

**ETHNIC POLITICS IN NEPAL:  
DO EXCLUSION AND IDENTITY FACTORS MATTER?  
A CASE OF TAMSALING NEPAL NATIONAL PARTY**

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Dedicated to  
My adorable wife Salina,  
Who, even enduring pain,  
Allowed me to entirely focus on my  
Thesis...

## ABSTRACT

This study explores and analyzes whether social exclusion and search for social identity lead people towards ethnic politics. Here, ethnic politics is the dependent variable; whereas social exclusion and search for social identity are the two independent variables. Based on facts and logics, people's joining of Tamsaling party, a party largely based on Tamang community, has been interpreted as ethnic politics. Theories showing linkages of social exclusion and identity assertions with ethnic politics were used along with a supplementing theory of ethnic nepotism. Quantitative and qualitative methods were applied along with individual case studies of the respondents while collecting data from three clusters – Kathmandu and Makwanpur (districts) and a village (Manahari-3, Ramantar) in Makwanpur district in a span of 50 days from March 2 to April 20, 2010. Under quantitative method, questionnaire was developed based on Likert Scale. The ranges were: 5 for “strongly agree”; 4 for “agree”; 3 for “can't say”; 2 for “disagree” and 1 for “strongly disagree”. The Mean was calculated based on these ranges. Under qualitative method, an interview guide with open-ended questions was developed showing relationships among the research variables. All the respondents of the research ethnically belonged to Tamang community and politically belonged to Tamsaling Nepal National Party, or simply the Tamsaling party. The sample size for quantitative primary data collection was 41; whereas it was 65 for qualitative primary data collection. The latter included group interviews as well as individual interviews.

The study showed linkages between the theories of exclusion and identity assertions with ethnic politics. [Cederman, Wimmer and Mins \(2010\)](#) saying that exclusion or no access to power are an important part of the dynamics leading people towards ethnic politics, has been justified. Similarly, [Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott \(2005\)](#) saying that “in the realm of politics, identities can affect... preferences for political leaders and parties” has also been vindicated. As for [Vanhanen \(1991\)](#)'s theory of ethnic nepotism, two of his three propositions have been approved in this study. They are: “All geographically discrete ethnic groups try to establish their own political units” and “The more ethnically divided a society or a political unit within the country is; the more political parties tend to become organized along ethnic lines.” [Vanhanen](#)'s third proposition which says: “the more ethnic groups differ genetically from each

other, the higher is the probability that conflicts between them lead to violence” has not been justified in the context of Tamsaling party.

The major findings of the research have been presented here below:

1. Search for social identity (M= 4.26) is a stronger motivation than social exclusion (M= 4.10) that leads people towards ethnic politics.
2. Among 4 exclusion factors, administrative exclusion (M= 4.30) is the greatest motivation factor driving people towards ethnic politics; followed by political exclusion (M= 4.29), educational exclusion (M= 4.10) and economic exclusion (M= 3.73), respectively.
3. Among 3 social identity factors, search for ethnic autonomy (M= 4.73) is the greatest motivation factor driving people towards ethnic politics; followed by government’s language policy (M= 4.31) and government recognition of local festivals (M= 3.76).
4. In overall ranking of the seven representative variables, search for ethnic autonomy (M= 4.73) holds the first position followed by government’s language policy (M= 4.31); administrative (M= 4.30), political (4.29) and educational (M= 4.10) exclusions; government recognition of local festivals (M= 3.76) and economic exclusion (M= 3.73), respectively.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CPN-UML	Communist Party of Nepal - Unified Marxist and Leninist
EPR	Ethnic Power Relations
MAR	Minorities at Risk
NC	Nepali Congress
NGO	Non-Government (al) Organization
NeFIN	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
SLC	School Leaving Certificate
TNNP	Tamsaling Nepal National Party or simply, Tamsaling party
UCPN-M	United Communist Party of Nepal – Maoist
VDC	Village Development Committee

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: DEFINING ETHNIC POLITICS

#### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights and provides a brief description about the background and present situation of ethnic politics in Nepal. It further defines politics, ethnicity and ethnic politics, among other terminologies used in the study. This chapter thereby presents the statement, objective, research question, hypothesis, significance and variables used in the study. Finally it tells about the scope, limitation and structure of the study, along with conclusion of the first chapter.

#### 1.1 Background: Ethnic politics in Nepal

Some 11 years ago in 1999, when preparations for the third parliamentary elections were in full swing, Keshab Dhungana, a candidate of a mainstream political party, CPN – UML, was on a door-to-door campaign in Constituency No. 5 in Sarlahi, which is a mid-Terai district in Nepal. Dhungana reached the house of Laxmi Raya, a local UML leader. Raya was also an elected chairperson of Sekhauna Village Development Committee (VDC). Dhungana had expectations that Raya would naturally extend help to him, as both of them were from the same party. But what Raya told him was not as per his expectations. Raya had told Dhungana: “*Comrade! Beti aw vote dosar jaat mein nai deba,*” meaning that he would not give daughter and vote to a caste or ethnic group different than his own (Nepal weekly 2008: 33-35).

“It is a reality shown by parliamentary election results of the past that ethnicity (*jaatiyata* in Nepali) is a key basis for winning elections in mid and eastern Terai districts. In addition, districts such as Saptari, Siraha, Dhanusha, Mahottari and Sarlahi, where Yadav community is in dominance, ethnicity plays the decisive role in election.” This statement is a portion of a news report covered by *Nepal weekly* on 6 April 2008 with dateline as Janakpur, a Terai town. “The situation today is much different than before,” the *weekly* further observes, “as it’s been only one month that the Madhesh movement has come to

an end. Therefore, this time around as well, in the upcoming (constituent assembly) polls, all political parties have nominated their candidates considering the ethnic composition of the respective districts. In these five districts, more than 60 percent candidates have been nominated from Yadav community” (Nepal weekly: 2008).

“Our social structure itself is caste and ethnicity-based,” says Rajendra Sah, a member of Madhesh state committee of CPN-Maoist, “That’s why, it’s no wonder that ethnic influence remains decisive in elections” (Nepal weekly: 2008). “I don’t believe in caste and ethnicity,” says Dr. Ram Varan Yadav, central general secretary of Nepali Congress and election candidate from Dhanusha-5: “But what to do, I feel greedy at the time of election” (Nepal weekly: 2008).

“At the end of eighth year of their *people’s war*, the Maoists have introduced the slogan of *ethnic and regional self-governance*,” Hasta Gurung writes in 2004 (Himal, Feb-March 2004: 36). In the 40-point demand paper of the Maoists’ predecessor party – United People’s Front, in 1996, ethnicity-related demand was mentioned in priority No. 25. The No. 25 clause did not mention anything on ethnic self-governance, but only stated about “ending regional discrimination between Hills and Terai” and providing “regional autonomy to backward areas” (Himal, Feb-March 2004: 36).

“The Maoists acquired majority of armed fighters from ethnic and regional fronts (during *people’s war* – 1996-2006)”, Gurung further writes: “Recently, a trend has been witnessed that Maoists’ armed forces are *abandoning* the party alleging it of frequent war defeats, surrenders and party’s ignorance towards those who were killed and wounded in encounters. With such quitting, the Maoist party is in crisis now. Therefore, Maoists have come to a situation where they need to give new life to their party raising slogans of ethnic and regional self-governance” (Himal, Feb-March 2004: 36). Citing an example of Gurung community, Hasta Gurung further says: “The Maoists have laid an ambush of Tamuwani autonomous governance (for Gurungs) thinking that it would be easier to attract Gurungs towards the Maoists’ rebellion, as Gurungs are generally less-educated

and dynamic community possessing knowledge on the use of weapons” ([Himal, Feb-March 2004: 36](#)).

In eastern hills, Limbu community is demanding an autonomous Limbuwan state to be carved out from the present districts of Mechi and Koshi zones ([worldlingo.com: 2010](#)). According to Kamalraj Nembang, joint secretary of Federal Limbuwan State Council, a political party largely based on Limbu community, “The present unitary structure doesn't represent the country's diversity. Therefore, Limbus have formed fronts to demand federalism based on history and ethnicity rather than geography and administration. The fact that even economically well-off Limbuwan residents support Limbuwan proves that the problems this country faces are rooted in ethnicity, not in class” ([nepalitimes.com.np: 2009](#)).

On the other hand, Dilendra Subba, president of Limbu Language Development Organization, says that “Nepal's problems are rooted both in ethnic and class differences. Those who consider class issues to be primary are seeking to retain the *status-quo*, so Limbuwan and Khumbuwan residents have had to push for ethnic federalism through various fronts. ([nepalitimes.com.np: 2009](#)).

On 19 March 2008, the Federal Limbuwan State Council agreed to take back all its agitation programs only when it reached a five-point agreement with the government of Nepal. The agreement ensured that Nepal would be a federal country instead of the present unitary one and that Limbus will get a state of their own, i.e., Limbuwan, in the new federalized Nepal ([unmin.org.np: 2008](#)). In this regard, Clause 1 of the agreement reads: “A Federal Governance System shall be adopted by making constitutional provision for autonomous states on the basis of historic background of Limbuwan, geographical area etc. while restructuring current Nepal from the Constituent Assembly, thereby addressing the immense desire of the people of Limbuwan and their movement, and maintaining the national unity, integrity and indivisibility” ([unmin.org.np: 2008](#)).



Before 1990 during the Panchayat system, ethnic associations were forbidden as public entities in Nepal, as were political parties. Ethnic associations were considered to be communal and a hindrance to the process of national unity and integration (Skar 1995: 31-42). The success of political agitation (democracy movement) in 1990 allowed ethnic entities to be opened in the country and owing to a rise in awareness level of people; many ethnic organizations were opened in the post-1990 period (Skar 1995: 31-42).

Today, Nepal's ethnic movement centers mainly on issues of governance and political representation, according to a report published by Nepal's Department for International Development (DFID) (english.ohmynews.com: 2010). Since its inception, the modern state of Nepal has been the affair of elites belonging to certain high caste groups. Numerous ethnic groups, and the so-called lower castes, were marginalized and prevented from every kind of participation. A report in "Unequal Citizens," published by the DFID, mainstreams the issue as a need for constitutional reform -- to remove current discriminatory provisions and make new provisions for equitable representation. Nepal originally listed 61 indigenous groups, which was later reduced to 59 in the eyes of the law. However, there are various complexities involved in compiling a definitive list (english.ohmynews.com: 2010).

The umbrella organization of indigenous peoples in Nepal, the Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN), reports that out of the 59 indigenous groups on the list, 10 are "endangered," 12 "highly marginalized," 20 "marginalized," 15 "disadvantaged," and 2 "advanced" or better off (english.ohmynews.com: 2010).

Constitutional reform is both an overarching demand related to many other issues and an affirmation that the Janajatis (indigenous nationalities) want a wholly reformed contract with the state. Equitable representation, including "restructuring of the Nepali state" by changing the electoral system and instituting affirmative action measures, are other key demands (english.ohmynews.com: 2010). Nepal is passing through transitional period. It is crucial for the welfare of the state, to understand the problems of indigenous peoples and the constitutional declaration on the multiethnic composition of the state be

buttressed by implementing integration and equal treatment measures that benefit all ([english.ohmynews.com](http://english.ohmynews.com): 2010).

As things were not moving as fast as expected, Janajatis started opening political parties based on their own ethnic communities. Political parties such as Mongol National Organization, Dalit-Janajati Party and Tamsaling Nepal National Party, among others, were opened under the same circumstances<sup>1</sup>.

## **1.2 Terminologies-used**

### **1.2.0 Politics**

The term “politics” has been derived from the Greek word “polis” which means a city-state, the general form of political organization in ancient Greece. Ancient Greece was divided into small city-states. But now there are big states in place of small city-state. Hence, the meaning of the term “politics” has also changed ([Agarwal 2009: 9](#)). According to R.N. Gilchrist (1938), “politics now-a-days refers to the current problems of the government which as often as not are more economic in character and political in scientific sense. When we speak of as interested in politics, we mean that he is interested in the current problems of the day, in tariff questions, in labor questions, in the relation of the executive to the legislature, in any question, in fact which requires or is supposed to require the attention of the law-members of the country ([Ibid](#)). Politics is a science which deals with those political problems that are being faced by a village, city, province or by the world. Therefore, the politics of one country differs from that of the other because every country faces different problems at the same time ([Ibid](#)).

Politics is the activities or affairs engaged in by a government, politician, or political party, or the methods or tactics involved in managing a state or government ([answers.com: 2010](#)). Politics is “the art or science of government or governing, especially the governing of a political entity, such as a nation, and the administration and control of its internal and external affairs ([Ibid](#)). Politics, in the broadest sense, is the

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<sup>1</sup> Source: field note

activity through which people make, preserve and amend the general rules under which they live ([maitah.com](http://maitah.com): 2010).

Politics is, in this essence, “power”: the ability to achieve a desired outcome, through whatever means. This includes everything from the ability to keep alive to the ability of government to promote economic growth. More narrowly, power may be associated with the ability to punish or reward, bringing it close to manipulation (*Ibid*). Power can be said to be exercised whenever ‘A’ gets ‘B’ to do something that ‘B’ would not otherwise have done. However, ‘A’ can influence ‘B’ in various ways. This allows us to distinguish between “faces of power” as mentioned below:

(1) *Power as a decision-making*: This face of power consists of conscious actions that in some way influence the content of decisions.

(2) *Power as an agenda setting*: The second face of power is ability to prevent decisions being made, that is, in effect, “non decision-making”

(3) *Power as thought control*: The third face of power is the ability to influence another by shaping what he or she thinks, wants, or needs ([maitah.com](http://maitah.com): 2010).

### **1.2.1 Ethnicity**

The term “ethnic” derives its origin from the Greek term “ethnos” normally translated as “nation” ([Eriksen, 1993: 2](#)). “Ethnos”, according to Wernhart, signifies the unit of human beings who are united through common socio-cultural expressions ([n.d.: 70, as cited by Teshome in \*The Journal of International Social Research\*, pg. 782, Volume 1/5 Fall 2008, Vienna Austria](#)). Wernhart further notes that “ethnos” could be perceived as “a skeleton (frame) concept, whose range of variation reaches from the smallest local groups to tribes and peoples”(*Ibid*)

The term “ethnic” appeared in the English language in the mid 14th century. However, “ethnicity” is a relatively new term in the field of social sciences. The word “ethnic” has

got various meanings through (out) time. In its earliest usage it meant “heathers” (wild people) or “pagans” (non-Christians) (Ibid). It was David Riesman, the American sociologist, who used the term “ethnicity” for the first time in 1953 (Eriksen, 1993; as cited by Teshome 2008: 781)

According to Nnoli (1978), ethnicity has four characteristics: (1) It exists only within a political society consisting of diverse ethnic groups; (2) It is characterized by a common consciousness of being one in relation to other relevant groups; (3) It tends to be exclusive... acceptance and rejection on linguistic...and cultural grounds characterize social relations; and (4) It is characterized by conflict (Nnoli, 1978: 6-8; citation Ibid, pg 782).

Ethnicity may be the cause of ethnocentrism and prejudices against members of other ethnic groups. Thus, it can create conflicts and wars (Paranjpe 1986:1; Ibid). According to Oxford dictionary (2005: 520), “ethnic” means “connected with or belonging to a nation, race or people that shares a cultural tradition” and “ethnicity” means “the fact of belonging to a particular race.”

### **1.2.2 Ethnic Politics**

In general, ethnic or ethno-centric politics can be defined as: “the expression of ethno-centric behavior by ethnic groups, to achieve goals related to their ethnicity, in political arena.<sup>2</sup>” When certain ethnic groups open a political party whose 90 percent members are from the same ethnic groups, then such kind of party can be called an ethnic party and the politics done by that particular party can be called as the ethnic politics<sup>3</sup>.

Ethnicity plays an important role in the politics of many countries (Horowitz 1993, 1998 and Young 1993: 1819; as cited by Teshome 2008: 782). According to Banerjee (2007:1), “strengthening of ethnic preferences increases polarization”, and this is particularly true among low income countries (Alesina et al 1999). Very often, ethno-politics is regarded as being synonymous with ethnic conflict...it would be wrong if we

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<sup>2</sup> Source: field note

<sup>3</sup> Source: field note

mistook ethno-politics to mean nothing but ethnic conflict (Wolff and Cordell 2004). Ethnicity and territory are two core components of ethnic politics (Ibid).

Ethnic politics in Ethiopian context had been described as this: “Ethnic politics is the notion of ascribing moral, social or political significance to a man’s genetic lineage- the notion that a man’s intellectual and characteristic traits are produced and transmitted by his internal body chemistry. It means, in practice, that a man is to be judged, not by his own character and actions, but by the characters and actions of a collective of ancestors.” (Anyuak Media, 2006)

According to Fearon, political coalitions may form along the lines of ethnicity when preferences over public policies are shared within groups but are polarized across groups (Fearon 1999: 11). Ethnic politics frequently emerge in new democracies, and are often presumed to threaten these new democracies (Hangen 2009).

### **1.2.3 Exclusion**

Exclusion means “the act of preventing somebody / something from entering a place or taking part in something (Oxford Dictionary 2005: 529). It also means “a person or thing that is not included in something (Ibid).

### **1.2.4 Social Exclusion**

Nobel laureate Amartya Sen says “the term ‘social exclusion’ is of relatively recent origin” and adds: “René Lenoir, writing about a quarter of a century ago, is given credit of authorship of the expression” (2000: 1). Identifying “the excluded” in France, René Lenoir, as *Secrétaire d’Etat a l’Action Sociale* of the French Government, spoke of the following as constituting the “excluded”—a tenth—of the French population:

*mentally and physically handicapped, suicidal people, aged invalids, abused children, substance abusers, delinquents, single parents, multi-problem households, marginal, asocial persons, and other social ‘misfits’ (Silver 1995: 63; Foucauld 1992; citation by Sen, 2000: 1).*

The impression of an indiscriminate listing of problems under the broad heading of “social exclusion” and of a lack of discipline in selection, combined with the energy and excitement with which the concept has been advocated for adoption by its energetic adherents, has had the effect of putting off some of the experts on poverty and deprivation (Sen, 2000: 2). In Oyen’s (1997: 63) unflattering portrayal of the research enterprise on social exclusion, new entrants in the field are seen as proceeding to “pick up the concept and are now running all over the place arranging seminars and conferences to find a researchable content in an umbrella concept for which there is limited theoretical underpinning” (Oyen: 1997). If the advocates have been vocal, so have been the critics (Oyen: 1997).

In Nepalese context, social exclusion has been understood as a situation when certain groups of people are deprived of their representation in political and/or administrative arena, or access to education or economic opportunities, among others<sup>4</sup>.

#### **1.2.4.0 Political exclusion**

Political exclusion is the deprivation of representation in political parties, cabinet, and parliament, among other fields of politics<sup>5</sup>.

#### **1.2.4.1 Administrative exclusion**

Administrative exclusion is the deprivation of opportunity to engage in government jobs<sup>6</sup>.

#### **1.2.4.2 Economic exclusion**

Economic exclusion simply means being poor, living under poverty and deprived of economic progress<sup>7</sup>.

#### **1.2.4.3 Educational exclusion**

Educational exclusion simply means the lack of access to formal education<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Field note

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

### **1.2.5 Identity**

Identity means the characteristics, feelings or beliefs that distinguish people from others: a sense of national / cultural / personal group identity (Oxford Dictionary 2005: 770). It is also the state or feeling of being very similar to and able to understand somebody / something (Ibid).

### **1.2.6 Autonomy**

Autonomy is the freedom for a country, a region or an organization to govern itself independently (Oxford Dictionary 2005: 89). It also means the ability to act and make decisions without being controlled by anyone else (Ibid).

### **1.2.7 Social identity**

It means characteristics, feelings or beliefs of a particular ethnic group that distinguish people belonging to other ethnic groups<sup>9</sup>.

#### **1.2.7.0 Ethnic autonomy**

Ethnic autonomy is the freedom given to ethnic communities to govern themselves independently on certain issues within the boundary of a national government<sup>10</sup>.

#### **1.2.7.1 Language policy**

Language policy can be defined as the policy of the government under which the government defines and manages the status of various languages prevailing in a multi-lingual country<sup>11</sup>.

#### **1.2.8.2 Local festivals**

Local festivals can be defined as the festivals celebrated by various ethnic groups in certain geographies of a country and which may or may not have a public holiday<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

### **1.3 Statement of the problem**

Nepal is, in essence, a cultural mosaic comprising different caste and ethnic groups belonging to the Tibeto-Burman and Indo-Aryan linguistic families, which is indicative of the waves of migrations that have occurred for over 2,000 years from the north and south respectively [Asian Development Bank (ADB) 2005: 1]. Nepal is populated by 103 caste and ethnic groups who are largely Hindus, Buddhists, Animists, some Muslims, and in some cases a combination of two or more of these (ADB 2005: 2). According to Harka Gurung (2003), “social demographic data of the last decade clearly evidence a strong tendency towards identity assertion based on ethnicity, language and religion” (ADB 2005: 2).

As Susan I. Hangen argues in her November, 2009 book titled as “Rise of ethnic politics in Nepal: Democracy in the margins”, ethno-centric politics is becoming increasingly central to Nepali politics (Hangen 2009). Ethnic Politics is being practiced in Nepal mainly by establishing political parties largely based on some particular ethnic communities (Source: field note). For example: Mongol National Organization has been opened targeting all indigenous nationalities, whereas Tamsaling Nepal National Party has been set up mainly targeting people belonging to Tamang nationality (Ibid).

In these contexts, it is imperative to discover what factors drive people towards ethnic politics and what they expect to achieve with their involvement in ethnic politics.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The basic objective of the study was to discover relationships between social exclusion and social identity, with that of ethnic politics and also to examine whether these two factors – exclusion and identity, lead people towards a political party largely based on a particular ethnic community.



### **1.5 Research questions**

The first research question of the study was: whether social exclusion of ethnic communities has a role in causing ethnic politics. Likewise, the second research question of the study was: whether the search for social identity causes ethnic politics.

### **1.6 Research hypothesis**

The first research hypothesis of the study was: “social exclusion of ethnic communities leads them towards ethnic politics.” Similarly, the second hypothesis of the study was: “ethnic communities involve in ethnic politics in search of social identity.”

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

Today, Nepali politics cannot be understood without understanding ethnicity-related movements, activities and political agendas. The research focuses on exploring causes of ethnic politics in Nepal and contributes to literature building on ethnicity and politics. It ultimately contributes to the broad area of public policy and governance in Nepal, as the policy makers and researchers are attempting to understand why there is ethnic cleavage in Nepal and how the gaps among various caste, ethnic and religious groups could be bridged. The research focuses on problem part so that it would be easier for future researchers and / or policy makers to work on solution part.

### **1.8 Variables**

The variables used in this research are:

Ethnic politics	- Dependent variable
Social Exclusion	- Independent variable, and
Search for social identity	- Independent variable

Independent variables representing Social Exclusion are:

- Political exclusion
- Administrative exclusion
- Economic exclusion

- Educational exclusion

Independent variables representing Search for Social Identity are:

- Non-recognition of festivals
- Government's language policy
- Search for ethnic autonomy

### **1.9 Scope and limitation of the study**

- Among various dimensions of ethnic politics, the research has empirically tested mainly two factors that may cause ethnic politics – (1) social exclusion and (2) search for social identity.
- Other ethno-centric political parties have been excluded and only Tamsaling Nepal National Party, which is largely based on Tamang community, has been included in the study.
- Reasons of ethnic politics, other than social exclusion and search for social identity, have not been considered.

### **1.10 Structure of the study**

First Chapter is an introductory part consisting of research objectives, hypothesis, and scope and limitation of the study, among other aspects. Second Chapter is “The Theoretical Framework”. It reviews relevant literatures and theories, and provides theoretical and conceptual foundations for the thesis. Third Chapter discusses methodologies used in the research works. It reveals that basically two methods have been used in the research: quantitative (questionnaire survey) and qualitative (interviews). It further says, data triangulation have been done among three sets of data – quantitative, qualitative and case studies. Fourth Chapter sheds light on the organizational efforts of Tamang community and the background of the birth of Tamsaling party – the research population, which is largely based on Tamang community. Fifth Chapter presents and analyses data collected during the study. And finally, Chapter Six provides a “Conclusion” of the study.

### **1.11 Conclusion**

This chapter mainly highlights the research objectives, hypothesis, variables-involved and structure of the study providing a general background about the research issue. In particular, it says, ethnic politics is the dependent variable having two independent variables – social exclusion and search for social identity; that may lead people towards ethnic politics.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides information as to what concepts and literatures were mainly reviewed to write this thesis and what theories were used to analyze the collected data. It also presents an analytical framework, based on which, the research was carried out, and the table of indicators, from which questions for quantitative and qualitative researches were derived.

#### 2.1 Concepts: Global ethnic and indigenous movements

*“I have seen, in my time, Frenchmen, Italians, and Russians; I even know, thanks to Montesquieu, that one may be a Persian; but as for man, I declare that I have never met him in my life; if he exists, it is without my knowledge.”*

- Joseph de Maistre, 19<sup>th</sup> century Social Theorist, talking about ethnic divisions among mankind, in his book *Considerations on France* [(Sage) Journal - Politics & Society, Vol. 2, No. 1, 21-45 (1971)]

Maistre diagnosed the issue of ethnic cleavage among mankind. He identified it at national level, but the reality today in 21<sup>st</sup> century is that the society itself is divided within the boundary of a nation. This pattern is vivid especially among developing countries and that too, in particular, among Sub-Saharan and South Asian countries.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, there were heinous genocide incidents between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups of Rwanda (Des Forges, 1999). Genocide occurred in *enlightened* Europe as well when Adolf Hitler intensified the politics of hatred towards Jew minorities (Niewyk, 2000:45). In South Asia, a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic region, genocide is not a phenomenon in general. However, ethnicity has found a way into day-to-day politics. Kumari Mayawati, the incumbent chief minister of Uttar Pradesh state of India,

was a teacher before she plunged into politics of ethnicity. She quit teaching to champion the rights of Dalits – a low-caste community, which Mayawati herself belonged to ([IBN-Live, 2008](#)). Laloo Yadav, an Indian politician famous for his wits and charisma for turning the loss-making Indian railway into profit-making unit, made his fortune in politics through anti-Brahmin movement and championed the rights of non-Brahmin people in his home state Bihar. His slogan was “*Bhu-Ra-Baa-La ko phék dalo*” meaning root out Bhumihar, Rajput, Brahmin and Lala (Kayastha) – 4 high-castes in Bihar state of India ([The Independent, 2007](#) and [Hindustan Times Blogs, 2009](#)).

In Latin America, class oppression and racial discrimination, often combined with a further sexual repression of women, merge to form systems of domination that for centuries have subjugated indigenous peoples to the interests of a ruling white or mestizo elite ([yachana.org: 2010](#)). In the South American Andes, resistance strategies included litigation and occupation of hacienda lands. In 1886, Pedro Pablo Atusparia led a revolt in Peru against a poll tax on the indigenous peasantry. In 1899, Aymara leader Pablo Zárate Willka raised an indigenous army that demanded a restoration of traditional lands and the establishment of an indigenous government. In 1915, Teodomiro Gutiérrez took the name Rumi Maqui (Quechua for "stone hand") and led a radical separatist revolt that employed the rhetoric of restoring the Inca Empire ([yachana.org: 2010](#)).

Expropriation of community lands led to a massive revolt at Jesús de Machaca in the Lake Titicaca district of Bolivia in 1921. Several years later, in one of the largest indigenous uprisings of the twentieth century, ten thousand people attacked haciendas in the Chayanta province in northern Potosí. Ultimately the government's superior firepower and a lack of indigenous unity led to the failure of these revolts and the massacres of hundreds of people. These uprisings, however, stopped hacienda expansion onto community lands and achieved the replacement of local officials ([yachana.org: 2010](#)).

In the 1920s, indigenous peasants began to organize rural syndicates. The syndicates were often allied with urban labor unions or leftist political parties, and their creation

represented a shift from focusing on local and narrowly conceptualized issues to agitating for larger and more structural changes. In Bolivia, Aymara and Quechua Indians agitated for land reform following the 1952 nationalist revolution. This grew into the Katarista movement that took its name from the late colonial indigenous leader Túpac Katari ([yachana.org](http://yachana.org): 2010).

In Guatemala, a Maya nationalist movement emerged that championed cultural pride in traditional lifestyles, dress, religion, language, literature, and education. In 1992 the activist Rigoberta Menchú won the Nobel Peace Prize and became a high-profile international symbol of the indigenous rights movement. Indigenous militancy emerged not only in Bolivia and Guatemala-which have majority and largely homogenous indigenous populations-but also in countries like Colombia, which has a small and extremely diverse indigenous population. Despite numbering only 3 percent of the population, Indians became a significant political force through the *Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia* (**ONIC**; National Indigenous Organization of Colombia) ([yachana.org](http://yachana.org): 2010). With these efforts, indigenous peoples gained far-reaching concessions including citizenship and territorial rights, as well as official recognition of ethnic diversity and indigenous languages in the 1991 constitution ([yachana.org](http://yachana.org): 2010).

Indigenous peoples emerged at the end of the twentieth century as one of the most powerful and well-organized political actors in Latin America. They led protests against neoliberal economic policies that often weighed most heavily on indigenous peoples. *Indigenous organizations increasingly formed political parties that competed for state power, and they joined coalitions that threw out unpopular presidents in Ecuador and Bolivia* ([yachana.org](http://yachana.org): 2010). Far from being static, indigenous people continually embraced new strategies and technologies such as the Internet to advance their struggles. Some spoke of the "return of the Indian." Indigenous peoples, however, had never left and were always present in Latin America as they agitated for their concerns in a variety of ways ([yachana.org](http://yachana.org): 2010).

In the case of Africa, today, groups claiming to be ‘indigenous’ are mostly those who have been living by hunting and gathering; by transhumant (migratory nomadic) pastoralism and those practicing traditional dry-lands horticulture including oasis cultures ([ipacc.org.za](http://ipacc.org.za): 2010). Indigeneity is associated with both the negative experience of discrimination and marginalization from governance, as well as the positive aspects of being holders of unique knowledge which has emerged through the long-term management of arid area and tropical forest ecosystems ([ipacc.org.za](http://ipacc.org.za): 2010).

In Africa, groups that self-identify as indigenous live a peripheral existence. Most governments in Africa do not have disaggregated data or indicators to monitor the social, economic and political status of indigenous people ([wrmbulletin.wordpress.com](http://wrmbulletin.wordpress.com): 2010). Most indigenous communities, including the Twa (of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda), were never compensated when expelled from the ‘protected areas’ or ‘state reserves’ they used to live in, due to their traditional marginalization and flawed legal and policy frameworks. As a result, their living conditions have degenerated further. Today, most Twa lead a shockingly impoverished existence. A recent report by the Forest Peoples Program predicts that the Twa are in danger of extinction unless massive and concerted action is taken to reverse their decline. Such is the state of many other groups of indigenous people, both pastoralists and hunter gatherers, from the Barabaig in Tanzania to the Tuareg in Mali ([ipacc.org.za](http://ipacc.org.za): 2010).

In the case of Pacific Islands, in September 1997, delegates from 18 Pacific Island peoples and nations established an Indigenous Rights Working Group (IRWG) under the regional NGO umbrella organization Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organizations (PIANGO) at a forum in Rarotonga, Cook Islands ([inmotionmagazine.com](http://inmotionmagazine.com): 2010). The PIANGO was founded in 1990 in Pago Pago, Samoa, to facilitate communication, provide a common voice at regional and international forums and to develop Pacific identities, unity, cultures and action to improve the well being of the island communities. In 1995, at the 2nd PIANGO Council meeting of delegates from 24 Pacific nations in Moorea, Te Ao Maohi (French Polynesia), four working groups were created to facilitate regional action on issues of

highest priority: indigenous rights, social and economic development, environmental protection and NGO capacity building ([inmotionmagazine.com](http://inmotionmagazine.com): 2010).

IRWG coordinates collective efforts by PIANGO members and works with other Pacific NGOs, to:

- Inform, educate and enhance awareness of indigenous people's rights, especially Pacific indigenous people's rights, violations of these rights; and the relationship of our Pacific indigenous people's rights issues to the global struggle of indigenous people against oppression and exploitation.
- Establish indigenous rights standards unique to our Pacific region on our peoples' spiritual, genealogical and cultural laws, as distinguished from the UN Draft Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples created by the UN nation states and based on Western law.
- Foster and help develop mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and redressing violations of indigenous rights at local, regional and international levels. These mechanisms include supporting struggles and/or campaigns of Pacific island indigenous peoples and nations for self-determination, peaceful decolonization and independence ([inmotionmagazine.com](http://inmotionmagazine.com): 2010)

IRWG's current priority activities include:

- Support for Kanak, Maohi, Maori, Kanaka Maoli, East Timorese, West Papuan, Bougainvillean and Australian Aboriginal self-determination and resistance to colonialism.
- Drafting a Pacific Region Charter of Indigenous Rights with unifying principles and standards unique to our Pacific region, identities and ways based on local spiritual and cultural traditions ([inmotionmagazine.com](http://inmotionmagazine.com): 2010).

In North America, American Indian Movement – a civil rights organization was founded in 1968, originally to help urban American Indians displaced by government programs. It later broadened its efforts to include demands for economic independence, autonomy over tribal areas, restoration of illegally seized lands, and protection of Indian legal rights



and traditional culture. Some of its protest activities involved violence and were highly publicized. Internal strife and the imprisonment of some leaders led to the disbanding of its national leadership in 1978, though local groups have continued to function ([answers.com: 2010](#)).

In Europe, the Sami, formerly called Lapps by the Scandinavians, are the indigenous people of the far north of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. Their language is Finno-ugric, related to Estonian, Siberian languages, Finnish, and Hungarian. The Sami people's traditional, semi-nomadic subsistence ways include reindeer herding, and fishing and hunting. Their clothing, handicrafts, and music are distinctive and beautiful - sharing with the Lakota the use of decorated hides/skins, and skin drums ([indigenouspeople.net: 2010](#)).

The traditional spirituality involves shamans, and totemic animals (especially the buck reindeer) though many Saami were converted to Christianity. Their social organization is traditionally equalitarian, with women sharing in leadership and ownership within small village communities. Traditional beliefs and livelihood activities still continue, though there has been much assimilation over the past couple centuries. There has also been land theft and encroachment, unscrupulous missionaries, forced loss of language, attacks on Sami villages, and the closing of borders which threatened the Sami culture ([indigenouspeople.net: 2010](#)). Currently, there are Sami political and cultural organizations in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Russia. There is a Sami Parliament spanning these borders, which participates in the global indigenous peoples' movement at UN, etc ([indigenouspeople.net: 2010](#)).

In India, the indigenous people or *adivasis*' main demand in their political activism is to achieve autonomy. The movement is active locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. In recent years the interface between the local/national and the global has become more pronounced. Indigenous activists now work on various levels and in various forums to change their situation at home ([sasnet.lu.se: 2010](#)).

The dynamics of the Indian nation state influence the ways different communities perceive themselves and others and how they negotiate the polity in order to reap benefits. Some communities are provided special provisions in the constitution and in this category the *adivasis* are considered to be the Scheduled Tribes ([sasnet.lu.se: 2010](#)). Indian *adivasis* suffer high rates of poverty, landlessness, malnutrition, human rights violation, unemployment and internal displacement than other sects of the society, and they have lower level of literacy and less access to health services ([sasnet.lu.se: 2010](#)).

As for China, the country says there are no indigenous people or indigenous issues in China. To quote a Chinese diplomat Long Xuequn, he says that “China is deeply concerned with the protection of the rights of indigenous peoples although there are neither indigenous people nor indigenous issues in China. He was speaking at the 53rd session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1997 ([china-embassy.ch: 2010](#)). Long further said, "The indigenous issues are a product of special historical circumstances. By and large, they are the result of the colonialist policy carried out in modern history by European countries in other regions of the world, especially on the continents of America and Oceania" ([china-embassy.ch: 2010](#)). "As in the case of other Asian countries, the Chinese people of all ethnic groups have lived on our own land for generations. We suffered from invasion and occupation of colonialists and foreign aggressors," Long said. "Fortunately, after arduous struggles of all ethnic groups, we drove away those colonialists and aggressors. In China, there are no indigenous people and therefore no indigenous issues" ([china-embassy.ch: 2010](#)).

## **2.2 Literature review**

[De-Sales \(2000: 41-73\)](#) has said: ethnic politics were unheard of in Nepal in the early 1980s. In her paper ‘The Kham Magar country, Nepal: Between ethnic claims and Maoism’, [De Sales](#) says “ethnic movements emerged in Nepal after the establishment of parliamentary democracy in 1990 ([De-Sales: 2000](#)). The paper discusses the Kham Magars, a Tibeto-Burman population in west and mid-west Nepal and notes that national elections during the 1990s did not address any concerns of Kham Magars. “Nor did they

bring into power anyone from ethnic organizations. The neglect by the dominant political process of these identity claims has rendered them live potentially revolutionary issues” (De-Sales: 2000).

Mahendra Lawoti (2003: 49-58) has written a paper in 2003, in which he discussed ethnic centralization and the participation of ethnic minorities in the Maoist insurgency. The paper “Centralized politics and the growth of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal” argues that: while the state is weak in terms of development and service delivery, it has been forceful in its policy of mono-cultural nationalism. As a result, many minorities feel marginalized (Ibid). To assess the situation of exclusion, Lawoti (2007: 57-77), further writes a paper “Political exclusion and the lack of democratization: Cross-national evaluation of Nepali institutions using a Majoritarian-Consensus Framework”. In this paper, he examines the extent to which indigenous nationalities (Janajati), people living in southern-most plains (Madhesi), Low-caste Hindus (Dalit) and women are excluded from state mechanism.

A seminar presentation (article) by D.N. Gellner (2007) looks back at the history of Hindu caste system and ethnicity in Nepal and the growth of ethnic movements thereby. The paper argues that the Maoists developed a strategy to use ethnic difference to their benefit (Ibid).

Susan Hangen (2007: 1-104) talks about “New Nepal” and judges politics through the prism of ethnicity in her work “Creating a ‘New Nepal’: The ethnic dimension”. In this study, she explores the rise of ethnic politics in Nepal and says despite the political reforms after 1990, political exclusion of marginalized groups has surged up. The main focus of the study is the movement of indigenous nationalities for inclusion in state mechanism. The study further suggests increasing social, economic and political power of the excluded groups.

Two Norwegian and one Nepali scholar have done a survey research in 2009 titled “Patterns of socio-political participation in Nepal” (Haug, Aasland and Dahal, 2009: 105-

136). The research has examined the patterns of participation in civil society organizations and political activities in four districts of Nepal - Dhanusha, Banke, Sindhupalchowk and Surkhet, with respondents drawn from 2,890 households.

The latest literature on ethnicity and politics is again a contribution of [Hangen \(November, 2009\)](#). This time, she has come up with a book “Rise of ethnic politics in Nepal: Democracy in the margins”, which provides an in-depth discussion on indigenous nationalities (Janajati) movement in Nepal. Drawing on years of ethnographic fieldwork, Hangen focuses on an ethnic political party – Mongol National Organization (MNO), which consists of multiple ethnic groups and has been mobilizing support in rural east Nepal ([Hangen 2009](#)). This work presents a more nuanced understanding of how ethnic parties operate on the ground, arguing that ethnic parties overlap considerably with social movements, and that the boundary between parties and movements should be reconceptualized ([Ibid](#)).

As for [Gellner \(2007\)](#), he has dedicated most of his time to view Maoists as the political force that capitalized the disenchantments of ethnic minorities, but she would not elaborate other factors leading towards ethnic politics. As for [Haug, Aadne and Dahal \(2009\)](#), their survey research is comprehensive and illustrative and it does not overlap with what this researcher wants to do – study of exclusion at central level along with one more variable as a reason of ethnic politics.

[Hangen \(2007 and 2009\)](#), has given a very good background of ethnic politics in Nepal focusing her work on indigenous nationalities (Janajatis) of Nepal. However, the scope and objective of this research and her research are different. Among all these literatures, [Hangen \(2009\)](#) and [Haug, Aadne and Dahal \(2009\)](#) have also done primary data collection through interviews; others have not.

[Vanhanen, Tatu \(1991\)](#), in his book “Politics of ethnic nepotism: India as an example”, has highlighted the pressure of ethnic politics and ethnic nepotism in India with the help of his theories of ethnic nepotism. [Gurung \(2010\)](#) in her thesis submitted to Central

Department of Public Administration, Tribhuvan University has laid emphasis on the efforts and challenges seen in the socio-economic development of indigenous nationalities of Nepal and the national policies vis-à-vis the same. [Tamang, Parshuram \(2007\)](#) has focused on development issues of Tamang nationality in his book “Tamang nationality: New Millennium Development Agenda.” He says Tamangs are one of the most backward communities of Nepal, as they have been deprived of many opportunities since decades. He further argues that the main challenges of Tamang community are to overcome poverty, exclusion and marginalization so as to fit into the 21<sup>st</sup> century ([Tamang 2007](#)).

## **2.3 Theoretical framework**

### **2.3.1. Theory of Social Exclusion and Ethnic Politics:**

In regard to the question on whether there is a linkage between social exclusion and ethnic politics and whether social exclusion leads ethnic groups towards ethnic politics, a dyadic test of exclusion theory says: “exclusion of powerful ethnic minorities increases the likelihood of conflict considerably ([Buhaug, Cederman and Rød 2008: 531-551](#)). [Cederman](#) later working with [Wimmer](#) and [Min](#); further developed the linkage between social exclusion and ethnic politics in their ([January 2010](#)) works. *Struggles over access to state power are an important part of the dynamics leading to ethnic politics* [or civil wars]: this was the main thrust of their new research titled as “Why do ethnic groups rebel? New data and analysis” [[Cederman, Wimmer and Min; Jan 2010: 1-50](#)].

“Our analysis is based on the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) data set, which covers all politically relevant ethnic groups and their access to power around the world from 1946 through 2005,” says the new data and analysis on ethnic politics, adding: “This data set improves significantly on the widely used Minorities at Risk (MAR) data set, which restricts its sample to mobilized minorities and thus largely overlooks the ethno-political constellation of power at the center” ([Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010](#)).

“In modern nation-states, rulers are no longer legitimized by the principles of dynastic succession, God’s grace, or civilizational progress but that they are expected to care for their own, ethnically defined people (Wimmer 2002; cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010). Political officeholders thus have institutional incentives to gain legitimacy by favoring co-ethnics over others when it comes to the distribution of public goods and government jobs. The expectation of ethnic preference works in the other direction as well, as voters prefer parties led by co-ethnics, delinquents hope for co-ethnic judges, and citizens prefer to be policed by co-ethnics.” (Cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010)

“Under the conditions of pervasive ethnic favoritism, political leaders and followers are driven by the strategic motive to avoid or even to overturn dominance by ethnic ‘others.’ This motive is simultaneously material, political, and symbolic: ‘adequate’ or ‘just’ representation in a central government offers material advantages such as access to government jobs and services, legal advantages such as the benefits of full citizenship rights, a fair trial, and protection from arbitrary violence, and symbolic advantages such as the prestige of belonging to a ‘state-owning’ ethnic group. In brief, this approach conceives of ethnic politics as the struggle over control of the state between various ethnically defined organizations and their constituencies.” (Cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010)

Especially in weak states with weakly developed civil societies, the state may be captured by particular ethnic elites and their constituencies, thus giving rise to one among other variants of the “weak state–strong society” constellation analyzed by Migdal and others (Migdal 1988; see also Jackman 1993; cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010).

*The more representatives of an ethnic group are excluded from central executive power, the probability of ethnic politics increases (Cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010).* The exclusion mechanism also alerts us to the consequences of changes in power hierarchies. Sociological theories of emotions suggest that negative emotions are especially likely to be aroused following loss of power and prestige (Kemper 1978; cited

by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010). When the subjects blame others for their downgrading; anger and resentment increase the readiness to fight in order to change the situation (Turner and Stets 2005; cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010).

“In collecting the data,” the research says: “we relied on the expert input of nearly 100 students of ethnic politics to assess formal and informal degrees of political participation and exclusion along ethnic lines” (Cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010). In line with most other data sources on ethnic politics including MAR, the current data set takes ethnic groups as units of observation, rather than political organizations that claim to speak in their name (Cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010). This data set improves significantly on previous efforts to code ethnic groups’ access to power, such as Cederman and Girardin, who rely on static measures of inclusion and limit their sample to Eurasia and North Africa (Cederman and Girardin 2007; see also Buhaug, Cederman, and Rød 2008; cited by Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010).

To sum up the linkages of social exclusion with ethnic politics, we can say that “large ethnic groups that are excluded from state power or underrepresented in government are much more likely to challenge the regime’s insiders through ethnic politics [or violent means]” (Cederman, Wimmer and Min: 2010).

### **2.3.2. Theory of Social Identity and Identity Politics:**

Social Identity Theory starts from the assumption that social identity is derived primarily from group memberships (Brown 2000: 746-47). Positive social identity derives largely from favorable comparisons that can be made between the in-group and relevant out-groups. In the event of an unsatisfactory identity, people may seek to leave their group or find ways of achieving more positive distinctiveness for it (Ibid: 747). There are different strategies which may be adopted to this end and various conditions under which these are thought more or less likely to be used (Ibid). People strive to achieve or maintain a positive social identity so as to boost up their self esteem (Ibid). Social identity can be an important factor in motivating (political) behavior (Dickson 2006: 5-39). Ethnicity [race]

[along with class and religion] predicts political ideology, electoral behavior, and political protest (Deleon and Naff, 2004: 689-719).

When the search for social identity is pursued in political arena, then it becomes Identity Politics. If an ethnic group involves in identity politics, it becomes ethnic identity politics; just like with women's involvement, it would have become gender identity politics. Therefore, theories and linkages showing why people involve in Identity Politics would automatically explain theories and linkages depicting why people involve in ethnic identity politics or simply, the ethnic politics.

Identity politics as a mode of organizing is intimately connected to the idea that some social groups are oppressed; that is, that one's identity as a woman or as a Native American, for example, makes one peculiarly vulnerable to cultural imperialism (including stereotyping, erasure, or appropriation of one's group identity), violence, exploitation, marginalization, or powerlessness (Young 1990; citation by SEP, 2007). Identity politics starts from analyses of oppression to recommend, variously, the reclaiming, redescription, or transformation of previously stigmatized accounts of group membership. Rather than accepting the negative scripts offered by a dominant culture about one's own inferiority, one transforms one's own sense of self and community, often through consciousness-raising (Cited by SEP, 2007). For example, in their germinal statement of Black feminist *identity politics*, the Combahee River Collective argued that “as children we realized that we were different from boys and that we were treated different — for example, when we were told in the same breath to be quiet both for the sake of being ‘ladylike’ and to make us less objectionable in the eyes of white people. In the process of consciousness-raising, actually life-sharing, we began to recognize the commonality of our experiences and, from the sharing and growing consciousness, to build a politics that will change our lives and inevitably end our oppression” (Combahee River Collective 1982, 14-15; cited by SEP, 2007).

*In the realm of politics, identities can affect conceptions of legitimacy, shared interests, and policy choices, as well as preferences for political leaders and parties (Abdelal,*



Herrera, Johnston and McDermott; 2005). Kelman (1969) has argued that national identity allows members of a group to see their state as legitimate; Feng (1999) demonstrated that Hainanese groups [of China] have different perceptions of political and economic conditions on the island (Citation Ibid). Shabad and Slomczynski (1999) found that identity shaped “orientation” towards transition issues in Poland; Adler (1992) explored how being part of a transnational identity group (international arms control specialists) shaped understandings of security concerns; and Valenzuela and Scully (1997) showed that voters from different classes had different values and therefore assessed political leaders and parties differently (Citation Ibid). Connecting class and gender in the workplace, Canning (1996) argued that identity discourses shape the understanding and meaning of work, which differ by gender (Citation Ibid).

Risse et al. (1999, 157) have argued that “collective identities define and shape how actors view their perceived instrumental and material interests and which preferences are regarded as legitimate and appropriate for enacting given identities” (Citation Ibid). Herrera (2005) has explored how regional identities within Russia have led to different views of regional economic conditions. There is also evidence that identities affect understandings of land itself, including understandings of access and rights, e.g. Tronvoll (1998) and Kelman (2001) [Citation Ibid]. Identity may indeed shape perceptions of territory, which also shape perceptions of culture. Goodman (2002, 849-50) has argued that provincial identity in Shanxi, China was shaped in concert with a specific “interpretation of the area’s centrality to the development of Chinese culture” (Citation Ibid).

### **2.3.3 Vanhanen’s theory of ethnic nepotism**

Vanhanen’ theory of ethnic nepotism (Vanhanen 1991) has been used here as a cross-cutting and supplementing theory to see, if it also has an effect over ethnic politics besides the theory of (social) exclusion and social identity. During his research, Vanhanen hypothesized the following assumptions:

1. All geographically discrete ethnic groups try to establish their own political units

2. The more ethnically divided a society or a political unit within the country is, the more political parties tend to become organized along ethnic lines
3. The more ethnic groups differ genetically from each other, the higher is the probability that conflicts between them lead to violence (Vanhanen 1991: 59).

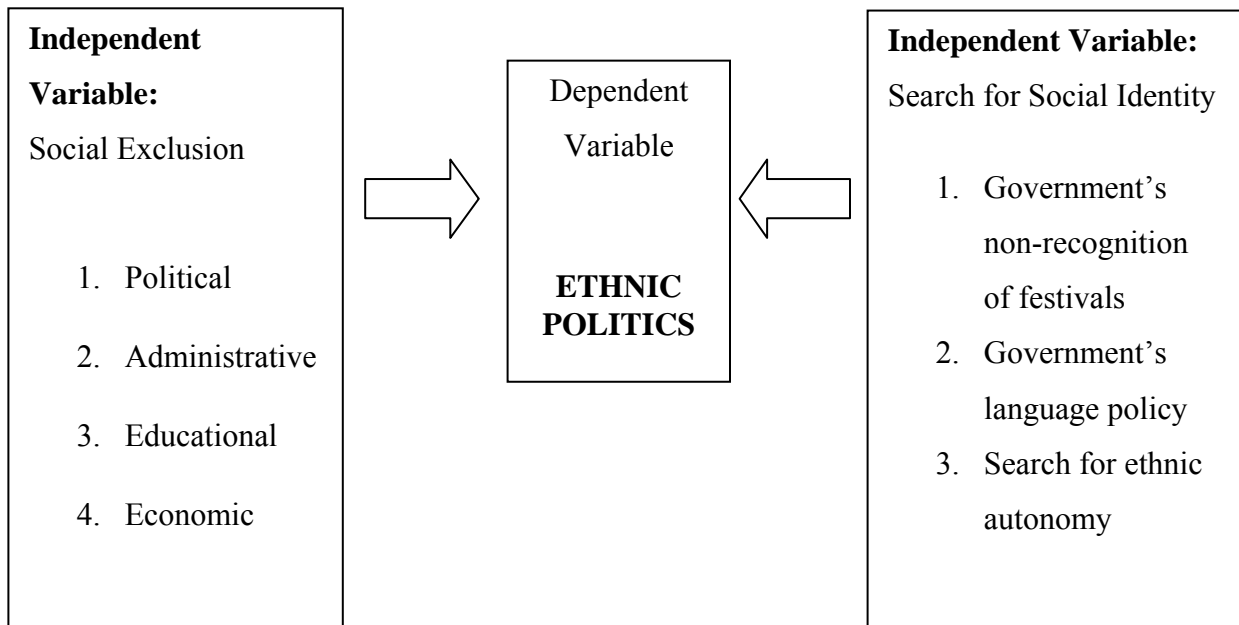
Based on the above hypothesis, Vanhanen came up with the following findings, respectively:

1. The revolt of Muslims in Kashmir is in harmony with this hypothesis number 1, although it does not presuppose that all geographically discrete ethnic groups should get their own independent states.
2. Hypothesis number 2 was tested by empirical evidence on the Indian party system. It was found that nearly all Indian parties are more or less ethnically based or differentiated.
3. The pattern of ethnic conflicts in India during the past year did not contradict this hypothesis number 3 (Vanhanen 1991: 189-93).

#### **2.2.4 Analytical framework:**

Based on the above theories showing linkages of social exclusion and search for social identity with ethnic politics, an analytical framework has been derived here below. Here, “ethnic politics” is the dependent variable, whereas social exclusion and search for social identity are two independent variables that may lead people towards ethnic politics. This analytical framework will be empirically tested during the research:

Figure 2.1- Analytical Framework to be tested empirically



### 2.2.5 Indicators

The research questionnaires and interview guide were formulated based on the following variables and indicators, which themselves were derived from the analytical framework.

*Table 2.1 - The indicators*

S/N	Variables		Measurable Indicators
1.	<b>Social Exclusion</b>	Political Exclusion	Population-disproportionate representation in cabinet
			Population-disproportionate representation in parliament
			Population-disproportionate representation in central committees of mainstream political parties
			Population-disproportionate representation in decision-making positions in mainstream political parties
		Administrative Exclusion	Population-disproportionate representation in Civil Service
			Population-disproportionate representation in policy-level posts in Civil Service
		Economic Exclusion	Poverty and economic backwardness
		Educational exclusion	Access to education
2.	<b>Search for Social Identity</b>	Non-recognition of festivals	No declaration of official holiday on indigenous nationalities' socio-cultural festivals
		Govt.'s language policy	Government policy towards preservation and promotion of local languages
		Search for ethnic autonomy	Demand of federal states on ethnic line

### **2.3 Conclusion**

As we attempt to see whether the literature mentioned in this chapter have left any “space” to carry out research on the causes of ethnic politics, then we come to know that we still have significant space and reason to conduct a research so as to explore the causes of ethnic politics in Nepal. The issues of Kham Magars of west and mid-west Nepal tells the story of formative years of ethnic politics in Nepal and therefore, [De-Sales \(2000\)](#) could not trace most of the reasons as vividly as it could be done by a researcher these days. [Lawoti \(2003\)](#), talks about ethnic minorities joining Maoists, who were then waging an armed insurgency to set up a republican order. He talks about the Maoists only, but did not elaborate on linkages of exclusion and identity with ethnic politics. Similarly, [Lawoti \(2007\)](#) discusses the extent of political exclusion but has not shown a statistical relation of exclusion with ethnic politics.

In a nutshell, this chapter lays an emphasis that many literatures related to ethnic politics, exclusion and identity crisis, particularly in the context of Nepal, were studied and reviewed. Theories of social exclusion and social identity showing linkages with ethnic politics were described. The theory of ethnic nepotism was also presented as a supplementing theory leading people towards ethnic politics. An analytical framework was also drawn so as to test it empirically, along with a table of indicators - the source of qualitative and quantitative research questions.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

A social research may be defined as a scientific understanding which by means of logical and systematized techniques, aims to: 1. discover new facts or verify and test old facts, 2. analyze their sequences, interrelationships, and causal explanations which were derived within an appropriate theoretical frame of references, and 3. develop new scientific tools, concepts, and theories which would facilitate reliable and valid study of human behavior (Young 1998: 30). According to Majumdar (2005: 25), the obvious function of research is to add new knowledge to our existing store.

This chapter has been designed to detail the discussion of methodological approach and strategy that have been employed while undertaking the research work. This chapter explains various stages and activities undertaken during data collection, data management and data processing phases.

In order to examine and analyze whether social exclusion and search for social identity lead people towards ethnic politics, this study combines both quantitative and qualitative methods popularly known as mixed methods.

#### 3.1 Quantitative methods

A survey was conducted to know about people's understanding in relation to ethnic politics and what factors they perceive as the ones leading them to ethnic politics. The survey has followed a questionnaire<sup>13</sup> consisting of 32 objective questions (see Appendix 1). The first 11 questions were about personal background of the respondent. The next six questions were basic questions meant to have a general understanding of the interviewees on social exclusion and search for social identity in regard to ethnic politics. The next

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<sup>13</sup> A questionnaire is a formal list of questions designed to gather responses from respondents (Baskota 2009: 110).

eight questions were particularly related to “social exclusion” – one of the two independent variables, vis-à-vis “ethnic politics” - the only dependent variable. Among the eight questions, four were about political exclusion, two about administrative exclusion and one each about educational and economic exclusions. Similarly, next five questions were related to “search for social identity” – the second independent variable, vis-à-vis the same dependent variable as mentioned above. Among the five questions, one was about non-recognition of festivals, and two each were about the government’s language policy and the search for ethnic autonomy. Finally, two additional questions were designed to define ethnic politics quantitatively.

As for the answer alternatives, it was based on a scale<sup>14</sup> known as the Likert Scale<sup>15</sup>, on a range from 1-5, denoting “strongly agree”, “agree”, “can’t say”, “disagree” and “strongly disagree.” The questions were set in English. However, for the convenience of respondents, they were translated and rewritten in Nepali – the local lingua franca and commonly understood language of Nepal. The language was pitched to the level of the respondents, whereas technical terminologies and jargons were also avoided.

In a bid to be more accurate and systematic, a pilot survey was conducted selecting a sample of four individuals who were representative of the population<sup>16</sup> towards which the questionnaire was ultimately intended at. It provided a space on the trial questionnaire to the respondents to make reactions and suggest changes. More significantly, it also provided space to make appropriate additions, deletions, and modifications to the questionnaire, as per the necessities.

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<sup>14</sup> An important trend in sociology during the past few decades has been an increasing emphasis on the development of measuring instruments. Such instruments are commonly referred to as scales (Young 1998: 348).

<sup>15</sup> Likert Scale is all about attitude-scaling. Likert (1932), in preference to the complicated scoring system of previous scales, reduced the number of classificatory categories of answer options to five (Majumdar 2005: 424-434).

<sup>16</sup> The population represents a group that one wishes to generalize his/ her research to (Simon: 2002)

### 3.1.0 Sampling<sup>17</sup>

Purposive sampling<sup>18</sup> has been used for the study. First of all, contacts were made with the members of Tamsaling Nepal National Party (TNNP) – the research population, and were asked to fill up the questions. A total of 41 TNNP members took part in the survey. The members of TNNP were purposefully selected because the survey intended at mapping out ethnic politics, i.e., the joining and opening of Tamsaling party, which is largely based on one particular ethnic group – Tamangs of Nepal. In this method, the choice of items in the sample depends upon the judgment of the investigator. The investigator possesses some belief that the sample being handpicked is typical of the population or is a very good representative of the population ([Baskota 2009: 100](#)).

Three clusters in two places: Kathmandu valley and Makwanpur district have been selected purposefully for this study. The first cluster included central committee members of TNNP residing in Kathmandu valley. Its number was 12. The second cluster included district committee members of TNNP in Makwanpur district. Its number was 13. The last and third cluster included village level members of TNNP particularly from Manahari VDC-3, Ramantar in Makwanpur district. Its number was 16. The survey was conducted in three clusters of two districts in order to understand the variation of a same population. A detail of the respondents has been tabulated here below:

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<sup>17</sup> Sampling is the process of selecting units (e.g., people, organizations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen ([socialresearchmethods.net](#))

<sup>18</sup> Purposive sampling starts with a purpose in mind and the sample is thus selected to include people of interest and exclude those who do not suit the purpose ([changingminds.org](#)). Purposive sampling targets a particular group of people. When the desired population for the study is rare or very difficult to locate and recruit for a study, purposive sampling may be the only option ([wadsworth.com](#)).



*Table 3.1 - Population, cluster and number of respondents used in quantitative method*

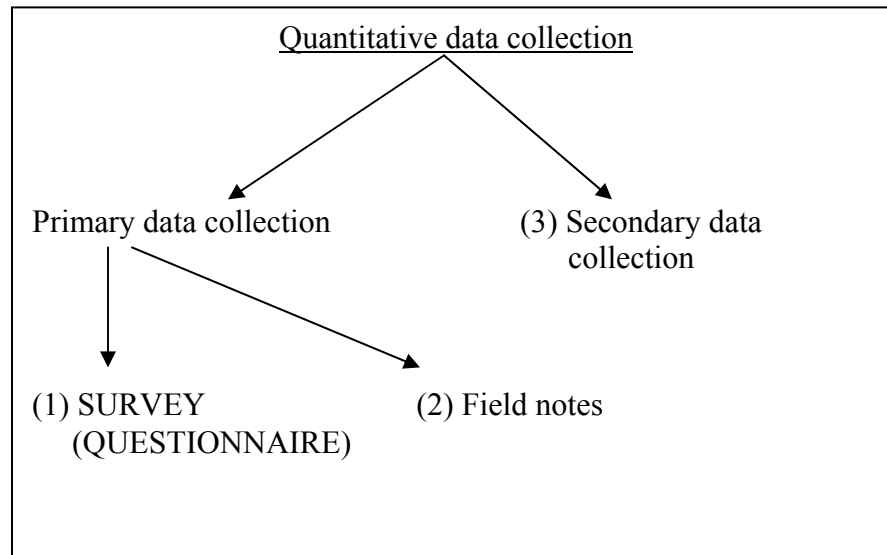
S/N	Population	Cluster	Number
1.	TNNP members	Central committee members of TNNP, Kathmandu	12
2.	TNNP members	District committee members of TNNP, Makwanpur district	13
3.	TNNP members	Village-level members of TNNP in Manahari VDC-3, Ramantar, Makwanpur	16
<b>Total sample size</b>			<b>41</b>

Under quantitative methods, primary data<sup>19</sup> was collected in two ways: (1) through questionnaire survey as mentioned above, and (2) through field notes. Questionnaire survey was the major tool and source of primary data collection, whereas, field notes were auxiliary and supplementing tool and sources for the same. As for the secondary data<sup>20</sup>, various books, journals, newspapers, articles, websites and previous researches were scanned and surfed to get numerical (quantitative) data. A diagram below presents these activities undertaken in a nutshell:

<sup>19</sup> Primary data is the data observed or collected directly from first-hand experience ([businessdictionary.com](http://businessdictionary.com))

<sup>20</sup> Published data and the data collected in the past is called secondary data ([businessdictionary.com](http://businessdictionary.com))

Figure 3.1 - Quantitative data collection



During data analysis, data triangulation<sup>21</sup> was done among these three sets of data sources for validity and accuracy.

### 3.2 Qualitative methods

Qualitative data consists of words and observation, not numbers. They are examples of human meaningful communication. Hence, they vary (Baskota 2009: 148). For reasons of convenience, most such data (qualitative ones) are converted to written texts. As with all data, analysis and interpretation are required to bring order and understanding even in qualitative data. This requires creativity, discipline and a systematic approach. There is no single or best way. There are different approaches to analyze data in qualitative research (Baskota 2009).

Qualitative methods provide thick description of events and allow the researcher to examine processes relating to the relevant concepts (Geertz, cited in Güney 2004; further cited in Karyeija 2009: 93). In qualitative researches, the task of researchers is “to

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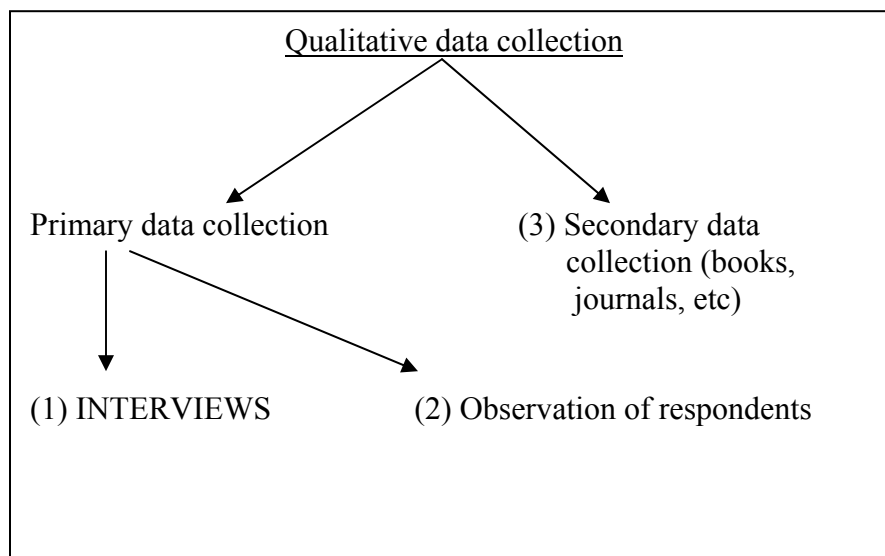
<sup>21</sup> Data triangulation is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from more than two sources. In particular, it refers to the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Bogdan & Biklen: 2006).

account for what has been given an account of” (Eisner 1991, cited in Karyeija 2009: 93). In this research, I relied on the participants’ “thick” views so as to understand their perception on ethnic politics and factors leading people towards ethnic politics.

For authenticity, i.e., validity and reliability of the participants’ views, I followed the concepts of Guba and Lincoln (cited in Seale 1999, further cited in Karyeija 2009: 93). It says that “authenticity denotes being consistent with the relativist view, namely that research accounts represent a consensus of views about what is to be considered true” (Ibid). To an extent, authenticity also depends on the respondents’ understanding about the research variables, namely, ethnic politics, (social) exclusion and the search for social identity. What-so-ever, for authenticity of the respondents’ views, data triangulation has been done combining open-ended interviews, observation of respondents and documents.

Under qualitative methods, primary data were collected in two ways: (1) open-ended interviews and (2) observation of respondents. Interviews were the key component of qualitative research, whereas observation was the auxiliary and supplementing component of the research. As for secondary data, various books, journals, newspapers, articles, websites and previous researches were scanned and surfed to get descriptive (qualitative) data. A diagram below presents these activities undertaken in a nutshell:

Figure 3.2 - Qualitative data collection



Among these three sets of data sources, the most important one is the interview method. However, two more additional method of data collection (observation and secondary data) also helped validate the data, as data triangulation was done combining interview, observation and documents (secondary data) so as to get an authentic finding during the data analysis.

### 3.2.0 Interview

Interview is one of the most important tools of collecting primary data in qualitative research. According to [Bingham and Moore](#), “interview is a conversation with a purpose ([cited in Baskota 2009: 108](#)). Interview is an interactive process between two or more individuals in which one person responds to it by a verbal reply ([Majumdar 2005: 236](#)).

There are open-ended interviews where the researcher can ask the respondents to propose insights into certain questions, focused interviews that follow a protocol, and surveys, which have structured questions designed for qualitative data ([Yin 1994, cited in Karyeija 2009: 95](#)). The interviews were based on open-ended questions that followed an Interview Guide ([see Appendix 2](#)). In terms of formality, the interview was formal as well as informal. On the basis of number of persons’ participation, the interview was individual as well as group interview. On the basis of subject matter, the interview was,

of course, qualitative. On the basis of objectives, the interview was sample (diagnostic) interview. And on the basis of the role of the respondent, the interview was directive (structured and semi-structured)<sup>22</sup>. A total of 65 TNNP members were interviewed during the research.

As mentioned earlier that three clusters in two places: Kathmandu valley and Makwanpur district were selected for the study, the first cluster included central committee and Kathmandu-based members of TNNP residing in Kathmandu valley. Its number was 21, out of which 12 individuals also participated in the questionnaire survey. The second cluster included district committee members and district level leaders of TNNP in Makwanpur district. Its number was 20, out of which 13 individuals also participated in questionnaire survey. The last and third cluster included village level members of TNNP particularly from Manahari VDC-3, Ramantar in Makwanpur district. Its number was 24, out of which 16 individuals also participated in questionnaire survey. A detail of the respondents has been tabulated here below:

*Table 3.2 - Population, cluster and number of respondents used in qualitative method*

S/N	Population	Cluster	Number
1.	TNNP members	Central committee and Kathmandu-based members of TNNP	21
2.	TNNP members	District committee members and district level leaders of TNNP, Makwanpur district	20
3.	TNNP members	Village-level members of TNNP in Manahari VDC-3, Ramantar, Makwanpur	24
<b>Total sample size</b>			<b>65</b>

<sup>22</sup> Baskota (2009: 108-09) has categorized interview on five basis. The researcher has used the same basis here while selecting his own interview categories.

### **3.2.1 Observation**

Observation was not the key method of primary data collection in this study. This method was used to supplement interview method of primary data collection so as to contribute to data validation. Young (1998: 214) says, at the time of interviewing, you are also observing the respondent, as he says: “interviewing is not a simple two-way conversation between an interrogator and informant. Gestures, glances, facial expressions, pauses often reveal subtle feelings (Young 1998: 214). Observation may be defined as systematic viewing, coupled with consideration of the seen phenomena. That is, consideration must be given to the larger unit of activity in which the specific observed phenomena occur (Young 1998: 161). In this study, the large unit of activity was interview and the specific observed phenomena was to read the facial expression and gestures of the interviewees so as to verify (through conscience – to the extent possible) whether they were lying or answering genuinely during the interview.

### **3.3 Case study strategy and units of analysis**

Social scientists study many culture groups and small social groups (a family, political party, a gang, a leadership group, etc). They also study large groups (sects, national and racial groups, etc) as the social units. A comprehensive study of a social unit – be that unit a person, a group, a social institution, a distinct, or a community – is called a case study (Young 1998: 246-47). The distinguishing character of case study is that each respondent (individual, family, institution, cultural groups, etc) is looked upon as a unit and the unitary nature of individual case is not forgotten at the time of analysis. Case studies emphasize on study of interrelationship between various attributes of the unit (Majumdar 2005: 284-85).

Case study should not be looked as a distinct method of collecting and analyzing data. The case study method is a technique by which individual factor whether it be an institution, or just an episode in the life of an individual or a group is analyzed in its relationship to any other in the group (Majumdar 2005: 285). In this study, the unit of analysis – the case – is official documents of Tamsaling Nepal National Party (TNNP), a political party of Nepal. Concurrently, specific cases of individual respondents have been

mentioned as and when it is seen appropriate. The information about individual cases has been collected through personal interviews.

### **3.3.0 Choice of unit of analysis:**

Tamsaling party is a party largely based on Tamang ethnic community. It was intended to understand what factors drove Tamang people to open a party of their own ethnicity, in spite of the presence of mainstream political parties in Nepal. Such a case study into the official documents of Tamsaling party would allow the researcher understand the phenomena of ethnic politics and its causes, mainly from exclusion and identity crisis perspectives. Further, Tamang people traditionally live in the hills surrounding Kathmandu valley – the capital city. Therefore, they were accessible as well.

### **3.4. Data management and analysis**

Some interviews were recorded and some were hand-written in notebooks. As for quantitative data, a manual file of all collected surveys (41 in total) was created. Each respondent's answer was given a code number in the file and each answer was entered into a computer-software – SPSS 17, so as to compute the data digitally. With the help of SPSS 17, the researcher became able to find out frequencies and means of the responses. The software analyzed data and yielded outputs as instructed. From the original outputs received through the SPSS, the researcher derived his own tables for convenience and display. Many of the tables were merged owing to the necessity of the analysis. The tables have been presented in Chapter Five of this thesis.

### **3.5 Research clearance, access and ethical considerations**

As for ethical considerations, the researcher told every respondent why he had come, who had sent him and what his motive was. There was nothing hidden so as to make sure that the respondents do not suspect the researcher as being something else. The researcher, on the very first page of the questionnaire, had written transparently that he was from a particular university doing research on a particular subject. Further, the researcher also assured the respondents that their privacy and confidentiality would be maintained and it would be never revealed as to which answer was told by which particular respondent.

Further, the respondents were assured that the thesis which was developed depending upon their responses would *not* be misused and misinterpreted.

### **3.6 Triangulation, validity and reliability**

While analyzing the data, data triangulation has been done so as to confirm validity and reliability of the data. As for quantitative data, questionnaire survey was the main data source and triangulation was done with field notes and secondary data. As for qualitative data, interviews were the main data source and the triangulation was done with observation of respondents and secondary data. The final data triangulation was done taking all three data as the main sources of data. They were: questionnaire survey, interviews and case studies.

### **3.7 Generalization and transferability**

As for the generalization and transferability of the research findings, the findings cannot be generalized for ethnic groups other than Tamangs and political party members other than those of Tamsaling party. But still, the findings can be used as references and citations to facilitate researches showing linkages between ethnic groups and their involvement in politics.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

A mixed method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods under descriptive-cum-analytical research design was applied to collect data from three clusters – centre, district and village of Tamsaling party - the research population. Policies of the party and individual cases of respondents were also studied from research variables' perspectives. Ethical matters were also taken into considerations while collecting data. SPSS 17 software was used to analyze data digitally. Tables showing frequencies and means were obtained through the software. Data was triangulated and analyzed in Chapter Five.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORTS OF TAMANG COMMUNITY

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a brief description about the historical developments and organizational efforts of Tamang community who established a political party largely based on their own community known as Tamsaling Nepal National Party.

#### 4.1 Organizational efforts of Tamang community

*“It was a matter of 104-year long oligarchic Rana regime that lasted in Nepal till 1950. Rana rulers were very powerful and brutal to those who stood against them. I would like to narrate you one incident of that time. It was not like standing against them; my ancestors never stood against them. It was just a simple matter but it their eyes, it was a massive issue. What happened was that my great grandfather was a generous person and possessed some properties also. Once he thought of building a free-of-charge guest house (‘paati’ in Nepali) in the hills of today’s Makwanpur district on the way to Kathmandu valley. That time there were no road links, so it was very soothing to those travelers to have a guest house that too free of cost in the wilderness of the hills. He built it, and the passers-by were so grateful to him that he had done such a religious work giving people the much-needed rest during the hectic on-foot journey towards Kathmandu. Once, a Rana ruler, shelled inside a wooden palanquin (‘palki’ in Nepali) which was carried by his servants, was among the passers-by heading towards Kathmandu. He saw the ‘paati’, rested upon there and asked curiously: who built this ‘paati’ in the midst of the hills? Someone told him the name. He thought for a while and issued a strong punishment orally. That time whatever Rana rulers would pronounce, it would have become law immediately. He said my great grandfather deserves to be called ‘chamaar’, a low status caste to whom people used to look down upon, for his crime was to build a ‘paati’, a kind of social and religious work, even being the son of a Tamang, who were considered wild and uncivilized community by the Rana elites. From that day onwards, our whole family is not known by our original surname Tamang but by the given surname ‘chamaar’ which*

*we are not. People in our locality still call us as the ‘descendants of chamaar’ (chamaar ko santaan in Nepali) even after some 100 years of the incident. We feel stigmatized. We have lodged applications in many offices to change our surname but our grievances have not been heard<sup>23</sup>.”*

*“Do you know why a person from Tamang community prefers sitting on the floor instead of chairs even if you request him to do so for dozens of times when he comes to your house? Do you know why a person from Tamang community is always submissive in nature and do not protest whatever you say?” a Tamang elder in his 50s asked this question to the researcher and replied himself: “It is because Tamang people are always fearful that they may get punishment even for minor gestures. During Rana regime, the old Muluki Ain (civil code) had categorized Tamangs as ‘maasiney jaat’ (caste who deserves to be killed), meaning that if Tamang, Limbu, Rai, and Magar have done the same crime, Tamang will be killed and Limbu, Rai and Magar will be released with some other mild punishments. The old law no more exists but that psychic still exists in the minds of Tamang people. That’s why they are still hesitant, submissive and fearful in nature<sup>24</sup>.”*

*At the time of King Rann Bahadur Shah and Girban Bikram Shah some 200 years ago, Tamangs who had joined the national army revolted twice. Though all of them were not expelled from the army, they were banned from carrying weapons and were assigned as manual workers such as road-constructing laborers, porters, firewood carriers and tent-fixers, among others (Himal: 1995). Owing to their history of revolt, Tamangs were barred from joining British recruitment of Gurkhas after Anglo-Nepal War of 1814-16; whereas, other Nepali communities such as Rai, Limbu, Magar and Gurung were encouraged and taken recruitment into the British army (Ibid).*

*“Actually the problem begins right at the time of King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the founder of modern Nepal who united small principalities of Nepal into one single nation state in*

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<sup>23</sup> Source: based on a narration during field research in Manahari VDC, Makwanpur district

<sup>24</sup> Source: based on narrations during field research in Kathmandu and Makwanpur

1769,” says a Tamang scholar pursuing his degree in sociology. “The then Tamang rulers did not understand the unification spirit of Prithvi Narayan and opposed his expansion. Or, it may be that Prithvi Narayan did not understand the spirit of the then Tamang rulers to maintain self-rule – it might be both the way,” adds he. “Whatever might be the reality, the hardship and uphill task faced by King Prithvi Narayan to defeat Tamang rulers in the unification process might have inspired him to be biased towards Tamang community in state mechanism afterwards. Same kind of second-class treatment to Tamangs by Rana rulers might just be a legacy.”

Whatever might be the reason, the above instances of discrimination are nerve-wrecking and heart-rending. When Rana regime was toppled down and democracy was established in 1950, Tamang people started regrouping and reorganizing themselves so as to get rid from their extremely low social status, oppression, exclusion, identity crisis and marginalization<sup>25</sup>.

In this backdrop, some Tamang youths took initiatives to open “Nepal Tamang Baudhha Sangh” (sangh = association) in 1952. The *sangh* was later named as “Nepal Tamang Committee” in 1956. Santabir Lama was the patron and Harka Jit Lama was the chairperson of the committee<sup>26</sup>. The committee was actually an ad-hoc committee. The main objective of the committee was to carry out holistic development of Tamang community respecting cultural diversity of Nepal, as the constitution of the committee says: “Nepal as a state in particular has not been constructed just by the people of one or two ethnic groups, clan and religion. Nepal’s nationality has its foundation in various caste and ethnic groups, religions, societies and cultures. Strengthening of these all factors will promote unity in all societies ultimately leading Nepal towards heights.” The committee’s constitution further says: “The committee has been created in order to raise the living standard of Tamang people through special knowledge and education in political, social, economic and psychological sectors and to drive Tamang people towards

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

progress joining hands with various clans, caste and ethnic groups, religions and societies.<sup>27</sup>”

The committee became popular in a short span of time. In general election of 1958, three Tamangs became able to be the Member of Parliament on the tickets of Nepal Rastrabadi Gorkha Parishad. They were Lalit Man Ghale, Harka Jit Lama and Tirth Man Lama. By that time, some other ethnic organizations also came into being; for example: Gurung Kalyan Sangh for Gurungs, Tharu Kalyankarini Sabha for Tharus, Kirat League for Rais and Limbus, and Dalit Sangh for Dalits. The situation, however, could not last long, as king Mahendra in December 1960, dissolved the elected parliament and cabinet, and banned political parties and ethnic organizations announcing a direct monarchical rule which was later baptized as Panchayati System<sup>28</sup>.

The Panchayati System that lasted for some 30 years from 1960 to 1990 was the most difficult period for ethnic organizations, according to a Tamang scholar. He says: “It was not tolerable for the government even to organize a picnic of Tamang people. All ethnic publications had to be approved by the then zonal chief. Amid tight government regulations, some Tamang youths in 1976 published a newspaper and calendar with the same name “*Ek haun*” (Let’s Unite). Until that time, there was no political party or ethnic organization to raise the voice of all nationalities univocally. In order to educate and raise awareness level of Tamang and other nationalities, Tamang scholars started publishing various literatures. For instance, nationalities-related articles of Parshuram Tamang were published in newspapers such as *Bihani* (Morning) (1979), *Bedana* (Grief) (1981), *Janmaanas* (Ordinary People) (1983) and *Bhojpur* (name of a district) (1989), among others. Similarly, Sitaram Tamang published a book “Problems of nationalities” in 1987 with the same objective<sup>29</sup>.

Amid protests against Panchayati regime, the then King Birendra in 1979 announced a referendum asking people to vote either the continuing partyless Panchayati system or a

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<sup>27</sup> Source: Constitution of Nepal Tamang Committee

<sup>28</sup> Source: field notes

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

multiparty system as an alternative. In such a “loose” environment, when the regime had become little bit liberal, Tamang people again attempted to organize themselves and as a result, constituted “Tamang *Sewa Guthi*” (Tamang Service Trust) under the leadership of Juddha Bir Lama and also held its first Tamang National Convention in 1979. Lama was in favor of bargaining with the then government and ask for reservations to Tamang community. In that convention, Tamangs were split into two camps – one supporting the then existing Panchayati system and another extending support to a new multiparty system. In the tug of war for leadership, the “Tamang *Sewa Guthi*” split into two different organizations with the same name. One was still led by Juddha Bir Lama whereas another one was led by Ashta Bahadur Lama. The convention ended without a conclusion<sup>30</sup>.

Since the efforts of Tamangs to unite were proved futile until 1979, a “Tamang language, culture and development committee” was constituted in 1980 under the leadership of Ganesh Bajra Lama with the initiative of some Tamang youths such as Sitaram Tamang, Parshuram Tamang, Bakhan Singh Lama, Chandra Singh Lama and Bakhat Bahadur Lama, among others. This organization published bulletins and calendars and expanded organization to various districts and educational institutions. Afterwards in October 1990, under the initiative of a Tamang leader - Syo-Mhendo-Thetma, a meeting of all Tamang organizations was convened. The meeting, with the aim of uniting all Tamang organizations, constituted a “United Tamang National Convention Preparatory Committee” under the convenorship of Kumar Waiba. The convention was summoned in June 1990 seven months after the formation of the preparatory committee. By that time, multiparty democracy had already been restored in the country (April 1990)<sup>31</sup>.

In an open environment of democracy in the post-1990 period, it became easier to hold the United Tamang National Convention. The convention integrated all Tamang ethnic organizations and constituted one single entity known as “Nepal Tamang Ghedung.” Nirmal Kumar Lama became chairperson and Parshuram Tamang became general secretary of the new umbrella organization. The Ghedung has so far performed six

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<sup>30</sup> Source: based on conversation with respondents

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

national conventions and is still continuing as an umbrella organization of all Tamang ethnic people<sup>32</sup>. The Ghedung became a founding member of Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NeFIN) – the umbrella organization of all indigenous nationalities in Nepal, in 1990. Later, Parshuram Tamang, who was representative of Ghedung in NeFIN, became the General Secretary of NeFIN – the highest executive position in the entity, and led the organization for seven years from 1993 to 2000<sup>33</sup>.

Among the nationalities of Nepal, no one has the same kind of economic, social, political and educational status. And the same thing applies to Tamangs as well. Among the five categories of Nepal's 59 nationalities - "endangered," "highly marginalized," "marginalized," "disadvantaged," and "advanced", Tamangs have been ranked as the "marginalized" community (Tamang 2007: 77).

According to Census 2001, the total population of Tamang is 1,282,304, which stands at 5.66 percent of Nepal's total population. Among all Tamangs, 91.4 percent live in rural areas and only 8.6 percent of them live in urban areas. The average life expectancy rate of Tamangs is 52.2 compared to national average of 60.5. Among all street children, 25 percent are Tamangs; among all domestic helpers, 12.7 are Tamangs; among all carpet laborers 49.5 percent are Tamangs; and among all garbage collector children, 13 percent are Tamangs (Tamang: 79-80).

The organizational efforts of Tamang community started taking u-turn when new political developments were witnessed in the country, especially after the success of People's Movement 2005/06 that paved the way for the downfall of monarchy and the start of a new republic Nepal. Many ethnic organizations, in the more open environment of Republic Nepal, felt that their objectives can be better highlighted and fulfilled if they convert their ethnic organizations into ethnic political parties<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

The Interim Constitution of Nepal 2006 has vowed that Nepal would become a federal country; meaning that there will be provinces and states and to govern those provinces and states, regional parties based on certain ethnic groups would be in demand<sup>35</sup>.

At one hand, different ethnic communities of Nepal such as; Tamangs were already excluded, marginalized and were facing identity crisis<sup>36</sup>. The Constitution, on other hand, was also offering them the “olive branch” as mentioned above. In such a situation, it was natural that the ethnic organizations either convert their entities into ethnic political parties or the promoters of those organizations open a new political party chiefly based on some particular ethnic group<sup>37</sup>. The same thing happened in the case of Tamsaling Nepal National Party as well. At one hand, Nepal Tamang Ghedung – the umbrella organization of Tamang community is still existing and continuing; whereas its promoters such as Mr. Parshuram Tamang and Devendra Lama, among others, abandoned Ghedung so as to give birth to Tamsaling Party – a political party chiefly based on Tamang ethnic community<sup>38</sup>.

As of today, Tamsaling party has opened district offices in 15 districts *where Tamang people are either in majority or constitute a significant number of the total district population*. The 17 districts are: Dhading, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Kavre, Sindhupalchok, Ramechhap, Dolakha, Chitwan, Makwanpur, Dhanusha, Rautahat, Bara, Kailali, Kanchanpur and Kathmandu. Yet another fact about the party is that 95 percent of its members are from Tamang community<sup>39</sup>.

## **4.2 Conclusion**

Describing discriminations against Tamang community, this chapter mainly presents the efforts of Tamangs to organize themselves on ethnic line. Previously they were organized along ethnic non-government (al) organizations; however later, they have emerged as a separate political party of Tamang people known as Tamsaling Nepal National Party.

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Ibid

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

## CHAPTER 5

### DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents and analyses data collected by employing mixed research methods of primary data collection supplemented by secondary data sources. It also highlights individual case studies and experiences of the respondents vis-à-vis discrimination, exclusion, identity crisis and their motivation towards joining Tamsaling party. This chapter has been divided into nine sub-sections.

#### 5.1 Involvement of Tamang community in ethnic politics

Ethnic politics is not something abstract. It can be defined in quantitative term as well. Here, in this research, *the establishment of Tamsaling party, which is largely based on Tamang community, has been defined as Ethnic Politics*. And such Ethnic Politics or establishment of Tamsaling party has occurred due to the failure of mainstream political parties to address the issues of Tamang community's issues. A total of 88 percent respondents believe that ethnic politics has its roots in the failure of big parties' policies towards ethnic issues. That's why Tamsaling party was set up, according to them. Again, 88 percent of them further note that the election manifestos of those big parties had also failed to address ethnic communities' issues owing to their incompleteness. That was yet another reason for indulging in ethnic politics through Tamsaling party. Here is the

#### *Box 5.1 – Promotion of junior fellow*

I was a UCPN-Maoist cadre and fighter during what we call as People's War (1996-2006). I was deputed in Kavre district. I was a committed woman and everybody had knowledge about my strength and capacity. However, when the time of awarding the post of district secretary came, I was sidelined and a junior fellow who belonged to an elite caste was given the opportunity. I started getting frustrated and later on joined Tamsaling party.



presentation of their views:

*Table 5.1 – Reason for establishing Tamsaling Nepal National Party (TNNP)*

STATEMENT	Agree and strongly agree (%)	Mean
<i>Mainstream political parties have failed to address the issues of Tamang and other communities and thus TNNP was opened to fulfill the same.</i>	<b>88</b>	<b>4.51</b>
<i>Election manifestos of mainstream political parties were incompletely written and thus have failed to address the issues of Tamang and other ethnic communities</i>	<b>88</b>	<b>4.39</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

The Mean of first statement (4.51) shows that people-perception is more oriented towards “strongly agree” category, which is highest-ranked at number 5. Though the Mean of second statement (4.39) is lesser than the first one, it is also oriented towards “strongly agree”, thus depicting the real cause of being involved in ethnic politics, i.e.; the opening of Tamsaling party.

The political parties did not bring concrete inclusion policies on incorporating various ethnic groups within the party structure and as a result, the parties are still non-inclusive, by and large. The parties’ manifestos talk about addressing the problems of different ethnic communities, but their commitments have rarely been brought into effect<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>40</sup> Source: Manifestos of Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and UCPN-Maoist; and field notes

## 5.2 Establishment of Tamsaling party as the case of ethnic politics

*“We are so happy that Tamang people have their own party now – Tamsaling party. We Tamang people were very much oppressed, discriminated, marginalized and excluded. Our voices were unheard by existing big parties. It is very much soothing that we Tamang ethnic people can now rely on our own ethnic party... otherwise, we still had to carry bags of leaders belonging to other communities.”*

When the researcher was in Makwanpur district to collect data, he had to come across various views of the Tamaling party members, the above one being one of them. It's a fact that people at district and village level perceive Tamsaling party as the party of Tamang ethnic people only; whereas, the central leaders of the same party residing in Kathmandu do not perceive their party as the party of Tamangs only. Central leaders think that their party belongs to all caste and communities. Now a question just pops up in our mind: what kind of party is Tamsaling party then? Is it ethnic? Is it non-ethnic? To have the exact answers, we have to lunge into the official policy documents of Tamsaling party, and here we go:

### *Box 5.2- No election ticket to Tamang*

I was a district committee member of Nepali Congress party in Dhading district before I joined Tamsaling party. Dhading is a district where Tamang settlements are in abundance. During last parliamentary polls, I urged my party to give ticket to a person belonging to Tamang community. It would have drawn the Tamang voters' attention and the candidate would have won eventually. But my party did not heed to my call. Instead, a candidate belonging to an elite caste was awarded the ticket. He lost the election, as it was expected. There was majority of elite castes in party district committee, disproportionate to the huge population of Tamang community in the district. I started feeling hapless within the party structure and so, became inactive and later on joined Tamsaling party, the party of my own Tamang community. I think Tamsaling party's principle of "population-proportionate inclusiveness in all state bodies" was the key inspiration for me to take a decision of joining this party.

Tamsaling party, which has a full name as Tamsaling-Nepal National Party, was established in 2007 on the eve of Constituent Assembly polls with an aim to participate in the polls. It could not get a birth in the Assembly, however, managed to gather some 20,000 votes across the country and thus established itself as a valid and (Election Commission)-registered party. According to the party's constitution 2007, Tamsaling party will have the following major objectives:

- (a) To establish a Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal,
- (b) To constitute federal states on ethnic and linguistic lines accepting the right to self-determination of oppressed ethnic communities,
- (c) To ensure the right of all ethnic communities for a population-proportionate representation and inclusive participation at all levels of state bodies, assuring autonomy of all communities at their own different levels, and
- (d) To ensure political reservation to minority communities which have very low population and lack central geography so as to qualify for population-proportionate representation,

*Box 5.3- Minor duty assigned for 17 years*

I was a very committed activist of Nepal's one of the biggest mainstream political parties – CPN-UML. I worked continuously for 17 years but I never got uplifted. I always worked as “area in-charge” which is a very small post covering some portions of a village or city. Many juniors belonging to other caste and ethnic group got promoted but not me. I was extremely depressed and thought of joining a party of my own ethnic group. Today, I am central committee member of Tamsaling party. My self-esteem and self-dignity has grown tremendously. I am more satisfied in a party of my own community than I was in CPN-UML.

Likewise, a key political document of the party named as *rajnitik adharpatra*, reiterates that the country has to be federalized on ethnic and linguistic basis. “The key target of Tamsaling party should be to demolish the old structure of state and create a new structure of state based on federalism and right to self-determination of oppressed

communities,” it adds. Yet another document of the party named as “Strategic program 2008 – related to the formation of Tamsaling autonomous state” says that there should be one autonomous Tamsaling state particularly for Tamang people. According to the document, the Tamsaling state will incorporate the present districts of Makwanpur, Chitwan, Dhading, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Kavre, Sindhupalchowk, Ramehhap, Dolakha and Sindhuli; some portions of Kathmandu (east-west-northern), Lalitpur (southern) and Bhaktapur (northern); western portion of Okhaldhunga and northern parts of Terai districts such as Dhanusha, Mahottari, Sarlahi, Rautahat, Bara and Parsa.

On the basis of above mentioned policies of Tamsaling party, we can draw some conclusions about the party so as to determine whether it is an ethnic party or a non-ethnic entity:

- (a) The mainstream political parties such as Nepali Congress and CPN-UML have been heard time and again saying that there are only two castes or ethnic groups in Nepal and elsewhere – they are male and female<sup>41</sup>. And that a man should be judged on the basis of virtue and character and the state should attempt to bridge the gap between upper class and lower class of the society<sup>42</sup>. As for Tamsaling party, there are various castes or ethnic groups in Nepal besides male and female and they should be judged by their origin of race and ethnicity. And they should be given rights to form their states and to exercise autonomy<sup>43</sup>. From this perspective, Tamsaling party is an ethnic party involved in ethnic politics, but
  
- (b) The horizon of ethnic politics as envisioned by Tamsaling party is not narrow. The party not only thinks about Tamang community, but also emphasizes the rights of other communities. The only difference between mainstream political parties and Tamsaling party is that the first interprets things from non-ethnic but class-based perspectives<sup>44</sup>, whereas the second entirely interprets things from ethnic (plus class-based) perspectives. Further, the first wants to continue with the west-

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<sup>41</sup> Source: Field notes

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

<sup>44</sup> Ibid

ministerial style of election, i.e., first-past-the-post electoral system; whereas the second wants to ensure population-proportionate electoral system to be applied to all ethnic communities of Nepal<sup>45</sup>.

### 5.3 Social exclusion and political involvement

Social exclusion is one of the two independent variables used in this research. The major representative variables considered for it are – political, administrative, educational and economic exclusions. The responses from the respondents have been presented below:

*Table 5.2- General perception on social exclusion*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>What constitutes social exclusion? (A) Economic Exclusion</i>	<b>90</b>	<b>4.56</b>
<i>What constitutes social exclusion? (B) Political Exclusion</i>	<b>85</b>	<b>4.46</b>
<i>What constitutes social exclusion? (C) Administrative Exclusion</i>	<b>80</b>	<b>4.29</b>
<i>What constitutes social exclusion? (D) Educational Exclusion</i>	<b>76</b>	<b>4.17</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

The respondents have voted that *the most important factor that constitutes exclusion is economic exclusion*. Its mean is 4.56 - quite close to “strongly agree”, and is followed by political (4.46), administrative (4.29) and educational exclusion (4.17). Since all these

<sup>45</sup> Source: Interview expressions

four means are near to “strongly agree”, it gives a clear message that these all factors have been approved as the components of social exclusion.

Apart from the above-mentioned general perception, opinions of respondents have been collected for the specific case for the study. When asked about their *practical* experience as to which factor of exclusion among the four motivated him/her the most to join Tamsaling party, the researcher received different results. The results have been presented here below. This time around, in their ranking, administrative exclusion was their first choice with a Mean of 4.30.

*Table 5.3- Opinions for administrative exclusion*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in Civil Service motivate you to join/open TNNP which is largely based on Tamang ethnic community?</i>	<b>85</b>	<b>4.41</b>
<i>Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in policy-level posts of Civil Service motivate you to join/open TNNP?</i>	<b>85</b>	<b>4.20</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>4.30</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

The result shows that the respondents were more concerned about jobs and in particular, Civil Service jobs. Had there been adequate jobs for Tamang people, most probably, they would not have opened Tamsaling party. Among two questions on administrative exclusion, respondents showed more interest in having a Civil Service job instead of occupying high posts in Civil Service, though both the questions have a very good Mean – 4.41 and 4.30, respectively.

In line with the research results, the standing figures on Civil Service jobs suggest that Tamang people have very discouraging presence in Civil Service, which is quite disproportionate to their total population of 5.66 %<sup>46</sup>. In Nepal's entire Civil Service, the presence of Tamang community is below 1 percent, almost five times below their total population (Tamang 2007: 31-64). In policy level posts such as under secretary, joint secretary and secretary in Civil Service; there are none from Tamang community (Ibid).

As for political exclusion, the respondents voted it as number 2 reason for their involvement in Tamsaling party after administrative exclusion. The Mean for political exclusion has been noted 4.29, which is near to "strongly agree". Among various manifestations of political exclusion, the respondents said they are more concerned with the fact that in the decision-making positions of political parties, there are very few or no Tamang people at all. Secondly, people are again concerned that they have low presence in central committees of political parties which is not proportionate to their population. The low presence of Tamang community in the Parliament and Cabinet has been ranked as third and fourth concerns for the respondents serving as the basis to join and/or open Tamsaling party. These four categories of political exclusion depict impressive Means of 4.39, 4.32, 4.29 and 4.15, thus robustly showing their orientation towards "strongly agree" perception of the respondents.

*Box 5.4- Derogatory comparison of Tamangs with beasts*

It was some 23 years ago in 1987 that I had applied for a temporary post of junior clerk (*kharidar*) in Department of Forest. Knowing that I was from Tamang community, the interviewers asked me a question: "*Tamangko buddhi arey, nagiko dhoti arey* – what do you mean by it?" First I got shocked to hear such kind of question in an interview place, as I was expecting some professional questions from them. Having known that their intention is just to embarrass me, I walked out fuming. The meaning of their question was: Tamangs have no brains; just like dogs have no clothes.

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<sup>46</sup> Population figure derived from Census 2001

Table 5.4- Opinions for political exclusion

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the decision making positions (chairperson, vice-chairperson, general secretary, politburo members, etc.) of central committees of mainstream political parties motivate you to join/open TNNP?</i>	<b>90</b>	<b>4.39</b>
<i>Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the central committees of mainstream political parties motivate you to join/open TNNP?</i>	<b>88</b>	<b>4.32</b>
<i>Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the Parliament motivate you to join/open TNNP?</i>	<b>88</b>	<b>4.29</b>
<i>Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the Cabinet in the past motivate you to join/open Tamsaling Nepal National Party (TNNP) which is chiefly based on Tamang ethnic community?</i>	<b>80</b>	<b>4.15</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>4.29</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say” (undecided), 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

The standing figures also suggest that Tamang people have no representation in high posts such as chairperson, president, secretary, general secretary, and standing committee members of three largest political parties (Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and UCPN-Maoist). In central committees of NC and CPN-UML, the number of Tamang people is 1 in 59 (1.69 %) and 0 in 116 (0 %), respectively. In UCPN-Maoist, it is 5 in 170 (2.94 %). There is 1 Tamang member in CPN-UML's 39-member politburo committee. In the



present 601-member Constituent Assembly (interim parliament), there are 16 lawmakers (2.66 %) from Tamang community. In the incumbent 43-member Cabinet led by Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, no one is from Tamang community. The total Tamang population of the country is 5.66 %.<sup>47</sup>

As for educational exclusion, it has been ranked as third social exclusion with a Mean of 4.10, showing respondents' clear inclination towards "strongly agree" category of answers.

*Box- 5.5 'I could never pass job interviews'*

There are discriminations against Tamangs. The discriminations are in practice, not in laws. And I have been the victim for several times. In my youth, I was a talented fellow and so, wherever I would give a written job exam, I would have passed it. The only one problem was in interview. I am the person who was always thrown out in interviews. Once there was a vacancy in a hospital for the post of supervisor. I also applied for it, sat for written test, passed it and waited for interview. On the interview day, I was sitting on a bench waiting for my turn. When I was not called inside even for hours, my patience started giving up and I asked a staff there: "When my turn comes?" And he replied: "Oh, you have come for interview! You can go back home. There will be no interview. One person has already taken appointment letter from the authority!"

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<sup>47</sup> Data sources for this whole paragraph are: field notes

*Table 5.5- Opinions for educational exclusion*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Did inadequate access of your community to education (low literacy rate of an ethnic community in regard to national average of literacy) motivate you to join/open TNNP?</i>	<b>78</b>	<b>4.10</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

Education figures of Tamang community paint a bleak picture of them, as only 42.5 percent of them are literate compared to the average literacy rate of Nepal, which is 54 percent (Tamang 2007). Only 5.9 percent of Tamang people study unto School Leaving Certificate (SLC) level or above. And the number of Tamangs getting education unto Bachelor level or above is only 0.6 percent of their total population (Tamang 2007).

The economic exclusion of Tamang people has been ranked as the fourth reason for being involved in Tamsaling party. Its Mean is 3.73 and is near to “agree” perception of respondents in particular.

*Table 5.6- Opinions for economic exclusion*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Economic condition of Tamang community motivated me to join / open TNNP?</i>	<b>68</b>	<b>3.73</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

The meaning of economic exclusion is that people are poor and excluded from economic benefits. The statistics on poverty strongly depicts poor economic condition of Tamang community. Among all communities of Nepal, Tamangs are the poorest people, as 61 percent of them still live below the poverty line (Tamang 2007).

*Box 5.6 – ‘We are always stigmatized’*

People from other caste and ethnic groups always stigmatize Tamangs calling us as *bhotey* – no matter whether the latter do the right or the wrong things. If a Tamang tills the land properly, then they say: *kasto ramro jotechha bhotey le!* (How nicely the bhotey has tilled the land). And if a Tamang tills the land badly, then they say: *kasto naramro jotechha bhotey le!* (How badly the bhotey has tilled the land). The derogatory word *bhotey* is always there for whatever we do.

**5.4 Social identity factors and political involvement**

The ‘search for social identity’ is the second independent variable used in this research. Among the three representative variables of ‘search for social identity’ – government recognition of local festivals, government recognition of mother tongue and search for ethnic autonomy; the respondents have voted that *the most important component of social identity is ethnic autonomy*. The table for this has been presented here below:

*Table 5.7- General perception on social identity*

STATEMENT	Agree and strongly agree (%)	Mean
(A) Ethnic autonomy	95	4.78
(B) Government recognition of mother tongue	88	4.49
(C) Government recognition of local festivals	88	4.46

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

In the table above, the Mean for ethnic autonomy is 4.78 - quite close to “strongly agree”, and is followed by government recognition of mother tongue (4.49) and government recognition of local festivals (4.46). Since all these three means are near to “strongly agree” category, it depicts a clear picture that these all factors have been approved as the social identity factors that prompt one to engage in the search for social identity.

Apart from the above-mentioned general perception, opinions of respondents have been collected for the specific case for the study. When asked about their *practical* experience as to which factor of social identity among the three motivated him/her the most to join Tamsaling party, the researcher received almost same kind of results. Again in their ranking, search for ethnic autonomy was their first choice with a Mean of 4.73. The results have been presented here below:

*Box 5.7– Coming to the refuge of Tamsaling party*

Once it was a time when all those who disliked the then regimes and governments, had become Maoists. It is the same time now. All those Tamangs who are frustrated with other parties have come to the refuge of Tamsaling party. I also came here being sidelined, squeezed, sandwiched and depressed from other parties.

*Table 5.8 – Opinions for search for ethnic autonomy*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Demand for ethnic autonomy to Tamang and other communities by carving out federal states on ethnic line, has led me and TNNP towards politics.</i>	<b>95</b>	<b>4.71</b>
<i>TNNP basically wants to ensure ethnic autonomy of Tamang and other ethnic communities not hurting rights of other communities.</i>	<b>95</b>	<b>4.76</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>4.73</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

During the research, the Tamsaling members were pretty clear in their demand for ethnic autonomy to Tamang and other communities that led them towards politics. This is a futuristic demand and approach, as there is no provision for ethnic autonomy at local level so far. The interim constitution of Nepal 2006 has provisioned that Nepal would be a federal country. The demand for ethnic autonomy has been raised considering this particular provision of the constitution. At the time of Nepal becoming a federal country, Tamsaling party is expecting that certain level of autonomy would be given to Tamang people and others on the basis of ethnicity at the local level. That's why each among 95 percent of the respondents (Table 5.8) said, the "demand for ethnic autonomy to Tamang and other communities by carving out federal states on ethnic line, has led me and TNNP towards politics". With a Mean of 4.71, their inclination can be seen distinctly towards "strongly agree" attitudes.

Concurrently, Tamsaling members are also conscious that they have no motive of hurting or dominating other communities when the Tamangs get their own rights. That's why, 95 percent of the respondent Tamsaling members (Table 5.8) said, "TNNP basically wants to ensure ethnic autonomy of Tamang and other ethnic communities not hurting rights of other communities." Here also the Mean (4.76) exhibits obvious tilting towards "strongly agree" category of perceptions.

Government's language policy has been ranked as the second reason for an engagement in Tamsaling party, as each of the 88 percent respondents have clearly said, "I have involved in politics through TNNP due to the government's policy towards preservation and promotion of Tamang language." Similarly, the percent of people saying that "Government's language policy is inadequate to protect and promote Tamang language" is 80. In both cases, the Mean values are 4.51 and 4.12, respectively, thus demonstrating clear-cut bowing towards "strongly agree" category of perceptions.

Table 5.9 – Opinions for government’s language policy

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>I have involved in politics through TNNP due to the government's policy towards preservation and promotion of Tamang language.</i>	<b>88</b>	<b>4.51</b>
<i>Government's language policy is inadequate to protect and promote Tamang language?</i>	<b>80</b>	<b>4.12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>4.31</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

Unlike the previous Panchayati constitution, the 1990 constitution recognized Nepal as a “multi-ethnic and multi-lingual country”. The constitution recognized Nepali language as the “nation-language” meaning that it would be continued to be used as the official language. Other mother tongues were recognized as “national languages” meaning that they would be allowed to be used as medium of instruction until primary level of education (Tamang 2009: 186-202). Following the success of People’s Movement - 2005/06, a new interim constitution was issued in 2006 to govern new arrangements created after the fall of monarchy. The new interim constitution of 2006 provisioned all mother tongues spoken in Nepal as “nation-languages” and continued Nepali language’s status as official language (Tamang 2009).

As for the non-recognition of festivals, the respondents did not give that much importance to this factor as its Mean is 3.76 only, which is near to just “agree” category of responses.

Table 5.10- Opinions for non-recognition of festivals

STATEMENT	Agree and strongly agree (%)	Mean
<i>Did no declaration of official holiday on your and other indigenous community's socio-cultural festivals in the past motivate you to join/open TNNP?</i>	66	3.76

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

The biggest Tamang festival is Sonam Lochhar. It’s a New Year celebration and generally falls in Magh month of Nepali calendar or February month of Gregorian calendar. In 2008, the government recognized Sonam Lochhar as a national holiday announcing public holiday on it each year<sup>48</sup>. At different periods, the government has so far recognized seven more local festivals announcing public holidays on the respective days. They are: Tamu Lhochhar for Tamu (Gurung), Udhauli and Ubhauli for Rais and Limbus, Maghi for Tharu, Chhat for Madhesis, Siruwa Pawani for Rajbansi, Eid for Muslims, and Christmas for Christians ([usnepalonline.com](http://usnepalonline.com): 2010). The reason for not giving much importance to festival factor by respondents might be that people have been celebrating their festivals unhindered since hundreds of years despite non-declaration of official holidays for them.

## 5.5 Hypothesis testing

### 5.5.1 Research hypothesis 1

The first research hypothesis used in the study was: “Social exclusion of ethnic communities leads them towards ethnic politics.” Its Mean is 3.76, which is near to “agree” category of responses. Table No. 5.11 depicts the outcome of the study in regard to Research hypothesis 1 here below:

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<sup>48</sup> Data source: field notes

*Table 5.11- Hypothesis No. 1*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Do you think social exclusion of ethnic communities leads them towards ethnic politics?</i>	<b>68</b>	<b>3.76</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

Apart from taking a Mean as mentioned above, the hypothesis was also tested compiling Means from all four components of social exclusion (political, administrative, educational and economic exclusions) that led the respondents towards ethnic politics, i.e., the opening of Tamsaling party as mentioned in Table No. 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 and 5.6. Let’s have a look at their Means:

*Table 5.12– Hypothesis 1: Compilation of Table No 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 & 5.6*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Administrative exclusion leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.3)</i>	85	4.30
<i>Political exclusion leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.4)</i>	86	4.29
<i>Educational exclusion leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.5)</i>	78	4.10
<i>Economic exclusion leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.6)</i>	68	3.73
<b>Total</b>		<b>4.10</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

From the table above, we find a Mean of 4.10, which is near to “strongly agree” category of perception. It is in fact the approval of the hypothesis through quantitative method.



Thus, we can say that: Social exclusion of ethnic communities leads them towards ethnic politics.

### 5.5.2 Research hypothesis 2

The second research hypothesis used in the study was: “Ethnic communities involve in ethnic politics in search of social identity.” Its Mean is 4.46, which is very near to “strongly agree” category of responses.

*Table 5.13- Hypothesis No. 2*

STATEMENT	Agree and strongly agree	Mean
<i>Ethnic communities involve in ethnic politics in search of social identity</i>	<b>93</b>	<b>4.46</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

Apart from taking a Mean as mentioned above, the hypothesis was also tested compiling Means from all components of social identity that led the respondents towards ethnic politics, i.e., the opening of Tamsaling party as mentioned in Table No. 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10. Let’s have a look at their Means:

*Box 5.8– ‘Parties failed to introduce inclusive policy’*

The mainstream political parties earlier failed to introduce and implement inclusive policy. That’s why I joined Tamsaling Party. There were Tamang people in Cabinet before as well. This is not the main reason.

*Table 5.14– Hypothesis 2: Compilation of Table No. 5.8, 5.9 & 5.10*

<b>STATEMENT</b>	<b>Agree and strongly agree (%)</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Search for ethnic autonomy leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.8)</i>	95	4.73
<i>Government’s language policy leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.9)</i>	84	4.31
<i>Non-recognition of festivals leading people towards the opening of Tamsaling party (Table 5.10)</i>	66	3.76
<b>Total</b>		<b>4.26</b>

Question asked: Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say”, 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

From the above table, we find a Mean of 4.26, which is near to “strongly agree” category of perception. It is in fact the approval of the hypothesis through quantitative method, as in the case of Hypothesis 1. Thus, we can say that: “Ethnic communities involve in ethnic politics in search of social identity.”

When we compare the Means of Hypothesis 1 and 2, then we discover that *Hypothesis 2 is a factor stronger than Hypothesis 1 that draws people towards the opening of ethnic parties like Tamsaling party*. It implies that *social identity factor* with a solo Mean of 4.46 (Table 5.13) and a compiled Mean of 4.26 (Table 5.14) *is stronger than the exclusion factor* which has a solo Mean of 3.76 (Table 5.11) and a compiled Mean of 4.10 (Table 5.12), respectively.

## 5.6 Theories and findings

When we compare the findings of this study with theories, then we come to know that the theory showing linkage between exclusion and ethnic politics has been justified in this study as well. Cederman, working with Wimmer and Min, had developed the linkage between social exclusion and ethnic politics in their (January 2010) works. *Struggles over access to state power are an important part of the dynamics leading to ethnic politics* [or civil wars]: this was the main thrust of their new research titled as “Why do ethnic groups rebel? New data and analysis” [Cederman, Wimmer and Min; Jan 2010: 1-50]. This has been proved right in this dissertation as well, since exclusion is all about access or no access to state power. And due to exclusion or no access to state power, Tamang ethnic people organized themselves under a political umbrella known as Tamsaling party.

Similarly, the theory of social identity leading people towards ethnic politics has also been justified in this study. *In the realm of politics, identities can affect conceptions of legitimacy, shared interests, and policy choices, as well as preferences for political leaders and parties* (Abdelal, Herrera, Johnston and McDermott; 2005). This theory proved to be the most suitable theory in this dissertation. Due to the distinct identity of Tamang people, they strived for a

### Box 5.9 – ‘I had to change my surname’

I’m originally from Dhading district. In our village when I was a kid, the local elites used to see our Tamang caste as being lowly and worthless. We were suggested that if we write Tamang as our surname, we will not get opportunities in future. That’s why, I wrote Gurung as my surname in my school until Class 10. There is countless oppression upon Tamang community. Whenever I recall my past as a boy, I get depressed. Whenever the cattle would die in village, we Tamangs were called to collect the carcass. People used to humiliate us calling us *bhotey*. They used to say that it is the traditional job of *bhotey* to collect and consume carcass. Thinking that they are right, we used to take the carcass to home and would cook food out of it. In Dhading, many Tamangs have made their citizenship certificates as Gurungs fearing social discrimination and insult.

different identity than the national identity and expressed their preferences for different political leaders and party, which is Tamsaling party and its leaders, in particular.

As for Vanhanen's theory of ethnic nepotism, his empirically tested and approved hypothesis number 1 says "All geographically discrete ethnic groups try to establish their own political units" (Vanhanen 1991: 59). It stands true in the case of Tamang people as well. They have a distinct geography spanned in some one dozen conjoint districts surrounding Kathmandu valley. Tamang ethnic people attempted to establish their own ethnic party and it is Tamsaling party. Vanhanen's empirically approved hypothesis number 2 says: "The more ethnically divided a society or a political unit within the country is; the more political parties tend to become organized along ethnic lines" (Ibid). Nepal is ethnically divided into 103 caste and ethnic groups; therefore, it is natural that in an open environment, political parties, such as Tamsaling party, tend to become organized along ethnic lines.

Vanhanen's 3<sup>rd</sup> empirically approved hypothesis says: "the more ethnic groups differ genetically from each other, the higher is the probability that conflicts between them lead to violence" (Ibid). This finding does not fit into the realm of Tamsaling party and Nepal. Nepal is a mosaic of genetic diversity; however, genetically different ethnic groups have not resorted to violence in Nepal. And the official documents of Tamsaling party are also pretty clear that violence is *not* in their goal, objective or strategy. Tamsaling party has not shown any sign of violence in practice also.

### **5.7 Relationships between exclusion and identity factors**

So far, we have separately tested the relationship of social exclusion and search for social identity with ethnic politics. Now, questions may arise as to whether there is any relationship between social exclusion and search for social identity – two independent variables, themselves. If people are practically excluded from political and administrative opportunities, if people have less access to education and are leading poverty-stricken lives, then they start looking for a revamped identity which could end their exclusion<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Source: Interview narrations

reestablishing themselves with a dignified status in the society. If exclusion prevails for more, people may even resort to stern measures to reclaim their shadowed social identities. The flip side of the coin is that people whose social identities are intact and are living in an inclusive system vis-à-vis exclusion, they do not feel agitated and do not resort to activities aimed at reasserting identities.<sup>50</sup> Further, the three components of social identity as mentioned in this study (search for ethnic autonomy, government's language policy and government recognition of local festivals) may not remain the same for other societies and units of analysis. The components of social identity may vary from unit to unit.

In the same vein, the four components of social exclusion as mentioned in this study (political, administrative, educational and economic exclusions) may not remain the same for other societies and units of analysis. They also vary from unit to unit. For example, for other societies and units of analysis, the components of social exclusion and social identity as mentioned in this study may be used *interchangeably*, implying that, for example, political exclusion can become a component of search for social identity, whereas search for ethnic autonomy can also become a component of social exclusion<sup>51</sup>.

*Box 5.10 – 'Our ego was hurt in high-caste neighbor's bhoj (party)'*

Some 8-10 years ago, we were invited to a *bhoj* (party) of high-caste elites in our village in Dhading district. They had to reluctantly invite us because we were their neighbors. It was quite visible in their behavior. When it was the time to eat, the hosts asked us to wear white *dhoti*, a religious piece of cloth, before we could start. We Tamangs have different customs and we don't do that. It's also not that we were poor, so we went there in the party just to eat. Our ego was hurt and we got disappointed. We left the *bhoj* instantly without completing it.

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

## **5.8 Conclusion**

The quantitative and qualitative data analysis results have shown that social exclusion and search for social identity lead people towards ethnic politics. As Tamangs practically remained excluded and were facing identity crisis, they preferred a political party largely based on their own community. That's why they either founded or joined Tamsaling Nepal National party. The theories of social exclusion and social identity showing linkages with ethnic politics have been justified here. Theory of ethnic nepotism has been partially justified.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

#### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion of the study. It is divided into four sub-sections: snapshots, major findings, generalizations and implications, and the conclusion. The main thrust is on major findings, which highlights key findings of the research work along with an empirically tested analytical framework.

#### 6.1 Snapshot

The objectives of the research were: (1) to analyze whether social exclusion of ethnic communities lead them towards ethnic politics, and (2) to analyze whether search for social identity lead people towards ethnic politics. The theories used in the research were: (1) Theory of social exclusion and ethnic politics, and (2) Theory of social identity and identity politics, along with a supplementing theory of ethnic nepotism. The methodologies used in the research were: (1) Quantitative method, (2) Qualitative method, and (3) Individual case studies.

#### 6.2 Major findings

As for the major findings of the research, the analytical framework which was empirically tested during the study tells almost everything about the research. The framework has been presented here below, first in words, then in a table, so as to highlight the research findings properly:

- (a) Search for social identity is a stronger motivation than social exclusion that leads people towards ethnic politics
  
- (b) Among 4 exclusion factors, administrative exclusion is the greatest motivation factor driving people towards ethnic politics; followed by political, educational and economic exclusions, respectively.

(c) Among 3 social identity factors, search for ethnic autonomy is the greatest motivation factor driving people towards ethnic politics; followed by government’s language policy and government recognition of local festivals.

(d) In overall ranking of the seven representative variables, search for ethnic autonomy holds the highest rank followed by government’s language policy; administrative, political and educational exclusions; government recognition of local festivals and economic exclusion, respectively.

*Table 6.1- Results of empirically tested analytical framework*

Variables	Mean	N
<b>Social exclusion</b>	4.10	79
• Administrative	4.30	85
• Political	4.29	86
• Educational	4.10	78
• Economic	3.73	68
<b>Search for Social Identity</b>	4.26	82
• Search for ethnic autonomy	4.73	95
• Government’s language policy	4.31	84
• Government recognition of local festivals	3.76	66

*Source: Based on data presentation and analysis, Chapter 5*



### **6.3 Generalization and implication**

As for the generalization of the research findings, the findings cannot be generalized for ethnic groups other than Tamangs and political party members other than those of Tamsaling party, but still can be used as references and citations to facilitate researches showing linkages between ethnic groups and politics. As far as the implication of the study for future researchers is concerned, the present dissertation leaves a room for future researchers to find out – what causes social exclusion and identity crisis of a particular ethnic group? At that time, exclusion and identity factors will become dependent variables whereas the researcher has to look for independent variables so as to make an analytical framework out of it and test it empirically.

### **6.4 Conclusion**

Search for social identity (M= 4.26) is a stronger motivation than social exclusion (M= 4.10) that leads people towards ethnic politics. Among 4 exclusion factors, administrative exclusion (M= 4.30) is the greatest motivation factor driving people towards ethnic politics; followed by political (M= 4.29), educational (M= 4.10) and economic exclusion (M= 3.73) s, respectively. Among 3 social identity factors, search for ethnic autonomy (M= 4.73) is the greatest motivation factor driving people towards ethnic politics; followed by government's language policy (M= 4.31) and government recognition of local festivals (M= 3.76). In overall ranking of the seven representative variables, search for ethnic autonomy (M= 4.73) holds the first position followed by government's language policy (M= 4.31); administrative (M= 4.30), political (4.29) and educational (M= 4.10) exclusions; government recognition of local festivals (M= 3.76) and economic exclusion (M= 3.73), respectively.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 - Interview questionnaire



**NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY**  
*The first private university in Bangladesh*  
*Center of Excellence in Higher Education*



To whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Manoj Rijal, a student of Master in Public Policy and Governance (MPPG) in North South University (NSU), Bangladesh. This MPPG course is a joint initiative of University of Bergen, Norway; Tribhuvan University, Nepal and NSU, Bangladesh, where I am studying.

For the partial fulfillment of MPPG course, I am currently undertaking a dissertation paper titled as “Ethnic Politics in Nepal: A case of Tamsaling Nepal National Party”. This research is for academic purpose and therefore, I would like to request you to answer this questionnaire. I will maintain confidentiality of your identity in regard to your answers and follow academic ethics. Your help will be a great contribution in determining the success of my study.

Thank you for your cooperation.

.....  
Manoj Rijal  
Researcher

**Section A: Background questions (Tick and/or fill in as appropriate)**

Q. 1. What is your highest level of education?

.....

Q. 2. Type of education and institution:

.....

Q. 3. Gender: a) Male      b) Female      c) Other

Q. 4. Age: .....

Q. 5. Religion:

(a) Hindu

(b) Buddhist

(c) Hindu and Buddhist

(d) Muslim

(e) Christian

(f) Others: Specify .....

Q. 6. Profession: .....

Q. 7. Additional profession, if any: .....

Q. 8. Party position in Tamsaling Nepal National Party (TNNP):

.....

Q. 9. Date of entry to TNNP: .....

Q. 10. Party affiliations or works before TNNP

.....

.....

.....

Q. 11. Permanent address:

.....

.....

.....

**Section B: Research Questions**

BASIC QUESTIONS

1. Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say” (undecided), 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Can't say	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	I'm satisfied with the present political system.					
2.	Do you think social exclusion of ethnic communities leads them towards ethnic politics?					
3.	Do you think ethnic communities involve in ethnic politics in search of social identity?					
4.	What constitutes social exclusion?					
	Political exclusion					
	Administrative exclusion					
	Educational exclusion					
	Economic exclusion					
5.	What are the components of social identity?					
	Government recognition of ethnic festivals					
	Government recognition of mother tongue					
	Ethnic autonomy					
6.	What prompts one to involve in the search for social identity?					
	Government's non-recognition of festivals					
	Government's language policy					
	Question of ethnic autonomy					

2. Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say” (undecided), 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Can't say	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Political exclusion						
1.	Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the Cabinet in the past motivate you to join/open Tamsaling Nepal National Party (TNNP) which is chiefly based on Tamang ethnic community?					
2.	Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the Parliament motivate you to join/open TNNP?					
3.	Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the central committees of mainstream political parties motivate you to join/open TNNP?					
4.	Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in the decision making positions of central committees of mainstream political parties motivate you to join/open TNNP?					

Clarifications:

- Decision-making positions = chairman or president, vice chairman or vice president, general secretary, secretary, treasurer, politburo, standing committee member, etc (In Q. 4)

Continued...

		Strongly agree	Agree	Can't say	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Administrative exclusion						
1.	Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in Civil Service motivate you to join/open TNNP which is largely based on Tamang ethnic community?					
2.	Did population-disproportionate representation of your community in policy-level posts of Civil Service motivate you to join/open TNNP?					
Educational exclusion						
1.	Did inadequate access of your community to education (low literacy rate of an ethnic community in relation to national average of literacy) motivate you to join/open TNNP?					
Economic exclusion						
1.	Economic condition of Tamang community motivated me to join/open TNNP?					

Clarifications:

- Policy-level posts = secretary, joint-secretary and under-secretary (In Q. 2 of Administrative Exclusion)

3. Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say” (undecided), 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Can't say	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Non-Recognition of Festivals						
1.	Did no declaration of official holiday on your and other indigenous community's socio-cultural festivals motivate you to join/open TNNP?					
Government's language policy						
1.	I have involved in politics through TNNP due to the government's policy towards preservation and promotion of Tamang language.					
2.	Government's language policy is inadequate to protect and promote Tamang language?					
Search for Ethnic Autonomy						
1.	Demand for ethnic autonomy to Tamang and other communities by carving out federal states on ethnic line, has led me and TNNP towards politics.					
2.	TNNP basically wants to ensure ethnic autonomy of Tamang and other ethnic communities not hurting rights of other communities.					

4. Please kindly rate the following statements on a scale from 1 to 5, whereby 5 represents “strongly agree”, 4 “agree”, 3 “can’t say” (undecided), 2 “disagree” and 1, “strongly disagree”.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Can't say	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Additional questions						
1.	Mainstream political parties have failed to address the issues of Tamang and other communities and thus TNNP was opened to fulfill the same.					
2.	Election manifestos of mainstream political parties were incompletely written and thus have failed to address the issues of Tamang and other ethnic communities					

Clarifications:

- Mainstream political parties = United Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), Communist Party of Nepal- Unified Marxist and Leninist (CPN-UML) and Nepali Congress (NC)  
[These are three largest parties of Nepal, respectively]
- TNNP = Tamsaling Nepal National Party

## Appendix 2 - Interview Guide

### ETHNIC POLITICS AND TAMSALING NEPAL NATIONAL PARTY (TNNP)

1. What is your understanding about ethnic politics?
2. Do you think there is ethnic politics in Nepal? If so, what are the indicators of it?
3. What could be the reason for opening ethnic parties in Nepal?
4. What was the background for opening TNNP? Why it was opened?
5. What kind of party is TNNP in your opinion?
6. Personally, why and how did you join TNNP? Explain.
7. Who can get membership of TNNP? What are the criteria?

### EXCLUSION AND ETHNIC POLITICS

8. What is your understanding about (social) exclusion?
9. What could be the relation between (social) exclusion and ethnic politics?
10. What could be relationship of political, administrative, educational and economic exclusions with ethnic politics? Explain each.
11. Personally, have you faced any type of exclusion? What type of? How was your experience?
12. Do all exclusions end up in ethnic politics? What are the pros and cons? Explain.

### SOCIAL IDENTITY AND EHTNIC POLITICS

13. What is your understanding about social identity and search for social identity?
14. What could be the relationship between search for social identity and ethnic politics?
15. What could be the relationship of government's language policy, non-recognition of local festivals and cultures and demand for ethnic autonomy with ethnic politics? Explain each.
16. Personally, have you ever faced identity crisis? What type of? How was your experience?
17. Do all search for social identity end up in ethnic politics? What are the pros and cons? Explain.



### Appendix 3 – Nepali version of Interview questionnaire



**NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY**  
*The first private university in Bangladesh*  
*Center of Excellence in Higher Education*



#### जो जससग सम्बन्धित छ

महोदय,

म मनोज रिजाल, स्नातकोत्तर तहमा सार्वजनिक नीति तथा शासन (Master in Public Policy and Governance) विषयमा नर्थ साउथ युनिभर्सिटी बंगलादेशमा अध्ययनरत विद्यार्थी हु। यो विषय बर्गेन युनिभर्सिटी नर्वे, त्रिभुवन विश्वविद्यालय नेपाल तथा म अध्ययनरत नर्थ साउथ युनिभर्सिटी बंगलादेशको संयुक्त पहलमा सुरु गरिएको हो।

हाल म यो विषयको आंशिक परिपूर्तिको निम्ति 'नेपालमा जातीय राजनीति- ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलबारे एक अध्ययन' मा शोधपत्र (थेसिस) गरिरहेको छु। यो अध्ययन प्राज्ञिक प्रयोजनको लागि हो र त्यसैले मैले तयार गरेका यी प्रश्नहरूको उत्तर दिनु हुन म हार्दिक अनुरोध गर्दछु। तपाईंको सहयोग यो मेरो अध्ययनको निम्ति ठूलो सहयोग हुनेछ। सहयोगको लागि धन्यवाद।

.....

मनोज रिजाल  
अनुसन्धानकर्ता

खण्ड 'क'

पृष्ठभूमि प्रश्नहरू - कृपया आवश्यकता अनुसार चिन्ह लगाउनुहोस् वा खाली ठाउँ भर्नुहोस् :

(१) तपाईंले कुन तहसम्मको शिक्षा प्राप्त गर्नुभएको छ ?

.....

(२) शिक्षाको प्रकार र संस्था

.....

(३) लिङ्ग -            अ) पुरुष                                            आ) महिला                                            इ) अन्य

(४) उमेर .....

(५) धर्म

(अ) हिन्दू                                            (ई) मुस्लिम

(आ) बुद्धिष्ट                                            (उ) क्रिश्चियन

(इ) हिन्दु र बुद्धिष्ट                                            (ऊ) अन्य:- लेख्नुहोस् .....

(६) पेशा .....

(७) अतिरिक्त पेशा, यदि छ भने, .....

(८) ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा पद र जिम्मेवारी

.....

(९) दलमा प्रवेश मिति:

.....

(१०) ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलभन्दा अगाडि अन्य दलमा आवद्धता वा कार्यहरू ?

.....

(११) स्थायी ठेगाना:

.....

.....

.....

**खण्ड 'ख' - अनुसन्धान प्रश्नहरू:**

**आधारभूत प्रश्नहरू**

(१) कृपया तलका प्रश्न वा वाक्यहरूलाई ५ देखि १ सम्मको स्केलमा लेख्नुहोस् । यहा ५= एकदमै हो, ४= हो, ३= भन्न सकिदैन, २= होइन, १ = एकदमै होइन, भन्ने बुझिन्छ ।

		एकदमै हो	हो	भन्न सकिदैन	होइन	एकदमै होइन
१	म वर्तमान राजनीतिक अवस्थादेखि सन्तुष्ट छु ?					
२	विभिन्न जातिहरूको सामाजिक बहिष्करणले उनीहरूलाई जातीय राजनीति तर्फ डोर्‍याउँछ ?					
३	विभिन्न जातीहरू सामाजिक पहिचानको खोजीमा जातीय राजनीतिमा संलग्न हुन्छन ?					
४	सामाजिक बहिष्करण (असमावेशीता) अन्तर्गत के के पर्दछन् ?					
	राजनीतिक बहिष्करण					
	प्रशासनिक बहिष्करण					
	शैक्षिक बहिष्करण (शिक्षाबाट वंचित)					
	आर्थिक बहिष्करण (गरीब तथा आर्थिक अवसरबाट वंचित)					
५	सामाजिक पहिचान भित्र के के पर्दछन् ?					
	जातीय चाड पर्वहरूलाई सरकारी मान्यता					
	मातृभाषाहरूलाई सरकारी मान्यता					
	जातीय स्वायत्तता					
६	सामाजिक पहिचानको खोजी गर्न कुन कुराले घच्च्याउँछ ?					
	सरकारद्वारा जातीय चाड पर्वलाई मान्यता नदिनु					
	सरकारको भाषिक नीति					
	जातीय स्वायत्तताको प्रश्न					

(२) कृपया तलका प्रश्न वा वाक्यहरुलाई ५ देखि १ सम्मको स्केलमा लेख्नुहोस् । यहा ५= एकदमै हो, ४= हो, ३= भन्न सकिदैन, २ = होइन र १ = एकदमै होइन, भन्ने बुझिन्छ ।

		एकदमै हो	हो	भन्न सकिदैन	होइन	एकदमै होइन
<b>राजनीतिक बहिष्करण</b> (असमावेशीता)						
१	विगत मन्त्री मण्डलहरुमा जातिको जनसंख्याको अनुपातमा पर्याप्त उपस्थिति नभएकोले तामाङ जाति मै आधारित पार्टी ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोल्नु भएको हो ?					
२	विगत संसदहरुमा तामाङ जातिको जनसंख्याको अनुपातमा पर्याप्त उपस्थिति नभएकोले गर्दा ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोल्नु भएको हो ?					
३	मुलधारका राजनीतिक दलहरुको केन्द्रिय कमिटीहरुमा तामाङ जातिको जनसंख्याको अनुपातमा पर्याप्त उपस्थिति नभएकोले ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोल्नु भएको हो ?					
४	मुलधारमा राजनीतिक दलहरुको केन्द्रिय कमिटीहरु भित्र निर्णायक पदहरुमा तामाङ जातिको जनसंख्याको अनुपातमा पर्याप्त उपस्थिति नभएकोले ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोज्नु भएको हो ?					

(निर्णायक पदहरु :- अध्यक्ष, उपाध्यक्ष, महासचिव, सचिव, कोषाध्यक्ष, पोलिटव्युरो सदस्य, स्थायी समिति सदस्य, आदि)

क्रमश :

		एकदमै हो	हो	भन्न सक्दिन	होइन	एकदमै होइन
<b>प्रशासनिक बहिष्करण (असमावेशीता):</b>						
१	नीजामति सेवामा तामाङ जातिको जनसंख्याको अनुपातअनुसारको उपस्थिति नभएकोले ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु भएको हो ?					
२	नीजामति सेवाको नीति निर्माण तहमा तामाङ जातिको जनसंख्याको अनुपात अनुसारको उपस्थिति नभएकोले ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नुभएको हो ?					
<b>शैक्षिक बहिष्करण (असमावेशीता)</b>						
१	शिक्षामा तामाङ जातिको अपर्याप्त पहुँचले गर्दा ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोल्नु भएको हो ?					
<b>आर्थिक बहिष्करण (असमावेशीता)</b>						
१	तामाङ समुदायको आर्थिक अवस्थाको कारणले गर्दा मलाई ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोल्नु प्रोत्साहित गर्‍यो ।					

(शिक्षामा अपर्याप्त पहुँच:- कुनै जातिय समुदायको राष्ट्रिय औसत साक्षरता दरभन्दा कम साक्षरता दर भएको अवस्था)

(३) कृपया तलका प्रश्न वा वाक्यहरूलाई ५ देखि १ सम्मको स्केलमा लेख्नुहोस् । यहा ५= एकदमै हो, ४= हो, ३= भन्न सकिदैन, २= होइन, र १ = एकदमै होइन, भन्ने बुझिन्छ ।

		एकदमै हो	हो	भन्न सकिदैन	होइन	एकदमै होइन
<b>चाडपर्वहरूको अमान्यता</b>						
१	विगतमा तामाङ जातिको सामाजिक सांस्कृतिक चाड पर्वहरूमा सरकारी छुटीको घोषणा नगरिएकोले ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लाग्नु/खोल्नु भएको हो ?					
<b>सरकारको भाषिक नीति</b>						
१	सरकारको भाषिक नीति भेदभावपूर्ण छ ?					
२	सरकारको भाषिक नीति तामाङ भाषाको संरक्षण र उत्थान गर्न अपर्याप्त छ ?					
<b>जातीय स्वायत्तताको खोजी</b>						
१	जातीय आधारमा संघीय राज्य निर्माण गरी तामाङ जातिको जातीय स्वायत्तता सुनिश्चित गरिनुपर्दछ भन्ने माग पूरा गर्न ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लागेको/खोलेको हुँ ।					
२	ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दल अरु जातिको अधिकारलाई चोट नपुऱ्याइकन तामाङ जातिको जातीय स्वायत्तता सुनिश्चित गर्न चाहन्छ ।					

(४) कृपया तलका प्रश्न वा वाक्यहरूलाई ५ देखि १ सम्मको स्केलमा लेख्नुहोस् । यहा ५= एकदमै हो, ४= हो, ३= भन्न सकिदैन, २ = होइन, र १ = एकदमै होइन, भन्ने बुझिन्छ ।

		एकदमै हो	हो	भन्न सकिदैन	होइन	एकदमै होइन
<b>अतिरिक्त प्रश्नहरू</b>						
१	मुलधारका राजनीतिक दलहरूले तामाङ जातिको मुद्दाहरूलाई संवोधन गर्न सकेनन् र त्यसैले त्यही कुरा संवोधन गर्न ताम्बिसालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलमा लागेको /खोलेको हुँ ।					
२	मुलधारका राजनीतिक दलहरूको चुनावी घोषणापत्रहरू अपूर्ण छन् र तिनीहरू तामाङ जातिको मुद्दाहरूलाई संवोधन गर्न असफल भएका छन् ।					

## Appendix 4 - Nepali version of Interview guide

### जातीय राजनीति र ताम्सालिङ नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दल

१. तपाईंको बुझाइमा जातीय राजनीति भनेको के हो ?
२. तपाईंको विचारमा नेपालमा जातीय राजनीति छ कि छैन ? छ भने के कस्तो रूपमा छ ? त्यसलाई कसरी नाप्ने ?
३. नेपालमा जातीय पार्टी खोल्नुको कारण के के हुनसक्छ ?
४. ताम्सालिङ दल खोल्नुको पृष्ठभूमि के थियो ? यो किन खोलियो ?
५. तपाईंको विचारमा ताम्सालिङ दल कस्तो खालको पार्टी हो ?
६. व्यक्तिगत रूपमा तपाईं ताम्सालिङ दलमा कसरी र किन आउनु भयो ? वर्णन गर्नुहोस् ।
७. ताम्सालिङ दलको सदस्यता क-कसले पाउन सक्छन् ? सदस्यता प्राप्त गर्ने न्यूनतम योग्यता के के हो ?

### वहिष्करण र जातीय राजनीति

८. तपाईंको विचारमा (सामाजिक) वहिष्कारण वा असमावेशीता भनेको के हो ?
९. (सामाजिक) वहिष्करण र जातीय राजनीतिबीचमा के कस्तो सम्बन्ध हुन सक्छ ?
१०. राजनीतिक, प्रशासनिक, शैक्षिक र आर्थिक वहिष्कारणको जातीय राजनीतिसँग के कस्तो सम्बन्ध हुन सक्छ ? प्रत्येकको वर्णन गर्नुहोस् ।
११. व्यक्तिगत रूपमा भन्नुपर्दा तपाईंले कहिल्यै वहिष्कारणको अनुभव गर्नुभएको छ ? कस्तो प्रकारको ? तपाईंको अनुभव कस्तो रह्यो ?
१२. के सबै वहिष्कारणहरूको परिणाम जातीय राजनीति नै हुन्छ त ? यसका विविध पक्षहरू के के छन् ? वर्णन गर्नुहोस् ।

### सामाजिक पहिचान र जातीय राजनीति

१३. तपाईंको बुझाइमा सामाजिक पहिचान र सामाजिक पहिचानको खोजी भनेको के हो ?
१४. सामाजिक पहिचानको खोजी र जातीय राजनीतिबीच के कस्तो सम्बन्ध छ ?
१५. सरकारको भाषिक नीति, स्थानीय चाडपर्व र संस्कृतिको अमान्यता तथा जातीय स्वायत्तताको माग र जातीय राजनीतिबीच के कस्तो सम्बन्ध हुनसक्छ ? प्रत्येकको वर्णन गर्नुहोस् ।
१६. व्यक्तिगत रूपमा तपाईंले कहिल्यै पहिचानको संकट भोग्नु परेको छ ? कस्तो खालको? तपाईंको अनुभव कस्तो रह्यो ?
१७. के सबै सामाजिक पहिचानको खोजीहरूको परिणाम जातीय राजनीति नै हुन्छ त ? यसका विविध पक्षहरू के के छन् ? वर्णन गर्नुहोस् ।



**Appendix 5 - Access letter written to Tamsaling party president**



**TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT  
CENTRAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION**

Ref. No. 169/066-067

Date: 21 Feb. 2010

To:

**Shree Parshuram Tamang**

President

Tamsaling Nepal National Party

Kathmandu, Nepal

**Sub: Request for assistance in academic research**

Mr. **Manoj Rijal** is a student and researcher of Master in Public Policy and Governance (MPPG) under the joint research and academic program of the Central Department of Public Administration, TU; North South University, Bangladesh and University of Bergen, Norway. Mr. Rijal is currently doing his thesis titled as “Ethnic politics in Nepal: A case of Tamsaling Nepal National Party” for the partial fulfillment of Master’s Degree of MPPG. Therefore, we request you to provide him necessary documents, information and supports in this regard.

Any support extended to Mr. Rijal is highly appreciated.

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**Gajendra Pd. Singh**

Deputy Administrator

**Appendix 6 - Picture of data collection -1**

**A landscape of Manahari VDC-3, Ramantar in Makwanpur district**



Appendix 7 - Picture of data collection -2

Office signboard of Tamsaling party's district office in Hetauda, Makwanpur



**Appendix 8 - Picture of data collection -3**

**A central committee member of Tamsaling party filling his questionnaire form in  
Baudhha, Kathmandu**



**Appendix 9 - Picture of data collection -4**

**District level members of Tamsaling party during data collection in Hetauda, Makwanpur district**



**Appendix 10 - Picture of data collection -5**

**Village level members of Tamsaling party during data collection in Manahari VDC-3,  
Ramantar, in Makwanpur district**

