



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI
SHORT ABSTRACT OF THESIS

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SHORT ABSTRACT

Student mobilization has been an important aspect of social movement studies. Student mobilizations for political reforms have taken place in different parts of the world. The student movements of Hong Kong and Taiwan for political and economic reforms have renewed the interest of studying student mobilization in the contemporary period. Comparative perspective of student mobilization and the state responses holds importance for theoretical and empirical research.

In Northeastern part of India, student organizations have been involved in contentious politics concerning the identity of indigenous people and citizenship. Mobilization of student organizations in the region is based on citizenship frame. This study uses citizenship as a popular frame for mobilization following social movement literature by taking two case studies. This dissertation examines the two cases of student-led mobilization concerned on citizenship issues in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

Student organizations claiming to represent the indigenous people of the region mobilized due to perceived threats to identity. This study focuses on the framing processes of student mobilization in the northeastern states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh on the issues of citizenship of illegal immigrants and refugees. Student mobilization has resulted in contentious politics in the region.

Demands for identification, disenfranchisement and expulsion of foreign nationals were raised by All Assam Students' Union (AASU) since the late 1970s. Similarly, there has been opposition from All Arunachal Pradesh Students' Union (AAPSU) in Arunachal Pradesh against the process of granting Indian citizenship rights to refugees expressing threats to indigenous identity and socio-economic concerns.

Student-led mobilization adopted various tactics and strategies to oppose the citizenship of refugees and illegal immigrants. Student movements have influenced the local politics of the states in the process. In the course of mobilization-led by the student organizations in these states, the state and movement organizations interact in different ways. This study thus focuses on the nature of state responses to student-led mobilization. Using political opportunity structure from social movement literature, this study examines the varying responses of the state in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh on the citizenship issues raised by the student organizations.

The study has been conducted following a qualitative approach. The process of data collection constitutes in-depth interviews with people associated with student organizations and refugee groups mobilizing to secure Indian citizenship in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Multiple techniques of data collection have been applied to understand the social movements led by the student organizations in the two states. The student mobilizations in both the states have been analyzed with the help of data from media sources, interviews, published government reports, pamphlets and memorandum of student organizations and judicial judgments linked to the issues of identity and citizenship rights.