

## Theories of Nation Building: An Analysis for Academicians and Nation Builders to Employ Nepali Army

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### Abstract

*Some of the theories of nation building have been dedicated to the study of link between nation and nationalism; others are attributed to explore nation building, state building, social integration, national integration and even conflict transformation during various historical periods. However, nation building is a normative concept used by academicians and nation builders alike to study the role of armed forces in nation building in recent times. Although research has conducted on ethnicity and nation building in Nepal, a little is known about application of theoretical perspective to explore the role of Nepali Army in nation building. Apparently, this article argues that the level of theoretical awareness of academicians and nation builders needs improvement and multiple theories of nation building are relevant to explore the role of Nepali Army in nation building during various enclaves of Nepali nation. Important issues like what are the relevant theories in Nepali context to analyse nation building? Their implication during the historical times to study the link of Nepali Army with nation building needs to be studied. Hence, this paper comparatively examines a nation building*

*theories and their relevant implications during various enclaves of Nepali nation particularly applauding the role on Nepali Army. Conceptual framework based on Saunder's Research Onion Peeled (2007) method was used with qualitative design in a way of inductive approach to conduct the research work to investigate the research questions. Comparative document study, library research, quick survey with policy makers, government employees, professors, university students APF Officers and Army Officers based on purposive sampling method have been used. "Study found that Nepali nation passes through its own way of building the nation in various enclaves, none of the theories are complete to study the employment of Nepali Army to produce visible and encouraging results. The level of theoretical awareness of academicians and nation builders needs further improvement. For this, multiple theories particularly related to social transformation, infrastructural development in support of centre to periphery relation; social integration and nationalism are appropriate.*

**Keywords:** nation, nationalism, Nepali Army, nation building, nation builders, social transformation

## Introduction

The term nation building is often used simultaneously with state building, democratization, modernization, political development, post-conflict reconstruction, and peace building. However, each concept is different, though their evolution is intertwined (Stephenson, 2005 p. 1). In Nepali Context, it can be argued that the level of theoretical awareness of academicians and nation builders needs improvement and multiple theories of nation building are relevant to explore the role of Nepali Army in nation building during various enclaves of Nepali nation. "Nation-building theory was primarily used to describe the processes of national integration and consolidation that led up to the establishment of the modern nation-state as distinct from various form of traditional states, such as feudal and dynastic states, church states, empires, etc "(Falode, 2019, p. 181). For this study, nation building can be considered a process of formation of a nation having common territory, common race, common religion, common language, common history, common culture and common political and yet none of these is an essential element. The elements, which go to build a nation, keep on changing (Stephenson, 2005, p. 1).

Some of the theories of nation building are dedicated to the study of link between nation and nationalism; others consider this process a enterprise to explore nation building, state building, social integration, national integration and even conflict transformation during various historical periods. However, nation building is a normative concept used by academicians and practicers to study the role of armed forces in building a nation in recent times. Even though academic disciplines do not agree, RAND Corporation

of US argues that transformation of conflict into peace building in terms of establishment of democratic institutions in any country can be termed as nation building.

Although research has been conducted on ethnicity and nation building, a little is known from theoretical perspectives how exactly the national army is linked to nation building in Nepal. From the standpoint of theoretical approaches, majority of Nepali academia and practicers are still in the primitive stage to understand and apply suitable theories in the geostrategic background of Nepali nation. Most of the theories in practice in Nepal were developed in different contexts in different times of human civilisation. Their relevancy in Nepali context may be contested and at times sceptical. Hence, this article intends to study theories of nation building particularly their relevancy for academicians and nation builders to explore the role of Nepali Army in nation building.

The purpose of this paper is to conduct comparative study of nation building theories and their implication during various enclaves of Nepali nation particularly in exploring the role on Nepali Army.

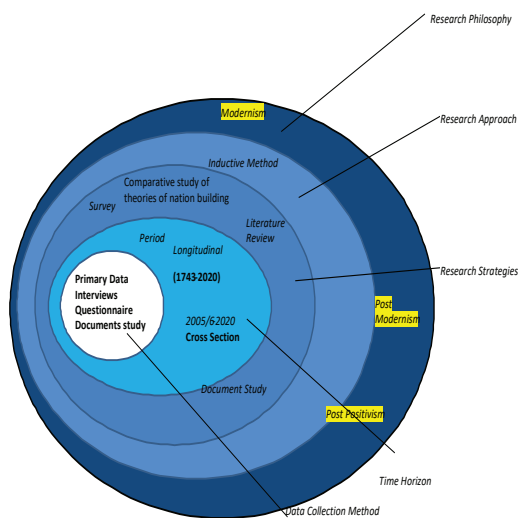
This study seeks to answer the following questions:

- (a) What are the relevant theories in the context of Nepal to analyse nation building?
- (b) What are implications of these theories during the decisive enclaves of nation building in Nepal?
- (c) How is Nepali Army linked in nation building?

## Methodology

Conceptual Framework based on Saunder's Research Onion Peeled (2007) method used with qualitative design in a way of inductive approach to conduct the research work (Fig.1). To investigate the research questions using comparative document study, library research, quick survey with one hundred thirty five stakeholders like government employees worked at policymaking level, academicians, university students, APF Staff College qualified officers and army senior officers based on purposive sampling method to collect data. Mainly relevant theories have been studied with a comparative method. Main dynamics for this study are nation building theories, Nepali Army and Enclaves of Nepali nation. Moreover, major variables for the study are language, culture, infrastructure development, history, tradition, geopolitics and ethnicity.

**Fig. 1.**  
Conceptual Framework of Study



*Prepared By Researcher Based on Saunder's Research Orion Peeled (2007) Method*

## Understanding Nation, Nationalism and Nation Building

On the one hand, Liah Greenfeld has offered one of the most pronounced arguments in favour of the nation, as she associates it with "popular sovereignty and equality, where it becomes an engine for the provision of individuals' dignity in a modern society" (Greenfeld, 2001, p. 18). Renan on the other hand believed that "a unique element of the European nation-forming experience was the mixture of races, origins and religions, where conquering people often adopted the religion and manners, and married the women, of the people they conquered"(Renan, 1882, p. 1). Benedict Anderson further argues that nation is an imagined political community and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign (Anderson, 1991, p. 2).

Nationalism assists in building and sustaining a nation. Adam D Smith defines nation as "a named community possessing an historic territory, shared myths and memories, a common public culture and common laws and customs" (Smith, 2002, p. 15). He defined nationalism as "an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy unity and identity for a population which some of its members deemed to constitute an actual or potential nation" (Smith, 1998, p. 1). To rally the people under common understanding, it is important to analyse the nation building process.

Nation building process has been defined and adopted differently at different times and contexts. For example, Ernest Gellner believes that "Nation building is the process whereby ruling political elites attempt to make the political and the national units overlap" (Gellner, 1983, p. 1). Bendix assumed the extension of citizenship to

members of ever-larger groups as the very hallmark of successful nation building (Bendix, 1996, p. 127). Harris Mylona vividly visualizes his experience of a state's choice to assimilate or exclude ethnic groups within its territory. He laid his argument relating state's nation building policies toward non-core groups. Karl W Deutsch (1953) proposed the mechanistic model of nation building by using assimilationist approach with social communication. Galtung's theory of imperialism explains the interaction between centre and periphery within and between the nations of the centre and periphery. RAND Corporation defines nation building as "the use of armed force in the aftermath of a conflict to underpin an enduring transition to democracy"(RAND, 2003, p. 1).

Although content and context of nation building varies with time and situation, most of the theories built up in the context of western nations. From the definitions of nation building, some common points can be extracted such as cultural identity, territorial integrity, management of conflict, sense of belongingness, national unity, feeling of nationalism and economic wellbeing. To move further with this study, it is imperative to analyse relevancy of theories from the vantage point of Nepali context during various enclaves of Nepali nation.

### Theories of Nation Building

Ernest Gellner's Theory "Ernest Gellner's famous words of nationalism creating nations and not vice versa, is a direct response to the nationalist conception of nations as having always existed and only recently having occupied a more prominent place in the minds of the inhabitants of Europe" (Gellner, 1996, p. 1). His main proposition is that "nationalism is a primarily a political principle, which

holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent. Nationalism can best be defined from violation of this principle" (Gellner, 1983, p. 1).

**Critics to Gellner's Theory.** Although Ernest Gellner's theory is considered one of the widely accepted concepts, there are several critiques on his theory. Important critique is that in the developing world particularly in Nepal, the trajectories of nation and nationalism predates the industrial revolution as oppose to Gellner's argument particularly religion, language and cultural understanding etc.

**Theory of Reinhard Bendix.** The nation-building framework is based on the analysis that under medieval rule, or what he called traditional rule. He argued that "governmental authority is as much linked to family as to property" (Bendix 1996, p. 128). The right of rule or right to exercise authority is held by individuals based on their position as a member of a family as opposed to an individual (Bendix, 1996, p. 128). "In the medieval conception the 'building block' of the social order is the family of hereditary privilege, whose stability over time is the foundation of right and of authority" (Bendix, 1996, p. 128). However, a 'modern' state "presupposes that this link between governmental authority and inherited privilege in the hands of families of notables is broken" (Bendix 1996, p. 128).

**Critics to the Theory.** One of the prominent critiques is that it diverts attention from the very real possibility that modernization may never arrive at modernity, so that terms like "development" or "transition" are misnomers when applied to societies whose future condition may not be markedly different from the present (Bendix, 1996, pp. 394-395). In Nepali context, modernisation process

effectively operationalises only after 1950 with the infrastructural development and revolution in education system to facilitate the social inclusion, democracy abolition of social discrimination and building the periphery to centre relationship.

### **Karl Deutsch's Theory of Nation Building.**

In Deutsch's perception, the process of social mobilisation and nation building has been a recurrent phenomenon in history, at least concerning certain general characteristics. Uniformities, which have been found in the growth of nations, include the following (Deutsch, 1979, pp. 16-31).

- (a) Shift from agriculture exchange to economies
- (b) Social mobilisation from rural areas and integration in the core areas and more intensive exchange
- (c) Growth of towns, mobility and ties between town and country
- (d) Growth of business communication grids linking rivers, town's trade routes
- (e) The differential concentration of capital, skills and social institutions
- (f) The rise of the concept of self-interest and the experience of national symbols

These aspects of theoretical propositions still remain in Nepali context. Because Nepal is still in the process of transformation from traditionalist society to modernity.

**Critiques to This Theory.** Among multiple approaches of this theory, Nepali context seems to be different starting from the time of King Prithvi Narayan Shah to the present. Nepal enjoyed a unique way of nation building during its history, which did not exactly unfold in line with this theory.

**Benedict Anderson's Theory of Imagined Communities.** In *Imagined Communities*, Anderson argues, "the nation is a new, modern phenomenon. The 17th and 18th century witnessed the demise of previous forms political bodies that were shaped by a sacred language, sacred cosmology and dynastic power, and sense of historical temporality shaped by cosmology" (Anderson, 1991, p. 7). He further mentions that "it is through the emergence of print-capitalism the technological, mass production of newspapers, the novel, and the spread of vernacular print languages that individuals could think have themselves and relate to others in different ways" (Anderson 1991, p. 7).

**Critiques to Anderson.** Chatterjee challenges the idea of nation as being imagined from certain modular forms. He believes that nationalism is not rooted on an identity but rather on a difference of the modular forms of the nationalist society propagated by the modern west (Chatterjee, 1993, p. 2). In Nepali context, unification as state building which built foundation to generate the feeling of Nepali by adopting multicultural and multi-ethnic communities by nation builders of Nepal .

**Stein Rokkan's Theory.** The model of Stein Rokkan consists of main four distinct phases. These phases were followed more or less in a similar manner in Western Europe. The first phase as he mentioned resulted in economic and cultural unification at elite level. The second phase encompasses even larger sectors of the masses into the system through conscription into the army, enrolment in compulsory schools. The burgeoning mass media created channels for direct contact between the central elites and periphery populations and generated widespread



feelings of identity with the political system at large (Flora, Kohnle & Urwin 1999, p. 1). In the third phase, the subject masses were brought into active participation in the workings of the territorial political system. Finally, in the last stage the administrative apparatus of the state expanded (Flora, Kohnle & Urwin, 1999, p. 1).

Rokkan's theory is the product of the French Revolution and its impact in Western Europe. It partially assists to justify the role of army in nation building in Nepal.

**Galtung's Theory.** In Galtung's theoretical postulation, "Public welfare services were established and nation-wide policies for the equalization of economic conditions were designed" (Galtung, 1980, p. 1). He further mentioned that "there is conflict, or disharmony of interest, if the two parties are coupled in such a way that the Local- Centre gap between them is increasing. There is no conflict, or harmony of interest, if the two parties are coupled in such a way that the gap between them is decreasing down to zero. Some points in this definition should be spelled out" (Galtung, 1971, p. 82).

**Kymlicka's Theory of Multiculturalism and Liberal Minority Right.** Will Kymlicka's position is that "notwithstanding the absence of minority group rights from the classical liberal bills of rights and the current distaste for them in much liberal thinking, the protection of such rights is not only consistent with liberal principles but is actively required by these principles. It is legitimate, and indeed unavoidable, to supplement traditional human rights with minority rights" (Kymlicka, 1999, p. 6). Even in Nepalese context, a compromised, adoptive and cooperative culture was the main vision of nation builders despite the ethnic politics in recent decades.

**Harris Mylonas' Three State Policies.** In "The Politics of nation building making conationals refugees and minorities" Mylonas proposes a categorical conceptualization of nation building which posits three possible state policies namely assimilation, accommodation, or exclusion. His theory is applicable in devising the policy to address the migration issue in the Southern part of Nepal from neighbouring countries and Hilly areas from the Tibet and Bhutan as refugees and illegal migrants.

**Nation Building Theory of RAND Corporation.** In United States, RAND defines nation building as the use of armed force in the aftermath of a conflict to underpin an enduring transition to democracy (RAND, 2005 ).

**Critiques to Theory.** The major critique of this theory is that it interchangeably uses the terms state building and nation building, which may be considered separately. It may deviate from national will. This theory is mainly applicable in the cases of post conflict scenarios .

**Lucian Pye Crisis Solving Approach.** In the opinion of Lucian W Pye, the process of nation building involves different crises and, therefore, the achievement of modern nationhood should successfully meet the following challenges (Pye,1966, pp. 62-66). According to Lucian Pye, following are the approaches of nation building:

- (a) Communication Approach
- (b) Integrationist Approach
- (c) Developmentalist Approach
- (d) Institutional Approach
- (e) System Approach

(f) Participatory Approach

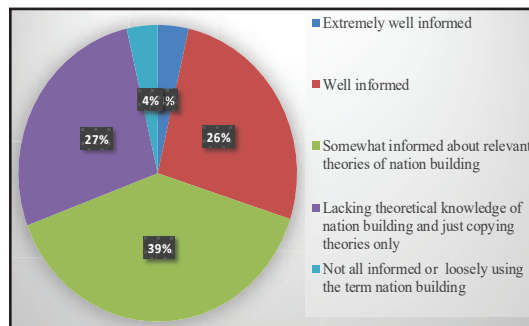
Considering these theoretical approaches, one can argue that none of the nation building theories can be relevant in the context of Nepal. Since these theories are built up in the western models, they could not be appropriate in Nepal’s geo-political contexts. Their concept, however, can partially be applied in integrating multiple theories in Nepalese context. In a process of nation building, Nepali nation has been progressing in its unique way, so it does not have to apply other countries’ approaches and models without serious speculations.

**Status of Theoretical Awareness of Nation Building in Nepal**

The state actors bear the main responsibility of nation building to integrate and construct the political majorities applying various strategies. For example, Government of Nepal has focussed on employment of Nepali Army in National development since few decades. In most of the annual policy and programs of Nepali government common statement of modernisation, professionalism and commitment in national development (Annual policy and programs of Government of Nepal since last 30 years) are common features. In the Nepali context, a survey was conducted to analyse the status of awareness among the policy makers to employ Nepali Army, a principle tool of nation building. A question was asked, "How do you think Nepalese academicians and policy makers are well informed theoretically to employ Nepali Army in nation building?" The response is depicted in Figure 2.

**Figure 2.**

Theoretical Awareness Level of Policy Maker Regarding Nation Building in Nepal



*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

Nepali State actors employed the army in nation building in one way or other despite their insufficient level of theoretical awareness to evolve the appropriate strategy. Survey result as depicted in Figure 2 shows that just below one third percent participants believe that policy makers are well informed. At the same time, two third of the participants accept that policy makers are poorly equipped with theoretical knowledge.

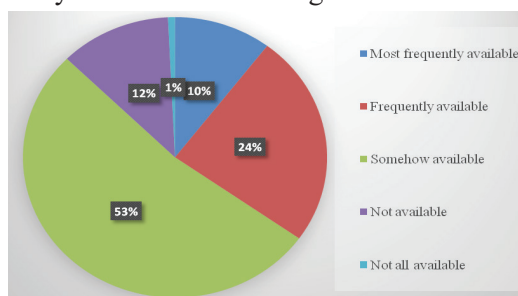
Although Nepali Army is one of the pioneer tools of nation builder in Nepal, the literature related to link between nation building and army in last two decades is found comparatively negligible. The literature available during this period shows the significant opening in recent period only. However, we do not find substantial authentic writings on Nepali Army’s engagements in nation building. Only a few papers have come out so far in Nepali Army Command and Staff College’s *Shivapuri Journal*. Similarly, Maj Gen (Retd) Tika Dhamala relates Nepali Army with a strong sense of nationalism in an article published in *Sipahi*

in the year 2006. Likewise, Col Dil Bikram Subba, in his “Nepali Army and nation building,” highlights Nepali Army’s role in nation building process. The first volume of *Unity Journal* published in 2020 contains six articles on Nepali Army’s role in nation building. A book published by Nepali Army titled *Success Story; Nepali Army in Nation Building on Infrastructural development* published in 2018 is praiseworthy. A survey was conducted recently regarding the literatures related to nation building and army.

During the survey, a question was asked "How adequate do you think literature about "Nepali Army and Nation Building in Nepal" is available?" The response was found (Figure 3) in reply to question that two third of the responders realised the scarcity of literature which is essential to inform planners and successive generations of Nepali Army’s contributions to the nation building.

**Figure 3**

Availability of Literature related to Nepali Army and Nation Building



*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

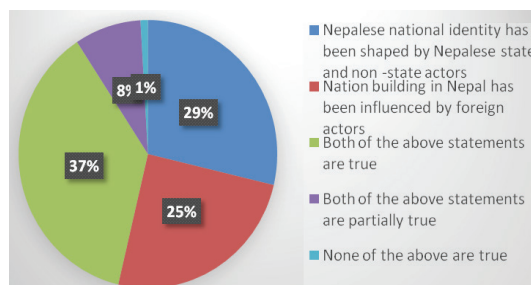
Despite various challenges, nation building in Nepal has been shaped during the unification period in the second half of eighteenth century and maintained its identity as a Hindu

Kingdom of Nepal until 2005. However, due to continuous interference of international actors exploiting the geostrategic location and politicization of multi-ethnic composition of the population since 1990, she inevitably changed her identity as Secular Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal in 2015 (Bhat, 2020 ). A question was thrown to the responders "How do you analyse nation building in Nepal?"

**Figure 5**

Influence on Nation Building in Nepal.

*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling*



*from 135 Respondents*

In that sense, the nation building process in Nepal depends not only on Nepali State actors but also foreign actors. The survey result (Figure 5) shows that one fourth of responders believes the foreign influence in nation building and one third participants realised the role of state and foreign actors in Nepalese nation building. Hence, Nepali state and non-state actors must focus on positive implication of nation building theories during the significant enclaves of Nepalese history and look forward for the Nepali identity employing Nepali Army a principal tool.

**Implication of Theories During Various Enclaves of Nation Building in Nepal**

The realities of nation building practiced throughout the history around the world differ

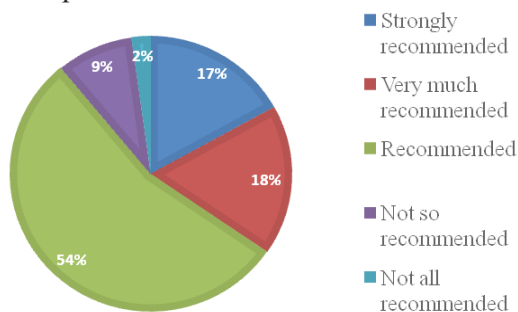


with each other. Some nations went through nation building processes when transitioning from traditional to modern societies. Others passed through nationalistic movement to get independence from their colonial masters, transitioning from conflict to peace and managing the problem of immigrants to assimilate into their native societies. Some nations revolted against the autocratic rule to democratic set up to defend from situations of failure of multiple states. However, Nepal maintains the unique position from the nation building perspective. Language is one of the significant components of any culture, which contributes in building national identity and belongingness.

Nepali language is one of the binding factors for belongingness to Nepali nation. A survey concerning the use of Nepali language in schools and universities was asked as "Some local governments in Nepal are organising school curriculum in local dialect. In this backdrop, medium of education in schools and universities in Nepal should be maintained in English or Nepali. The response received is as shown in the Figure 6.

**Figure 6**

Medium of Teaching in School and University in Nepal.



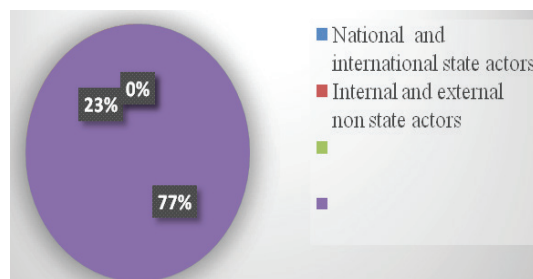
*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

Nepali language has been contributing the most to promote national identity and belongingness for which Nepali Army contributed since unification period. During the survey (Fig. 6), more than 90% of the responders accept the promotion of nationalism and belongingness in multi-ethnic country like Nepal. They recommend maintaining the medium of school and university education in Nepali language.

More importantly, it can be further observed that this small Himalayan nation will continue to face challenges in future if the course of history of nation building not managed through the appropriate rational approaches for its unique national identity. To move further this debate, it is necessary to analyse some critical junctures or enclaves in the history of Nepali nation where status of nation building was under debate and subsequently took a shape in course of its history. These enclaves attributed the contribution of Nepali Army in nation building. A survey was conducted asking a question "Nation building in Nepal have been shaped by National and international state actors or Internal and external non state actors."

**Figure 7**

Domination on Shaping of Nation Building in Nepal



*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

Nepali nation building and multidimensional actors from within and outside the nation have influenced multi-ethnic character. Survey result shows the main role of national and international state actors to shape the nation building, whereas non-state actors in recent times have equally been encouraging ethnic politics and influencing the cultural Identity. Approximately one fourth of the total participants (Figure 7) realized the role of non-state actors on nation building. It is imperative to analyse the significant enclaves of history of nation building in Nepal.

### **First Enclave: Unification Period (1743-1769)**

#### *Context*

When King Prithvi Narayan Shah was in a process of uniting small states of 22 and 24 in Far West and Western region of Nepal in 1743, the academic discipline of sociology was yet to be in existence. Neither of the concepts of modern nationhood was in a concrete shape, which could have been referred by, and then Nepali state rulers nor state authority as suggested by Max Weber was in practice. Rather concept of monarchical state based on religion as principle perspective for interpreting administrative matters was in existence. At that, there were several territories and principalities in Nepal and her neighbouring countries of the entire Bharat Khand (Indian Sub-continent).

#### *Actors*

External actors were British Indian, French, Tibet and China. Internal actors were Monarchy with King Prithvi Narayan Shah, Hindu and Buddhist Religions, and Kings of principalities within the Nepalese territory. King Prithvi Narayan used Nepali Army as a principal tool for unification.

#### *Consequences*

Prithvi Narayan Shah and his successors succeeded in unifying the principalities, expanding the external boundaries of state up to Tista in the East and Sutlej in the West. At the same time, Prithvi Narayan Shah and his successors had adopted the multicultural system while recognizing Kathmandu as the capital of Nepal. They could have considered Gorkha the capital of the strong Hindu nation-state, but they made Kathmandu the capital and Hinduism the principal basis of legal provision and decision-making.

### **Second Enclave: Anglo Nepal War (1814-1816)**

#### *Context*

Industrialization process started in Western Europe (1740-1830). British East India Company was not only consolidating its control over Indian Territory but also exerting pressure to intervene in Nepali State.

#### *Actors*

External actors were British, French, Tibet and China. Internal actors were King Prithvi Narayan Shah, Hindu and Buddhism Religions, Kings of principalities within the Nepalese Territory. Nepali Army was the principal tool of Nepal's unification campaign (Figure 10).

#### *Consequences*

Nepal witnessed territorial loss East of Mechi and West of Mahakali River because of Anglo Nepal War. Hinduism was in existence as principal basis of legal provision. Administrative consolidation process continued over Nepali territory. British intervention in Nepal started after the war.

### **Third Enclave: Aftermath of Anglo Nepal War (1846-1951)**

#### *Context*

British Indian Rule and its aftermath in India. World War I and II changed the political landscape of the world. Decolonisation in India resulted in establishment of federal democratic system. Autocratic Rana Regime ruled in Nepal for 104 years until 1951. Chinese control over Tibet in 1949 resulted in flow of refugee migration to Nepal (Figure 10).

#### *Actors*

External actors were British India, India, USA and China. Internal actors were Monarchy, Rana Rulers, Refugees and Political Parties.

#### *Consequences*

Rana Regime promulgated the Legal Code of 1853, and Rana Rulers. Consolidated the caste hierarchical system in Nepal. Nepali became the official language of the State, and Hinduism as the principal basis of legal provision and decision-making. Bravery of Nepali Army in World Wars and Indian Sepoy Mutiny could regain the Naya Muluk, including territories of Banke, Bardiya, Kailali and Kanchanpur.

### **Fourth Enclave Democratic Period (1951-1962)**

#### *Context*

Consolidation of Indian State with state nation concept. Republic constitution was promulgated. Signing of treaty of peace and friendship between India and Nepal in 1950. End of Rana Regime and democratic constitution was promulgated. Democratic election was held in 1960 (Figure 10).

#### *Actors*

External actors were India, USA and China,

Hindu Religious Institutions. Internal actors were such as Monarchy, Non State Actors, and Political Parties. Nepali Army was introduced in national development and UN peacekeeping mission.

#### *Consequences*

Democratic nation building with liberal democracy and development prevailed in this period with the Constitution of Nepal 1959 and the Constitution of Nepal 1962. Process of infrastructures building began in this period with support of Nepali Army. It was followed by establishment of Nepal Rastra Bank with introduction of Nepali Currency and planned development in Nepal.

### **Fifth Enclave Panchayati Period (1962-1990)**

#### *Context*

The Cold War period continued until 1989. Effective foreign policy continued in opening with the outside world. Muslim population began to migrate in Nepal from Bangladesh. Nation building in Nepal with the vision of Hindu Nepal continued (Figure 10).

#### *Actors*

External actors were British, India, USA and China. Internal actors, including Monarchy, Refugees, and Political Parties continued to interact. INGOs started to operate in Nepal vigorously.

#### *Consequences*

Balanced foreign policy with limited intervention in internal matters was adopted. Promotion of economy and education with abolition of cast discrimination through constitution and decentralization of essential goods and services with established administrative system. Constitution of Nepal 2019 BS (1962 AD) abolished the racial discrimination and Land reformation.

### Sixth Enclave Constitutional Monarchy (1990-2015)

#### Context

Constitutional monarchy as a political movement of 1989/90 backed by India. Second Peoples' Movement combined with the Maoist Insurgency until 2005/2006 and Madheshi and Janajati movements supported by foreign actors. Indian population migrated in Nepal (Figure 10).

#### Actors

External actors were EU, USA India. INGOs, NGOs, and Internal included Monarchy and political parties, religious organisations. Nepali Army as a principal tool has consolidated peace and infrastructural development.

#### Consequences

Political parties along with then Maoist party signed 12-point agreement in India and overthrew the Monarchical system with secular federal democratic state structure. New constitution with secular nation-state opening the venue for religious transformation and ethnic politics. Nepali Army continued contributing to national development and rebuilding the post-earthquake disaster of 2015.

### Theoretical Implication

Nepali Army committed initially from unification period to 1951 AD in extending boundaries of the nation as state building which is an initial phase of nation building (Stein Rokkan,1999 ), followed by active involvement in national development till today in parallel with national integration, Bravery in the world arena (Galtung,1980; Karl Deutsch,1963; Bendix,1977 ). Main features were the territorial integration, Inclusiveness (Kymalicka), accommodation

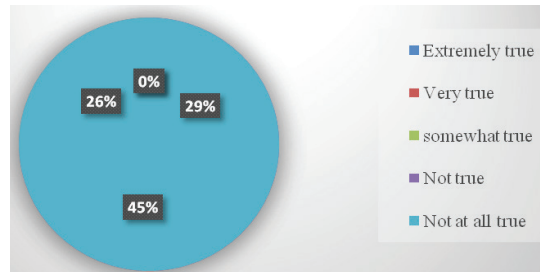
of cultures of conquered principalities into Nepali Nepali culture (Renon, 1882 ) to form identity. Economic and socio cultural consensus at the elite level was made, which subsequently transmitted with peripheral culture with consolidation of administration and inclusive democracy.

### Nepali Army and Nation Building

Nepali Army has been making significant contribution to nation building. During a survey, a question related to Nepali Army and nationalism was asked as "Nepali nationalism is being promoted through national inscription symbols like national flag, national anthem where Nepali Army contributed the most." result is shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Contribution of Nepali Army in Nationalism through Promotion of Inscription Symbols



Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents

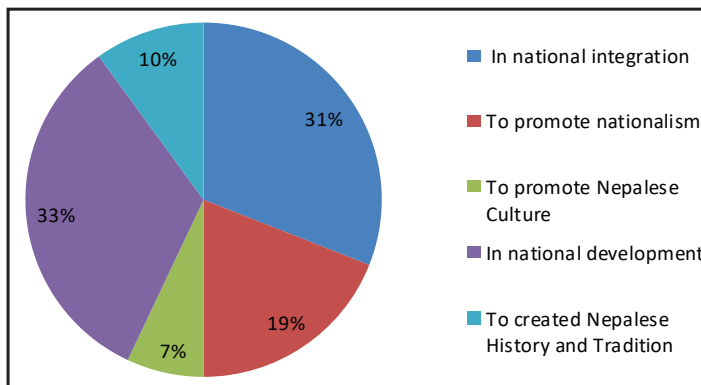
Nepali Army can be termed as symbol of national unity and has been promoting nationalism since its establishment during the time of late King Prithvi Narayan Shah. Survey result illustrated in Figure 8 shows that more than 74% participants strongly believe that Nepali Army is promoting Nepali nationalism through different symbolic inscriptions and cultural practices. More importantly, all the responders realised the

importance of Nepali Army in promoting nationalism which is necessary to build the Nepalese identity. Similarly, another question was asked, "Where do you think Nepali Army (NA) contributed the most in the discourse of nation building in Nepal?"

**Figure 9**

Areas of Contribution of Nepali Army in Nation Building

*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

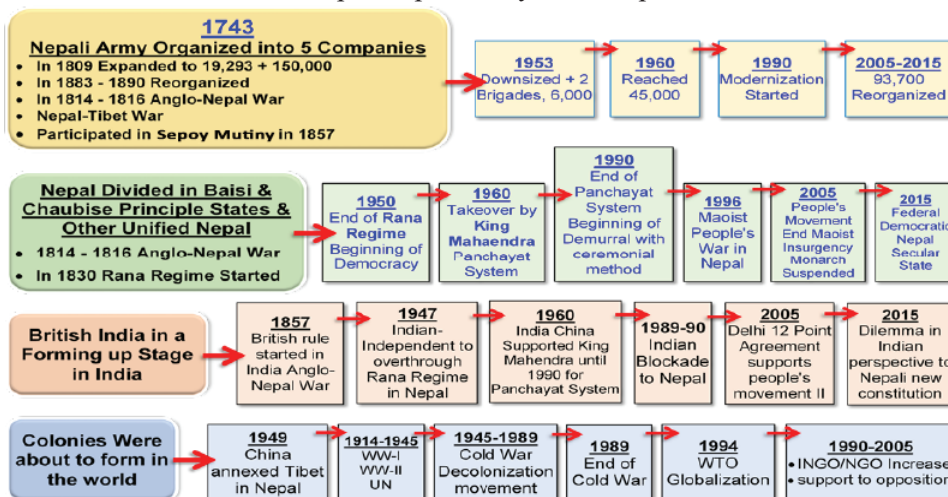


Nepali Army contributed significantly in national development and national integration, which are in line with

the nation building theories (Galtung, Rokkan and Gellner). Survey result displayed in Figure 9 highlights the view of two third responders in role of Nepali Army in national development and national integration. It tends to continue in future to enhance the access of rural / periphery population to the center through development of infrastructure and communication along with national integration. The geopolitical status of Nepal is one of the likely factors of attracting foreign actors in nation building and state building of Nepal where strength and employment of army kept on difficulties in different periods of Nepali history (Figure 10).

**Figure 10**

Comparison of Facts related to Nepal Nepali Army and Geopolitical Situation



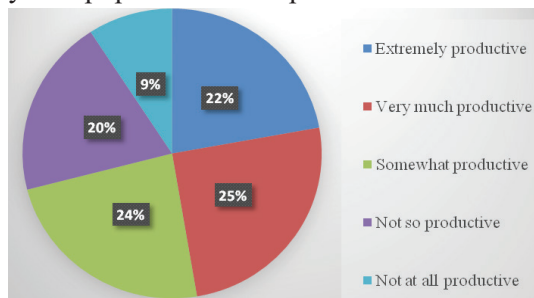
Source: Sketch extracted from Ph. D dissertation submitted to TU Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences by Anand Singh Bhat on "Nepali Army and Nation Building" in 2021



Nepalese youths can be employed in national development by recruiting in army and APF. In recent times, the Army has also made important strides towards gender inclusiveness (Nepali Army, 2018, p. 1). However, compulsory military service for youths to participate in national development can be one of the options for Nepal. A question was asked, "How do you recommend compulsory military service for Nepalese Youths and commit them in national development?" The input available from the survey has been shown in Figure 11.

**Figure 11**

Voluntary service vs compulsory service for youth population of Nepal



*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

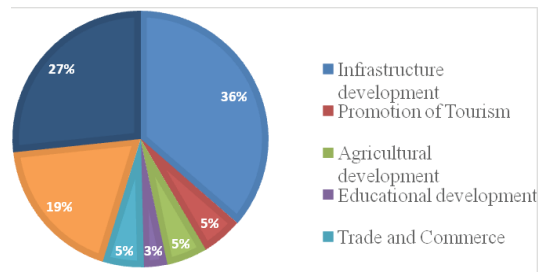
A country with natural diversity needs to mobilise its youth population with a comprehensive strategy in national development rather than dissipation in foreign countries in the form of labour force. The survey result (Figure 11) shows that majority (71%) of responders suggests to employ youth force in national development with short-term military basic training so that a visible result can be achieved.

A claim can be made that beside the youth population, Nepali Army in peace and crisis situation should be employed in nation building without compromising its

professionalism and criticism from people. For the employment of Nepali Army in nation building a question was asked as "What are the likely areas that NA can be employed in future for national development?" Details of responses have been shown in Figure 12. Majority of responders expressed their view in employing army in infrastructural development followed by aid to civil authority and nature conservation, which is current deployment of Nepali.

**Figure 12**

Likely areas of employment of Nepali Army.



*Note: Prepared Based on Purposive Sampling from 135 Respondents*

**Findings.** State and nation formation process in various nations around the world differs in terms of its context, contents and strategies adopted by practicers and academicians to adopt the existing situation. Various historical enclaves or turning points in Nepal suggest that nation building demands multidimensional approaches to study this process. All the nation-building theories have reservations and studied from the Western perspectives. Nepali nation passes through its own way of building the nation. Hence, integration of multiple theories partially can be used to analyse the role of Nepali nation in nation building.

Study found that Nepali Army have been contributing in nation building in parallel

with state building since its inception. At the same time, Nepali Army demands more formal studies using theoretical framework for its comprehensive, multidimensional employment to achieve visible and encouraging results as demanded by Nepali nation. The level of awareness of academician and nation builders needs improvement. For this purpose, schools and universities need to explore multiple theories particularly related to social transformation, infrastructural development in support of centre to periphery relation; social integration and nationalism.

### Conclusion

This research was designed at mapping the sketch of applicability of theories of nation building in Nepal and level of awareness in Nepali academicians and nation builders to employ Nepali Army in nation building process. While doing so, it examined key variables such as history, culture, language, ethnicity, infrastructure development and geopolitics. While qualitatively analysing the subject under the study, it briefly studied the historical trajectories of essential elements of a nation in Nepal those existed during the tenure of King Prithvi Narayan Shah. In the context of Nepal, the contemporary environment during the unification period turned a background of nation building. The period transitioning from traditional to modernity continued until 2015 BS passing through various enclaves. Precisely, internal and external forces and some important developmental issues, including globalisation, industrialisation and their effects in geopolitical environment shaped the role of Nepali Army in nation building that demands a higher level awareness of multiple theories of nation building in the context of Nepal.

It is recommended that army must be involved in national development without compromising its core responsibilities of protection of national security and territorial integrity. In the current situation of Nepal, Nepali Army has remained a vital national institution of trust and confidence of Nepalese people.

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