Identity and Belonging - A study of former Bhutanese Refugees resettled in the Netherlands.

How is a hybrid identity of the Netherlands-based Bhutanese shaped by practices of social networking with other ethnic groups in the Netherlands?

Photo source: facebook page of Bhutanese Community in the Netherlands.

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Abstract

Former Bhutanese refugees resettled in the Netherlands are a unique minority group, considering their tiny population size and country of origin. Bhutan is widely known as the country that implements Gross National Happiness as the index to measure its economy in place of Gross National Product. Therefore the issue of refugees from such a happy country is highly unexpected in the western world and, therefore, never investigated or researched. The researcher of this study is one of the community members who aimed to explore the roles social networking has played in forming the hybrid identity of Bhutanese community members. Based on ten semi-structured interviews, this research found that those coming at younger age developed intense social networking with other communities and thus underwent many transformations in their cultural identity. However, language barriers and lack of education were the most significant obstacles hindering the older people from gaining momentum in social networking with other communities, especially with the ethnic Dutch community, though their cultural identity is also transforming. This research concludes that Bhutanese community members have been actively pursuing social networking with other ethnic groups, mostly with ethnic Dutch and that such networking has hugely shaped their hybrid identity.

Keywords: *Bhutanese Refugee; Gross National Happiness; Hybrid Identity; Resettlement; Social Networking*

Introduction

"I cannot say which identity I have now. I have a little crisis, an identity crisis because it is difficult for me to say, but I feel I am more Dutch than Bhutanese or Nepali, but that might sound a little bit odd to my Dutch friends because my skin colour is dark, I speak Nepali and follow Nepali culture". (Dikki,18)

Refugees are often considered people who have no home and are permanently uprooted. Such ideas are due predominantly to the common assumption that people are always born with a fixed and rigid nationality, identity and culture (Malkki, 1992). Malkki (1992) says that the term refugee is devised as traumatic, resulting in a so-called identity crisis and a sense of homelessness that falls outside the political border of nations. The standard narrative on refugees that they are coherent and homogeneous social beings with a distinct culture and national identity with strong local roots can be examined in the context of resettled Bhutanese refugees (Hoellerer, 2017). The history of these refugees could be traced to ethnic Nepali who are believed to have migrated to Bhutan during 1600 AD from Nepal (Rose, 1993) but were forced to return to Nepal, where they lived for more than 20 years in United National High Commissioner (UNHCR) aided refugee camps before being resettled in various eight developed countries including the Netherlands beginning 2007 (UNHCR, 2015). For this reason, Hoellerer (2017) argues that resettled Bhutanese refugees are communities whose cultural and national identities always remain in transition.

Being one of those Bhutanese refugees myself, I felt that while in Bhutan, I used to feel Bhutanese in terms of my nationality, but since I inherited the Nepali culture from my parents and Bhutanese culture from our school friends and fellow citizens, I used to feel that my identity is neither fully Bhutanese nor fully Nepali. After being evicted, my fellow Bhutanese and I did not feel safe and secure on Indian soil; instead, we crossed over to Nepal though it shares no border with Bhutan. Due to the common language, culture and religion between Nepali and evicted Nepali-speaking Bhutanese, we thought our life could be safer and more secure in Nepal than in India.

Initially, in Nepal, my fellow Bhutanese refugees and I felt alien internally even though the culture and language were similar to that of the local Nepali people. Due to our similar looks, language, and culture, we felt closer to them than the Indians. In due course of time, the community was already in transition due to the close interaction with the local community in terms of marriage, going to the same schools and colleges, working together, and spending leisure times together like participating in cultural activities and festivals. Similarly, after opting for third-country resettlement, Bhutanese refugees left the transitional identity back to Nepal and landed in a strange country with a different language, culture, religion, tradition, and climate. As time went by, these people started interacting with local communities, and thus a transition took place regarding their culture, religion and language. Taking this into consideration, the argument put forward by Hoellerer (2017) that the cultural and national identities of the resettled Bhutanese community have constantly been changing would seem correct.

Out of a hundred thousand resettled Bhutanese Refugees, 327 were resettled in the Netherlands from 2009 to 2011 (UNHCR, 2015). So far, very little has been known about the Bhutanese refugees living in the Netherlands, herein referred to as the Bhutanese Community in the Netherlands (BCN). There are currently only two published articles on this issue. Global Human Rights Defence (GHRD) published a report on Bhutanese refugee resettlement in the Netherlands, highlighting the general situation of the people arriving in the country. The author of the report, J. Lundstrum (2009), stated that the purpose of her report was to obtain a first impression of the experiences the resettled Bhutanese refugees are undergoing in the Netherlands. Through detailed inter-

views of the newly arrived Bhutanese refugees, Lundstrum (2009) wanted to inform the facts to clear the massive misinformation and confusion that existed in the refugee camps in Nepal between those who were in favour of and those who were against the UNHCR's proposal for resettlement. Another study was a master's thesis titled "Learning from successful integration - Resettled Bhutanese: a decade in the Netherlands" (Heiligers, 2019). Heiligers (2019) focused her study only on integrating the resettled Bhutanese refugees in the Netherlands. More published information on this small number of people, whose number was initially 317 (UNHCR, 2015) among the 17 million population in the Netherlands, is almost non-existent. Thus, there is a vast knowledge gap concerning the present status of BCN members about their social, economic, cultural, and religious ways of living.

More specifically, in this study, I will be focusing on the actual transformation of the cultural identity of these people as a consequence of their interaction and social networking with other ethnic communities. As one of the members of BCN serving them in various capacities as a community leader, I have seen tremendous progress in the community, mainly in business and higher studies, despite facing several hurdles in language and culture. Being a predominantly Hindu community, many started finding priests from other Hindu communities, such as Surinamese Hindustani, buying food articles from South Asian-owned shops, finding jobs in companies owned by immigrants from South Asia, et cetera. Several younger community members find partners from other ethnic communities and participate in festivals and cultural programs organised by these ethnic communities, et cetera. These activities all happen due to the ever-increasing social networking activities of the community members.

With these rapid changes in the community in mind, I was always curious if I or anybody could ever undertake a study to find the intensity of cultural differences among the community members. Thus, as my master's thesis, I decided to research the role of social networking in forming the hybrid identity of BCN members from the perspective of Homi K. Bhabha's theory of hybridity. Towards that end, the following research question has been formulated:

How is a hybrid identity of the Netherland-based Bhutanese shaped by practices of social networking with other ethnic groups based in the Netherlands?

Relevance

In the public sphere, the presence of Bhutanese as refugees might evoke some interest in the Netherlands, given that most people, if they know anything about Bhutan, know Bhutan as the champion of Gross National Happiness (Adler, 2012) but have probably never imagined that it has created the world's most significant number of refugees relative to total population size (Morch 2016). Therefore, this research can generate awareness and raise curiosity among the western people about the way of life being adopted by these mountain-originating people in the plains of the Netherlands. Heiliger's study (2019) found that Bhutanese refugees have become successful in integration in the Netherlands. However, the present study can add insight into several specific networking strategies adopted by BCN members in terms of getting employment, building social contacts, and, above all, their identity transformation and their willingness to bring changes in their everyday lives.

Almost all the research on Bhutan describes the unique culture, peaceful way of life, Buddhism, romantic nature, et cetera. Still, no researchers ever took it upon themselves to study the Bhutanese refugees, the causes of their becoming refugees, or their cultures. Thus this research not only explores the formation of hybrid culture among the members of BCN but also helps under-

stand the refugees from a land often known in the West only as the land of Gross National Happiness.

Theoretical framework

The basic concepts that build my thesis are hybrid identity and social networking. The theoretical framework to answer my research question is developed around these central concepts.

What is Identity?

A person's identity is what that person identifies with and through which such a person understands him or herself as a person (Pederson, 2011). Pederson further argued that a person's identity is formed in society or during meetings with other generalised communities. In a more common language, one's identity is composed of the self-images that emerge from the reflexive activity of self-categorisation or identification in terms of membership in particular groups or roles (Stets & Burke, 2000). One of the areas where identification may most easily occur is that of social values and attributes, and identification is also about what our society and parents taught us and how we accept it.

Identity can be classified into different categories: cultural identity, personal identity, social identity, ethnic identity, and gender identity. Alba argues that symbolic ethnic identity can change according to the different situations and the social needs (Cerulo, 1997: 389). Both place of origin and refugee history can influence identity. Therefore, refugees' economic, social, political, and cultural relationships with their host countries can play a role in identity formation (Khalidi, 2010).

Social Networks: bonds, bridges and linkages

Social networks are considered a social capital that can play a vital role in exchanging support and solidarity for the needs of individuals in the society. Thus social network itself is a crucial resource over the life course and represents a form of social capital that is helpful during times of trouble, a source of comfort in times of pain and information in times of need (Coleman, 1988). The magnitude of social networking among people differs as per their ages, and the social network size decreases as the individual ages. The need for social resources for older people is less than the younger people; thus, younger people engage more with society than the older people (Kristine et al., 2001).

Various social networks and associations also help strengthen social cohesion among members of migrant populations. Social networks have mainly two components: social bonds and social bridges. Their main distinction is that social bridges help bring together disparate community members. In contrast, social bonding helps bring together people and groups with shared backgrounds, languages, religions and other social aspects (Putnam, 2000).

In other words, social bonds mean the connection within a group or community. In contrast, the social bridges are related to the relationships between social groups, social class, religion or other social-demographic or social-economic characteristics (Claridge, 2018). Bonds are those links between people based on a sense of shared identity, such as family, friends, neighbours and people with whom common culture, religion and ethnicity are shared. In contrast, bridges are the links between people with distant friends, colleagues and acquaintances (Keepley, 2007: 103).

As a small community being resettled by UNHCR to live permanently in a strange land with different languages and cultures like that of the Netherlands, it is pretty logical for the members of BCN

to proactively begin the process of building a social network with other ethnic groups in order to adjust, find a job, receive social support and to get access to all the available civic facilities.

Hybrid identity

Homi K. Bhabha (1994) claims that there is a space in between the two established identities; such space paves the way for the formation of cultural hybridity, bringing differences but without creating any hierarchy. Bhabha means that individuals from various ethnic groups have access to two or more ethnic identities, which ultimately build in the word of Bhabha as a hybrid identity. Hybrid identities are a product of the fusion of two or more types of identities, which is much more likely to occur within a complex global culture with a greater flow of ideas and more significant movement of people. The identity construction is influenced by the host society's attitude and perceptions toward refugees. Accordingly, the interplay between the country of origin, the host country and a migrant community shapes the hybrid identity of the immigrants (Staring et al. 1997: 16).

Furthermore, one's identity is ingrained in social relationships, interactions, and discourses and depends on various outside factors (Hall, 1990). Thus the hybrid identity of individuals will be shared through social networking with the members of other immigrants and the host community. According to Bhabha (2014), a pure and uncontaminated culture does not exist as culture is always fluid and in perpetual motion. He claims that culture is, thus, not a static entity. All culture, according to Bhabha, is characterised by a mix he refers to as hybridity. In other words, Bhabha views culture not as an unchangeable essence but as characterised by change, flux and transformation and, more importantly, by mixedness or interconnectedness, which Bhabha terms hybridity (Bhabha, 1994).

This thesis is an effort to look at the present status of the cultural identity of BCN members using the concept of hybrid identity. Refugees face a considerable challenge in adapting and adjusting to the host communities, and these challenges often result in the rapid personal transformation of their cultural experiences. They will be forced to start engaging in several activities in the new environment to shed their ever-growing stress, anxiety, and uncertainty associated with their exposure to new cultures and surroundings. Like Bhabha, Stuart Hall (1987) argues that identity is neither a fixed nor a singular true self that can be shared collectively. For Hall, too, it is a continuous process of formation and representation which undergoes continuous changes. Hall further argues that one's identity is ingrained in social relationships, interactions, and discourses and depends on various outside factors. Thus, the social networking activities of BCN members with other ethnic communities can be expected to play an essential role in the formation and sustenance of their hybrid identity in the Netherlands.

Data and Method

Semi-structured interviews

I have adopted qualitative interviewing as my data collection method in my study. This method is considered one of qualitative research's most prominent data collection methods (Bryman, 2016: 492). Interviewing people is a chance to glance at another person's private world and can be stimulating and enlightening (Lloyd-Johnsen, 2004). It can immensely help one understand the social conditions, norms and relationships in the society of the people. Facts and other practical issues of the topic under study can be cross-checked and understood in-depth through the interview method. In this research project, I conducted interviews with ten members of BCN to understand their views

about how their cultural transformation has occurred due to their social networking with other ethnic communities while living in the Netherlands.

Among fifteen respondents contacted, five could not be interviewed because some were sick, and others said they were on holiday; therefore, we could not agree on a mutually beneficial date and time for the interviews. The other ten samples constituted four females and six males were interviewed. All the interviews were done at the participants' own homes and in a congenial environment sitting face to face.

To record the interviews, I used Philips VoiceTracer DVT8110, which I purchased exclusively for this purpose. All such recordings were done after taking prior permission from the respective interviewees. Though I have prepared detailed and clear guidelines for the interviews, such guidelines were not helpful as our informal conversations went smoothly and per requirement.

Before starting and recording the actual interviews, we talked at length about the general welfare of ourselves, as with most of them, I am meeting after some time due to the pandemic. I explained in more detail about the interview because while speaking via Facebook messenger, some of them I sensed were not very clear. Everyone signed the informed consent form without hesitation after explaining the contents to them. I informed them that their real names and addresses would not be published in the thesis, even though they all expressed no objection. Some community leaders interviewed believed that the community organisation could use the final thesis to formulate an action plan for working towards preserving and promoting Bhutanese culture in the community.

Most of the interviews were brief and to the point. The time taken for the interviews was 5 hours and 6 minutes only. As an insider, I know all the interviewees personally; as a result, we did not find it meaningful to ask about their details, background, and some concluding formalities. Thus the interviews were all brief and to the point.

Sampling

A sample of 10 people between 17 and 70 years old, including men and women, was selected for face-to-face interviews. For this, I adopted the fixed purposive sampling approach, where the research question guides the sampling approach and such samples are more or less fixed and well defined before the research begins (Bryman, 2016).

To find the roles of social networking in forming a hybrid identity among BCN members, I have selected three types of participants for the interviews. One whose age was 5 to 15 years old, the second those between 16 to 35 years old and the others who were 36 years and above during their resettlement in the Netherlands. The main reason for following this categorisation was the expectation that the social networking capacities of BCN members vary because of their age. Moreover, the intensity of hybrid identity formations can also be expected to differ among the participants of these various age groups. I have tried to include more or less equal numbers of women and men in my study to find any differences in the speed of hybrid identity formation among them.

To identify the samples, I enlisted five individuals from the above age group that consisted of individuals from different gender, professions, and educational qualifications. After that, I contacted all of them via Facebook messenger because, in my experience, most members of BCN prefer to be contacted through this social media platform. They consider it the cheapest and most reliable communication source with people known to them and are listed as friends on their Facebook accounts. During my initial contact itself, I provided them with all the information about my thesis project and requested them to become participants in my interview. I also informed them about the ethical issue involved in the process and the steps that will be taken to protect their privacy and private data, like not publishing their names and address in the thesis, et cetera. Later ethical forms, informed consent forms and interview questions were sent to them.

Those approached found my worthwhile project and expressed their willingness to participate in the interview. Some participants even applauded me for taking this initiative to research our community. They feel such initiatives should be done to make the community visible and promote the community's own identity in the country.

Table 1 List of Participants

Names	Gender	Age	Profession	Educational Qualifications
Arun	Male	44	Care, Home worker,	Secondary School
Bhim	Male	54	Driver	Primary School
Damber	Male	70	Community leader	Secondary School
Dikki	Female	18	Student	High School
Garja	Male	58	Community leader	Secondary School
Khina	Female	69	Housewife	No Schooling
Prem	Male	50	Businessman	Bachelor Degree
Parvati	Female	20	Student	University
Ran	Male	25	Cook	High School
Soma	Female	42	Entrepreneur	Bachelor Degree

Thematic & Deductive Approaches

First, I transcribed all the audio interviews word by word and then translated them into English as my interviews, except two was done in Nepali. Those two interviews were done in English and did not need translation; thus were straightly transcribed.

As my research question indicates, the principal aim of my research is to find the effect of social networking activities in developing the hybrid identity of the members of BCN; thus, I must find the themes from the data to find the answer to the research question. I decided to adopt the thematic analysis method for this study.

The goal of thematic analysis is to identify themes, i.e. patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue. It is much more than simply summarising the data; an excellent thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of it (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The author's six steps guide to thematic analysis like Familiarisation, Coding, Generating themes, Reviewing themes, Defining and naming themes, and Writing up has been helpful and followed in this study.

Thus before the coding took place, I read and reread the translated interviews several times to be familiar with the interview data. Each time I read the transcripts, I wrote the main points to

grasp the significant points, which could help me find the answer to my research question later. After this process was completed, I manually coded the data using the method of open coding by identifying the similar meanings or the similar chunks of data from the transcripts.

The codes are then grouped as per their common elements under the primary themes. Similarly, those basic themes that resemble some common meanings are again grouped under another theme called organising themes; in other words, the organising themes link together all the basic themes with similar meanings. Finally, those organising themes are linked together, creating a central theme.

I have conducted my study based on the deductive approach of the thematic analysis. A deductive approach comes to the data with some already formed themes based on the theory or existing knowledge (Clarke & Braun, 2013). In this case, the theory of hybrid identity and social networking that my theoretical framework constitutes already has pre-conceived themes.

Ethical considerations

Ethics in social research revolves mainly around the following four ethical principles: whether there is harm to participants, whether there is informed consent, a potential invasion of privacy and whether deception is potentially involved (Bryman, 2016: 125). As Bernard has said: "the first ethical decision you make is whether to collect certain kinds of information at all. Once that decision is made, you are responsible for what is done with that information, and you must protect people from becoming burdened for having talked to you" (Bernard, 2011: 167). Proper ethical conduct is fundamental in the issue of my study because the subjects (BCN members) have a very troubled and often traumatic background, and a little carelessness in maintaining ethics can trigger sad and emotional expressions.

The ethical principles were adhered to throughout the research process, and therefore voluntary participation and informed consent using a written form have been strictly implemented appropriately. Furthermore, anonymity and confidentiality have to be guaranteed, and the potential effects of power imbalances have been considered in drafting interview questions and selecting respondents. The recorded audio and other data were stored in a computer with a good password, and those hard copies of data were locked in a locker. All such data will be deleted soon after my thesis trajectory is over.

Results

Social Networking

All the participants mentioned that adjusting during the initial phase of their living in the Netherlands was extremely difficult. Language seems to be the leading general factor in this challenging situation. However, these participants stressed the informal and free Dutch society (Freedom in the world, 2021) as the main factor that complicated their social networking abilities with other ethnic communities.

During the initial stage of their arrival in the Netherlands, invited refugees were kept in an asylum seeker centre at Amersfoort, a Dutch city in the province of Utrecht, where invited refugees from all around the world used to live together in a vast complex (Coa, 2006).

> *"We used to share the kitchen, corridor and the building with other invited refugees mostly coming from African countries and Myanmar; it was there where I got the first opportunity to interact and learn others cultures" (Khina, 69).*

All the participants mentioned that it was the first time in their life to meet refugees from other countries, though they said they had seen them on the television and in pictures.

> *"Because of the language barrier, I hardly talked to any of them though we often met them in the kitchen. I used to cook food for my large family almost three times a day in the same kitchen where they also used to come and cook food for their families"* (Khina, 69).

> *"Before I came to the Netherlands, I did not know any people that follow religions other than Hinduism and Buddhism. I was also unaware of other cultures other than our own,"* Bhim (55).

Bhim further said that he believed that in the Netherlands, there are only white people, and they speak either Dutch, English or both languages. However, after coming to the Netherlands, he learned that there are other religions like Muslims, Christians, Jews, and others, and all of them have their own cultures, traditions and history.

> *"I work as a window cleaner, and in my company, there are also people from Morocco, Turkey, Iran and other countries. I learnt something about their religions, languages and cultures,"* Bhim said.

Social networking between one of the participants Khina (69) and the Dutch communities started taking place intensely when she started working in her rented garden. Like her, several people from other Dutch communities come to work in their respective gardens every day. Thus, she said that despite the language barrier, she could exchange greetings, share lunch, visit each other's gardens, et cetera.

> *"I used to feel vastly different from Dutch people and used to think that everything between us is different except shadows, but now I speak and interact with them without any hesitation and feel we are the same human being",* Khina (69).

The older participants used to think of themselves as inferior and bow their heads when they saw or met people from other ethnic communities, mainly ethnic Dutch. They told me that they could not make eye contact while talking to them as that was their culture back in Nepal and Bhutan, and that is what their habit was, and it comes automatically. However, as the days go by, they learnt through their children, colleagues, or language teachers that one should talk with one head up and make eye contact face to face.

Another participant, Damber (70), said that he always remembers the saying from his daughter that if one talks without making eye contact with a Dutch person, he/she thinks that the person is not telling the truth. Therefore he said that his eye automatically makes contact with the eyes of the person with whom he is talking.

> *"During 12 years, a lot has changed in my lifestyle and culture; now I smile and greet a stranger automatically when I meet them on the street or elsewhere, but in Bhutan and Nepal, such actions with a passing by strangers were quite uncommon".* Bhim (55).

Most of the elderly participants said that volunteers from the Dutch communities visit their homes quite frequently to help them read letters, write letters, make phone calls to the agencies on their

behalf, settle issues regarding social security, insurance, et cetera. Such relationship extended as all of them said they built a good relationship with them and were often invited for dinner or participate in their festivals and rituals. Meanwhile, Soma (42) has the following to say about her social networking activities:

> *"While I was doing a Dutch language course, I used to have many friends from several other immigrant communities. My best friends were from China and Romania. As a mother of school-going children, I have regular social contact with the parents and teachers of my children's class. At my son's football grounds, children's birthday parties and other school events, I could build a solid social network with the dutch and other communities".*

Another participant Prem (48), described his ways of social networking in the following words:

> *"I live in a small dutch village, where we have only Dutch people as our neighbours. Thus I have more social contact with the Dutch community than other communities. I go to my children's schools, supermarkets, language school and workplace, where I meet most the dutch people. We introduce and invite each other for a cup of coffee at our respective homes".*

Prem mentioned that he also has social contact with people from other ethnic communities besides Dutch. However, such contacts are only made a few times a year during the festivals and other major cultural events. Social media and phones are the primary modes of maintaining frequent social contact with such people. Similarly, another participant Arun (44), said the following while explaining his ways of doing social networking:

> *"I have intense social contact with the Dutch people because I work as a cook in a care home, and all my colleagues are from the Dutch community. We regularly interact in the Dutch language and go together once in a while for dinner. I also regularly invite my dutch neighbours to my home for a cup of coffee, and they do the same; during all these meetings, I preferred to speak Dutch with them, but they wanted to learn English through me. Thus we also speak English among each other" Arun (44).*

All the above participants said that the primary medium of social networking is physical meetings and telephone calls. Meanwhile, Parvati, a young student of 20 years of age, has to say the following about her social networking activities:

> *"I feel much easier to make social contact with people from ethnic dutch communities rather than with members of BCN and NRNA. While speaking with members of BCN and NRNA, I have to be formal and respectful, while with dutch people, I can speak in informal language, and I can be just straightforward and frank" Parvati (20).*

She said that since she spent most of her life in the Netherlands, she is habituated to speaking in informal and less respectful words like her friends. Meanwhile, another participant Dikki (18), while speaking about her social networking activities with other communities, put her words in the following manner:

> *"In my class, there are just three students with immigrants background, including me, one from Iran and the other from Turkey, but the rest are from the dutch community. I have a*

> *good relationship with both of them, and most of the time, we talk about our experiences of being only immigrants. However, I also have Dutch friends in the class with whom I have an excellent social relationship".*

Like Parvati, Dikki also said that she prefers to contact her dutch friends rather than friends from her community because she said it is easy and confident with them as they grew up together in the village where she was resettled back in 2009. Ran (25) maintained that he likes dutch people because they speak straightforwardly and listen to me patiently whenever I speak with them. He further said in his own words,

> *"I do not have friends from my community. I go to discos and other social events with my Dutch friends. I use Snapchat, Facebook, and Instagram most of the time to contact my friends; I make phone calls significantly less because it is more expensive than contacting via the internet".*

One whose age was between 5 to 15 years old during resettlement and now 18-25 years old has vast social networking with other ethnic communities, especially with the local Dutch community. At the same time, those between 16 to 35 years old during the resettlement and now 36 to 49 years old said that they have good social networking with the local Dutch Community. Moreover, those who were 36 years and above during their resettlement and now 50 years and above demonstrated lesser social networking with other ethnic communities. This group of participants were born and brought up in Bhutan before becoming refugees in the early 1990s.

Bhutan is a country where an ancient code of conduct called Driglam Namza was strictly implemented. Driglam Namza dictates that Bhutanese follow uniform rules like how to eat, sit, dress, bow, respect elders, pray and other daily ways of living (Christensen, 2018). Adjusting to a free society like the Dutch society (Freedom in the world, 2021) for this disciplined and formalised group of people is complicated and challenging. For this reason, these three elderly participants expressed their inability to participate in social networking activities like those younger participants.

The above result clearly showed that the intensity of social networking decreases when one gets older and older. In other words, the above findings demonstrated that younger people engage in social networking more intensely than older adults. Kristine et al. (2001) are correct when they say that the social network size decreases as the individual ages. The need for social resources for older people is less than the younger people; thus, younger people engage more with society than the older people (Kristine et al., 2001).

Formation of hybrid identities

During the interviews, most participants were interested in highlighting the changes that have been occurring in their everyday living in the fields of clothing, dressing, eating, cooking, performing religious rituals, speaking languages and other aspects of their lifestyles. All of them mentioned that these changes in their cultural aspects were predominantly due to their social contacts with people from other cultural backgrounds. Therefore, these themes will be discussed case by case to answer my research question.

Transformation in clothing, eating and cooking

Khina (69) said that she sees many of the female elderly members of BCN discarding their traditional clothing in favour of western clothes, colouring their black hair to look like white females.

However, she wanted to preserve her traditional clothes even at the cost of being called a joker to whatever, whereas another participant Soma (44), has to say that:

> *"During our cultural events or going to Nepalese or Indian festivals, I wear my traditional clothes, but in my day-to-day activities, I prefer to wear western clothes".*

Younger female participants maintained that they wanted to be seen like their Dutch friends and not unique and thus preferred to wear clothes like their Dutch friends wore, whereas those elderly female participants preferred to wear the same clothes as they used to wear while they were in Nepal. The dressing of the male participants has not changed because the males in Nepal wear western clothes as in the Netherlands; thus, even after coming here, nothing has changed in this section. Regarding eating habits too, their original conception was that people worldwide eat rice and curry three times a day as they and other south Asian communities do.

> *"I used to think that eating a lot of rice, meat with fat, lentils, curries with many spices makes us healthy and fat. A fat person used to be considered a person of high status and rich; thus, like me, everybody wanted to eat more rice to become fat. However, now I realise through my children and grandchildren that all my above perceptions were wrong and becoming fatty is the sign of becoming unhealthy and sick"* Damber (70).

Some participants said that their school-going children forced their eating patterns to be transformed rapidly. Children wanted to eat as their school friends do; thus, one of the participants had to say the following:

> *"I think it is a universal process that we bring changes in our eating and other habits over time. Nevertheless, such changes occurred with me faster because our children wanted to follow their Dutch friends in terms of food choice and the pattern of eating"* Soma (42).

At the moment, most of the participants said that they changed their eating and cooking habits, thus eating their traditional rice and lentils only once a day, and for breakfast and dinner, they eat bread, salade, cheese, and other light food. All the participants mentioned that their original eating habits have transformed during their stay in the Netherlands. Meanwhile, another participant commented that he was surprised when he saw Dutch people eating their meals while travelling or walking outside. The following is what he has to say on this:

> *"I used to see Dutch people eating and drinking while walking, travelling, or outside the house, but that is strange for us"* Garja (59).

He further said that as the days went by, due to the formation of close social networking relations with the Dutch people, he also started eating while travelling or walking on the road or sitting in the garden outside and eating his meals during the excellent weather. One participant mentioned that her erstwhile way of cooking her meals in a presser cooker has changed because the noises created by it created inconvenient relations with the neighbours. Moreover, using a presser cooker is found to be unclean.

There is a general tendency on the part of the members of BCN to change their eating/cooking patterns, and such patterns have inclined towards the Dutch ways of eating and cooking. Regarding the transformation in clothes and their styles, it has been found that younger women preferred to wear Dutch styles of clothing, but the older women wanted to wear the same traditional

clothing. Males members of BCN wear the same clothing styles as they did in Nepal because they are all similar here too.

Transformation in the field of Religious and cultural aspects

During my interviews and data analysing period, I found that the members of BCN have not only transformed their clothing, eating, cooking, language, et cetera but their systems and procedures of performing religious rituals and their related cultural aspects.

> *"I perform my regular rituals and religious events at home, but when I do big religious events, I hire priests from Tibetan communities because I am a Buddhist, and I hardly find any Buddhist priest in our community"* Garja (58).

Garja further said that though the style and procedures of Tibetan and Bhutanese lama are different, he has to adjust the procedures of doing rituals and religious ceremonies as per the availability of the lamas to perform them.

> *"Despite differences between the language and explanation of the mantras recited by the Hindu and Buddhists priest from other communities, we hire them to perform our religious events. Our religious activities have also become hybrid"* Bhim (55).

Meanwhile, other cultural aspects of these participants have taken some transformation.

> *"I live in a small town with my family where most of the inhabitants are ethnic dutch. In the beginning, I used to feel different from them, but now I can easily intermingle with them and feel that I am also similar to them and equal. Though our culture taught us to bow our heads down in front of older people and talk with them, this culture has changed because I learnt from my Dutch friends that if we do not look at their eyes while talking, we are telling lies. Thus I adjusted my habit, though it was challenging to do so"* Arun (44)

All the older participants told me how they started making eye contact while talking to others, especially with those older Dutch people. Regarding the system of making appointments before visiting friends and relatives, participant Arun (44) have to say the following:

> *"In Nepal and Bhutan, I visited my relatives, friends and neighbours straightly with no prior information whenever I wanted to visit them. However, after resettling in the Netherlands, that culture has changed; now I make an appointment or inform them first before I visit them"*

Almost all the participants expressed the above views on the appointment system. Meanwhile, in terms of behaving toward the white people, Prem (50) has to say the following:

> *"Previously, I considered white people superior and believed that all of them were highly educated and knew everything; thus, I used to address them with sir or madam. However, now that conception has changed, and I feel I am equal to them, and while speaking, I call them by their names no matter whether they are elder or younger to me"*.

Even though all the participants have the same views as Prem in the above issue, Soma (42) went a step further and expressed herself in the following words:

> "Our culture does not allow us to call senior people by their names; we use the term as per our relations to address them; thus, I found it extremely hard to address elderly people by their names. Even teachers they call by their names, which I found odd. Nevertheless, I started calling them with great difficulty using their names; unlike Dutch friends, I still use respected language while speaking with people elder to me, which is also not common among the ethnic Dutch".

One of the younger participants, Dikki (18), said that in all the younger members of BCN, the style of talking and the words used to address people have completely changed. She further said they feel pretty awkward speaking with people from their community because they need to change their speaking tone and use the respected words. At the same time, they are used to speaking with Dutch people using informal language and without choosing polite words.

Transformation in the daily spoken language

The oldest participant Damber (70), said that he started using some common Dutch words when he speaks his mother tongue Nepali with his wife and other community members. He said it was because of his constant interactions with the Dutch people while outside, walking and doing other activities. Another participant Garja (59), explained his language transformation in the following words:

> "I speak Dutch during my working hours, Nepali at my home and types English on my computer and watch news also in Hindi television channels beside English and Dutch news. If I meet Indian and Pakistani people, I speak Hindi and Bengali with Bengali friends. Thus, my spoken language has become a hybrid; these days, I use many common Dutch words while speaking other languages".

Meanwhile, at 69 years old, Khini said that though she had never been to school in her entire life, these days, she started noticing that while she speaks her language, certain Dutch words automatically come. However, the younger participants said there was a drastic change in language usage in their general conversations.

> "I work 40 hours a week with my Dutch colleagues and speak only the Dutch language. These days, even if I wanted to speak my mother tongue with my family members, ultimately we landed in speaking dutch" Arun (44).

The transformation in spoken language is very intense among the youths, as has been proved when 18 years old Dikki has to say the following:

> "Language is the main barrier to communicating with my grandmother and others in Nepal and Bhutan because I cannot speak my mother tongue so fluently and clearly. I speak Nepali but automatically mixes dutch words, which confused them" Dikki (18).

Language hybridity has been seen in all aged participants, but such transformation has rapidly occurred among the younger members of BCN.

Dutch, Bhutanese or Nepalese?

One of the participants described his identity in the following words:

> *"I have acquired Dutch Citizenship now; therefore, as per the law, I am a Dutch, but I prefer to be called Nepali speaking Bhutanese with Dutch Citizenship"* Garja (59).

Similarly, most of the older participants, those possessing Dutch citizenship, echo the same feelings as Garja. In contrast, Khini (69) expressed her sadness for not becoming a citizen here though she has lived in this country for 12 years. She put her words in the following lines:

> *"My stateless status has not changed for 35 years; thus, I am still a Bhutanese Refugee".*

On the other hand, another participant Soma (44), boldly said that even her small Netherland-born children hesitate to identify themselves as Dutch because they say even if they feel they are always asked by their friends and teachers where they came from?

Meanwhile, the youngest group of participants in this research seems much confused about revealing their actual cultural identity. This group of participants are unsure if they are Bhutanese, Nepalese or Dutch. All three participants in this category felt that they have never been there if they say Bhutanese as their identity. They only have contact through telephone and Facebook messenger with their family members and relatives inside Bhutan but have never seen them physically. They were born to Bhutanese parents in a refugee camp in Nepal, where they did not possess citizenship. Though they learned something in Nepal, they feel it is insufficient to form a cultural identity. Now they live in the Netherlands. Most of the time, they spent with their Dutch and other immigrants friends through school and other extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, in the Netherlands, though, they do not feel like being Dutch because their colour and looks make them different. Parvati (20) put her expression like this:

> *"I am a Dutch citizen now. My parents were Bhutanese and fled to Nepal and lived there for many years in the refugee camp where I was born. I did not have a passport in the refugee camp in Nepal; thus, I have no experience being Bhutanese or being in Bhutan. As a child of 6 years, my parents brought me here; thus, it is difficult for me to say that I am a Nepali, though my culture and language match them. Now I am in the Netherlands, have a Dutch passport, and have friends and everything here. I feel Bhutanese because my parents were born and brought up in Bhutan, but I am Dutch because I have a Dutch passport."*

Another participant Dikki (18), put her word on this issue in the following manner:-

> *"I cannot say which identity I have now. I have a little crisis, an identity crisis because it is difficult for me to say, but I feel I am more Dutch than Bhutanese or Nepali, but that might sound a little bit odd to my Dutch friends because my skin colour is dark, I speak Nepali and follow Nepali culture".*

Parvati (20) again feels that she does not feel Dutch when she is with her dutch friends because her culture does not match them. While visiting her Dutch friends, she said she heard them addressing their parents by name. When she talks to them, she automatically uses respectful words and hesitates to address them by their names; that is why she feels that her thinking and action do not match that of her Dutch friends. Meanwhile, talking on behalf of the youths of BCN, another participant Ran (25), have to say the following:

> *"All those youths in the Netherlands coming from Bhutan face an identity crisis. When I talked to them, I found them saying that they are neither Nepali nor Bhutanese and also not Dutch; thus, they do not know their own identity or belongingness; however, I think they are more Dutch like me and feel at home here than they used to feel at Nepal"* said Ran (25).

All the participants in this research have demonstrated that there have been transformations in their life's cultural aspects due to their social networking with other ethnic communities, especially the Dutch community. It showed that younger people mainly engage more in social networking activities than older people; as a result, they formed more hybrid identities than the older participants.

With so many social networking activities taking place in the community, the research found that such networking certainly plays a more significant role in making the hybrid identity of the members of BCN. Refugees' economic, social, political, and cultural relationships in their host countries are key influences in identity formation (Khalidi, 2010).

The speed of mixing between the members of different cultures can expedite the formation of those people's hybrid identities; such mixing is called intercultural contact (Sayegh,2008). This study found that younger members of BCN have developed vast social networking, and thus they develop a hybrid identity much quicker than older people.

This research also found that an individual's age can determine the speed of the hybrid identity formation; the younger develops a hybrid identity faster than the older.

The study found that changes in those cultural aspects due to social networking are forming a hybrid identity among BCN members. These findings aptly proved Hall's theory that our identity is ingrained in social relationships, interactions, and discourses and depends on various outside factors (Hall, 1990). Bhabha's (1994) theory that an individual's culture is always fluid and is always in motion, regularly added and transforming regularly, thereby making one's identity hybrid, has been proved by this study.

Discussion

This research explored the roles played by social networking towards the formation of hybrid identity among the members of BCN. The researcher belongs to the same community whose members were the participants of this research. Being an insider of this small but closed community, the researcher had the advantage of knowing most of this community member personally. The researcher believed that the cultural identity of the members of BCN had undergone changes, and it has to be studied if social networking with other ethnic communities is the reason for such transformation. Thus this research explored the roles played by the social networking activities of the BCN members in forming their hybrid identity.

This research found that the social networking activities of the members of BCN were mainly responsible for creating their hybrid identity. It was also found that the older members of BCN feel satisfied and do not feel it necessary to engage in social networking with other communities. In contrast, the younger participants expressed that their engagement in everyday life like their job, children's school/extracurricular activities, shopping and schools, their social networking is bound

to be broad. Younger people engage in more social networking activities than older people. The need for social resources for older people is less than the younger people; thus, younger people engage more with society than the older people (Kristine et al., 2001). This research found that the younger members of the BCN, due to their active engagement in social networking activities, have undergone more transformation in their cultural identity than the older members of BCN. In other words, this research found that the formation of the hybrid identity of the young members of BCN was much more intense than the older members of BCN.

This research also found that female members of the BCN are engaging in social networking activities more intensely than male members. The primary reason for these disparities was the roles played by the female members to raise their children and engage with them in their daily activities like accompanying them at their football matches, taking them outside to play, et cetera. Women usually have significantly larger social networks than men (Mclaughlin, 2010). As this issue does not fall under the purview of this research question, the researcher did not feel it relevant to go deep into this male-female composition of social networking activities, leaving it for future researchers to dig into that aspect.

The participants in this research feel comfortable talking about their cultural aspects like cooking, eating, dressing, speaking languages, national identity, and other visible aspects; thus, the researcher focussed only on those aspects while finding the answer to the research question of this study. Therefore, given the magnitude of social networking taking place among BCN members, these cultural aspects were found to have undergone tremendous changes, and such cultural changes are what Bhabha (2016) called Hybrid Identity. These findings aptly proved Hall's theory that an individual's identity is ingrained in social relationships, interactions, and discourses and depends on various outside factors (Hall, 1990). Thus the hybrid identity of individuals will be shared through social networking with the members of other immigrants and the host community.

Conclusion

Resettlement of Bhutanese refugees in the Netherlands started in early 2009 and ended in 2011. A total of 327 Bhutanese refugees were resettled in the Netherlands and permanently housed in various parts of the country. To unite and help each other during their time of need and to promote and preserve their culture and history, these people organised themselves and registered an association named Bhutanese Community in the Netherlands (BCN) in September 2009. On 19 February 2019, BCN organised the 10th anniversary of their resettlement in the Netherlands.

For ten years, the members of BCN underwent tremendous changes in their cultural, economic, social, religious and educational aspects. Having served in various capacities, including the president of BCN, the researcher of this study was well aware of those transformations, specifically those perceptible changes in the cultural identity of the members of BCN.

It is not easy for the members of BCN to adapt and adjust to a complex society like that of the Dutch society because Bhutan, where they came from, is a closed country that even implements the regulations for its citizen's everyday living. Above all, despite language hurdles and vast differences in cultural and religious aspects between the members of BCN and the Dutch community, members of BCN are seen to be culturally transforming at a rapid pace.

Thus this researcher, for his master's thesis, felt the need to investigate whether the members of BCN successfully crossed those hurdles and built enough social networking with the other ethnic community, especially with the Dutch community, thereby forming a hybrid identity. Towards that end, the following research question was formulated: *How is a hybrid identity of the Netherland-based Bhutanese shaped by practices of social networking with other ethnic groups based in the Netherlands?*

To find the answers to the above research question, the researcher conducted 10 semi-structured interviews over one month. The participants of the interviews consisted of male, female, young and old from among the members of BCN. During the interviews, the participants stressed their cultural transformation in clothing, eating, cooking, religion, language, and other cultural aspects because of their active involvement in social networking activities with those of other ethnic communities, especially with the Dutch community.

Though the study found that there are enough social networking activities in the community, the younger members of BCN are much more actively engaged in such activities than the older members of the community. Many social networking activities are taking place in schools, workplaces, football and other extracurricular activities sites, vegetable garden, market places, parks, social media, cultural and religious events, et cetera.

This research also found that most BCN members' social networking activities occur with the ethnic Dutch population. The reason behind this was that almost all BCN members are found to be resettled in the Dutch-dominated localities. Therefore, there are hardly any significant interactions between the other immigrant communities and the BCN members. As a result, this research talked a lot about the relationships between BCN members and the local Dutch community members.

Those involved in more social networking activities have developed much more hybrid identities in terms of their eating, cooking, clothing, religion, language and other cultural aspects of their daily living. Thus because of more social networking activities, the younger members of the BCN demonstrated a tremendous formation of their hybrid identity. In contrast, because of their lesser involvement in the social networking activities, older members of BCN are found to have undergone lesser formation of hybrid identity in their cultural aspects.

Therefore this study not only found the roles played by the individual's age in building social networking, but the formation of one's hybrid identity also depends on the age of the particular individual. The more young an individual is, the more rapidly his or her hybrid identity formation occurs.

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ERASMUS UNIVERSITEIT ROTTERDAM

CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Master's Thesis

Name, email of student: Ram Bahadur Chhetri, 625433rc@student.eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Prof. Willem Schinkel, schinkel@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: February 2021 till June 2022

Is the research study conducted within DPAS   <u>YES</u> - NO

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1.   Does your research involve human participants.   <u>YES</u> - NO

        If 'NO': skip to part V.

        If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research?   YES - <u>NO</u>

Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO) must first be submitted to an accredited medical research ethics committee or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CCMO).

2.   Does your research involve field observations without manipulations
         that will not involve identification of participants.   YES - <u>NO</u>

         If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3.   Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary   data
that has been anonymized by someone else).   YES - <u>NO</u>

         If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1.   Will information about the nature of the study and about what
         participants can expect during the study be withheld from them?   YES - <u>NO</u>

2.   Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written
         'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study?   YES - <u>NO</u>

3.   Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation
         at any time be withheld from participants?   YES - <u>NO</u>

4.   Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants?   YES - <u>NO</u>
         *Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to
         think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study
         is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they
         harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).*

5.   Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or
         negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by
         participants?

6.   Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR
         (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade
         union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying
         a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life
         or sexual orientation)?YES - <u>NO</u>

7.   Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other
         groups that cannot give consent?
         YES - <u>NO</u>

8.   Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study?   YES - <u>NO</u>

9.   Can participants be identified by the study results or can the
         confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured?   YES - <u>NO</u>

10.   Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study?   YES - <u>NO</u>

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

In order to find answers to my research questions participation of the human individual is unavoidable.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

All the participants will be provided with a copy of the final outcome of this research. I will delete all the interviews data soon after my thesis trajectory is over and the final grade is published.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

No.

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.
PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

At the private homes of the participants or any other places of their choice.
Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

10 individuals.
Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

Around 400 individuals
Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

 Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

All the digital data files will be stored in my own laptop that is equipped with a strong password. All other physical items will be stored in my locker equipped with proper lock and key facilities.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I myself will be fully responsible for the immediate day to day management, storage and backup of the data arising from my research.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Once a day

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

All the names will be replaced by some imaginary names. Other personal identifiers will be coded.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: *Ram Bahadur Chhetri*   Name (EUR) supervisor: *Prof. Willem Schinkel*

Date: 16-03-2022   Date: 16-03-2022

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Project Title and version	Master Thesis
Name of Principal Investigator	Ram Bahadur Chhetri
Name of Organisation	Erasmus University Rotterdam
Name of Sponsor	
Purpose of the Study	To study the possible formation of hybrid identity of the Bhutanese people living in the Netherlands as a result of their social networking with other ethnic communities. Therefore I am inviting you to take part in this project. It is solely for the purpose of my master course.
Procedures	The interview will last around 2 hours where you will be asked questions related to your aspects related to cultural identity. A sample question will be sent to you before the interview takes place. You must be at least 18 years old.
Potential and anti-cipated Risks and Discomforts	There are no obvious physical, legal or economic risks associated with participating in this study. You do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. Your participation is voluntary and you are free to discontinue your participation at any time.
Potential Benefits	Participation in this study does not guarantee any beneficial results to you. As a result of participating you may better understand the trends of identity transformation in the course of your living in this country.

Sharing the results	The final outcome of this research will be the property of Erasmus University Rotterdam. A final copy of it will be handed over to you soon after it is accepted.
Confidentiality	Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. This research project involves making audio recordings of interviews with you. Transcribed segments from the audio recordings will be used for the thesis. In this case pseudonyms will be used. The audio recordings, forms, and other documents created or collected as part of this study will be stored in a password-protected computers and will be destroyed soon after the purpose of this study is fulfilled.
Right to Withdraw and Questions	Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalised or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify. If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, feel free to contact me in my email: karkiram90@hotmail.com.
Statement of Consent	Your signature indicates that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree that you will participate in this research study. You will receive a copy of this signed consent form. If you agree to participate, please sign your name below.

Audio recording
 	
(if applicable)
	I consent to have my interview audio recorded
	  ☐ yes
	  ☐ no

Secondary use (if applicable)	I consent to have the anonymised data be used for secondary analysis ☐ yes ☐ no	
Signature and Date	**NAME PARTICIPANT**	**NAME PRINCIPAL INVESTIGA-TOR**
	SIGNATURE	**SIGNATURE**
	DATE	**DATE**