

**UNDERSTANDING THE CONSTRUCTION AND
NEGOTIATION OF TIBETAN REFUGEE IDENTITIES IN
INDIA**

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NEGOTIATION OF TIBETAN REFUGEE IDENTITIES IN
INDIA**

by

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Submitted

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to the



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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work presented here in the thesis has been carried out by me towards the partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of a PhD from the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. The work contained herein is my own and is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever quotations from others are involved, every effort has been made to indicate this clearly with due reference to the literature. The content of this report, in full or in parts, have not been submitted to any other institute or university for the award of any degree.

Pallavi Ramanathan

2018HUZ8108

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis “**Understanding the Construction and Negotiation of Tibetan Refugee Identities in India**” submitted by Pallavi Ramanathan to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) for the award of the degree of “**Doctor of Philosophy**” is a record of bona fide research work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance, and it is in conformity with the rules and regulations of IIT Delhi.

She has fulfilled all the requirements for the submission of this thesis which has, in my opinion, reached the standard of fulfilling the requirements for the degree.

To the best of my knowledge, the material contained in this thesis has not been submitted, in part or in full, to any other University or Institute for the award of any other degree or diploma.

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ABSTRACT

The number of refugees has increased dramatically the world over. In a scenario such as this, it is important to unravel some of the processes that are specific to refugee populations, to enable the creation of well-informed policy and praxis for refugees. Past research on refugees has tended to focus on issues of trauma, adjustment, etc., leaving the examination of social psychological processes such as social identity and intergroup relations rather untouched. The composition of refugee national identities in exile and their construction and negotiation are important concerns with significant impact. This thesis addresses issues of identity and intergroup relations in the context of Tibetan refugees residing in India. Tibetan refugees have lived outside Tibet for more than seventy years now; it is important to understand how this has impacted their identity as well as their interactions with other social groups. The role of the social, political, historical, and geographical context is also critical for this examination. A mixed-method approach with a focus on the context was undertaken, where three studies through three different methods were conducted. Each study explored a different aspect of the Tibetan population while addressing the broad question of the national identity of Tibetan refugees living in India. Study 1 addressed this by an examination of the identity entrepreneurship of the Dalai Lama through speeches and interviews given by him on landmark occasions in Tibetan history since 1959. These were analysed using the Discourse Historical Approach (Reisigl & Wodak, 2009); this method emphasizes the historical and political context in the exploration of discourses, and six major topics were identified. This study, through an examination of secondary literature, demonstrated that Tibetan identity seems underpinned by the idea of not forgetting Tibet. The second study explored these themes in the narratives of Tibetan refugee youth while emphasizing the geographical context through an examination of the differences and similarities in the identity construction of Tibetan youth born in India and those born in Tibet. The impact of place identity and place

attachment on national identity in exile was also noted. Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) revealed a high level of identity congruence between the themes of the first and the second study, as well as an overall inclination towards collective action for the Tibetan cause. Study 3 was more specific in its examination of the context and the population, exploring the local context as well as the influence of intergroup contact and intergroup anxiety on national identity. Further, given the emphasis on national identity in the previous study, this study examined whether a major festival, considered a strong marker of identity, would impact national identity. Thus, a longitudinal study was conducted on Tibetans living in Bylakuppe, one of the largest Tibetan settlements in India. Data were collected at three-time points (one week before Losar, the Tibetan new year, on the day of Losar, and one week after) and across three age groups on national identity, intergroup contact, and intergroup emotions. National identity and quality of intergroup contact were found to be significantly different across all three time points (only Time 3 for national identity), with higher levels noted at the time of the festival. This indicates that the festival does have some bearing on the levels of national identity and the nature of intergroup contact although age did not seem to play a role in these relationships. Existing literature indicates that national identity is more salient when members are exposed to “semi-ritual practices” such as flag hoisting or holidays and commemorations (e.g., Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983). The mediational role of intergroup anxiety and the moderational role of group salience was also examined to understand the predictors of Tibetan attitudes towards Indians. It was found that perceived status difference, quality of contact, and national identity all predicted Tibetan attitudes towards Indians, and these effects were partially due to the mediated effects of intergroup anxiety. These effects were noted to be stronger and more significant when group salience was high: further evidence of the importance of group salience in intergroup relations and its impact on intergroup attitudes. Overall, these multi-method studies address

important gaps in the literature on refugee identities and their contextual nature. It is critical to explore such social psychological processes in refugee populations not just for policies but also for the creation and sustenance of more inclusive and sensitive societies that are well-oriented toward the betterment of groups on the periphery.

Keywords: social identity, national identity, leadership, place identity, intergroup contact, Tibetan refugees, social context

दुनिया भर में शरणार्थियों की संख्या में काफी वृद्धि हुई है। इस तरह के परिदृश्य में, शरणार्थियों के लिए अच्छी तरह से सूचित नीति और प्रथाओं के निर्माण को सक्षम करने के लिए, शरणार्थी आबादी के लिए विशिष्ट कुछ प्रक्रियाओं को उजागर करना महत्वपूर्ण है। शरणार्थियों पर पिछले शोध में आघात, समायोजन आदि के मुद्दों पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने की प्रवृत्ति रही है, सामाजिक मनोवैज्ञानिक प्रक्रियाओं जैसे कि सामाजिक पहचान और अंतर-समूह संबंधों की परीक्षा को अछूता छोड़ दिया गया है। निर्वासन में शरणार्थी राष्ट्रीय पहचान की संरचना और उनका निर्माण महत्वपूर्ण प्रभाव के साथ महत्वपूर्ण चिंताएं हैं। यह थीसिस भारत में रहने वाले तिब्बती शरणार्थियों के संदर्भ में पहचान और अंतरसमूह संबंधों के मुद्दों को जाँचती है। तिब्बती शरणार्थी अब सत्तर से अधिक वर्षों से तिब्बत के बाहर रह रहे हैं; यह समझना महत्वपूर्ण है कि इसने उनकी पहचान के साथ-साथ अन्य सामाजिक समूहों के साथ उनकी बातचीत को कैसे प्रभावित किया है। इस जाँच के लिए सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, ऐतिहासिक, और भौगोलिक संदर्भ की भूमिका भी महत्वपूर्ण है। संदर्भ पर ध्यान देने के साथ यह थीसिस में तीन अलग-अलग तरीकों के माध्यम से तीन अध्ययन किए गए। प्रत्येक अध्ययन ने भारत में रहने वाले तिब्बती शरणार्थियों की राष्ट्रीय पहचान के प्रश्न को संबोधित करते हुए तिब्बती आबादी के एक अलग पहलू की खोज की। अध्ययन 1 ने 1959 के बाद से तिब्बती इतिहास में ऐतिहासिक अवसरों पर दलाई लामा के द्वारा दिए गए भाषणों और साक्षात्कारों के माध्यम से तिब्बती शरणार्थियों की पहचान की एक परीक्षा की। इनका विश्लेषण डिस्कोउसें हिस्तोरिकल अप्रोअच (रेडसिग्ल एंड वोदक, 2009) का उपयोग करके किया गया था; यह पद्धति प्रवचनों की खोज में ऐतिहासिक और राजनीतिक संदर्भ पर जोर देती है, और छह प्रमुख विषयों की पहचान की गई। अभिलेखीय साहित्य की जाँच के माध्यम से इस अध्ययन ने प्रदर्शित किया कि तिब्बती पहचान तिब्बत को न भूलने के विचार पर आधारित है। दूसरे अध्ययन ने भारत में पैदा हुए तिब्बती युवाओं और तिब्बत में पैदा हुए लोगों की पहचान निर्माण में अंतर और समानता की जांच के माध्यम से भौगोलिक संदर्भ पर जोर देते हुए तिब्बती शरणार्थी युवाओं के आख्यानों में इन विषयों की खोज की। निर्वासन में राष्ट्रीय पहचान पर जगह की पहचान और जगह के लगाव के प्रभाव को भी नोट किया गया। रिफ्लेक्सिव थिमैटिक एनालिसिस (ब्रॉन एंड क्लार्क, 2019) ने पहले और दूसरे अध्ययन के विषयों के साथ-साथ तिब्बती मुद्दे के लिए सामूहिक कार्रवाई की। अध्ययन 3 संदर्भ और जनसंख्या की अपनी परीक्षा में अधिक विशिष्ट था, स्थानीय संदर्भ की खोज के साथ-साथ राष्ट्रीय पहचान पर इंटरग्रुप कॉन्टैक्ट और इंटरग्रुप चिंता का प्रभाव। पिछले अध्ययन में राष्ट्रीय पहचान पर जोर दिया गया था, इस अध्ययन ने जांच की कि क्या एक प्रमुख त्योहार, जिसे पहचान की एक मजबूत निशानी माना जाता है, राष्ट्रीय पहचान को प्रभावित करेगा। इस प्रकार, भारत में सबसे बड़ी तिब्बती बस्तियों में से बाइलाकुप्पे में रहने वाले तिब्बतियों पर एक अनुदैर्घ्य अध्ययन किया गया था। राष्ट्रीय पहचान, इंटरग्रुप कॉन्टैक्ट और इंटरग्रुप इमोशंस पर तीन समय पर (लोसार, तिब्बती नव वर्ष, से एक सप्ताह पहले, के दिन, और एक सप्ताह बाद) और तीन आयु समूहों में डेटा एकत्र किया गया था। राष्ट्रीय पहचान और इंटरग्रुप संपर्क की गुणवत्ता सभी तीन समय पर (राष्ट्रीय पहचान के लिए केवल समय 3) महत्वपूर्ण रूप से भिन्न पाई गई, साथ ही उत्सव के समय उच्च स्तर पर ध्यान दिया गया। यह इंगित करता है कि त्योहार का राष्ट्रीय पहचान के स्तर और इंटरग्रुप संपर्क की प्रकृति पर कुछ असर पड़ता है, हालांकि इन संबंधों में उम्र की भूमिका नहीं लगती है। राष्ट्रीय पहचान पर पहले से मौजूद साहित्य इंगित करता है कि राष्ट्रीय पहचान तब अधिक प्रमुख होती है जब सदस्य अर्ध-

अनुष्ठान प्रथाओं जैसे ध्वजारोहण या छुट्टियों और स्मरणोत्सव (हॉब्सबॉम और रेंजर, 1983) के संपर्क में आते हैं। भारतीयों के प्रति तिब्बती दृष्टिकोण के भविष्यवक्ताओं को समझने के लिए अंतरसमूह चिंता की मेडिएशन अनालिसिस और समूह प्रमुखता की मॉडरेशन अनालिसिस की भी जांच की गई। यह पाया गया कि कथित स्थिति अंतर, संपर्क की गुणवत्ता, और राष्ट्रीय पहचान सभी ने भारतीयों के प्रति तिब्बती दृष्टिकोण की भविष्यवाणी की, और ये प्रभाव आंशिक रूप से इंटरग्रुप चिंता के मेडिएशन के कारण थे। समूह की प्रमुखता अधिक होने पर इन प्रभावों को अधिक मजबूत और अधिक महत्वपूर्ण माना गया। अंतरसमूह संबंधों में समूह की प्रमुखता के महत्व और अंतरसमूह दृष्टिकोण पर इसके प्रभाव का और सबूत। कुल मिलाकर, ये बहु-विधि अध्ययन शरणार्थी पहचान और उनकी प्रासंगिक प्रकृति पर साहित्य में महत्वपूर्ण कमी को संबोधित करते हैं। न केवल नीतियों के लिए बल्कि अधिक समावेशी और संवेदनशील समाजों के निर्माण के लिए भी शरणार्थी आबादी में ऐसी सामाजिक मनोवैज्ञानिक प्रक्रियाओं का पता लगाना महत्वपूर्ण है जो परिधि पर समूहों की बेहतरी की ओर उन्मुख हैं।

कीवर्ड: सामाजिक पहचान, राष्ट्रीय पहचान, नेतृत्व, स्थान की पहचान, इंटरग्रुप संपर्क, तिब्बती शरणार्थी, संदर्भ

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