sought out from members. Membership is given rather than acquired. In the book, "The Interpretation of cultures," Clifford Geertz (1973), showed some similarity with Edward Shils's (1957) argument that groups having social attachment and loyalty are molded socially and culturally through socialization within the boundaries of a place, language and historical experiences. Identity of an individual or group does not stand-alone. Cross cutting existence with other components are obvious among groups. "Man is seen as a leopard that cannot change his ethnic spots," says McKay (1982: p. 398) in Cornell and Hartmann (2007). Ethnicity is related with blood relationship that is tied up with attachments where perceptions and attributes are given more importance than the presence and absence of members. The concept of primordialism has brought confusion among scholars that ethnicity is linked with culture and its meanings are invented and reinvented according to situations or the increasing level of awareness among a group to bring all members within one community and construct their identity among others. In this process, others define them as a separate group based on their separate identity that they managed to construct among others (Barth, 1969).

Circumstantialists argue that ethnic ties depend upon changing social circumstances and external forces within a society (Glazer & Moynihan, 1975). Ethnic groups are not only cultural groups but they also share cultural practices that lie at the core of their identities. The activities that ethnic groups undertake to create their identities are always done with self-interest (Glazer & Moynihan, 1975) and ethnicity is fundamentally a political phenomenon. It is a type of informal interest group (Cohen, 1974). The activities that lie behind their activism are expectations for some benefit. The individuals as well as the group always maintain group boundaries for individual advantage (Cornell & Hartmann (2007). Circumstantialist approach helps to identify the situation that makes the group lead towards the achievement of their

targeted goals. Working as ethnic elites or leaders carry some hidden interest to distribute resources to members of the group. Members compete among themselves and with those outside the ethnic group for resources. Mobilization of groups depends on the circumstances, targeting towards political and economic interests. Both individual and group interests are taken as the product of concrete social and historical situations (Cornell & Hartman, 2007: p. 61-63). Interest and utility are central features of this approach (Nagata, 1981).

The primordial perspectives has been discarded by most researchers especially by the Russians stating that identities are socially constructed by ethnic actors themselves and by the states whereas instrumentalists use ethnicity and race as means to particular ends. They use ethnic links and ethnic platforms for achieving economic, political, social, individual and group benefits. Hobsbawam and Ranger (1983) disagree with the primordial perspective and argue that culture or ethnic identities are invented and reinvented based on the need of the group's recognition. Ethnic identity has social and political dimensions. They develop their own ethnic associations that provide upward mobility to the group. Such organizations also play important role in the protection of ethnic identity by simulating their culture and social mobility by promoting cooperative educational activities (Khurane, 1999: p. 12). However external social, economic and political processes and actors also construct ethnicity. While carrying out identity transformation, collective meanings are created through mythology and history of groups (Nagel, 1994). In the process ethnic construction process, ethnic cultural boundaries are negotiated, revised and revitalized through interaction with other groups. Ethnicity is often constructed based on language, religion, culture, appearance, ancestry or regionalism (Nagel, 1994: p. 152).

In constructionist viewpoint, history is linked with ethnic movement along with ethnic construction (Nagel, 1994). Nagel thinks that ethnicity is not simply a historical legacy of migration or conquest but constantly undergoes redefinition and reconstruction through ethnic conflict and mobilization, resurgence, and change that might happen at the core concept of ethnicity. Resource competition lies beneath the objective of ethnic formation where recognition and acknowledgement by the state towards ethnic groups is essential either in census taking, or incorporating clauses in the constitution, designating to reinforce or reconstruct ethnic boundaries from collective effort of mobilization of group to be heard for the equal treatment. The state will be able to recognize only the demand of a sub -population when demands are raised, which only happens through increasing self or group awareness (Nagel, 1994: p. 67). In addition, ethnic conflict is seen as the outcomes of unequal resource distribution by the state (Banton, 1983). Ethnicity could be a rational choice (Hechter, 1987a). The construction of ethnic boundaries (group formation) or the construction of ethnicity centered on personal gain for individual and collective political and economic advantage for the group. (Hechter, 1978b, 1992; Hechter and Friedman, 1984; Hechter, Friedman & Appelbaum, 1982). Contemporary scholars are mainly found inclined towards the instrumental and social construction perspectives. Wilmsen and McAllister (1996: p. 7-9) write that ethnicity is a cultural construction. It is neither primordial nor instrumental even though they are built to satisfy a group's aspirations. Ethnicity is taken as the marker of self-conscious identity arising during the exercise of power. This is known as relational concept where dominant actors are able to define the subordinate and inequality in the society.

The above literature review gave clear vision of understanding the definition on ethnicity, and ethnic identity construction process among groups. In this process groups are formed to fulfill their various goals, which are analyzed with different theoretical perspectives. Durkheim, Tonnies, Edwards Shils and Clifford Geertz are known as primodialist. Glazer and Moynihan emphasize on the circumstance explain that ethnicity is depend on circumstances and situation of external forces. Self-interests are hidden within their group movements and they expected some benefits. Hidden interests are lies beneath their group commitments. Constructivists believe that ethnicity is socially constructed and

instrumentalists argue that it is a means of particular ends. Likewise Hobbsbawm and Ranger emphasized that groups appeared to be noticed and demand for recognition inventing cultural group symbols for upward mobility. Joan Nagel argues that social identity is constructed out of the making of lost culture analyzing their history attached with ethnic groups. Hetcher (1984) explains about rational choice theory. Fredrick Barth argues that groups define themselves and others define them with acceptance during transaction. In the process of group identification the motives of the group is reflected in their behavior within individuals while they are working collectively as mentioned by Catherine et. al. Understanding all these definitions on ethnicity and ethnic group identity construction process, this researcher will try to stay between primordialism and instrumentalism in which all the theoretical understanding can be reflected in this study.

ETHNIC IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION PROCESS IN NEPAL
Ethnicity and ethnic identity construction process in Nepal came on surface after 1990s peoples' movement. Ethnicity and ethnic groups were hardly addressed before 1981 census. Tribal groups were commonly understood for ethnic and minority groups. Establishing ethnic organization was restricted. After 1990's people's movement, ethnic movement became visible on the political arena. Many ethnic organizations were registered as social organization for the development of group promoting social, cultural and political aspect. Ethnic organizations alliance together and established Nepal Federation of Ethnic Nationalities (NEFIN) in 1991. This helps ethnic groups to work together collectively to be distinct than caste groups in every aspect. Ethnic activists affiliated with ethnic organizations were highly influenced with primordial feelings of carrying ethnic traits, being distinct from other groups to be addressed as separate groups culturally, religiously and linguistically. In the process of group identification, many ethnic activists affiliated with ethnic organization are also found affiliated with different political party wings. Ethnic organization has been used as platform for the potential individual for the future opportunities. The discourses of being primordialist representing distinct group among others are also forced them to think about becoming instrumentalist to use the platform for their individual benefit. Political ideology that a person carries and showed himself as a potential candidate attracts political party to nominate as representative of the ideological candidate not only beneficial or the individual but also the political party they are affiliated with. The discourses on ethnicity, the issues of nationalism and identity construction process has helped many ethnic and indigenous groups to be distinct from others through cultural codes as ethnic marker, this helps government to identify the groups into different categories (advanced, disadvantaged, marginalized, highly marginalized and endangered), has given opportunities through reservation as access to resources through equal opportunity, declared national holidays for particular ethnic groups (Magar, 2013, 2015). These activists stood as potential candidate for political party leaders. Ethnic activists affiliated with political wings are the potential candidates for political party among ethnic groups. This created opportunity for the individual, their membership and positional achievement within ethnic groups becomes instrument for their personal achievement.

CONCLUSION
This article helps to understand ethnicity, ethnic identity construction process and theoretical understanding reflecting the twin-directional discourses about ethnic identity and ethnic identity construction process. One discourse was inclined towards primordial thoughts claiming to be the first settlers with certain physical and cultural attributes attached to their endonym. The other discourse is the ethnic movement that helps them to identify themselves as a separate group targeting towards state resources. Ethnic identity movement among ethnic groups is a collective consciousness movement for separate identification using cultural

codes. The understanding about ethnic identity applied to tribal groups in transforming their social position in society. The primordial perspectives argue that some specific characteristics of a group make them distinct from others. Other perspectives are studying ethnicity stating that all ethnic issues are related to their social and economic conditions. They take ethnicity markers as rights claiming mechanisms for accessing the resources from the state. This article will help to understand how ethnicity is defined, theoretical perspectives to understand ethnicity and ethnic identity construction process and Nepali issue as a short glimpse to understand the situation.

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