# HARMONIOUS BUILDING OF ETHNIC SOCIETY: A TRUE GLOBAL VILLAGE

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#### **ABSTRACT**

The paper is based upon discussion and information provided by 75South Asian participants present at EDI of Indiaand the published work Ethnicity and harmony. The objective of this study is to study if there is any difference in the idea of the minorities and majorities for the harmonious building of ethnic societies amongst the different ethnic society. The paper talks of multi-track cultural dimensions and their implications in particular and stresses on how to build a harmonious society among the different ethnic society. The paper reviews ethnic effect in some of the South Asian countries. The findings of this paper suggest the ways in the direction of development of harmonious building of ethnic society.

**Key Words:** Harmonious Building, Ethnic Society, Global Village China, Cultural Values, Cultural Dimensions

### Introduction

In this era of modernization and globalization, an interrelation between an individual and the group in multicultural context is must for a healthy society. Most of the South Asian countries with huge population bears multi ethnicity. With multi ethnic groups, sufficient care needs to be taken to form a shared society in which a certain degree of group value and interest prevails. Globalization has turned the world a small village along with increase in cultural sensitivity and understanding of complexities in host countries. It is a known fact that culture varies across nations (Cateora, et al., 2011; Jain, 2001). Verhelst (1990, p. 17) defined culture as "every aspect of life: knowhow, technical knowledge, customs of food and dress, mentality, values, language, symbols, socio-political and economic behavior, indigenous methods of making decisions and exercising power, methods of production and economic relations, and so on". Dutch management professor Hofstede (2001) refers to culture as the "software of mind" and argues that it provides a guide for humans on how to think and behave; it is a problem solving tool. Joinson (1998) advocates cultural sensitivity or cultural empathy which is the recognition and sincerely caring about other people's cultures. Cultural sensitivity is the ability to understand the viewpoint of those living in very different cultures and the readiness to put them self in another peoples perspectives which if overlooked is likely to create differences causing severe consequences led by ethnic conflicts.

The number of movements in Assam, Telangana, Jharkhand and Gorkhaland in India; baluchand Pakhtun (both failed), bengala movement (succeeded), and the recent Sindh (native sindhis and Mujahirs especially in Karachi) in Pakistan, the problems of Sinhalese and minority tamils in Srilanka leading to fierce fighting between LTTE and military; Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) in Bangladesh; the differences between the majority Drukpar and theminority Nepalese in Bhutan and the differences in the 56 nationalities of China are all the examples of the ethnic movements posited within the region and covering wider issues of theoretical concern that enable us with the parameters of ethnicity, nation building and harmony building. Referring to the history, it could be concluded that this ethnic diversity within a country is the result of the conquest, European colonization and decolonization, migration of the local inhabitants etc. which led to the formation of ethnic groups viz. the homeland or the natives and the migrants and thus to the ethnic conflicts

In India the ethnic conflicts have been continued in some cases but have collapsed in others. In Srilanka, ethnic conflict worsened over decades but the same led to the bifurcation of Pakistan and even after it continued. In Nepal and Bhutan, the inter-ethnic cleavage have been hidden and not become vociferous. Whereas one is accountable for increasing vociferity of ethnicity, in multi-ethnic societies, ethnicity mobilises one group and not others, initiates competitive and confictual ethnic mobilization etc.

For a civil society activism, Track Two diplomacy, a term coined in 1981 by Joe Montville, a US diplomat, to describe the conflict resolution work of private citizens and NGOs was applied which was extended to Multi-Track Diplomacy by McDonald in 1991. Apart of these two McDonald included Track Three - private sector involvement; Track Four - citizen-to-citizen educational exchange programs; and Track Five - the media. Four more tracks were added later to include education and training, peace activism, religion and funding. Multi Track is involved in peace building to make a peace agreement effective and lasting although it is neither the exact number of Tracks nor their content that is relevant but the principle of peace building through civil society activism but it is yet to be considered for harmonious building of ethnic society.

The phenomenon of ethnicity is an intrinsic component of socio-political realities of multi-ethnic states within South Asia aswell in most of the countries of the world. Neveretheless, an equally significant pointer of ethnic group relationship is that of harmony and not conflict due to mutual tolerance of each others beliefs and value systems. Further the ethnicisation of politics and politicization of ethnic communities has diffused mutual tolerance and sharpened ethnic consciousness. The socio-economic change, ethnic dimensions or power structures, policies, strategies and tactics to cope the aspiration of various ethnic groups provide wider setting for understanding ethnicity, nation building and harmony globally. The worlds two largest population in China (with 56 nationalities) and India with largest ethnic difference has proved to be the best examples of harmony building. India with multi-cultural and muti- ethnicity is unique to boast of unity in diversity and thus claim harmony within the countryalong with preserving the culture and tradition and simultaneously developing itself faster after liberalization.

The People's Republic of China's (PRC) with56 nationalities, thereafter called ethnic minorities (EMs) exists on the basis of shared mode of production, shared territory, shared language, shared psychological make-up, and the follow-up promotion of ethnic equality and solidarity. With topmost agenda of building a harmonious society in China and supported by the people of China for prosperity and happy life, the Chinese government puts people first. With its initiation for reform and its opening-up, the economic and social development of China boasts of its profound achievements but simultaneously, globalization and information technology has spread distinctive opportunities and challenges. But still along with modernization it has adhered to its culture within each ethnic society. Cultural variables result from unique shared values amongst people belonging to different nations. Most of the differences between cultures arise from underlying value systems, which cause people to behave differently under similar circumstances (Cateora, et al., 2011; Deresky, 2003). Values are a society's ideas about what is good or bad, right or wrong (Deresky, 2003; Mead, 1994); the importance of things and ideas (Cateora, et al., 2011); and hold the key to understanding a culture (Kluckhon, 1969). Values in general than determine how individuals respond in any given circumstance (Deresky, 2003; Hofstede, 1997). Values are enduring beliefs that modes of conduct or end-states of existence are preferred to opposing modes of conduct, or end states of existence (Rokeach, 1973).

Various studies have been conducted on the cultural impact on various aspects (e.g., Albaum, et al., 2010; Chinta and Capar, 2007; Conte and Novello, 2008; Deresky, 2003; Fan and Zigang, 2004; Glassman, 2011; Khatri, 2009; Laaksonen, 1984; Ralston, et al., 1997; Redding, 1990; Shenkar and Ronen 1987a, b) however studies on harmonious building of ethnic society is marginal which necessitates the study.

The study is based on the assumption that if it could be possible for India and China to build harmony in the ethnic societies, the same could be possible for the different countries in South East and South Asia, provided it is led unanimously by the ethnic societies.

The dictionary meaning of ethnic refers to characteristic of a people, especially a group (ethnic group) sharing a common and distinctive culture, religion, language, or the origin, classification, characteristics, etc., of such groups. It also refers to being a member of an ethnic group, especially of a group that is a minority within a larger society based on common ancestral, social, cultural or national experience. In the present study, an ethnic societyrefers to category of people who identify with each other based on the cultural and national experience. Membership of an ethnic group in this study tends to be defined by a shared cultural heritage, ancestry, myth of origins, history, homeland, language (dialect), or even ideology, and manifests itself through symbolic systems such as religion, mythology and ritual, cuisine, dressing style, physical appearance, etc.

Harmony refers to compatibility in opinion and action. It is agreement in feeling or opinion. In the present study harmony refers to agreement in facts, opinions, interests, values and culture amongst the members of different ethnic groups.

Building harmony in ethnic society means an interrelation between an individual and the group in multicultural context in a shared society in which certain degree of group value and interest prevails.

In the study, interview and rating scale were used to collect data from the participants. The interview was conducted to generate the rating scale for harmonious development of ethnic societies. The interview with the participants evolved the aspects as such the equality of status, equality of earning, equality of justice, equality of education, housing, business opportunities, public services, individualism (considering self at the highest), sharing and caring, safety and security with respect to job, career, role, ideas; capitalism (money is important than any other); humanism (human should be considered at any cost); values, customs and traditions, adherence to group, freedom to thought and action, celebrations, entertainment, exchange programs, national day celebration and unbiased media. The aspects were divided into three groups as social, developmental and ethical requirement of the group for harmonious building of ethnic society for this study. To develop harmony among the ethnic societies it is necessary to understand if the minorities and the nationals or the majorities tend to bear the same idea about harmonious building of ethnic societies. Thus the study is limited to the minorities and majorities of the ethnic society belonging to china, Uzbekistan, Thailand, Vietnam, Russia, Brazil and Cambodia from South East and South Asian countries.

# Objectives of the Present Study

The objective of this study is to study if there is any difference in the idea of the minorities and majorities for the harmonious building of ethnic societies amongst the different ethnic society. Various studies have been conducted on the cultural impact on various aspects, however studies on harmonious building of ethnic society is marginal.

# Hypothesis

- 1. There will be no significant difference in the mean score of harmonious building of ethnic society score (HBESS) of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.
- 2. There will be no significant difference in the mean social requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.
- 3. There will be no significant difference in the mean developmental requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.
- 4. There will be no significant difference in the mean ethical requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

# Research Design

The paper is based upon discussion and information provided by 75 south asian participants present at EDI of India (40 minorities and 35nationals) of which .These included 10 thai's, 5 vietanamese, 5 Russian, 4 brazillians, 25 uzbekistanians, 15 cambodians and 11 Chinese participants. Interview and rating scale was used to collect data from the participants. The interview was used to generate the rating scale for harmonious development of ethnic societies. The interview with the participants evolved the aspects as such the equality of status, equality of earning, equality of justice, equality of education, housing, business opportunities, public services, individualism (considering self at the highest), sharing and caring, safety and security with respect to job, career, role, ideas; capitalism(money is important than any other); humanism (human should be considered at any cost); values, customs and traditions, adherence to group, freedom to thought and action, celebrations, entertainment, exchange programs, national day celebration and unbiased media. The aspects were divided into three groups as social, developmental and ethical requirement for harmonious building of ethnic society whereby social requirements included equality of status, equality of earning, equality of justice, equality of education, housing, individualism, sharing and caring, adherence to the group, safety and security with respect to job, career, role, ideas; developmental requirements included business opportunities, public services, freedom to thought, freedom of action, national day celebration, capitalism, exchange programs, unbiased media, entertainment whereas the ethical requirements included humanism, religion, values, customs and traditions. Thus a five point rating scale was prepared with respect to the above aspects with 1 as not at all required, 2 as not required 3 as undetermined, 4 as required and 5 as must required for harmonious building of the ethnic society. Else than capitalism and individualism all the aspects were marked as per their rating but for these two reverse score were assigned as such marking to 1 was scored 5 and marking on 5 was scored 1. Thus with the total 26 aspects, the range of the score would be 26 to 130. This total score would be considered as the harmonious building of ethnic society score (HBESS). The paper is based on published literature; discussions and briefings provided by international participants having the knowledge of atleast two countries, who stayed

in the foreign country for more than one month because atleast this time is required to understand the culture of a country (although, this is not all).

#### **Analysis and Interpretation**

1. There will be no significant difference in the mean score of harmonious building of ethnic society score (HBESS) of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

The data revealed that the p-value is less than 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance which connotes that the hypothesis will not be rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It declares that there will be no significant difference in the mean score of harmonious building of ethnic society score (HBESS) of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

2. There will be no significant difference in the mean social requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

The data revealed that the p-value is less than 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance which connotes that the hypothesis will not be rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It declares that there will be no significant difference in the mean social requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

3. There will be no significant difference in the mean developmental requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

The data revealed that the p-value is less than 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance which connotes that the hypothesis will not be rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It declares that there will be no significant difference in the mean developmental requirements core of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

4. There will be no significant difference in the mean ethical requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

The data revealed that the p-value is less than 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance which connotes that the hypothesis will not be rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It declares that there will be no significant difference in the mean ethicalrequirements core of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society.

# Discussion

There will be no significant difference in the mean score of harmonious building of ethnic society score (HBESS) of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society. It indicates that the idea of the minorities and the majorities for the harmonious building of the ethnic society do not differ significantly.

Therewill be no significant difference in the mean social requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society. It indicates that the idea of the minorities and the majorities for the harmonious building of the ethnic society with respect to the social requirement of the ethnic societies do not differ significantly.

There will be no significant difference in the mean developmental requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society. It indicates that the idea of the minorities and the majorities for the harmonious building of the ethnic society with respect to the developmental requirement of the ethnic societies do not differ significantly.

Therewill be no significant difference in the mean ethical requirement score of the minorities and the majorities of different ethnic society. It indicates that the idea of the minorities and the majorities for the harmonious building of the ethnic society with respect to the ethical requirement of the ethnic societies do not differ significantly.

# Findings of the study

The harmonious building of the ethnic societies (HBES) is the requirement of both the majorities as well minorities. Thus theaspects as such the equality of status, equality of earning, equality of justice, equality of

education, housing, business opportunities, public services, individualism (considering self at the highest), sharing and caring, safety and security with respect to job, career, role, ideas; capitalism (money is important than any other); humanism (human should be considered at any cost); values, customs and traditions, adherence to group, freedom to thought and action, celebrations, entertainment, exchange programs, national day celebration and unbiased media should be considered and within south east and south asian countries the policies, strategies and tactics be framed in a way that promotes HBES. In the interview the participants stressed on promoting education, exchange programs, customs and traditions, and unbiased media and exchange of entertainment programmes to promote HBES. Individualism and capitalism were the choice of respectively five and three international participants of the total 75 participants. The aspects were divided into three groups as social, developmental and ethical requirement for harmonious building of ethnic society whereby social requirements included equality of status, equality of earning, equality of justice, equality of education, housing, individualism, sharing and caring, adherence to the group, safety and security with respect to job, career, role, ideas; developmental requirements included business opportunities, public services, freedom to thought, freedom of action, national day celebration, capitalism, exchange programs, unbiased media, entertainment whereas the ethical requirements included humanism, religion, values, customs and traditions.

#### Conclusion

The findings of the study indicates that the idea of the minorities and the majorities for the harmonious building of the ethnic society do not differ significantly. Further, it indicates that the idea of the minorities and the majorities for the harmonious building of the ethnic society with respect to the social, developmental and ethical requirement of the ethnic societies also do not differ significantly. It clarifies the importance of social, developmental and ethical requirements of both of the minorities and the majorities. It emphasizes the importance of social requirements with respect to equality of status, equality of earning, equality of justice, equality of education, housing, sharing and caring, adherence to the group, safety and security with respect to job, career, role, ideas based on cooperation, loyalty, reciprocity and patience. They stressed on collectivism rather than individualism, socialization, friendship, and personal relationships. The participants stress on inheritance and development of culture with exchange programs, media, education and entertainment programmes. The ethical requirements are likely to lead towards humanism along with the inheritance and development of culture in this era of globalization and modernization.

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