

Origin of an Ethnic Group

Lecture Delivered

By

Dr. Aisha Shahzad

Lahore College for Women University, Lahore

- ▶ Any group of people which has some objective foundation.
- ▶ They believe in group affinity due to common descent, common language.
- ▶ A group generates a feeling of likeness among people claiming to have some cultural possession i.e. language or a common political objective.
- ▶ Apart from the common language, shared religious beliefs and common rituals are also conducive to the feelings of ethnic affinity.
- ▶ Then the other important factor is outward economic differences or differences between status groups.

- ▶ Every ethnic group has sense of ethnic honor. But when the ethnic group is victimized in terms of economic deprivation.
- ▶ This situation leads towards sense of inferiority or subjectivity.

Economic deprivation in society



Subjective feelings among groups



Strengthen ethnic affinity



Creates ethnic repulsion against others

- ▶ Pronounced differences of customs also create ethnic frontiers.
- ▶ In this connection, ethnic identities get manifested by way of migration or expansion.

Creation of Pakistan



Due to 1947 partition of India



Accumulation of distinct ethnic groups



Formation of heterogeneous society



Strong ethnic identities i.e. Bengalis, Pushtun, Punjabi etc.

► Sometimes demarcation of ethnic boundaries also generates ethnic identities or become a reason for the formation of ethnic groups.

1947 Partition of India



Division of ethnic groups i.e. Urdu speaking community was divided between India and Pakistan.

Pushtuns were divided between Afghanistan and Pakistan etc.



Such divisions creates ethnic identities and double loyalty.

Concept of Ethnicity

Ethnicity is **being, doing, knowing**

Ethnicity is Being:-

- ▶ Ethnicity is an experienced reality. It exist in a society.
- ▶ It is inherited and transformed from generation to generation like other biological features and physical capacities.
- ▶ Although biological elements of ethnicity (language, religion etc.) are pliable, compromisable, flexible, mutable but still they influence once personality.

Ethnic Identities of
beings

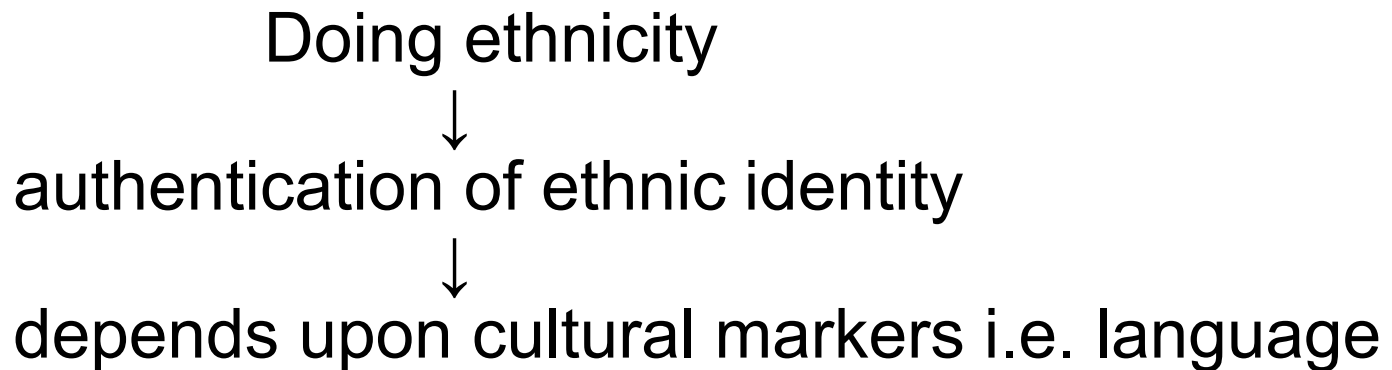
Biological traits of human
beings



both are transformational

Ethnicity is Doing:-

- ▶ Some writers i.e. J.S. Mill and Marx assert that Ethnicity → Disruption in society.
- ▶ Doing ethnicity means that ethnic identities not only exist but are also politicized under certain circumstances.
- ▶ Ethnicity is doing refers to the preservation of the past heritage, conventions and customs.



Ethnicity is Knowing:-

- ▶ Ethnicity 'knowing' and 'doing' are more or less same.
- ▶ Knowing ethnicity leads towards ethnic movements. It further unifies the people of the particular ethnic group.
- ▶ In this way the ethnic group is motivated by the subjective needs.