

ABSTRACT

The Bodos are one of the distinct ethnic communities of Assam who has been struggling for validating their identity in the contemporary social, political and cultural scenario of Assam. Movement for separate state has co-opted all section of the Bodo society in the rhetoric of Bodo Nationalism. The Bodos are demanding recognition of their identity and accommodation of their cultural difference. Recognition is required to have an undistorted identity as minority often feel depreciated in relation to the majority. Ethnicity has been the main cause of the Bodos' struggle for a separate state. Ethnicity is harnessed as an ideology as well as a device to wrest greater concessions and share in the institutions of power and authority. The aim of this research is to see how different cultural forms have been used to represent the community in their struggle for a separate state.

The term “expressive behaviour” means the various forms of expressions that are being used as medium to represent the culture of the Bodo community. Culture describes the ways in which human beings express themselves for the purpose of uniting people, forming groups, defining an identity and even for distinguishing themselves as unique. Culture is often used as a starting point when expressing one's identity to others. Culture has been mobilized for the purpose of identity construction and it has been increasingly politicized. Ethnicity is a conceptual parameter of looking at a group of population whose members identify each other on the basis of resumed common genealogy, ancestry or recognition by others as a distinct group, or by common cultural, linguistic, religious or cultural traits.

To categorize the study, the thesis has been divided into five chapters. Specifically, the first chapter includes the introduction of the area of the study elaboration of the various expressive behaviour i.e. songs, dances and documentaries that are being used in the study. This chapter also includes theoretical overview on the studies of ethnicity, some points of representation and identity and an overall idea of expressive behaviour. Statement of the problem, objectives of the study, methods and methodology used in the study and the review

on relevant literature have also been incorporated in this particular chapter.

The second chapter is a brief account of the socio cultural life of the Bodos. It has in details presented the population of Bodos in Assam, their religious practices, language, food habits, dress, customs, traditions, festivals and their economic background.

The third chapter is about the Bodo Identity Movement where the Bodo movement starting from Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma in the 20th century till the present time has been explored and examined thoroughly the assertion of Bodo identity and the emergence of Bodo identity movement has also been understood and analysed accordingly.

The fourth chapter is identity, ethnicity and Political representation in expressive forms of the Bodos. The various kinds of culture, religion, language etc have been represented through the medium of songs, dances and documentaries. The songs have been taken starting from 1957 till date. Five documentaries have been analysed for better understanding of the concepts of culture and identity.

The fifth chapter is the drawing of conclusion for the above four chapters drawing on the limitations of the study. The objective has been justified in this chapter base on the analytical viewpoint of the researcher.