

**INDIAN DIASPORA IN UNITED KINGDOM:
IDENTITY AND ADAPTATION
(A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS)**

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled “**INDIAN DIASPORA IN UNITED KINGDOM: IDENTITY AND ADAPTATION (A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS)**”, submitted by SHAIENDRA KUMAR in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY, of Jawaharlal Nehru University. This dissertation has not been previously submitted for the award of any degree to this or any other university, and is his original work.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Migration and Emergence of Diaspora

The present study is a modest attempt to understand and analyse the process of identity formation and cultural adaptation among Indian immigrants in United Kingdom (U.K.). The Indian diaspora in U.K. is considered to be the oldest. Indian diaspora is some three hundred years old. Indians started migrating as coolies and industrial workers, in a racially hostile social milieu of U.K. Yet they not only adapted in the alien culture of alien society, but they have carved out a dignified identity for themselves. The Indians have maintained strong ties with their country of origin and have successfully used their traditional institutions like caste, family, kinship, religion etc. in consolidating their socio-economic and political status in host society. Therefore, the study focuses on the cultural dynamics in Indian Diaspora and deals with the questions of Indian emigrants in U.K. The processes of cultural persistence and adaptation among Indian families, uneven inclusion and exclusion of Indians, and the phenomena of sandwiched culture, including race, ethnicity, and dynamics of language within Indian diaspora has also been discussed in the present study. However, thrust in the study is on the question of the cultural adaptation and change in Indian Diaspora in U.K. with specific reference to contestation of identity among Indians in U.K.

Migration and dispersion are natural phenomena prevalent both in the plants and animal kingdom alike. Human society is no exception. Human beings have been experiencing temporary, seasonal or permanent migration from their original habitats since time immemorial. The reasons may vary from natural vagaries to political, ethnic, religious persecution to economic pursuit for a better living conditions and environment (Jayaram, 2004). Migration does not mean mere physical movement of people. Migrants carry with them a socio-cultural baggage which consists among other things of a predefined social identity, a set of religious beliefs and practices, a framework of norms and values governing family and kinship organization, and food

habits, and language. More important, the migrants are not inevitably irrevocably cut off completely from the land of their breed. They themselves may retain physical and/or mental contact with their homeland, often characterized by what is called “the myth of return” (Saffron, 1991).

Migration has been responsible for the emergence of any diaspora. Significant others of migrants, their folk back in the homeland as well as sections of the population in their land of adoption, may identify them as originating from and/or belonging to their homeland. This facet of migration has important implications for the formation of ethnicity among a migrant community and its relationship with other ethnic groups. The phenomena surrounding such human migration are best conceptualized under the rubric of diaspora (Jayaram, 2004, p-15). Societies with large or significant sections of immigrant population are social laboratories where the salient theoretical perspectives of social science disciplines can be tested. Diasporic situations enable us to trace and analyse certain key social processes like the formation of ethnic identity, the shaping of ethnic relations, the reconstitution of social institutions, the reconstruction of life-worlds, etc. Since Diasporic situations require interaction of cultures, they provide unique avenues for understanding the dynamics of culture (Jayaram, 2004).

Diaspora: Meaning and Perspectives

Etymologically, the term Diaspora is derived from the Greek composite verb *dia* and *speirein* (infinitive), literally meaning ‘to scatter’, ‘to spread’, or ‘to disperse’. Jayaram (2004) argues that, in contemporary scenario the term is applied to describe any group of people or ethnic population forced or induced to leave their traditional ethnic homelands; being dispersed throughout other parts of the world, and the ensuing developments in their dispersal and culture (Jayaram, 2004 p-16). In the beginning, the term Diaspora (capitalized) was used by the Ancient Greeks to refer to citizens of a grand city who migrated to a conquered land with the purpose of colonization to assimilate the territory into the empire. The original meaning was cut off from the present meaning when the Old Testament was translated to Greek; the word diaspora was used to refer specifically to the populations of Jews exiled from Judea in 586 BC by the Babylonians, and Jerusalem in AD 136 by the Roman Empire. This term is used interchangeably to refer to the historical movements of the dispersed

ethnic population of Israel, the cultural development of that population, or the population itself. The probable origin of the word is the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy 28:25, “thou shalt be a dispersion in all kingdoms of the earth”. The term was assimilated from Greek into English in the late 20th century (Jayaram, 2004).

According to Jayaram (2004), there are four well known Diaspora in the world – the Jewish, the Irish, the Chinese and the Indians. Diasporic community is a metaphoric designation for several categories of people, for example expatriates, political refugees, immigrants, racial minorities and so on. In terms of numbers, the Indian Diaspora is smaller than that of the Chinese and the Jewish, but it is perhaps the most widespread amongst them all. The Indian Diaspora consists of People of Indian Origin (PIO) and Non-resident Indians. The status of PIOs is determined as per the provisions of the Article 8 in (Part II – Citizenship) the Constitution of India and the provisions under the Citizenship Act, 1955 (Bakshi, 2005; Kashyap, 2005). PIOs are the people who have adopted the Citizenship of the host society, but are eligible for the acquisition of Indian Citizenship as per the provisions of the Constitution of India and the Citizenship Act, 1955. Non-resident Indians are the Citizens of India and holds the Indian Passport and ordinarily work, reside or stay out of the country for significant period in a year.

Categories of Migration of Indians

The Indian Diaspora is the third largest diaspora, next only to the British and the Chinese in that order. Indians/People of Indian origin (PIOs) are found in all continents. In Mauritius the PIOs are the single largest ethnic group (70.10 percent). In countries namely Fiji (47.75 percent), Surinam (35.90 percent), Trinidad and Tobago (35.25 percent), Guyana (30.30 percent), and Nepal (27.12 percent) they form a substantial proportion of host country’s population. They have a large presence in the United Arab Emirates (16.55 percent), Qatar (15.76 percent), Oman (14.29 percent), Bahrain (11.16 percent), Malaysia (7.07 percent), Sri Lanka (6.28 percent) and Kuwait (5.88 percent). Several other countries have significant presence of Indians/PIOs (Chandraseskharan, 2006).

Even though the history of Indian Diaspora dates back to the pre-Christian era, large-scale emigration of Indians took place mainly in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The 19th and early part of the 20th centuries witnessed unprecedented emigration of indentured and other labourers, traders, professionals and employees of the British government to the British, French and Dutch colonies in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. According to Jayaram (2004), during the post-World War II period there was far-reaching emigration of Indians (mainly professionals) to the developed countries namely England, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. During the oil boom in the 1970s and 1980s millions of Indians migrated to the Gulf and west Asian countries (Jayaram, 2004).

Jayaram (2004) suggests that Indian Diaspora has a long history. It consist of ancient maritime adventurers, the 19th century indentured labour to the African, Caribbean and Australian plantations, the contract labourers in the Gulf countries and more recently prosperous businessmen, technocrats, professionals and other settlers. They belong from the first to the fifth generation of migrants. The profile of the migrants has changed from bonded labour and shopkeepers in the beginning to the professional elite in the recent years. They have mostly migrated to the U.S.A. and U.K., with smaller numbers going to Australia, Canada, South-East Asia and the Middle East.

A casual report on Indian Diaspora emphasises that Indians are found in 136 countries numbering more than 20 millions. Many of the Indians besides being leading professionals have also made a mark in the political structures in their host countries. In the beginning of the millennium there were three Presidents, two Prime Ministers and over 300 legislators of Indian origin all over the world (www.nri-worldwide.com). Roughly two-third of them are PIOs i.e. they have adopted the citizenship of the countries of domicile and the rest one-third still carry the Indian passport.

As far as economic status of Indian Diaspora is concerned the Indians living abroad have a net worth of more than US \$ 300 billion (Rs. 14,50,000 crores) a figure comparable to the GDP of India. India has also benefited by this newfound prosperity of overseas Indians. Over the years, remittances from the Indians abroad have also increased considerably. According to the World Bank statistics the Indian workers remittances to the country touched US \$ 23 billion in 2004 as against US \$ 17.4 billion in the year 2003 (Global Economic Prospectus, 2006; World Bank).

According to Jain (1993), Indian migrants can be classified into two broad categories: "Overseas emigration in the nineteenth century" and "Twentieth century migration to industrially developed countries" (Jain 1993: Contents). Firstly, in the early 19th century after the abolition of slavery in 1833 in Africa, the colonial powers were in need of cheap labour. The cheap Indian indentured labour was sent to countries like Mauritius (1834), British Guyana (1838), Suriname, South Africa (1860), Trinidad and Tobago, and Fiji (1879). Other group was sent to Srilanka and Malaysia under the Kangani system. During the period of 1834 to 1916, almost 5 million Indians migrated to these countries. These migrants had to undergo severe hardships in adjusting to the strange environment and they worked hard and contributed to the development of the countries of adoption. During the colonial period the migration to Britain was confined to the upper class visiting for the purpose of western education.

The second category of migration of Indians emerged after the Second World War and Indian independence in 1947. Because of this new Indian Diaspora took shape. It is a fact that during 19th and early 20th century, Indians were seen as cheap but hard-working basic labourers in European colonies. This image and identity of Indians continued even after India gained its independence and joined the League of Nations. Therefore Indian emigrants were preferred to provide the same services for the European colonizers. Broadly there are 3 patterns of migration of Indians in the post independence era: (a) the emigration of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England, (b) the emigration of professionals to the industrially advanced countries like the USA, England, Canada, and (c) the emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia (Jayaram, 2004, p-21).

Indian emigration during the 19th and early 20th centuries to the British, French and Dutch colonies was unprecedented. The emigration of about 28 million Indians between 1846 and 1932 was a consequence of vast colonial expansion, especially by the British Empire. Indian emigration during this period was more than that of any other country. But large proportion of those who emigrated eventually returned. There were two types of emigration that took place during this period. They are: (i) emigration of contract labourers under the 'indenture system', (ii) 'Kangani' system; and (iii) 'free' or 'passage' emigration of traders, clerks, bureaucrats and professionals (Jayaram, 2004).

The British slave trade was abolished in 1807. The institution of slavery was abolished in the British Empire with the Act of Emancipation of 1834 (Tinker, 1974). In 1846, slavery was abolished in the French colonies and in 1873, in the Dutch colonies. The emancipation of slaves in 1838 led to severe shortage of labourers working in sugar, coffee, tea, cocoa, rice and rubber plantations in the colonies. The British colonists were impressed by the example of Latin American and Cuban colonists who had imported Chinese labourers from Macao, a Portuguese settlement, to work on their plantations (Campbell, 1969). Indians at that time were employed in public works-roads, harbours, offices and jails in various colonies and as slaves and convicted prisoners (Sandhu, 1969: 132-140; Tinker, 1974:44-46).

The plantation owners worldwide succeeded in bringing pressure on the British colonial authorities in introducing the system of indentured Indian immigration based at Calcutta and Madras. Following the abolition of slavery in French and Dutch colonies they also reached agreements with British authorities in India to obtain labourers under the same system. Indenture was a signed contract to work for a given employer for five years, performing the tasks assigned to him. During this period the labour received a basic pay, accommodation, food rations and medical facilities. At the end of the five years, the emigrant was free to reindenture or to work elsewhere in the colony, and at the end of ten years, depending on the contract, he was entitled to a free or partly paid return passage to India or a piece of crown land in lieu of the fare (Jain, 1993; Clarke 1990).

The work performed by the indentured was strenuous and exacting, and therefore, young and physically fit, preferably men were recruited. The indentured were very rarely more than thirty years old, and the vast majority were between twenty and twenty-five years. Jamaica, Trinidad, Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana, Natal and Surinam governments had maintained emigration agencies in Calcutta and some in Madras as well. Majority of the recruits were young males and females were few. Although the Government of India, supported by the Colonial Office, stipulated that there should be forty women for every hundred men, it was not followed because of non-utility of women for the recruiters (Lal, 2000). The shortage of women affected both indentured and free labourers. The increasing cost of Indian immigration was a major reason for the reluctance of the planters in importing women and children (Lal, 2000). The migrants volunteered as individuals. Emigration of family units or caste

groups or village communities was rare (Jain, 1993:6). Under the indenture system some 1.5 million persons migrated. The indenture system was terminated in 1917, due to the anti-indentureship campaign led by Indian nationalists.

According to Jain (1993), another system prevalent to get the contract labour mainly to the tea plantations of Ceylon and rubber plantations of Malaysia was Kangani system. The word Kangani is an anglicized form of the Tamil word '*Kankani*' meaning overseer or foreman. The Kanganis were Indians who were employed by the plantation owners to recruit labourers in India. Kanganis were men with some capital who advanced money to the prospective coolies for travelling and settling down on a plantation (Jain, 1970:199). The Maistry system used to acquire labourers for plantations in Burma was more or less similar to the Kangani system except that the former was characterized by a gradation of middlemen-employers (the labour contractor, the head Maistry, the charge Maistry and the gang Maistry) and the innumerable deductions. In contradiction to indentured labourers, coolies under these systems were largely free. There was no contract and no fixed period of service (Jain, 1989:162). During the period 1852 and 1937 1.5 million Indians went to Ceylon, 2 million to Malaysia and 2.5 million to Burma (Davis, 1951:104). Since these colonies were situated not far from India, majority of the migrants returned home after serving as plantation labourers.

After 1920, the Kangani emigration gradually gave way to individual or un-recruited migration due to fall in demand for Indian labour. The Sastri Report of 1936 brought about the formal abolition of Kangani plantation recruiting (Thompson, 1943:122). Most of the indentured migrants came from the states of Bihar and Northwest Provinces (today's Uttar Pradesh). All the Kangani and Maistry labourers and a small proportion of indentured labourers came from the Tamil and Telugu speaking areas of Madras Presidency. The Calcutta Emigration Reports says that among the labourers 86 percent were Hindus, and 14 percent Muslims (Saha 1970:34). Muslims' proportion among traders and administrators was considerable.

The third type of migration of traders and artisans took place to the east African countries namely Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Natal (South Africa), Mauritius, Burma, Malaysia and Fiji during the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth

centuries, was known as “Free” or “Passage” migration (Tinker, 1974). They were mainly petty contractors, bankers, shopkeepers, merchants, clerks, entrepreneurs and professionals. They mainly catered to the indentured labourers working in those colonies. Unlike the indentured labourers who belonged to mainly lower castes, the traders belonged to the upper castes. They included Baniyas from United Provinces, Marwaris from Rajputana, Chettiars from Madras and Pathans from Northwest, Gujaratis from Bombay and Punjabis. Clerks and administrators were recruited by the British government to work in the overseas territories in Southeast Asia, and East and South Africa. Tinker calls them ‘imperial auxiliaries’ (Tinker, 1974).

Twentieth Century Emigration

During last century emigration from India has been mainly to the North America, Oceania, Europe and West Asia. This was mainly a post – Second World War phenomenon. Phenomenal changes in the political and economic scenario of the receiving and sending countries led to their new wave of international migration. There was a shift during this period in the direction and magnitude of internal migration and composition of the migrants. The history of emigration from India and other Asian countries to the four English speaking countries namely the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, has been similar. During the mid-nineteenth century there was a substantial migration of Chinese gold diggers to the gold fields of California, British Columbia, the east coast of Australia and the west coast of New Zealand. This led to white agitation in all the four countries which ultimately led to restrictions on their immigration by the late 1880s. During the period 1897-1924 legislations were enacted in these countries to prevent the Asian immigration. The restrictions were in force until the 1950s and 1960. During this period the chief flows to these countries were from Europe. An important turning point occurred during the early 1960s marking the beginning of a new phase. In the 1960s, these restrictions were removed from these countries and Asians were allowed to immigrate. Today, Asians constitute an appreciable element in all these four countries (Price 1987:175).

After analysing the emigration of Indians world over let us analyze the specific case of emigration to U.K. Even though emigration of Indians to the United

Kingdom has a history of about three hundred years, large-scale emigration of Indians and PIOs from various British colonies took place during the post-World War II period.

Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom

Various reports explain that after independence, an estimated 1.8 million Indians, from a representative cross sample of Indian society, emigrated overseas, the largest share (70%) settling in Britain. The United Kingdom has a large population of people of Indian origin (955,000 in 1992) constituting 1.39 percent of the country's population. The Indian population has been part of Britain for almost 300 years. During the period of the British Empire Indians were seamen, domestic servants, politicians, barristers, doctors and social celebrities (Visram, 1986). Prior to the 1950s, Indians in Britain were a middle-class group with a preponderance of doctors (Kondapi, 1949), students (Kanitkar, 1972) and international businessmen (Desai, 1963). However, emigration to the United Kingdom started in the 1950s. Between 1955 and 1962, 146,300 Indian and Pakistani workers entered Britain, the timing of their migration being influenced by the varying fortunes of the UK's economy (Robinson, 1980). Those who migrated were construction or dockyard workers. During the earlier years of immigration males outnumbered females (The ratio was 3:2 or 5:3) (Tinker 1977:165).

Indian professionals, emigrating in the search for better living conditions and higher wages also came to form a highly visible presence in scientific research, university faculties, and a large variety of small businesses. At present there are more than 1.5 million Indians in U.K. constituting about 1.5% of the total population. Half of them have adopted the citizenship of Britain and rest are still carrying the Indian passport. However, in 1962, the British government imposed restrictions on unskilled labour migration which fundamentally altered both the nature of South Asian migration and the permanence of resulting settlement. Despite the modification of British immigration laws to limit the immigration of all but the most highly skilled Indians, the Indian community of Britain continued its rapid growth, even after the transformation of the United Kingdom into the Confederation of the Isles. Migration was increasingly of (female) dependents and for marriage, and South Asian settlement became more permanent and family oriented.

During the 1960s and 1970s, large number of Indians migrated to the U.K. from East Africa. One out of every four of the Indians and Pakistanis in Britain has arrived via East Africa. In the late 1970s, according to Yash Tandon, there were more than 200,000 Asians from East Africa in Britain (Tandon: 31). Considerable East Asian migrants with capital started commercial enterprises in Britain. Britain also has a small number of East Indians migrated from Caribbean, Mauritius and South Africa. The population of Asians living in Britain after the World War II was 7,000. During the next thirty years the Asian population grew a hundred fold. The number of immigrants was highest during the decade 1960-70. In all, 196,395 Indians (107,190 males and 89,205 females) and 53,835 Kenyan Asians (28,900 males and 24,935 females) emigrated (Tinker, 1977:169). The size of the immigrants during the 1950s was small. About 47,500 persons from India (30,500 males and 27,000 females) and 14,500 from Pakistan (12,800 males and 17,000 females) emigrated to Britain during the 1950s (Tinker 1977:167). The early migrants were mainly Sikhs. The later migrants were mainly Gujaratis and Punjabis. The Indians and other Asians were absorbed mainly in the older labour intensive industries which were unable to obtain workers at the low rates of pay which were traditional.

In the Indian community, 57 percent of male workers were on manual work. The remainder of the Indians were found in a broad band of occupations: 6.6 percent being employers or managers, 10.5 percent being professional people, 18.9 percent shop assistants and office workers, and 2.4 percent serving in the armed forces (Tinker, 1977:176). A high proportion of Indian women also work in various industries. Since the late 1960s Indians are being employed in banks, department stores, insurance companies etc. Many Indian doctors are employed in hospitals. Their occupational distribution is now closer to that of the white British population. Indians are concentrated in the London Area and in the Southeast. Over the issue Robinson (1990: 194) writes eloquently, "The shift to a post-industrial society has strengthened the position of certain Asians who are clearly members of upwardly mobile and increasingly affluent 'new' class, which some commentators feel now exists. Other south Asians have not been so fortunate. They have seen their already weak position progressively undermined by social and economic change. For them, the post-industrial future is bleak, caught as they are on the wrong end of a new international division of labour in a country that does not care".

Process of Social Adjustment of Indian Immigrants in Britain

G S Aurora (2004) analyses the process of social adjustment by the Indian immigrants of Sikh community in the foreign social environment of Britain. Considering that they were the first generation immigrants, they were keen to avoid conflicts with the host society, and if possible to get assimilated into it. It gives deep insights on how the immigrants adjust to their new environment. He looks at the residential patterns, social intercourse, habits, inter and intra community relations, contest for an identity and adjustments and so on. British was a progressive community of over 55,000 inhabitants with all the amenities and it is famous for its industries of saddle making to civil engineering. Since 1951, it had been host to the community of Punjabi speaking Sikh community, most of them employed in the various industries (Aurora, 1976).

Aurora (1976) depicts the residential pattern of the Sikh Diaspora also. According to him the residential pattern was divided into two groups – lower working class group near factories and railways, and the locality of middleclass away from centre consisting of single/double storeys buildings. The property ownership had a great bearing on the behaviour of the immigrants; sometimes they imitated host society and sometimes rejected it. The class differences are also reflected in various idioms of culture, for example dress pattern, visiting a bar and so on. Most of them followed strict conditionalities in home structure.

Indian immigrants were heterogeneous in their caste background consisting of Chamars, Rias, Khattris, Brahmins and so on (Kumar, 2004). There was also a pronounced class orientation like ex-government servants – teachers, patwaris, retired police officials and so on. But English educated section played an important role as peacemaker through deliberate attempt and by making an adjustment with the host society. Most of them were employed and adjusted easily as they came from a background on unskilled hard labour. But there were problems from the employers' side as Britishers did not like them much due to their racial snobbishness and arrogance. The lack of knowledge of the English language was also a common problem which thwarted the communication. The skilled and educated immigrants were easily absorbed in the market.

In terms of social processes there was accretion/ transformation of the groups. The primary group consisted of the family, closely related, distantly related and even

unrelated kins. The decision to migrate was taken by the family rather than the individual in homeland. The departure from the homeland was an important social process. It was an extension of Punjabi foreign community in Britain. Punjabi community lived like a tribe or a community. The Punjabi brotherhood was more important than any other primary face to face relations. The primary relationships were reciprocal and an end in itself, whereas secondary relationships were the means to an end. It indicates a symbolic relationship (Aurora, 1976).

The great majority of Indians were accommodationist as they adopted the policy of ad-hoc accommodation with host population. The aim was to adjust their cultural behaviour with host society. But the adjustment was to the extent that their identity was not eroded. It was not motivated by the feeling of identification with the host society. The primary aim was to fulfil economic goals. Acculturation took place in terms of dress, food habits and so on. Migrants belonged from the rural and uneducated background which increased the gulf with the host society.

Indian Diaspora: Contemporary Scenario

In the last decade or so, the Indian community abroad has become more visible internationally and a large number of them are first generation migrants who have become great achievers in their area of expertise. Many of the Indians besides being leading professionals have also made a mark in the political structures in their host countries. As stated previously the profile of the migrants has changed from bonded labour and shopkeepers in the beginning to professional elite in recent times. They have mostly migrated to the USA, U.K., with smaller numbers going to Australia, Canada, South-East Asia and the Middle East in recent years. This visibility is not confined to its native land or the host society only, but has transnational character. The phenomenon of global citizenship emerges which transcends the national and cultural boundaries. Indians like Amartya Sen, Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Laxmi Mittal, Bhikhu Parekh and many more do transcend the national boundaries and acquire a global citizenship and cultural ethos. Some of the recent studies by Kumar, Tatla, Dubey, Vertovec, Jayaram, Jain, and others provide rich information and analysis of the processes going within the Indian diasporic communities in recent times.

Indian Diaspora has a net worth of more than US \$ 300 billion (Rs. 14,50,000 crores) a figure comparable to the GDP of India. India has also benefited by this newfound prosperity of overseas Indians in terms of remittances to the tunes of US \$ 23 billion in 2004. Besides, they have also made a mark in the political structures in their host countries. Realising their importance the government of India has started celebrating 'Pravasi Bharatiya Divas' and honouring them. To tap the vast resources, both human and capital of Indian Diaspora Indian Diaspora has started the policy of issuance of 'PIO Cards' and granting 'Dual Citizenship'. Know India Programme organised by High Commission of India in U.K. is an effort by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to help the Indian Diaspora to know about their cultural roots and create a sense of belongingness and attachment with India (www.hcilondon.net). They have maintained their group cohesiveness and built networks that span across countries.

Indian Diaspora: Formation of an Identity

The term identity derives from the Latin root '*idem*' meaning sameness and continuity. Discussions of identity take two major forms – psychodynamic and sociological. These assume a unique core or essence to identity – the 'real me' – which is coherent and remains more or less the same throughout life. The sociological tradition of identity theory is linked to Symbolic Interactionism and emerges from the pragmatic theory of the 'Self' discussed by William James and George Herbert Mead. The 'self' is a distinctively human capacity which enables people to reflect on their nature and the social world through communication and language. In the later works of Erving Goffman and Peter Berger, 'identity is socially bestowed, socially sustained and socially transformed' (Marshall, 2004, pp 293-95).

Seen in the light of the above, in sociology, the concept of identity is explained with reference to one's sense of self, and one's feelings and ideas about oneself. It is assumed that our identity comes from the expectations attached to the social roles that we occupy, and which we then internalize through the process of socialization. It is also assumed that we construct our identities more actively out of the materials presented to us during socialization or in our various roles (Marshall, 2004, pp 293-95).

In recent years, the concept of identity hangs loosely and precariously in the domain of culture and politics. In addition, the local contexts of study determine our individuation of cultural phenomena quite variously. This makes us confront with the question of existential identity (Saffron, 1991). In Bernard Williams's traditional 'ethical theory', identity remains non-negotiable and existentialists' integrity of the self obscures the intention of conflict. This is like an ordinary conflict between any two set of values (i.e. conflict between moral truth and falsity or as in this case between the culture of homeland and the host society). Accordingly, we will evaluate the process of identity formation of Indians in Diaspora.

If we evaluate the process of crystallisation of identity among the Indians in Diaspora or Indian Diaspora then we have to evaluate it with reference to historical nature of Indian Diaspora. We all know that Indian Diaspora has a long history. Tinker (1977) argues that, Indian Diaspora's auxiliary role within the host society and varying attitude of its members range from integrationist to particularistic. Its largely forgotten history encompasses narratives of displacement, migration, and the cross-fertilization of ideas in the Indian diaspora. The emergence of new cultural forms and practices are increasingly being viewed as an important and intrinsic part of the story of processes related to modernity and processes of globalization, trans-national economic and cultural exchanges, and hybrid forms of political, cultural, and social identity.

According to Vertovec (1990), having almost unique socio-cultural histories and being subjected to different economic and political situations, the Indian communities abroad have evolved distinct diasporic entities. They are nevertheless Indian as they manifest in varying degrees of the survival, persistence or retention of several social patterns and cultural elements whose roots and substance can be traced to India. In some of these communities, for various reasons, conscious efforts are being made to revive some of these patterns and elements - a kind of "renaissance" of Indian culture, as declared by some diasporic Indians (Vertovec 1990). Living in multicultural societies and being characterized by an ethnic identity, the Indian communities abroad have been invariably required to negotiate the problem of ethnicity. They have been engaged in active economic and cultural competitions. They have experienced ethnic discrimination, either explicit or covert. Sometimes they have been even involved in ethnic conflict and political struggles. All these phenomenon have helped in the process of identity formation of Indian diaspora in the host countries.

In the last decade or so, the Indian community abroad has become more visible internationally and a large number of them are first generation migrants who have become great achievers in their areas of expertise. Their listing in fortune magazines and presence in political and public space in the countries of their adoption have brought them fame and made India proud. In the present day of globalisation and increasing sophistication of communications, world associations and organisations like GOPIO (Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin) have helped in creating pan Indian identity.

Statement of the Problem

In the light of the above arguments, the researcher has broadly analysed the socio-cultural dynamics in the Indian Diaspora with focus on cultural identity and their integration in host society. The study has also analysed the impact of structural changes on them and attachment to their homeland. In addition, it looks at the questions like – What role does culture play in the formation of new identities in a new place? How and why the cultures are preserved among the Diasporic communities? What is the socio-cultural dynamics between the Indian Diaspora and the host society? What is the dialectics between transcendence of the geographical, cultural and national boundaries of global village and the resurgence of cultural nationalism? We have also probed in the present study how Indians use their identities and symbols for their assertion in the political economy of a globalized world? What is the role of political economy for their homeland and host society? How do they balance their cultural and politico-economic interests in a global village?

Hypothesis

The socio-cultural roots help in the adaptation and formation of identity among the Diasporic communities in distant lands.

Objectives

- To study broadly the socio-cultural dynamics of the Indian Diaspora with the host society.
- The role of culture in formation of new identities.

- The preservation of culture among the Diasporic communities and its influence on identity formation.
- The use of Indian identities and symbols for assertion in the political economy of a globalized world.
- The role of political economy for their homeland and host society.
- The balance between their cultural and politico-economic interests in a global village.

Methodology

The nature of the study is historical and exploratory in which qualitative, quantitative and secondary data has been analysed. The historical sociology is sociological analysis based on historical data sources – either primary (such as original documents in archives) or secondary (the written history produced by historians themselves). Abrahams argues that ‘history and sociology are, and always have been the same thing’, so that any dispute about their relationship to each other was merely a matter of prevailing institutional arrangements rather than one of intellectual substance (Marshall, 2004). Giddens argues that history tends to be individualizing (ideographic) and to describe singular or unique phenomena, whereas sociology is generalizing (nomothetic) in formulating theories that apply to categories of phenomena. This is a matter of emphasis rather than a hard-and-fast principle of method, since ‘there simply are no logical or even methodological distinctions between the social sciences and history – appropriately conceived. The common objective of practitioners in both disciplines is a causal analysis of the meaningful behaviour of individuals and groups, with a proper appreciation of process, context and change (Marshall, 2004).

Sources of Data Collection

Major sources of data collection are secondary. The secondary sources of data like surveys reports, interviews of experts, books, journals, newspapers, articles, contemporary records, documentary sources – government reports as well as reports of organizations have been consulted. The resources available in various libraries in Delhi and concerned embassy etc. as well as relevant material from numerous Internet sites have also been used in this study.

Chapters Scheme

1. Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the topic and conceptual explanations. Besides, this chapter briefly highlights the history of the migration of Indians to different countries. It also deals with process of adaptation of Indian communities in host society. Further the chapter defines and analyses in brief the process of formation of identity in Diaspora. This chapter also deals with objectives, methodology and sources of data collection used for the study.

2. Indian Diaspora: A Brief Socio-Historical Profile

Second chapter gives a detailed account of the history of the migration of the Indians towards distant lands since the ancient times to the recent times. The chapter provides fair idea of the duration of the migration and extent of the locations of the migration. This chapter will analyse the various types of migration among Indians. What are the differences and similarities between migration in the ancient and modern period will also be analysed in this chapter. The chapter will also give the numerical strength of the Indian migrants to different countries and the type of their settlement patterns as well.

3. Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom

Chapter three will focus specifically on migration of Indians to U.K. It will analyse at the outset the push and pull factors of migration of Indians to U.K. The demographic profile of the migrants along with their population in U.K. will be probed here. The professional difference between pre and post world war migrant Indians and their settlement patterns will also be analysed in this chapter. We will try to highlight the facts about the economic, social and political participation of Indian Diaspora in U.K. Further, the chapter will briefly touch upon the nature of organisations established by the Indian Diaspora.

4. Identity Formation and Adaptation

The fourth chapter will analyse the social, cultural, economic and political adjustments, negotiations and dynamics among the Indians in Britain. It will probe into how the identities are manifested and asserted through various means of social, cultural, religious, political, economic symbols in Diaspora. The chapter

will also analyse how and to what extent the primordial institutions like castes, family, kinship, religion etc help migrants to adopt in a hostile environment and to assert a distinct identity.

5. Conclusion

This chapter summarises and concludes the analysis of Indian migrants in U.K.. The issue of identity is important for individual and communities even in places where the contexts are missing. The migrant communities not only preserve their local identities but also assert in terms of cultural and social symbols.

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CHAPTER 2

*INDIAN DIASPORA:
A BRIEF SOCIO-HISTORICAL
PROFILE*

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Chapter **ii**

Indian Diaspora: A Brief Socio-Historical Profile

In this chapter, we would discuss a brief socio-historical profile of the Indian Diaspora with special reference to the demographic dimensions. In this chapter an attempt has been made to give a glimpse of brief historical, demographic and socio-economic profile of the Indian Diaspora residing in different countries in substantial numbers. According to a rough estimate Indians are found in 136 countries numbering more than 20 millions. Today many of the Indians besides being leading professionals have also made a mark in the political structures in their host countries. For instance, in the beginning of the millennium there were three Presidents, two Prime Ministers and over 300 legislators of Indian origin in different countries of the world (www.nri-worldwide.com). Roughly two-third of them are People of Indian Origin i.e. they have adopted the citizenship of the countries of domicile and the rest one-third still carry the Indian passport.

But to reach this status the Indian migrants have travelled a long arduous and difficult journey. The history of Indian Diaspora dates back to the pre-Christian era. But it is a fact that large-scale emigration of Indians took place mainly in the 19th and 20th centuries. The 19th and early part of the 20th centuries witnessed unprecedented emigration of indentured and other labourers, traders, professionals and employees of the British government to the British, French and Dutch colonies in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. During the post-World War II period there was far-reaching emigration of Indians (mainly professionals) to the developed countries namely England, U.S.A., Canada, Australia and New Zealand. During the oil boom in the 1970s and 1980s, millions of Indians migrated to the Gulf and West Asian countries. According to Saffron (1991), the auxiliary role of Indian Diaspora within the host society ranges from integrationist to particularistic. The history of Indian Diaspora consist of ancient maritime adventurers, the 19th century indentured labour to the African, Caribbean and Australian plantations, the contract labourers in the Gulf countries and more recently prosperous businessmen, technocrats, professionals and other settlers. They belong from the first to the fifth generation of migrants.

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The profile of the Indian migrants has changed from bonded labour and shopkeepers to professional elite. The migration of professional elite is more recent and mostly to USA, UK, with smaller numbers going to Australia, Canada, South-East Asia and the Middle East. United Nations Multilingual Demographic Dictionary defines migration as, 'a form of geographical mobility or spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another, generally involving a change in residence from the place of origin or place of departure to the place of destination or place of arrival'. Migration is the third component of population change, the other two being mortality and fertility. Migration is not a biological variable but operate through social, cultural and economical factors. It is determined by the wishes of the persons involved. It is a response of human organisms to economic, social and demographic forces in the environment.

The migration can take place from rural to urban, small town to metropolitan cities, from one region to another (internal migration) and one nation to another (external migration). The causes of migration involve push and pull factors. The push factors are like high population growth creating population pressure on existing resources, natural calamities like droughts, floods, earthquake, tsunami, famines; and acute social, religious or political conflicts compelling people to migrate to other places for reasons of safety. The pull factors include the allurements of better economic prospects, and career opportunities along with better civic amenities (Husain, 2002). In most of the cases, migrations occur not because of push or pull factors alone but a result of the combined effect of both. The motivational aspects of migration are highly subjective in nature.

Emigration from India during Ancient Period

Here we have discussed in detail the history and causes of migration of Indians in different parts of the world. We will also discuss the systems of migration and the settlement patterns of the immigrants. Indians have a long history of emigration to other parts of the world. India's links with Europe dates back to the tenth century B. C. The Old Testament records of ivory, apes and peacocks which were used for the decoration of the palaces and temple of King Solomon amply suggest this connection (Abraham, 1993: 269). The disciples of Buddha fifty years after his death (483 B. C.) went to the neighbouring countries to spread Buddhism and settled there. King

Ashoka (268-239 B. C.) embraced Buddhism and sent monks to Central and Eastern Asia to spread the gospel of Buddha. For the first time, the whole of South Asia, and beyond, was brought under the influence of one unified political and religious system (Tinker, 1989: 7). Similarly, King Kanishka (1st century AD) was another champion of Buddhism. During his rule Buddhism spread to Southern India, Eastern Iran, Central Asia, China, Greece, Kandahar (now in Afghanistan), South East Asia and Indonesia (Motwani, 1993:33). The monks, who were agents of Buddhism, settled there in the course of spreading Buddhism.

Indians settlements were in existence in the North-eastern Africa at the time of Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.). Alexander was advised by Aristotle to establish a colony of Greeks in Sokotra Island off North-eastern Africa. The army of Alexander conquered the island in which Indians were living (Pankhurst, 1979). The famous work *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* (a first century Greek guide for sailors) mentions that the Indian ships were arriving along the East African coast. Several Indian gold coins found at Dabra Damma, dating from the third century, have established the trade relations between Ethiopia and India. Further, India had a long-standing mercantile connection with this part of the world as a part of the ancient network of the Indian Ocean. Geographical proximity facilitated by the monsoon winds made India for over two thousands years a very important market for gold, ivory, and slaves and the most important source for cotton, cloth, beads and sundry manufactured articles (Desai, 1993:118). The Greek work also mentions India's trade relations with Rome, Malay and China. Arikamedu in Tamil Nadu was a Roman settlement where muslin was made for exporting to Rome.

Arikamedu was also an entreport for ships to Malay and China and carrying Indian goods to Rome. Romila Thapar (1966) attributes Roman use of this port from the first century B. C. to the early second century A.D. The imports from India were luxury items like spices, jewels, textiles, parrots, peacocks and apes. Originally trade with South East Asia was caused by demand for spices which sent Indian merchants as middlemen to Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Cambodia and Borneo which were a treasure-trove of various spices. Bigger trade developed with Indians settling in Southeast Asia with South Indian traders dominating the trade together with prominent merchants from Kalinga and Magadha. During this period trade with China also increased with the use of Chinese cloth and bamboo in India. The routing of China silk through the North-Western towns, Taxila and Broach added to the

prosperity of north-western part of India. Thaper traces the colonization of the Irrawady Delta in Burma and various parts of Java to the Kalingans; and the introduction of Indian culture to Cambodia to an Indian Brahmin named Kaundinya who married a Cambodian prince (Thapar, 1966).

Many other sources suggest presence of permanent settlements of Indian traders along the coast of East Africa. The other dominant trading community was of Arabs. Arabs developed Mogadishu and Mombasa as great trading centres. Indian traders, manufacturers and clove cultivators were concentrated in Zanzibar Island. They were both Hindus (mainly Vaishyas) and Muslims (Ismailis and Bohras). The Venetian traveller Marco Polo has a word of praise for the Gujarati and Saurashtrian merchants on Africa's east coast who he considers as "the best and most honourable that can be found in the world" (Travels of Marco Polo written in 1260 A.D). Vasco de Gama touched East Africa on his historic voyage to India. He reached Malindi in 1497 A.D. and found Indian merchants in Mozambique, Kilwa and Mombasa. He hired a Gujarati mariner named Kanji to take him to the shore of India (Desai, 1989; Samaroo, 1994). The Indian traders had also settled in Aden and the Persian Gulf (Tinker, 1977:2). The abundance of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain that found its way to East Africa during the medieval period did so, for the most part, in Gujarati ships (Hatim, 1983: 66-72).

Indians made their presence felt in East Africa as well. In this context Desai (1989) eloquently writes, "Indian presence on the East African seaboard was quite substantial up to the beginning of the 16th century when the western maritime powers arrived in the Indian Ocean. The use of Indian system of weights and measures and of Indian *cowries* as currency, a great demand for Indian goods, all pointed to the fact that Indians were playing a key role in the area. Indian traders, labourers, adventurers and junior administrators took part in the Portuguese penetration into the interior, thereby further enhancing their presence in the area". Indians lived in China also. This can be argued basically on the basis that Buddhism was brought to China by the year 69 A.D. By the fifth century a large segment of Chinese population had embraced Buddhism. Moreover, Motwani (1993:38) writes, "An account written in A.D 749 refers to the numerous merchants belonging to the Polomen, i.e. Brahmanas of India on the river of Canton. The same account refers to the three Brahmana monasteries at Canton where Brahmanas were residing".

India has more than two thousand years history of cultural and commercial relations with Southeast Asia. Commercial relations had a longer history than cultural contacts. According to Brian Harrison (1966:10), "from at least the sixth century B. C. onwards Indian traders were sailing to those lands, and down through those islands, in search of gold and tin". The first civilized society in Burma that of the Pyu and the Mon was focused upon the south. The capital Srikshetra (Old Prome) was an Indian-style sacred city. The culture was after the Indian pattern, and the script borrowed from south India. This society was overthrown by the Burmese. According to New Webster's Dictionary (1992) Java was colonized by the Hindus between the 1st and 7th century. In the 7th century, Javanese got converted to Hinduism and an elaborate Hindu culture developed there by the 10th century. The Hindu kingdom (8th-13th centuries) covered much of Indonesia. The Chola king Rajaraja the Great (985-1018 AD), conquered the entire South India and extended his hold over Ceylon. Under his son, Rajendra (1018-35 AD), the Chola power reached out to threaten the empire of Sri Vijaya in Java and Sumatra (Sri Vijaya kingdom was founded in Sumatra before the fourth century A.D. and it rose to prominence towards the close of the 7th century A.D.). The Cholas were expelled from Ceylon in 1070 (Tinker, 1989:12). In the 5th century A.D. Hindu kingdoms were formed in Java (Majumdar, 1988).

The people of Java came to share with the Indians their religions, languages, art and architecture, their cultural mores, and legal and political ethos and forms (Aurora, 1982: 119). This area was exposed to "the heaviest Indianisation" (Wales, 1951:195). Majority of the people of Bali Island still practices Hinduism. Brahminical and Buddhist influences spread through the intervening culture areas to islands of Borneo as well as Mindanao and the Vaishyas in the Philippines. They gradually penetrated even to the northernmost island of Luzon. There are traces of Indic influences in the languages, literature and social customs in the Philippines (Rye, 1982:144). In Indo-China, the kingdoms of Fu-nan, Champa, Kambujadesa (Kampuchea), Angkor and Laos were greatly influenced by Indian culture and civilization. From the beginning of the Christian Era, the Indian merchants and adventurers, princes and priests, spread the Indian language and literature, religion and philosophy, art and architecture, customs and manners in these countries, the deep imprint of which is visible even today.

The Indian settlements had been widely spread all over the region by the beginning of the Christian era. Later they grew into small kingdoms. Within two to

three hundred years nearly the whole of Indo-China and Indonesia, comprising Burma, Siam, Malay Peninsula, Cambodia and Annam in the mainland and the islands of Sumatra, Java, Bali, Borneo, Celebes and perhaps many others were dotted over with such kingdoms and settlements of a less organized nature (Majumdar 1955:34-35). Some of these kingdoms like those of Fu-nan and Champa grew very powerful. These contacts lasted for more than a thousand years (Reddi 1982:155). The migration from India to the early states of Southeast Asia involved the limited but important movement of priests and traders. These people were not part of any massive wave of population movement. Instead, by their command of specialist knowledge, they came to fill vitally important roles in the emerging Southeast Asian states and so to implant the Indian cultural contribution to Southeast Asia's historical development. In general, however, the Southeast Asian classical world does not seem to have been one marked by large-scale voluntary migration. A limited but highly important number of Indians settled in the area and made their mark (Osborne 1979:90). For example, Afghanistan had mainly Hindu and Buddhist population and was ruled by the Hindu kings till the end of the seventh century when the Arabs conquered it and people embraced Islam.

The Banjaras (Gypsies) migrated from India in the 10th century to several European countries. The Gypsies are spread all over the Europe. Their population in Europe was about 8 million in 1993 (New York Times, May 5, 1993). Their language Romani has a resemblance to Indian languages. It is spoken in widely varying dialects. Hancock (1993) has explained that, "Romani is spoken by the descendants of a population which left India at the end of the first millennium A.D. and which made its way into Europe via Persia and the Byzantine Empire, arriving there some time during the thirteenth century. The identity of the first population and the circumstances of their exodus have been the subject of scholarly debate since the 1780s. Late twentieth century research, some of it being undertaken in India, suggests strongly that the original population consisted of different Indo-Aryan descent (in particular Dravidians and the Pratihara migrant population who had settled in India from north), out of whom were created Rajput armies to resist the Islamic incursions into India led by Mohammed Ghaznavid. As these armies moved further west, they were again caught up in, and displaced by, the spread of Islam as it overtook the Byzantine Empire. It was the westward movement which pushed the Romani

population up into Europe. The common name Gypsy (like Gitano in Spanish) originates in the misassumption that the population had come from Egypt”

The Chettiars, who were bankers and traders of south India and Ceylon from medieval times, gradually extended their activities to Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Indonesia and Mauritius (Tinker, 1977:3). Before the Portuguese arrival in the Indian Ocean the merchants of Gujarat, Malabar, Coromandel, and Bengal looked to the East, to the Indonesian archipelago, for direct voyages organized with their own shipping and capital. From the sixteenth century the orientation was suddenly reversed and turned westwards, towards the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. Hindu merchants were to be found all through the Middle East in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Chaudhuri, 1985:100).

The Sikh empire was spread up to Peshawar and Khyber. The Gurkhas of Nepal carried out a sub-montane Himalayan empire which stretched from Darjeeling to Shimla. The emigration that took place from India to various parts of the world did not result in any significant permanent settlements overseas.

Indian Emigration during Modern or Colonial Period

We have just discussed the migration of Indians in the Ancient period, where priests, monks and traders etc. migrated to different parts of Asia. Now we will focus the discussion on the migration of Indians in the modern or colonial period. Indian emigration in the modern or colonial period started during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Immigration was restricted to the British, French and Dutch colonies. Between 1846 and 1932, approximately, 28 millions of Indians migrated to different colonies. This happened because of vast colonial expansion, especially by the British Empire. Indian emigration during this period was more than that of any country of which we have record. The unique elements of this emigration were that most of the migrants were males and secondly large population of those who migrated returned to the mother country. The chapter has briefly dealt with the three types of emigration that took place during this period. They are: (i) Emigration of contract labourers under the ‘indenture system’; (ii) ‘Kangani’ system; and (iii) ‘Free’ or ‘Passage’ emigration of traders, clerks, bureaucrats and professionals (Jayaram, 2004).

Emigration of Contract Labourers (Indenture System)

Indenture was a signed contract to work for a given employer for five years, performing the tasks assigned to him. During this period, the labourer received a basic pay, accommodation, food rations and medical facilities. At the end of the five years, the emigrant was free to reindenture or to work elsewhere in the colony, and at the end of ten years, depending on the contract, he was entitled to a free or partly paid return passage to India or a piece of crown land in lieu of the fare (Jain, 1993:6; Clarke, 1990:8). The prospective emigrant had to testify before a magistrate that he understood the terms of the contract. Recruitment of indentured labourers was not done through legitimized manner only. Unscrupulous methods were also used. These included lying, kidnapping by the recruiting men to dupe ignorant country folk in order to get them to offer themselves for indenture (Jain, 1989:25; Gillion 1973:26). According to Lal (2000), the work required from the indentured was strenuous and exacting, and the recruiters sought people who were young and physically fit. The indentured were very rarely more than thirty years old, and the vast majority were between twenty and twenty-five years. Before being allowed to embark each volunteer was medically examined, the unfit were rejected and a detailed report was submitted on those who were accepted. Jamaica, Trinidad, Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana, Natal and Surinam governments had maintained emigration agencies in Calcutta and some in Madras as well. Majority of the recruits were young males and females were few. Most of the indentured labourers came from states like Bihar, North West Frontier Province (now Punjab, Sind and Rajasthan) and United Province (now Uttar Pradesh) (Lal, 2000).

Gender imbalances were seen in the recruitment of indentured labourers in India. Although the Government of India, supported by the Colonial Office, stipulated that there should be forty women for every hundred men, ships often left India with less than this percentage. The shortage of women affected both indentured and free labourers. This shortage of women led to sharing of women which amounted to legal prostitution (Andrews, 1915; Lal, 2000). This led to frequent wife murders by the jealous husbands (British Guiana 1875-1894). Indian plantation life was demoralized and debilitated for many years (Tinker, 1977:5). Although social pathos existed in the emigrant labourers, the planters continued with the policy of gender imbalance among them. Hill (1919) argues that, the increasing cost of Indian immigration was a major

reason for the reluctance of the planters in importing women and children. The migrants volunteered as individuals. Emigration of family units or caste groups or village communities was rare (Jain, 1993:6). Under the indenture system some 1.5 million persons migrated to different countries. The indenture system was terminated in 1917 due to the anti-indentureship campaign led by Indian nationalists. The Viceroy Lord Hardinge (1910-1916), a liberal and humanitarian administrator, took the decision to end indentureship.

After the migration of priest and traders in the ancient period, the most important migration of a population from India in 19th century was of Indian labourers. Indentured labour migration in the 19th century intersects many serious issues of our time – racism, Third World poverty and the arrogance of a great world power. Indenture suggests lack of freedom and the exploitation of people forced into exile or misadventure. It came after the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834, in many respects it can be regarded as a replacement of the slave labour system. Indeed, both humanitarians and officials in the 19th century, and many historians subsequently regarded it merely as a new system of slavery. Herman Merivale points out at the paradox whereby both a white settler society and slavery owed their economic foundations upon the same condition of scarce labour and plentiful land (in Lal, 2000). There is a direct relationship between the availability of cheap land and the scarcity of the labour.

The British slave trade was abolished in 1807. The institution of slavery was abolished in the British Empire with the Act of Emancipation of 1834. In 1846, slavery was abolished in the French colonies and in 1873, in the Dutch colonies. The emancipation of slaves in 1838 led to severe shortage of labourers working in sugar, coffee, tea, cocoa, and rice and rubber plantations in the colonies. The British colonists were impressed by the example of Latin American and Cuban colonists who had imported Chinese labourers from Macao, a Portuguese settlement, to work on their plantations (Campbell, 1969). Indians at that time were employed in public works, roads, harbours, offices and jails in various colonies and as slaves and convicted prisoners (Sandhu, 1969: 132-140; Tinker, 1974:44-46). The plantation owners worldwide succeeded in bringing pressure on the British colonial authorities in introducing the system of indentured Indian immigration based at Calcutta and Madras. Following the abolition of slavery in French and Dutch colonies in 1846 and 1873 respectively, French and Dutch planters also reached agreements with British authorities in India to obtain labourers under the same system (Lal, 2000).

The first wave of Indian indentured emigration started in the 19th century to meet the shortage of labour supply caused by the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1833. The first ship of indentured labour went to Mauritius in 1834 followed by British Guiana in 1838, Trinidad and Jamaica in 1845, small West Indian colonies such as St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada in the 1850s, Natal in 1860, Surinam in 1873 and Fiji in 1879 (Tinker, 1974 ; Lal, 2000). Table – 2.1 shows the year of migration of Indentured labourers to different countries (See below).

Table – 2.1
Year of Beginning of Migration of Indians

S. No.	Country	Year	S. No.	Country	Year
1	Philippines	1762	14	St. Lucia	1856
2	USA	1790	15	St. Vincent	1856
3	Indonesia	1798	16	Natal (South Africa)	1860
4	Mauritius	1834	17	Malay	1860
5	Ceylon	1834	18	St. Kitts	1861
6	Uganda	1834	19	Japan	1872
7	Nigeria	1834	20	Surinam	1872
8	Guyana	1838	21	Jamaica	1873
9	New Zealand	1840	22	Fiji	1879
10	Hong Kong	1841	23	Burma	1885
11	Trinidad and Tobago	1845	24	Canada	1904
12	Martinique and Guadeloupe	1854	25	Thailand	1910
13	Grenada	1856			

Source: Motwani (1994:3); Roberts and Byne (1975:14)

During the 82 years of indentured emigration, over one million Indians were introduced in different British colonies (See below Table – 2.2). They emigrated on the contract whose precise terms varied between the colonies and over time. Most of the migrants had probably intended a short and temporary sojourn to cope with some personal misfortune or economic hardships. Quite a few of the indentured labourers returned back also. By 1870, 21% labourers returned back, while by 1910, 50% returned back to India. However, a major chunk of population was enticed by the prospect of better opportunities in the colonies. There were number of other reasons as well which stopped the indentured labourers to return back to India. For instance official discouragement of repatriation, fear of undertaking a long sea voyage again, settled permanently in the colonies. That is why, social scientists has called indenture a complex institution riddled with contradictions (Tinker, 1974; Lal, 2000).

Table – 2.2
Estimated Total Migration to and from India, 1834 to 1937 (in 000's)

S. No.	Year	Emigrants	Returned migrants	Net emigration*
1	1834-35	62	52	10
2	1836-40	188	142	46
3	1841-45	240	167	72
4	1846-50	247	189	58
5	1851-55	357	249	108
6	1856-60	618	431	187
7	1861-65	793	594	199
8	1866-70	976	778	197
9	1871-75	1,235	958	277
10	1876-80	1,505	1,233	272
11	1881-85	1,545	1,208	337
12	1886-90	1,461	1,204	256
13	1891-95	2,326	1,536	790

14	1896-1900	1,962	1,268	694
15	1901-05	1,428	957	471
16	1906-10	1,864	1,482	383
17	1911-15	2,483	1,868	615
18	1916-20	2,087	1,867	220
19	1921-25	2,762	2,216	547
20	1926-30	3,298	2,857	441
21	1931-35	1,940	2,093	-162
22	1936-37	815	755	59
Total	1834-1937	30,191	23,941	6,250

* The figures do not always correspond to the exact differences between the first two columns because of the rounding.

Source: Davis (1951:99)

Two streams of theoretical interpretation exist with reference to institution of indentured labour during colonial period. One stream has stressed the deception, drudgery, and dehumanisation that the indenture system entailed and has labelled it a new system of slavery. For Hugh Tinker (1974), indenture was almost like slavery and equally exploitative with only difference of being temporary. On the other hand are those who take more sanguine view of the indenture, emphasising the freedom that emigration and settlements in the colonies provided to the migrants from the social and economic hardships they faced in their society. Thus for I. M. Cumpston (1956), indenture meant care in sickness, free medical attendance, free hospital accommodation, rations in some cases, Sanitary dwellings, a guaranteed minimum daily wage, and general supervision by the government officials. Whether indenture was slavery or not is ultimately an unresolvable question, and a matter of perspective but even those who reject Tinker's theory of indenture being slavery, they agree indenture was a degrading, dehumanising experience that scarred those who endured its hardships.

Kangani System

According to Jain (1970:199), another system prevalent to get the contract labour mainly to the tea plantations of Ceylon and rubber plantations of Malaysia was Kangani system. The word Kangani is an anglicized form of the Tamil word *Kankani* meaning overseas or foreman. The Kanganis were Indians who were employed by the plantation owners to recruit labourers in India. Kanganis were men with some capital who advanced money to the prospective coolies for travelling and settling down on a plantation. The Maistry system used to acquire labourers for plantations in Burma was more or less similar to the Kangani system except that the former was characterized by a gradation of middlemen-employers (the labour contractor, the head Maistry, the charge Maistry and the gang Maistry) and the innumerable deductions. In contradiction to indentured labourers, coolies under these systems were largely free. There was no contract and no fixed period of service (Jain, 1989:162). During the period 1852 and 1937, 1.5 million Indians went to Ceylon, 2 million to Malaysia and 2.5 million to Burma (Davis, 1951:104). Since, these colonies were situated not far from India, majority of the migrants returned home after serving as plantation labourers. After 1920, the Kangani emigration gradually gave way to individual or unrecruited migration due to fall in demand for Indian labour. The Sastri Report of 1936 brought about the formal abolition of Kangani plantation recruiting (Thompson, 1943:122).

All the Kangani and Maistry labourers and a small proportion of indentured labourers came from the Tamil and Telugu speaking areas of Madras Presidency (Jain, 1970). It is possible to know the religious and caste composition based on the Calcutta Emigration Reports. Among the labourers 86 percent were Hindus, and 14 percent Muslims (Saha, 1970). Muslims' proportion among traders and administrators was considerable. Sikhs emigrated to east Africa as indentured labourers initially to lay the Kenya-Uganda railway line. Later they migrated as traders, policemen and army men (Clarke, 1990). Among the Hindus 16 percent belonged to upper castes, 32 percent to agricultural intermediate castes and the rest to lower castes and 'untouchables' (Smith; Kumar, 2004). The emigrant population was predominantly male and young (Lal, 2000).

'Free' or 'Passage' Migration

Tinker (1974,) discusses the third type of migration of traders and artisans to the East African countries namely Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Natal (South Africa), Mauritius,

Burma, Malaysia and Fiji during the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, which was known as “Free” or “Passage” migration. They were mainly petty contractors, bankers, shopkeepers, merchants, clerks, entrepreneurs and professionals. They mainly catered to the indentured labourers working in those colonies. Unlike the indentured Indian labourers who belonged to mainly lower castes, the traders belonged to the upper castes. They included Baniyas from United Provinces, Marwaris from Rajputana, Chettiars from Madras and Pathans from Northwest, Gujaratis from Bombay and Punjabis from Punjab. Clerks and administrators were recruited by the British government to work in the overseas territories in Southeast Asia, and east and South Africa. Tinker calls them ‘imperial auxiliaries’.

Settlement Pattern

After discussing the types of migration of Indians, which are three, we will discuss the settlement pattern of the migrant Indians in their host country. Tinker (1974) emphasises that the indentured and Kanganis labourers initially settled on the plantations which had hired their services. After the end of their indenture, they were allowed to settle elsewhere but close to the plantation where they worked earlier so that they could be a permanent source of labour to their plantations.

Lal (2000) argues that the indentured arrived in wave after wave for almost three-quarters of a century and mixed with the earlier ones. This served to reinforce traditional habits and customs and contributed to continuity in cultural patterning. The migrant population was excluded from both the colonisers and the locals. Thus the interaction between the natives and the migrants was minimal which led to the crystallisation of the stereotypes, leading to the confrontation between the two during the period of decolonisation. On the other hand there was wide chasm between the colonisers and the migrants who were looked down upon. Thus the settlement patterns which emerged in the colonies were kind of ghettos of the Indian settlers with minimal civic facilities. Though in due course of time, many were able to break away from these areas and make decent living in either urban centres or rural areas practising agriculture.

Twentieth Century Emigration

During this century, emigration from India has been mainly to the North America, Oceania, Europe and West Asia. This was mainly a post – Second World War

phenomenon. Phenomenal changes in the political and economic scenario of the receiving and sending countries led to their new wave of international migration. There was a shift during this period in the direction and magnitude of internal migration and composition of the migrants. The history of emigration from India and other Asian countries to the four English speaking countries namely the United States of America, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, has been similar. During the mid-nineteenth century there was a substantial migration of Chinese gold diggers to the gold fields of California, British Columbia, and the east coast of Australia and the west coast of New Zealand. This led to white agitation in all the four countries which ultimately led to restrictions on their immigration by the late 1880s. During the period 1897-1924 legislations were enacted in these countries to prevent the Asian immigration. The restrictions were in force until the 1950s and 1960. During this period the chief flows to these countries were from Europe. An important turning point occurred during the early 1960s marking the beginning of a new phase. In the 1960s, the restrictions were removed in these countries and Asians were allowed to immigrate. Today, Asians constitute an appreciable element in all these four countries (Price, 1987:175). Even though emigration of Indians to the United Kingdom has a history of about three hundred years, large-scale emigration of Indians and PIOs from various British colonies took place during the post-World War II period. Netherlands received PIOs mainly from its former colony Surinam on the eve of its independence in 1975. A brief profile of these countries is given below.

Table – 2.3
Indians in Asian Countries

S. No.	Country	Person's of Indian Origin (in 000's)	% of host country's population	% of total no. of Indians abroad
1	Afghanistan	46	0.30	0.58
2	Bhutan	70	4.93	0.55
3	Burma	330	0.84	2.60
4	Malaysia	1170	7.07	9.21
5	Nepal	3900	27.12	29.93
6	Singapore	100	3.83	0.79
7	Sri Lanka	1023	6.28	8.10
8	Thailand	65	0.12	0.51

Source: (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93)

Table – 2.4
Indians in Oceania and Indonesia

S. No.	Country	Person's of Indian Origin (in 000's)	% of host country's population	% of total no. of Indians abroad
1	Australia	99	0.61	0.78
2	Fiji	339	47.75	2.67
3	Indonesia	30	0.02	0.24

Source: (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93)

Table – 2.5
Indians in European Countries

S. No.	Country	Person's of Indian Origin (in 000's)	% of host country's population	% of total no. of Indians abroad
1	France	42	0.80	0.33
2	Germany	32	0.50	0.25
3	Netherlands	103	0.70	0.81
4	United Kingdom	789	1.39	6.21

Source: (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93)

Table – 2.6
Indians in American Countries

S. No.	Country	Person's of Indian Origin (in 000's)	% of host country's population	% of total no. of Indians abroad
1	Canada	229	0.89	1.80
2	Guyana	300	30.30	2.36
3	Jamaica	39	1.62	0.30
4	Suriname	140	35.90	1.10
5	Trinidad & Tobago	430	35.25	3.39
6	USA	500	0.21	3.94

Source: (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93)

Table – 2.7
Indians in Africa Countries

S. No.	Country	Person's of Indian Origin (in 000's)	% of host country's population	% of total no. of Indians abroad
1	Kenya	70	0.31	0.55
2	Mauritius	701	70.10	5.52
3	Mozambique	21	0.14	0.16
4	South Africa	850	2.57	6.69
5	Tanzania	40	0.17	0.32

Source: (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93)

Now we will look at the migration of Indians to specific countries. Here, we present a brief socio-historical and demographic profile of the emigrants in Netherlands, United States of America, Canada, Australia and West Asian countries. The elaborate profile of the emigrants in United Kingdom will be presented separately in the next chapter.

Netherlands

Netherlands has the second largest population of the people of Indian origin in Europe. Their population is around 90,000 (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93). In 1969, the population of Indian migrants was only 1,500. The independence of Netherlands colony Surinam in the Caribbean in 1975 led to the sudden increase of the population of people of Indian origin in the Netherlands. The Independence Act of Surinam provided for the emigration of Surinamese to Netherlands before the transfer of power. The Indian community in Surinam was a prosperous business community on the eve of Independence. A series of incidents of assaults to life and property made the Indians to immigrate to Netherlands. The increasing employment opportunities in Netherlands were an incentive for them to migrate (Gupta, 1994). More than one-third of Surinamese of Indian origin took advantage of the Independence legislation and flew to Netherlands in 1974-75 and later. Presently there are more than 100,000 Indians in Netherlands. Most of them are concentrated in the large cities of Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam and are playing an important role in the economic and social life of the country. A small number of people immigrated to Netherlands during the post Second World War period (about 3,500). They are mainly concentrated in educational institutions, medicine, law, business houses, hospitals and other service industries (Moharir, 1993: 417).

United States of America

Emigration from India to the United States dates back from the year 1820. During the period 1820 to 1890 about 700 Indians came to USA (Kattampally, 1994). But large number of Indians migrated later. A few thousand Indians migrated to the west coast to work as agricultural labourers (Hess). In 1930 there were only 9,377 Indians in the USA (Reimers, 1985). Most of the Indian immigrants were from Punjabi Jat farming families, and belonged to the Sikh faith. Many of these early Sikh immigrants worked on the Western Pacific Railroad and later moved into the rural areas of the Central Valley of California reasserting their agricultural tradition (Jensen, 1980:298). Apart from this, the number of Indian students in American universities was small during this time (Shridharan, 1941). The enactment of the Oriental Exclusion Act in 1924

virtually banned all immigration from Asia. The passing of the India Bill in 1946 again opened the doors for renewed immigration. Outside of China, Philippines, Japan and Korea, India sent most immigrants after the World War II, but her numbers were small. Unlike the earlier migration of Indians, those coming after 1946 as quota immigrants were professionals rather than unskilled agricultural labourers. In addition, larger numbers of non quota family members also immigrated. Overall the number of Indians arriving between 1945 and 1965 was only a few thousand, but it was the beginning of a larger immigration after 1965 of highly educated persons (Brett, 1981:206-8). The White Paper of 1965 further specified an annual maximum of 8,500 work vouchers (Tinker, 1977).

The Immigration Act of 1965 opened the floodgates for Asians. It phased out the national origin quota system. The Act incorporated a preference system for the eastern hemisphere countries. The new law gave a higher preference to persons with professional qualifications. The first, second, fourth and fifth preferences of the 1965 Immigration Act, which allots 74 percent of the country's quotas to family unification, has further enhanced incentives to migrate to the United States. During the post-1965 period the European immigration rates greatly declined whereas the non-European rates of immigration jumped (Reimers, 1981). By 1976, there were 115,000 Indians in U.S.A. The first Indian immigrants entering after 1965 were predominantly males who took jobs in American urban hospitals, universities or businesses eager to employ their skills. But during 1972-76, females outnumbered them as the already admitted immigrant males began to bring in Indian brides. In 1978, the National Science Foundation reported that Asia accounted for slightly more than half of the immigrant scientists and engineers of that year. Indians accounted for one-third of the Asian total. Mostly these were engineers (National Science Foundation 1978:15-16). In 1975, immigration authorities classified the vast majority of Indian immigrants as professional/ technical workers or their immediate families; a higher rate than for any other nation. As Nathan Glazer puts it "Indians arrived at the right place and at the right time for success".

As the elite settled and began to bring their families and as more Indians began to use family preferences, the social base of the immigrants broadened, the sex ratio of immigrants narrowed slightly, and Indian communities developed, notably in New York City (Reimers, 1985:114). The number of Indians rose from 362,000 in 1980 to 500,000 by 1987. Considering the four US census regions, the Asian Indians are remarkably evenly distributed as compared to other Asian groups. They are

preponderantly metropolitan. Almost 70 percent of the Asian Indians live in the eight major industrial-urban states – New York, California, New Jersey, Texas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois and Ohio. Most of them are employed in the industrial and service sectors of the economy (Bharadwaj, 1990:204).

Canada

During the period 1904-08, 5,200 Indians settled in British Columbia as agricultural labourers. Approximately, 80-85 percent were Sikhs, who had come from Punjab and Hong Kong. Most of the rest were Hindu Punjabis. The Canadian government banned Indian immigration in 1908, and the ban remained in force till 1947. During the post-1947 period the government gradually lifted the barriers on Asian immigration which led to an increase in Indian population. During the post World War II period, the flow of Indian immigrants was highly selective. About three-fourths of all the post-war immigrants were highly educated and skilled. By 1971, there were 67,000 Indians in Canada (Jain, 1993: 43). The migrants during this period came from different parts of India. The PIOs migrated during this period from various British colonies namely Fiji (15,000), East Africa (25,000), South Africa (2,000), Guyana (25,000) and Trinidad (25,000) (Jain, 1993: 44). Sikhs remained by far the largest Indian group representing 120,000-130,000 (Buchignani, 1989).

The year 1976, was a milestone in Canadian immigration history. With the passage of the 1976 Immigration Act, Canada institutionalized fair admission practices and also encouraged family reunification and admission of refugees. By 1981, there were 109,665 Indians in Canada. Indians are mainly concentrated in Ontario (45 percent) and British Columbia (about 39 percent). Over one half of all Indians in Canada today are Sikhs. The Indians who are mainly urban professionals have been settled to the large cities, primarily to Toronto (Kubaat, 1987:229). Apart from the skilled professions, another avenue for Asian immigrants is the proprietorship of small business. As per 1991 Census of Canada, there are 424,095 PIOs in Canada (including 157,015 Hindus and 147,440 Sikhs). They constituted 1.5 percent of the population of Canada. They are presently one of Canada's most rapidly growing ethno cultural populations (Buchignani, 1989:71).

Australia

In the nineteenth century Australia, the Chinese migrants formed the major Asian-Pacific group followed by Pacific Islanders and Indians in sequence. Most of the

People of Indian Origin in Australia were children of British military and civil service families. But there were a few Gujarati, Sind and Bengali traders and noticeable number of Sikhs and Muslims from the Punjab. Some of these people worked as tropical labourers in northern Queens-land, some were in sugar and then bananas in northern New South Wales, and others spent time hawking goods in the country towns. In all by 1901, they numbered just under 5,000. Even by 1947 there were only 7,468 Indians. Their number rose gradually during the 1950s and 1960s. The Indian population was 14,167 in 1961 and 29,212 in 1971. There was a steep fall in sex ratio among the Indians from 389.9 in 1901 to 180 in 1947 to 107.4 in 1971 (Price, 1987:175-80).

The declaration of the Government in 1972, that Australian immigration policy would be completely free of any discrimination on grounds of race, skin, colour or nationality, resulted in the marked rise in Asian-Pacific immigration. Similar stand was taken by the National Government of 1975 and 1983. By 1983, the population of people of Indian origin was 99,000. They were mainly concentrated in New South Wales (29.4 percent), Victoria (29.9 percent) and Western Australia (24.2 percent). The people of Indian origin are mainly in production, processing, professional, technical and clerical occupations (Price, 1987:194). In 1987, Australia had 99,000 PIOs (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93).

Emigration to the West Asian Countries

Kondapi (1951:528) argues that, the emigration of Indians on a large-scale to the West Asian countries is a post-Second World War phenomenon. There were only 14,000 Indians in the Gulf in 1948. By 1971, their population increased to 40,000 (Tinker, 1977:12). During the seventies and eighties there was unprecedented immigration to the Gulf due to the oil boom. The population of Indian workers which was 154,418 in 1975 rose to 599,500 in 1981 and 1,150,000 in 1992. Presently, there are about 1.4 million Indians in the West Asian countries out of which about 1.3 million are in the Gulf countries (Jain, 1996).

The main reason of migration of Indians to West Asian countries was the oil boom in the Gulf countries resulting in unprecedented development of physical infrastructure. These countries invariably had to import unskilled and skilled workers, and white and blue-collar workers from other countries due to paucity of required work force in the region. During the 1960s, they got workers from the other Arab countries, especially from Egypt, Yemen and Jordan. Till the end of the decade there were only a few Indians in the Gulf. With the increase in the developmental activities

in many countries there was a scarcity of labour. South Asia became the next source of labour for the Gulf countries. Large number of Indians, Pakistanis, and Bangladeshis emigrated to the Gulf and West Asia. The year 1973, was the beginning of a rapidly increasing demand for expatriate labour in oil-exporting countries of the Gulf region – Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Qatar and Libya. In the following years, the oil revenue of these countries increased considerably and they started in a big way the erection of physical infrastructure, which led to the demand for labour, especially in the construction sector, and largely for unskilled labour.

But, it is a fact that migration to West Asian countries has not been a smooth process. Several factors contributed to the inability of the countries to get the needed labourers within the country. They had very small domestic populations, a low participation rate in the labour market caused by the low participation rate of women, the traditional aversion of the people to blue-collar jobs, and lack of technical personnel (Biros and Sinclair, 1980). Initially these countries imported the needed labour from the neighbouring Arab countries like Yemen, Egypt and Jordan. India also has the tradition of sending workers to the West Asia since the Second World War. But not many Indians had migrated till the early seventies. With the oil boom and increase in the developmental activities in the 1970s, it became inevitable for these countries to turn to South Asia for obtaining labour. Several private agents started recruiting people in South Asia. Within a short span large-scale emigration of South Asians to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) started.

In 1975, 71 percent of the expatriate labourers in the Middle East were nationals of other countries, and 20 percent were Asians, the majority of them coming from the Indian sub-continent. Non-Arabs were concentrated in Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE. Over the years the nationality structure of the labourers changed. There was a steep rise in the number of South Asian labourers. The main reasons which made the South Asians competitive in the labour market were that they were cheap, disciplined and hardworking and they came from either Muslim countries (Pakistan and Bangladesh) or Muslim regions of India like Kerala (La Porte, 1984:701). During the initial years of oil boom, the oil-rich countries concentrated on building the infrastructure and imported mainly unskilled labourers. During the later years, the emphasis shifted to industrialization and that led to importing of more skilled workers. Before 1976, one million unskilled workers were employed in the labour importing countries for the infrastructural projects. Between 1975 and 1980, one million more unskilled workers had to be imported to manage and operate this

new infrastructure (Shaw, 1981). Again the oil-rich countries had to turn to South Asia to get the skilled labourers since other Arab countries were unable to provide the needed labour.

Most of the Indians working in the Gulf are unskilled or semi-skilled labourers. As per the 1980s data, pertaining to their occupational structure, more than half of them were working in the construction and transport industries. Others were in the utility and maintenance and offices and paramedical services (Jain, 1994). There is no possibility of Gulf and West Asian countries needing more labourers from India. There is a possibility of considerable number of Indian workers returning from the Gulf and West Asian countries in the near future. Most of the construction workers may have to return to India since much of the construction of infrastructure facilities is over. About half of the Indians living in the Gulf are from Kerala, and the rest are from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa and other states of India. The Indians living in the Gulf are not the citizens of those countries. Citizenship in the Gulf is not granted to non-Arabs irrespective of the duration of stay in the host country. They have gone there as temporary workers on a contract basis. They will have to return after their contract is over. Most of the workers are not allowed to take their families to the Gulf. They are provided free accommodation, food and transport by the employers.

The Gulf remittances have helped in the development of certain regions of India. The annual remittances from the Gulf is now estimated at Rs.10,000 crores (1992). In the Indian financial sector approximately Rs. 21,000 crores of expatriate investments exists. A brief profile of these countries is provided here in the Table – 2.8.

Table – 2.8
Indians in West Asian Countries

S. No.	Country	Person's of Indian Origin (in 000's)	% of host country's population	% of total no. of Indians abroad
1	Bahrain	48	11.16	0.38
2	Iraq	35	0.21	0.28
3	Kuwait	110	5.88	0.87
4	Libya	36	0.88	0.28
5	Oman	190	14.29	1.50
6	Qatar	52	15.76	0.41
7	Saudi Arabia	250	1.80	1.97
8	UAE	240	16.55	1.89
9	Yemen (FDR)	103	1.41	0.81

Source: (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93)

Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that the migration has been prominent feature of the human societies across time and space. As various accounts dating from Vedic to contemporary times shows clearly the migration of Indians to far flung areas in pursuit of trade, wealth, better quality of life and at times for safety and security. Indians went to distant lands to preach the gospels of Buddhism. There was a numerically small but continuous migration of traders, knowledge seekers, vagabonds and others before the colonial rule of British in India. Numerically it may seem insignificant compared to the later migration but has played a major role in cultural diffusion across the societies and civilizations. These instances also repudiate the assertion that Hinduism prohibits travel across the sea as it leads to loosing one's caste. This assertion seems to be the fallout of strict religious practices which creped into Hinduism during the Smriti period and later Muslim rule of eight centuries.

The second wave of large scale migration can be seen during the British colonial rule which consisted of the indentured labourers and other free migrants. They constitute the bulk of the migrants residing in various old colonies of the British Empire starting from Malaysia to other end of Atlantic. The third wave of migration started after the independence of India in august 1947. There has been a large scale migration of free labourers, traders, professional, students and other to mostly developed countries or other countries like Gulf providing greener pastures to the migrants.

It is interesting to note the dichotomy between migration to European countries and to Gulf. While professionally trained people migrate to European and American countries, the unskilled or semi-skilled workers migrate to Gulf countries. This also raises the issue of expenditure incurred on the training of the professionally trained Indians migrating to European and American countries and unskilled or semi-skilled labourers migrating to Gulf countries. That is why it is believed that the remittances sent by the semiskilled or unskilled labourers is more than that of those sent by professionals.

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CHAPTER 3

*INDIAN DIASPORA IN
UNITED KINGDOM*

Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom

In this chapter we will discuss the demographic, socio-historical and socio-cultural profile of the Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom (U.K.). We will try to understand the different phases of migration of Indians, their socio-economic and political participation in U.K. The occupational status and settlement patterns of Indian Diaspora will also be analysed. Indian Diaspora in U.K. has a unique place in the rubric of Indian Diaspora in different countries of the world. As discussed earlier, it is three hundred years old. The rapid growth of Britain's Indian population during the second half of the twentieth century is best understood as the most recent manifestation of a dynamic series of interconnections between the British Isles and the Indian subcontinent. The beginning of the process can be traced when Britain set about creating an imperial presence in South Asia. In that process of transformation, 1947 was a turning point in three different senses. Firstly, India got independence, and therefore, the status of Indians changed from British subjects to free citizens of a sovereign country. Secondly, 1947 marked the formation of separate states of India and Pakistan and later on Pakistan was further divided in 1971, with the birth of Bangladesh. Each of these countries has followed different socio-economic trajectories as the years passed. Last, but not the least the phenomenon which influenced migration of Indians and South Asians to Britain was Britain's post-war economic boom (Ballard, 2003).

Ballard (2003) emphasises that every phase of rapid industrial expansion during nineteenth century precipitated acute shortages of unskilled manual labour in various industries. The gaps between demand and supply of labourers were filled by recruiting additional hands from elsewhere, initially from countryside, then from Ireland, and subsequently from Eastern Europe. However, during the post war economic boom the traditional reservoir could not provide for the necessary manpower. This resulted in the adoption of open minded attitude to labour recruitment. This led to transformation of the labour market in Britain and people

from South Asia found their way to Britain. The employers were willing to take them to undertake tasks which no-one else was prepared to do. Initially the work and working conditions which were unfriendly to the labourers was considered to be a temporary measure by the employers but as the time passed they became permanent and that is why Ballard calls it as a process of reverse colonisation (Ballard, 2003).

Though 1947, marks the turning point in the process of migration of labourers from South Asia to Britain the foundations on which this process of mass migration grew up was laid down many years earlier. This transformation is still under way. According to Ballard (2003), this process is the seeds of different ways of thinking and acting, which were considered superior and were sown by the British Raj some three hundred years back. He argues that, British Indian Raj had generated a general feeling among masses that British ways of thinking and acting were innately superior to all Indian ways. These feelings are still secretly shared by most of Britain's indigenous majority. These impositions by the Britishers have not been accepted cordially and smoothly by the Indians and South Asian immigrants settled in Britain. British South Asians still have an uphill struggle on their hands, but they are by no means pawns in the face of the resultant forces of racial and ethnic exclusionism (Ballard, 2003).

Ballard (2003) further argues that, both settlers and their offspring have been actively and indeed successfully engaged in devising strategies to resist and subvert the worst aspects of exclusionary pressures which were imposed on them by British. Reverse colonisation has mounted from below. According to Ballard (2003), reverse colonisation is the process wherein the migrants from the hitherto British colonies migrated to Britain and took advantage of the opportunities available in U.K.; furthermore, they have taken dominant positions in various aspects of the economy. The resistance is met by the maintenance of Swadeshi inspired lifestyles and their associated conceptual structures have provided settlers with a series of equally effective platforms from which to challenge the ideological assumptions of Britain's indigenous majority. On the face of it, these developments, in the process of migration of Indians, are a comprehensively British phenomenon. Not only have they been generated in the context of the local social order, but they are also precipitating some far-reaching changes in its character. The Indian Diaspora is involved in an elaborate series of transnational linkages, most of which are grounded in ties of kinship, such that they also continue to participate in all sorts of significant ways in their

community of origin. However, the intensity of these linkages varies. For the first generation migrants the ties are intense and many still dream of returning home on a permanent basis as they assumed initially. In contrast, those born and raised up overseas have much more complex relationship with their ancestral origins (Ballard, 2003).

Demographic Composition of Indians in United Kingdom

United Kingdom has a large population of people of Indian origin (955,000 in 1992) constituting 1.39 percent of the country's population (Statistical Outline of India, 1992-93). Two-thirds of Indians living in Europe are in the United Kingdom and they constitute 6.21% of all Indian diaspora. During the period of the British Empire Indians were seamen, domestic servants, politicians, barristers, doctors and social and political celebrities (Visram, 1986). The presence of a moderate intellectual elite comprising of very eminent patriots like Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and others ensured Indian participation in the British political process from the early stages of India's Independence Movement. Dadabhai Naoroji was elected to the House of Commons as a Liberal Member in 1892. He represented Indian opinion in the U.K. and applied his liberal education and experience in the U.K. to India's problems (Chandra, 1988). A number of Indian organisations were founded in Britain to work for India's independence which mobilised British public opinion for their cause. This further contributed to Indians becoming part of the British political process.

Besides the presence and assertion of individuals the Indian student bodies in Oxford and Cambridge were among the most active student organisations in these universities. A large number of Indian leaders of the Independence Movement, including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, B. R. Ambedkar and others were deeply influenced by the liberal education they had received in the U.K. The non-violent nature of the Indian Independence Movement resulted not only in the peaceful departure of the British from India but also helped in continuation of ties with the U.K. (Chandra, 1988). The foundations of Indology were laid in the U.K. during the colonial times. Every major university in the U.K. had departments for deep and serious India studies. The civilisational impact of India was felt in the U.K. very strongly in the 19th century owing to the works of India's social reformers and

philosopher like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and British personalities who studied the civilization of India.

Apart from individuals and students a large number of Indian soldiers who participated in both the First and Second World Wars helped in establishing relationship between Indians and British. This led to the creation of special bonds between the Armed Forces of the two countries. The largest numbers of Victoria Cross recipients were Indians. Because of these bonds, a number of Indian soldiers felt that they had claims on the Empire as equal citizens. This was an important factor in the migration of Sikhs to various parts of the Empire. According to Tinker (1974), the colonial policy of 'Indentured Labourers' after the abolition of the slavery resulted in the emergence of Indian communities in virtually every part of the Empire. Through their hard work, perseverance and expertise they played a vital role in the transformation of these colonies into organised economies and modern states. A number of these PIOs subsequently migrated to Britain, thus creating unique segments within the large Indian Diaspora of the U.K. (Tinker, 1974). The presence of such extraordinary diversity of the host country, with which India had a relationship for over two centuries of colonial rule, makes Indian Diaspora truly unique Diaspora.

A substantial presence of PIOs in the British Parliament, several hundred Councillors and a substantial number of Mayors reflect the significant participation of PIOs in the public life and political processes in the U.K. Among other prominent PIO citizens are the industrial giants, hoteliers, traders, media men, scientists, artists, cultural and literary figures, academicians and sportsmen of eminence. This diversity of people of Indian origin in U.K. with a vast difference in their social, socio-economical and political status makes the Indian Diaspora in Britain truly a unique Diaspora.

Brief History of Migration and Settlement

As discussed earlier the origins of the present day Indian Diaspora in Britain lay in the variety of interactions between the long British Rule and India. The contact between the India and Britain is as old as the imperial project itself. Visram (1986) identifies three major categories of sojourner: first, the personal servants of imperial adventurers and administrators, who accompanied their masters on their return home; second, seaman, worked in menial capacity as stokehold; third, affluent travellers, who came

to Britain in search of a mixture of adventure, excitement, and professional qualifications. Tinker (1974) points out that the Parsi community of Gujarat and the Bengali community arrived in Britain in the 18th and 19th centuries as qualified lawyers, doctors, and professionals to settle down in the U.K. The Parsis dominated the Indian community in the U.K. as the earliest settlers.

Ballard (2003) argues that the Great War in 1914 brought about some dramatic changes. A number of *sipahis*, *lascars*, and ex-seaman took advantage of their presence in the imperial heartland and the opportunities available. The going turned out to be extremely tough for both ex-seamen & ex-soldiers, since demobilized English soldiers were invariably given preference in few available jobs. He further argues that despite immense difficulties they faced, many of these early pioneers ultimately achieved a modicum of success. Few became waged labourers, but most became peddlers selling cheap clothing door to door often in remote rural areas. Indeed their entrepreneurial efforts were so successful that by the early 1930s, they began to send word back home to their kinsmen indicating them to make ways to Britain as they would be able to earn and save far more than they ever could as peasant farmers back in Punjab. When hostilities broke out in 1939, small colonies of South Asian peddlers had established themselves in most of Britain's larger ports, as well as in many of its major industrial cities. In 1945, war time labour shortages opened up all sorts of opportunities which had previously been closed to people of colour. Many of the peddlers switched over to waged employment, especially in munitions factory of central and northern England but they were also joined by a significant number of ex-seamen whose ships had been torpedoed in the Atlantic. During the First and Second World Wars, many British Indian Army soldiers who were part of the war efforts, settled down in Britain.

Pattern of Migration in the Post World War Era

The rapid growth of Britain's south Asian population set out by the resulted processes of chain migration was very much a function of the post war economic boom. According to Ballard (2003) the British economy picked up again and moved into a period of sustained economic boom until the 1970s. This economic boom helped pioneer sojourners who promptly took advantage of the opportunities emerging with the economic boom. This had chain reaction among Indians in Britain. Not only did

they move into the newly available jobs for themselves but they also went out of their way to assist their kinsmen and fellow villagers to make their way to Britain. He further argues that the result was an ever expanding process of chain migration which enabled members of the third world peasantry who were fortunate to live in and around the villages from which the early pioneers were drawn to gain direct access to wage employment in metropolitan Britain. They started right at the bottom of the industrial hierarchy but never the less the hourly wages even in those jobs produced an income stream which was far higher than anything back home.

According to Ballard (2003), the vast majority of Britain's South Asian population can be placed into four broad categories. First, Gujaratis – drawn from coastal districts in Saurashtra and Gulf of Cambay; among them 80% are Hindus and the remainder Muslims. Second, Punjabis from Jullundur Doab, with a population of half a million; 80% are Sikhs while remaining are Hindu or Christians. The remaining two categories include migrants from Pakistan & Bangladesh. Each of these inflows has its own specific historical roots. He further argues that Gujaratis were expert in textile technology, entrepreneurial capacities whether as craftsmen, engineers or as small scale traders in India. In their move towards the U.K. they received a ready welcome from enterprising kinsfolk who had already established a foothold in cities such as Leicester. According to Ballard (2003), most of these migrants were of rural origin either peasant farmers or craftsmen by trade, but very few arrived with any significant educational or professional qualification. He further argues that despite their shared socio-economic background members of each group have followed sharply different trajectories of adaptation and upward mobility in the host society as the years have passed. This can be explained by their exposure to English social, cultural and linguistic conventions. Indeed most members of the second generation are as much at home in British as in Indian cultural contexts. But it is also true that the vast majority of settlers have continued to organize their domestic lives on their own terms that they have simultaneously managed to construct.

Robinson (1980) points out that after 1947 large numbers of workers, mainly of Punjabi origin went to the U.K. in the aftermath of the post World War-II reconstruction efforts in the industrial sectors. However, major influxes of Indians took place during the 1950s and 1960s, when emptying cities and an expanding economy called for more labour. Ballard (1977) has outlined a general sequence of Indian settlement in Britain for this period. The individual male pioneers came and found

work, lived together in shared houses, gradually brought over their families and relatives and eventually re-established their families and accumulated material assets in the new contexts. The principle feature of Indian transplantation in this period was chain migration.

Bhachu (1985) opines that the second major wave was in the 60s and 70s, when People of Indian Origin, mainly of Gujarati origin, were forced to leave erstwhile British colonies in East Africa due to radical Africanisation programmes introduced by the Kenyan and Ugandan governments. This led to the formation of 'Double Diaspora' (Bhachu, 1985). The Asians who were uprooted from Uganda in large numbers by Idi-Amin constituted an important segment of the PIOs who went to Britain in a large influx in the early and mid 70s. Many of them left for the U.K. and for the U.S.A., thereafter, reflecting secondary and tertiary waves of PIO migration. The individuals who migrated in the second wave had considerable expertise in trade and business (Ballard, 2003; Tatla, 2003). The economic successes and prosperity of the Indian community in the U.K. commenced in a major way with this second wave of migration, establishing the Indians as 'shopkeepers in the nation of shopkeepers' (Gandhi, 1921). It made a major impact on the socio-economic landscape of the U.K. and its multi-cultural fabric.

According to Vertovec (1990), another wave of Indians migrating to different European and American countries occurred in 1970s and 1980s, in which immigrants had special educational and professional qualifications. During 1970s and 1980s, the majority of the migrants were composed of well educated, highly professional and affluent Indians who have made their way to US, Canada, Australia and Britain. He further argues that due to the world recession during early 1980s and mounting racism or ethnic unrest most of the western countries tried to curb the immigration and indeed all foreigners. Various Immigration Acts in Britain particularly in 1962, 1968 and 1971 were enacted in many ways to curtail the rights and status of Indians seeking to migrate or actually moving to U.K. (Jain, 1993). Only the Ugandan Asians who were expelled by Idi Amin in 1971 were allowed to enter U.K. by a special body created to serve their settlement. In the last decade, the population of the U.K. has remained stable, but it has been ageing like the population of many other developed countries (Robinson, 1990). This has led to a dependence on young workers from non-Western countries, especially high-tech skilled workers such as IT experts, doctors, teachers, and engineers.

Singhvi Report (2002) points out that the number of British work permits issued to India immigrants has risen steadily from 1,997 in 1995, to 5,663 in 1999. 51.4 percent of the total number of work permits granted in 1999 by the U.K. was for work in the computer industry. Presently, at least two-third software professionals entering Britain are from India. This is due to amendments in the work permit rules which facilitate the entry of more information technology professionals from foreign countries. As U.K. faces a massive skills shortage in IT sector, these amendments have opened the floodgates for Indian IT professionals. British Government figures shows that 18,257 foreign IT professionals immigrated to Britain in 2000, among them 11,474 were from India. In 2001, according to official estimates, these numbers are rising faster. In 2002, the second highest number of IT professionals (2,034) came from the U.S.A., of whom, many were of Indian origin. Indian professionals are leading over others Asians in taking up IT jobs in Britain. For instance, only 132 IT professionals came from Pakistan, 69 from Sri Lanka and 15 from Bangladesh. India is thus becoming a generic supplier of skills to Britain (Singhvi Report, 2002).

The Singhvi Report (2002) further points out that the governments of India and U.K. are making efforts to intensify their economic cooperation, so as to make it future-oriented in emerging and growth areas such as information technology. Non-traditional knowledge-based sectors like IT and bio-technology have therefore, acquired great prominence and promise in bilateral relations. The Government of the U.K. has also expressed considerable interest in facilitating Indian IT professionals to work in the U.K. by taking several initiatives such as adding IT skills in the list of skill shortages in March 2000 and introducing an innovators visa scheme in September 2000. This would facilitate the conversion of student visas into work permits in the skill shortage categories while the individual concerned stays in the U.K. Therefore, it is obvious that the Diaspora in the U.K. will continue to grow and also acquire even greater diversity in the coming years (Singhvi Report, 2001).

Demographic Profile and Residential Pattern of Indian Diaspora in U.K.

According to the official statistics for the year 1999-2000, the total population of the U.K. was 56.9 million. Of them the number of People of Indian Origin and Non-Resident Indians was 942,000 i.e. 1.6% of the total. On a more informal basis, however, it is estimated that the size of the Indian community today is closer to

around 1.2 million i.e. 2.11% of the total population. Over 40% of the People of Indian origin lives in inner and outer London. It is concentrated in the boroughs of Ealing (Southall), Brent (Wembley), Hounslow, Barnet, Corydon and Newham. Outside London, the main areas of concentration are West and East Midlands, Leicester and Greater Manchester. As the Table – 3.1 indicates, Indians constitute a sizeable proportion of the total population in several areas:

Table – 3.1
Percentage Population of Indian Diaspora in different regions of U.K.

S.No.	Area	% of Indian Diaspora
1	Brent	17.5%
2	Newham	13%
3	Ealing	16.1%
4	Leicester	22.3%
5	Slough	12.5%
6	Harrow	16.1%
7	Hounslow	14.3%
8	Redbridge	10.2%
9	Wolverhampton	11.4%
10	Barnet	7.3%
11	Blackburn	7.7%

Source: High Level Committee Report On Indian Diaspora (2002)

A majority of the original immigrants of the 1960s and 1970s were industrial workers. The later immigrants from East Africa are mostly in small and medium-scale business and also the health sector. A majority of the second generation Indians and current immigrants are professionals working as doctors, engineers, solicitors, chartered accountants, academicians, IT experts, etc. According to Robinson (1990) an important trend in non-EU immigration in recent years to the U.K. is accounted for by family reunification and marriage migration, in which the Indian subcontinent has a major share. Persons of Indian origin constitute the single largest ethnic minority in Britain. According to U.K. 2001 Census Tables, Hindus (1% of total population) are the largest group followed by Sikhs (0.6%). 45% hail from the Punjab, of whom the 300,000 Sikhs form a large majority. Gujaratis comprising of Hindus and Muslims, Ismailis and Bohras constitute an equally large ethnic group. The Diaspora from Bengal, Bihar and UP, though numerically small, form influential groups in some selected pockets.

Socio-cultural Profile of Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom

Taylor (1871) defines culture as, 'a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as member of society'. For him culture is a conscious creation of human rationality. In the light of the above we will analyse the socio-cultural representations among the Indian Diaspora in U.K. The Sikh migrant communities initially comprised only of men, resulting in large demographic gender imbalances (Aurora, 1976). The arrival of families in the U.K. had the effect of strengthening the pattern of family life along the lines that existed in India. Traditional customs, religions and cultural values were also maintained. Second and third generation Asians, however, had difficulties in conforming to them. The pressures of discrimination from the dominant society led to further strains and consolidation of the traditional lifestyle of the minorities. The Indian community today maintains a vibrant and dynamic socio-cultural life within the framework of its numerous organisations and associations which are based mainly on their Indian religious or regional origin. In addition, there are a number of social, cultural and political organisations. The community organisations are by and large constituted around the following alignments:

(i) Organisations Based on Religion: Different religious groups such as Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians and Parsis have their own religious organisations. Some of the important ones are Hindu Cultural Society, Arya Samaj, Jain Samaj Europe, Sikh Forum, Namdhari Sangat, Zoroastrian Organisation, Indian Christian Organisation, Indian Muslim Federation, Ahmadiya Muslim Association, Dawoodi Bohra Community, Ambedkar & Buddhist Organisation, Ravi Dasi and Valmiki Mahasabhas and so on (Singhvi Report, 2002).

(ii) Organisations Based on Regional or Ethnic Alignments: Most of the regional and linguistic communities have their own organisations. Some of the important ones are Punjab Unity Forum, Confederation of Gujarati Organisations, Andhra Association, Bengali Association, Goan Association, British Malayali Association, Maharashtra Mandal, and so on (Singhvi Report, 2002).

(iii) Organisations With A Political Orientation: These include Indian Overseas Congress, Indian Workers' Association, Akali Dal, friends of BJP, VHP, Bahujan International and so on (Singhvi Report, 2002).

Tatla (2003) points out that the Indian community's divisions into sub-groups on religious and regional lines tend to limit capability in terms of influence-building even though the community remains united on major issues concerning India. However, some of the emotive issues related to caste or religious affiliations in India do sometimes find their echo in the utterances of some community leaders in the U.K. Tatla (2003) further argues that religious and cultural identities have been a significant factor in helping the community to cope with the stresses of adjustment in a foreign land. This is evident in the vast mushrooming of Gurudwaras, temples and mosques as well as committees which administer them. Many religious functions are organised in the temples, Gurudwaras and mosques. Swami Narayana Temple, the largest temple complex, has found its way to the Guinness Book of World Records. The landscape of the Indian community settlements is dotted with temples, both Hindu and Jain. There are also prominent Buddhist Viharas of the Ambedkarites, Ravi Das and Valmiki Sabhas.

The Indian community is culturally very active. It organizes numerous cultural and religious festivals to maintain cultural ties with India. There is no formal cultural exchange programme between India and the U.K. Cultural exchanges, however, take place through mutual interest and negotiations are held between organisations/institutions on a regular basis. Several Indian artists are presented in the U.K. each year. The Nehru Centre was established in 1992 in London by the Government of India. It functions as part of the High Commission of India, with the objective of show-casing the cultural and intellectual achievements of India (Singhvi Report, 2002). Both the Nehru Centre as well as the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan has performed a very useful role in fulfilling the cultural needs of the Indian community and assisting it in establishing links with its Indian cultural roots. Know India Programme organised by High Commission of India in U.K. is an effort by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to help the Indian Diaspora to know about their cultural roots and create a sense of belongingness and attachment with India (www.hcilondon.net).

According to Aurora (1974), Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities in the 50s and 60s, experienced difficulties in assimilation in the U.K. owing to their very distinct lifestyles and cultures which were vastly different from those of the mainstream host society. This brought a new concept of 'multiculturalism' on the public agenda of the U.K., which emphasized the need of co-existence of different

cultures to enrich the multi-cultural fabric of the nation. The term "multiculturalism" or multicultural is used to describe demographic conditions of cultural and ethnic diversity. Marshal (2004) argues that, multiculturalism is characterised by cultural pluralism which celebrates cultural variety such as religious and linguistic diversity. It provides equal opportunity and respect to variety of religious, ethnic, linguistic groups. It is not just marked by the tolerance of the other but respect and celebration of the diversity. Multiculturalism is an ideology advocating that society should consist of, or at least allow and include, distinct cultural and religious groups, with equal status (Microsoft Encarta Reference Library, 2005). As state policy, multiculturalism has so far been a way of managing cultural diversity by focusing on superficial aspects of cultural identity rather than structural inequalities related to de facto cultural dominance and institutional racism.

Indians have done exceedingly well in the sphere of education, to which they attached considerable importance. It is no mean achievement that today the Indian community's educational performance is assessed as being higher than that of the majority community of Britain (Office for National Statistics, U.K., 2001). Approximately, 30 Indians occupy permanent positions as professors in major universities and research institutions in various disciplines including engineering, computer science, biochemistry, chemistry, aerospace and others. Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen was the first Indian to become Master of an Oxbridge college. Compared to other South Asian communities in the U.K., the Indian community is considered the best-educated, qualified and law-abiding community. This differentiation is now being noticed by social scientists and the media, persuading them to look at the Indian community as a distinct category and not just in terms of the larger 'Asian' community. The Indian community has no major conflicts with the host community.

Ballard (2003) argues that the first generation migrants remain nostalgic about the parent country and are extremely keen to maintain an active cultural and spiritual link with India. At the same time, the community now has a number of retired persons with the time, inclination and resources to devote themselves to the protection and propagation of the cultural and religious heritage of the community. This urge, and consequently the linkage, is declining somewhat with the succeeding generations. He further argues that for the second and third generations a great deal of cultural hybridization has inevitably been taking place. The priorities of the second generation

are quite different from the first since they tend to be better-integrated in the mainstream British community and often retain only a peripheral interest in India. Usage of Indian languages is also declining amongst the second and third generations. First generation visits to India are almost annual, subject to their financial status, while the succeeding generations tend to limit their visits to important family occasions or tourism. Tatla (2003) points out that, community leaders in U.K. are well informed about developments in India and in specifically development of the state. Some of them are in close and frequent contact with political, religious and cultural personalities in India and often play a host to them in U.K.

Economic Profile and Trade of Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom

The Indian community with a per capita income of 15,860 Pounds per annum is among the highest earning groups in the U.K. According to a study by the Institute for Social and Economic Research of Essex University (1998), British Indians per capita income is higher than the national average. The community has attained considerable economic prosperity and plays a crucial role in key sectors like industries, Information and Communication Technology, other services sector. It has diverse interests in almost all spheres of commercial and industrial activities. These include steel, engineering, manufacturing, finance, hotels, pharmaceuticals, ICT, media, travel, trading (including cash and carry), catering, fashion, consultancy, etc. According to Tatla (2003), the Indian community accounts for 40% of the retail sector. It is also estimated that a significant percentage of hospital doctors, general practitioners and consultants are from the community. The National Health Service is greatly dependent on the services of doctors from India. The rate of unemployment amongst Indian emigrants is considerably lower than that of other immigrant communities. This is attributed in part to the higher skill levels of Indian emigrants, especially those who have gone to the U.K. in recent years. Equally important, the Indians who came from East Africa in the 1970s were known for their entrepreneurial abilities and high savings rate (Ballard, 2003). Their presence in several sectors of the economy helped in creating a useful base for absorbing new immigrants, thereby creating productive opportunities and keeping unemployment rates low.

Singhvi Report (2002) points out that the British Indians dominate the 'cash and carry' stores and retail trade. They are mostly in small and medium business.

Owing to this success, till the 80s the Indian community was mostly perceived as a sub-nation of corner *shop-walas*, specializing in vending sweets, newspapers, cigarettes and bread. There are approximately 300 important NRI businessmen today and approximately 150 prominent and rich Indians (NRIs and PIOs) in the U.K. (Singhvi Report, 2002). They have a significant business presence across diverse sectors of manufacturing and services, both as owner-entrepreneurs and as professionals. They are playing a significant role in bilateral trade with India and indeed in UK's global trade with the rest of the world. But several of them have risen to public prominence, after figuring in the Queen's honours list. Prominent examples of this kind are Baron Bagri of Regent's Park and Baron Desai of St. Clement Danes (Singhvi Report, 2002). They are becoming a part of Britain's new aristocracy in the making. Lord Tarsem King, one of the five Indian peers in the House of Lords, felt that acquiring this position was a pointer to the future of the marginalised Indian community. Similarly, a 21 year old multi-millionaire Reuben Singh perceives himself as a role model of British Indian teenagers and feels that Indians can make it to the top. Lakshmi Mittal world's best known metal magnate is among the richest half a dozen persons in the U.K. He heads a continuously growing list of what is jokingly called the 'coolie millionaires'. It includes Shrichand and Gopichand Hinduja (oil, banking and telecom interests), Lord Swaraj Paul (Caparo Group), hotelier Jasinder Singh, brewer and sugar king Manubhai Madhavani and electronics giant Gulu Lalvani to name just a few (Singhvi Report, 2002).

Singhvi Report (2002) points out that, unlike the Indian Diaspora in the US, the Indians in the U.K. do not have the same economic and political strength although there is considerable leverage that could contribute to closer economic and political bilateral links with the U.K. The presence of the Indian community in the UK's civil services has not kept pace with the community's overall economic profile. Although due to the Government's special efforts to recruit from ethnic minorities the numbers have increased slowly over the last few years. There are still very few representatives of the Indian community at the higher echelons of the civil services. The Report (2002) further points out that almost all of the 50 Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the U.K. incorporate 'Asian' units or chapters within them, which cover India and are generally manned by Indian-origin professionals. Besides them, some of the prominent community organisations also play a role in disseminating business information and are involved in business promotion. Moreover, there are at least 15

prominent PIO commercial organisations in Britain, such as Indian Development Group (U.K.) Ltd, Indian Development Fund, Confederation of Indian Organizations, Indian Forum for Business, India Group at the London Business Schools etc. which have further enhanced the economic status of Indian Diaspora in U.K. (Singhvi Report, 2002).

Though, decisions to trade with a country or company are not taken on emotional considerations but on realistic and hard economic grounds keeping profit and loss in mind. Yet PIOs have strong inclination towards parent country. In this the PIOs knowledge of the home country and its culture as well as their family links helps in clinching business deal. Given the significant proportion of the Indian community in the population of the U.K. and their contribution to the U.K., there is potential for the Indian Diaspora to contribute to India's trade and bilateral relations with the U.K. One can predict a safe and developing future of the trade and commerce between Indians in U.K. and Indians in USA.

The success of Indians in U.K. in the economic and professional fields has helped in deconstructing the stereotype images of Indians in the eyes of Westerners. From being stereotyped as a land of snake charmers, saints and fakirs, India now appears to the Western world as a computer-savvy, intelligent and dynamic nation. A century ago, Indians migrated as factory workers and farm labourers, whereas, today Indians have invaded virtually all fields of repute and expertise. The close of the 20th century took Indians from one end of the stereotype to the other. However, some of the achievers feel that the glass ceiling has only cracked and has yet to be fully removed to enable the full flowering of the talent of the Indian community and its optimal contribution to its host country.

Indian Diaspora in United Kingdom and Political Participation

Owing to the century-old tradition of participation in the political processes in the U.K., the Indian community in Britain has made its presence felt in the political arena of the country. The increase in its numbers, accretion in economic strength, attainment of higher educational levels and enhancement in social status are being gradually reflected in the increasing political visibility of the community in the U.K. This can be argued on the basis of different facts. For instance, there are four elected Members of Parliament and 11 members in the House of Lords of Indian Origin in

U.K. (Singhvi Report, 2002). Further, in a significant development, Lord Dholakia took over as the Chairman of the Liberal Democrat Party becoming first person of Indian origin to attain top post in a national party in the U.K. There are also three Members of the European Parliament from the U.K., who belong to Indian Diaspora.

At the next level of political participation, there are over 250-300 Councillors of Indian Origin scattered all over U.K. (Singhvi Report, 2002). They have formed a group called 'British-Indian Councillors Association' (BICA). The Report (2002) further points out that traditionally, Indians have been supporters of the Labour Party and, till recently, over 65 % of the Indian population was estimated to be voting in favour of Labour. However, the Conservatives have also been making concerted efforts to woo the Indian voters, and the appointment of Lord Dholakia as Chairman of the Liberal Democrats may boost their ability to target the Indian vote. Out of the three major political parties in Britain, two i.e. the Labour Party and the Liberal Democrat Party have formed friends of India parliamentary groups. The Conservatives have also announced that they would soon launch such a group. Apart from these friendship Groups in the political parties, there is also a British-Indian Parliamentary Association which cuts across party lines and consists of members of the British Parliamentary Association, which is known as the 'Curry Club' and meets regularly to discuss matters of topical interest and to promote India's concerns (Singhvi Report, 2002). These specific parliamentary forums dealing Indians amply prove the point, how important Indians have become politically in U.K. And this in turn proves the point, growing numerical strength of Indian Diaspora as in democracy numbers matters.

In the end, we can argue that Indian community leaders have displayed considerable interest in promoting bilateral relations. They have lent significant support to efforts to form pro-India lobby groups in the three major political parties. Lord Swaraj Paul heads the British delegation for the Indo-British Round Table, a non-official initiative launched during the visit of Honourable Robin Cook to India earlier this year. Prominent members of the Indian community have been assisting officials of the Indian High Commission whenever necessary in their efforts to lobby political opinion makers.

Indian Diaspora and its Interaction with Media

According to Tatla (2003), since 1970s, the Asian viewers have a wide choice of radio and TV programmes. The local British Broadcast Corporation (BBC) and other independent radios have dedicated number of hours for the popular music from Indian subcontinent. Since the establishment of the satellite television in 1990s, the various channels like Star TV, Zee TV, B4U and Lashkara TV and other have been catering to the British Indians. It has a major impact on the British Indian households. The subscription to these channels provides them opportunity to connect with their homelands and culture. A number of persons from the Indian community occupy important positions in the mainstream British Television and print media, including organisations like the BBC, The Daily Telegraph, The Financial Times, etc. Their presence in these organisations contributes to a better understanding of India and a more balanced projection of issues of concern to India. The ethnic Indian media has a strong and powerful presence throughout the country. The Indian community runs a number of ethnic TV channels, radio stations, newspapers and magazines. According to Singhvi Report (2002), there are 9 prominent ethnic publications, namely, India Weekly, Gujarat Samachar, Garavi Gujarat, Asian Trader, Amar Deep, India Home & Abroad, Southall Gazette, New World, Asian Affairs. There are also 11 ethnic Indian Radio/TV channels, namely – Sunrise Radio, Sunrise Radio Yorkshire, Zee TV, Asia 1 TV, Sony TV, Sabras Radio, Radio XL, Apna TV, Namaste TV, Supa AM, MP Media Services. All of them tend to focus primarily on news and events related to the Indian subcontinent and help the community to remain in touch with India. The growing availability of newspapers on the Internet is another important new development for keeping the Diaspora connected with India. Several PIOs have attained prominence in literature, Salman Rushdie, and Sir V.S. Naipaul who won the Nobel Prize to name a few. The contribution of these individuals in media, literature and cinema is increasingly recognised in mainstream British society. Media plays an important role in decimation of information, knowledge about the socio-cultural milieu in which one resides. With the coming of the mass media the reach has leaped to the global milieu. Thus media helps maintaining the contact between the migrants with their motherland and the world around them in which they venture.

Tatla (2003) argues that the popularity of Hindi films and ethnic television is a major element in keeping the Indian Diaspora and, in particular, its second and

subsequent generations in touch with India. The reach of the Hindi cinema cuts across barriers of language, religion and caste which are otherwise seen in most community organisations. In addition to all sections of the Indian community, Hindi films enjoy considerable popularity amongst the other South Asian communities as well, and have started to attract mainstream audiences. Though the cinema depicts hyper reality which is far from the real life, but the various symbols used in cinema have cultural bearings over them. In spite of being unreal, cinema plays an important role in depicting the socio-cultural mores of Indian life. However, the growth of an Asian sub-culture can be seen in the combined *Bhangra* and Western dance music, which reflects the synthesis of the British and Asian cultures.

Conclusion

The Indian community in the U.K. has a unique place in the rubric of Indian Diaspora because of its share of diversity and historicity. U.K. is the first country which has an Indian community truly representative of its diversity. The colonial connection between India and U.K. had ensured intimate interaction between the two countries at all levels for almost three centuries. This has contributed to the evolution of an Indian community in Britain comprising of all sections of the people. With the humble beginning as migrant labourers to millionaires, it has been an uphill task for the Indian to make a mark in an alien society which in spite of its liberal ideals practised institutionalised racial and ethnic exclusion. The Indian have made their mark not only in the economic and professional spheres but also in the intellectual and academic fields. The presence of the Indian community in the UK's civil services has not kept pace with the community's overall economic profile. Despite British Government's special efforts to recruit ethnic minorities in civil services there are very few representatives of the Indian community at the higher echelons of the civil services. Politically they have been noticed and have created space to voice their concerns. Indian communities have also been able to not only preserve but promote and propagate their cultural traditions in the younger generations. The cultural interaction between the British and India has led to unique blending like *Bhangra* mix. Indian culinary tastes have mixed with the British from mango chutney to *tandooris*. There are curry Clubs, Masala and Spice Magic and various other clubs specialising in Indian culinary to organic food from India. Media and communication has played

an important role in both keeping the cultures alive and transmitting them to the British Indians.

It is unfortunate that despite their significant contribution to their country of adoption, Indian diaspora continue to be apprehensive of their rights and security. This is evident also in other West European countries. There are strong democratic institutions and legal frameworks in Western countries, which guard against racial discrimination and harassment. Unfortunately, particularly in times of economic crisis, ethnic minorities continue to be attacked by extreme right wing groups. Following the recent terrorist attacks in the US, members of the Indian community in Britain were also threatened or abused in several cases. Professor Bhikhu Parekh, a reputed PIO political theorist, has lamented the insecurity felt among the PIOs and appealed to the general population not to treat them as 'step-citizens, bearing the burdens of equal citizenship without enjoying equal rights and opportunities'. The issue of formation of identities and adaptation will be dealt in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

*IDENTITY FORMATION AND
ADAPTATION*

Identity Formation and Adaptation

After looking at the brief socio-historical profile of the people of Indian origin in U.K., it is logical to look further to the issues of identity formation and adaptation among the Indian Diaspora in U.K. The issue of identity is important for the diasporic communities in an alien land. It provides not only a distinctive sense of 'self' but also helps in sustenance of the 'self'. This self is not only preserved but also asserted and contested in various arenas of life's endeavour. The identity is manifested through various socio-cultural institutions and sustained through them. In this chapter we will try to analyse the processes of identity formation and adaptation by Indian Diaspora in U.K. We will also analyse how different institutions formal and informal help Indian Diaspora in adapting in the hostile host society. Further, how they help in assertion of identity.

Identity: Meaning and Perspectives

The term identity is derived from the Latin root '*idem*' meaning sameness and continuity. Discussions of identity take two forms – psychodynamic and sociological. These assume a unique core or essence to identity – the 'real me' – which is coherent and remains more or less same through out life. The psychodynamic tradition emerges with Freud's theory of identification, through which the child comes to assimilate external persons or objects usually the super-ego of the parent. It stresses the inner core of a psychic structure as having a continuous (though often conflicting) identity. Erik Erikson saw identity as a process located in core of the individual, and yet also in the core of his or her communal culture, hence making a connection between community and individual (Marshall, 2004: 293-95).

According to Marshall (2004), in sociology identity theory is linked to Symbolic Interactionism and emerges from the pragmatic theory of the 'Self' discussed by William James and G. H. Mead. The 'Self' is a distinctively human capacity which enables people to reflect on their nature and the social world through

communication and language. The 'Self' is a process with two phases: the 'I', which is knower, inner, subjective, creative, determining and unknowable; and the 'Me', which is more known, outer, determined and social phase. Identification is the process of placing ourselves in socially constructed categories, with language holding a central position in this process. Goffman and Berger argue that identity is 'socially bestowed, socially sustained and socially transformed' (Berger 1966). Apart from the individual identity of self (individual), there is a group or community identity as well. The Indian Diaspora as a whole manifests certain identity which differs from its particular identity of belonging to a certain caste, kinship, region or religious group. Thus, we can say that individual does not have a single identity, but has multiple identities emanating from the various roles performed and belonging to particular group.

Marshal (2004) argues that, interfusing of identity emphasises the hybridity of cultural identities. The notion of hybridity suggests that identities are not pure but the product of mixing, fusion and creolization. This gives importance to the mixing and movement of cultures. The history is marked by diverse forms of cultural traffic – from slave trade to the contemporary circulation of media forms – which have helped to shape the modern world. The resulting fusion or hybridity of identities is not the product of assimilation of one culture by another but the production of something new. In words of Salman Rushdie, Diaspora identities are shaped by this sense of having been 'borne across the world'; of being 'in' but not entirely 'of' the West (Rushdie, 1991). Further, Marshal (2004) argues that, there is no clear concept of identity in modern sociology. It is used widely and loosely in reference to one's sense of self, and one's feelings and ideas about oneself, e.g. class identity, gender identity. Sometimes it is assumed that our identity comes from the expectation attached to the social roles that we occupy and which we then internalised, so that it is formed through the process of socialisation.

Process of Identity Formation in Diaspora

The Diaspora is neither a homogenous whole nor a series of concentric circles. It is a fact that identity of Indian Diaspora is directly related to questions of culture, power, multiculturalism, and transnationalism. We will look at the crystallization of identity of the Indian Diaspora in the presence of difference in structures of power. Varma

(2003) argues, identity is always multiple, it would be fruitful to examine the levels at which difference is asserted, and the reason for that assertion. As diasporic existence is at a multitude of levels, diasporic identity is also fractured or fragmented. According to Shah (2001), identity is understood in terms of individual, family, community and society – i.e. in terms of kin groups and place of residence. Not only formation of identity takes place in a contest but assertion of identity also takes place in particular context. Furthermore, it is recognisable and identifiable to others in ‘in group’ and ‘out group’ (Sumner, 1906) within that context. However, the issue is when any (or all) of the criteria that establish that context are missing, then how is identity to be asserted?

According to Dubey (2003), Diasporic existence is global at one level, for it transcends national boundaries. At another, it recreates a local community and a local identity, which is simultaneously part of the host country, the home country and the global community. Therefore, identity of a Diaspora is always multiple. Identity construction is a continuous process, and often both ambiguous and contradictory. Varma (2003) argues that the migrants carry with them both a longing for and a memory of homeland. Both of these need to be sustained through a set of cultural symbols. These symbols assert the unity of that community and visibly maintain it as different from the ‘other’. Hence we can argue that identity is created because of exclusivity and exclusion. However, the culture that is transplanted in the host country by the Diaspora is often different from that in the homeland, because it has been structured within a particular immutable form. This happens because the diasporic communities form the networks and maintain the linkages with the homeland. Therefore, this maintenance results in continuance of traditions, for the outward manifestation of a cultural tradition and is a powerful method of promoting common interests. Bhat (2003) argues that, identity is emphasised through the observance of certain traditions, which are ‘central to the life and identity’ of Indian immigrants.

Varma (2003) highlights that, as second generation grows up in the new homeland, it learns about the original culture of the homeland, through the eyes of the older generation. For them, the culture is a reflection of someone else’s memory, something with which they have no direct contact. This would then raise questions about the nature of the linkages with the homeland, and the nature of identity asserted vis-à-vis the homeland. They further argue that, assertion of identity by the Diaspora

can be in any form like maintenance of the traditional dance forms, arts, theatre, cinema, religious places like temples, mosques, *Gurudwaras* and so on. The physical presence of the buildings like temples or cultural centres add a dimension to the community's identity and at times may itself testify to the political, social or economic importance of the community of believers.

It has been stated by Dhruvarajan (2003) that the question of identity is rather different for the second generation of the Diaspora of any country. For instance the second generation of India has a sense of pride and affinity to India but it is Britain that is perceived as home. They want to be accepted on their own terms. It is here that many face problems, for they feel a sense of alienation, in the sense of 'insider, outsider'. The generation gap is doubly problematic for them, for not only do they face the problems common to many teenagers, in relationship to their parents, but they also have the problem of the perceived 'Indianness'. Many feel that their parents make unreasonable demands by expecting them to behave in an ideal manner. This ideal is Indian, but the younger generation has been brought up in and have to deal with a different British environment outside the home. The parents usually distinguish between the core and peripheral values. Core values include marriage, dating and courtship which are not negotiable. Peripheral values include such as eating habits, hobbies etc which are negotiable. A high premium is placed on visible academic achievement which is very much evident from the successes achieved by many Indians in the fields of academic and other professional fields. The elders in Diaspora maintain another similarity with Indian environment that is in their attitudes towards girls and boys. The girls are given less freedom as compared to boys and are considered to be the repository of tradition in Diaspora also, which needs to be maintained (Dhruvarajan, 2003).

According to Varma (2003), for the formation of identity in Diaspora the role of communication, like internet, telephony, satellite television, are significant, as also the nature of communication – social, political, economic etc. The role of market forces in shaping identity within a multicultural setting is also extremely important, particularly in the context of capitalism, which accords primacy to economic factors. Equally important is the issue of communication between two groups of Indians in a non-Indian environment. In this context, language becomes very important. A

difference is maintained between the home and the world, and is maintained by the use of different languages in the two worlds.

Therefore, the identity of the diasporic communities appears to be a continuation of that established within India. Local differences existed and interestingly were often maintained. They were used to make distinctions between people within the immigrant community in Britain. Thus the identity of family and community were transplanted to a non-Indian environment. Within India, social groupings are based on caste and kinship, which were reinforced by the specific nature of Sikhism and Hinduism practiced by the communities. Emigration is seen as a way of improving one's economic position and correspondingly a higher social position back home (Varma 2003).

Identity Formation in the Context of British Pride and Prejudice

It is a fact that an environment of domination of whites prevails in U.K. And identity formation of Indian Diaspora takes place in this environment of domination. We will discuss this process of domination here. Aurora (1974) argues that, propensity of a community to be mobile can be explained by many push and pull factors. However this cannot explain the particular psychological factor which cannot be grasped without a *sui generis* consideration of the ethos of a community. According to Aurora (1974), when the dark frontiersman (the migrants from the colonies) of today enters countries dominated by the European or their culture. The voluntary immigrant begins his struggle for new horizons in a highly organised society, where the vantage points are stoutly defended by well-entrenched natives. The immigrants in an alien society begin their quest for upward mobility from a position of great disadvantage. Even though they work hard and for extra hours, the immigrants begin their quest at the bottom as the rules of competition are defined by the host society. It is a fact all these rules more often than not, favour the native against the immigrant. The immigrant has to act within the moral and social framework of the host society, which means that he has to undergo the process of acculturation. While achieving a *modus operandi* with the larger society the immigrant goes through various stages of social and psychological adjustment. The resistance of the host society to coloured immigrants is not always based on colour prejudice, it is very often due to what we may term 'cultural distances' between the immigrants and natives. The problem certainly has its

economic and political overtones. Hence, Indians who migrated to Britain face all these drawbacks prevailing there.

It is necessary to examine the social framework of the host society and the social background of the immigrant community while analysing the cultural contact between immigrants and the host society. The influx of migrants poses many difficulties for the host population and immigration of Indians to U.K. The causes of the problem have been highlighted by Gunnar Myrdal in *The American Dilemma*. According to him the *Negro* problem is essentially a product of the schism within the American personality in USA. The moral and social facets of the colour problem in Great Britain are very similar to the ones in American society. Here, we have to understand that the British social values and attitudes are the product of two historical developments. Firstly, there has been the impact of liberal thought on the course of British history and on the British personality. Secondly, these historical developments have conjured up a somewhat different self image for the British. The British have ruled over quarter of the world for more than two centuries. The people under their rule have been mostly dark skinned. As masters over the subjugated coloured masses they began by viewing the darker humanity as essentially inferior to the white races.

Aurora (1974) insists that the political upheaval of the post World War II, however, shattered the social edifice which earlier seemed to give substance to these beliefs. But though the situation has changed, the attitude persists. The British behaviour to the stranger in their midst is thus based on paradoxical attitudes of 'humanity and a regard for human dignity' on the one hand and egoistic contempt for the generally poor, dark pigmented intruders on the other (Aurora, 1974). This is also the problem of white humanity all over the world. Today most developed nations which happen to belong to the white racial stocks, are immensely powerful and wealthy, while the darker humanity, is almost living on the verge of starvation. In between there are developing nations like China, India and others who have been trying to make their mark in the domain of economic, political and international affairs. In the attitudes of the ones on the top to those at bottom there is a kind of ambivalence which comes of the two contradictory feelings. On one hand, humanity and human dignity, leads to almost a universal support for policies of aid to the under-developed nations; on the other, egoistic contempt, to restrictions on coloured

immigrants. Therefore, we have to keep this discriminatory social milieu in our mind when we analyse the formation of identity of immigrating Indians.

Indian Diaspora: Ethnic and Racial Identity

According to Marshal (2004), ethnicity defines individuals who consider themselves, or are considered by others, to share common characteristics which differentiate them from other collectivities in a society, within which they develop distinct cultural behaviour. Whereas, during 19th century anthropological studies race was concerned with the categorisation of people on the basis of phenotype (skin colour etc.) and genotype (genetic makeup) differences. Though, this notion of biological categorisation has given way towards looking at the social construction of such categories of differences. Thus now the emphasis has shifted towards the social determinants of categorization such as stratification system. Marshall (2004) further argues that the term ethnicity was coined in contradistinction to race since although members of an ethnic group may be identifiable in terms of racial attributes, they may also share other cultural characteristics such as religion, occupation, language or politics. Ethnic groups are distinct from the social classes as the members generally belong to all cross-section of socio-economic stratification within society. Thus it encompasses individuals who share common characteristics that supersede class. He further argues that therefore ethnic groups are fluid in composition and subject to changes in definition. New ethnic groups are constantly formed as people move between countries. For instance Indians in Britain constitute an ethnic group, although as individuals they are also members of certain caste and religious groups.

Jain (1990) points out that the diasporic communities had to face institutionalised racism against them, sometimes subtly and sometimes manifested violently as evident from certain cases. There was resentment among the natives against the presence of Indians and taking up the jobs. Even at the administrative level there were policies and legislations in order to curb and regulate the migration in favour of the natives. A collective sense of ethnic identity has been cultivated by and imposed on the Indian communities in their various colonial and post-colonial contexts. Competition for control over resources, geographical segregation, political organisation, and efforts to maintain cultural traditions in alien milieu contribute to the development of the migrant communities. Therefore, they have founded a variety

of organisations and associations to provide religious activities and guidance, to establish ties and networks of all kinds, to arrange saving schemes and funeral societies, to build recreational and social centres, to produce Indian cultural events, promote links with India and to liaise with non-Indian organisations. Ethnic relations in colonial and post colonial contexts have fluctuated in locus, content and intensity. Like all migrants, Indians have been treated as outsiders because of their different habits and beliefs. The manner in which the ethnicity is expressed is conditioned by number of factors.

Britain is an ethnic plural and multicultural society and boasts of its multiethnic and multicultural traditions and society. Most of the initial Indian immigrants belonged to the labour class, but now their occupational distribution resembles more or less similar to that of the British white population (Peach, 1988). However, institutionalised racism particularly in housing meant that they were associated with the lower class structure and excluded from the mainstream society. They had to confront with great difficulties in achieving others forms of social mobility. The second generation also faces the difficulty of confronting culturally conflicting lifestyle choices (Thompson, 1974). Thus we can see that ethnicity and race are important factors of distinction and discrimination in multiethnic and multicultural society. The differences are not only preserved but also contested and asserted against the other in social interaction. The differences help in creating the identity for both the group and individual members.

Identity of Indian Diaspora through the Eyes of Britishers

It is an established fact that there is little evidence to show that most members of the indigenous majority can accurately differentiate between diversity of South Asian migrants. In the first instance they are all popularly identified as 'Pakis'. The general term 'Pakis' utilised to refer the South Asian migrants is evidence of stereotyping of the migrants from the South Asia. Prejudice is a form of generalisation overlooking the particular aspects. As discussed in the above sections, this prejudice and the attitude of superiority mark the interaction between the migrants and the host society. The South Asian migrants have been discriminated on the grounds of their racial features, ethnicity and the region they belong to. The South Asians communities migrate from the earlier colony of the erstwhile British Empire. As Aurora (1974)

points out though the situations have changed but the attitude persists. Therefore, the reason of this discrimination and attitude lies in the British personality rather than some outer features of the interaction between the two groups.

As discussed in the last chapter, the south Indian Diaspora has achieved social and economic mobility to a great extent. Starting from the coolies and unskilled labours in industries, now they occupy the prestigious positions in many white collar employment markets. The Indian migrants were considered to be cheap and hard working labourers. They were looked down upon and were allowed to participate in the economy to the extent it helped them in their overall economy. Now they are part of the mainstream economy and contribute substantially in the British and global economy. The question arises that if the economical mobility helps in breaking away the social prejudices and stereotypes. The question remains to be probed if such mobility has helped in breaking the old stereotypes and gained them acceptability in the mainstream British society. As pointed out in the last chapter, the Indian millionaires in U.K. are called as 'coolie millionaires', though jokingly, but it points out at the general attitude of the Britishers towards the Indian Diaspora. The identity is what one perceives of one 'self' and at the other hand the 'significant other' also becomes important. As the significant other helps in creation of one's self identity through the process of 'looking glass self' (Cooley, 1902). Thus we can see how 'significant other' is important in the formation of one's identity. In case of the identity of the Indian Diaspora as a group it is very much determined by the interaction pattern it develops with the significant others i.e. native Britishers and other migrant communities.

Indian Diaspora and Dynamics of Adaptation

Indian Diaspora has adapted itself in various ways in an alien and hostile socio-cultural environment. The issue for the migrants are not only of preservation of their original identities and culture but also to mitigate the hostilities with host society. Thus, they face double dilemma of preservation of their original identities and values and adapt in an alien milieu with different set of values. Ballard (2003) argues that the 'little Indias' (colonies of Indians) are partially rooted in emotional feelings of nostalgia, and can be understood as ethnic colonies which are active arenas for the articulation and development of a distinctive set of human, economic and conceptual

resources. They are the prime source of the social, cultural, spiritual and psychological capital on the basis of which the diasporic communities launch against an ever widening series of challenges to which their members would otherwise have been defencelessly exposed. Asians and Indian immigrants have made a substantial degree of progress since their arrival in the U.K., some three hundred years back, though not uniformly.

Ballard (2003) further argues that, there are some very striking differences between the trajectories of mobility which each community has followed. These trajectories of mobility are grounded in the entrepreneurial exploitation and the established socio-economic order and further reinforced by the creative utilisation of their resources of moral, cultural, psychological and family alterity, have many dimensions. Their children are doing well in schools and colleges, from which an even greater proportion now began to emerge with professional qualifications. He points out that this was associated with parallel processes of residential mobility, i.e. many members of these communities began to move out of the decaying inner city areas in which they had originally settled in favour of more attractive properties in suburbs, where educational facilities were also of higher standards. He (2003) asserts that, as the 1980s progressed, this trend was further reinforced. Young professionals realising how 'glass ceilings' were likely to constrain their ambitions, more and more decided that best solution was to move onwards yet again. The migrants preferred to settle in discrete regional-linguistic groupings rather than in heterogeneous enclaves. The religion, language, and region of origin are closely intertwined among Indian migrants. Among the Hindu migrants, two third are Gujaratis and rest are composed of Punjabis and other Indians. Sikhs comprise 20% of the British south Asian population. The presence of 'twice migrants' with experience in East Africa (comprising of Gujarati and Punjabi Hindus and Muslims and Sikhs) complicate the matters (Ballard, 2003). Robinson (1986) describes almost twelve religious-ethno-linguistic groups present in Britain which points out towards its diversity and complexity.

Ballard (2003) argues that the constraints of racial and ethnic exclusionism were severe but most were able to take advantage of a ready made network of ethnic colonies which their kinsmen and caste fellows had already established. As the racial and ethnic exclusionism was less severe across the Atlantic in countries like USA and

Canada many migrated to these areas using their already existing networks. Though it is difficult to ascertain the exact numbers yet the Census Reports of 1981 and 1991 suggest the outflow of Indians during that period in the order of 10,000 persons per annum. The outflow has increased substantially in the following years.

Caste in Indian Diaspora

Apart from racial derision between British and Indians, the principle determinants of social identity are family, caste, kinship and the marriage preferences. Caste remains an important source of identification for the Indians. While a functioning system of caste based relationships no longer exists overseas, awareness of caste membership is maintained either through self-proclaimed pride or through accusations about other people's low status (Michaelson, 1979; Bhachu, 1985). The tendencies towards cultural homogenisation have been undermined due to caste affiliation, religious sectarianism and regionalism. Although, some blending of regional traditions within Hinduism has occurred in Britain (Knott, 1987) exclusive practices and associations have nonetheless developed among overseas Hindu groups. The caste composition of Indian Diaspora is highly complex, due to the vast territories from which they were drawn. Their caste makeup reflects that of their regions of origin (Smith, 1959; Lal, 1979). For the practical purposes, the caste system disintegrated and caste consciousness waned (Schwartz, 1967). The reasons for this are cited as absence of occupational specialisation, precise ritual roles, and inter-caste dependence (*jajmani*) in the new setting. Though Kuper (1960) argues that, caste consciousness remained high even though the system of caste based interaction and exchange ceased to function. He further argues that caste awareness can survive if members: (1) can maintain a ritual exclusiveness from the time they leave India; (2) hold a privileged position in the economic organization and avoid proletarianisation; (3) retain ties with a protected caste nucleus in India, and (4) isolate their women from intimate cross-caste contact.

Morris (1968) argues that, among the merchant migrants more sectarian and particularly caste based community fission has occurred. This he attributes to 4 factors: (1) proximity to India allowing easy communication and links with specific social groups; (2) favourable political atmosphere allowing for consolidation of smaller groups; (3) existence of a pace making group who organise themselves

communally, thus motivating others to do so; (4) the ambitions of leaders. Members of the Jat (peasant-farmer), Ramgarhia (craftsmen), and Bhatia (peddler) castes have not only formed their own networks but also show different trajectories of social mobility. Among Muslims the Ismailis and Bohras are prominent.

Kumar (2004) argues that, 'caste identities are strong within the Indian Diaspora which restricts the interaction pattern of non-dalit with the Dalit Diaspora'. He cites the discriminatory practices practised in Wolverhampton among the dalit and non-dalit Diaspora. For instance the non-dalit customer refuses to take change from the hands of dalit vendors, instead preferred to be placed on the counter. Other instances of discrimination are the refusal to share the water from the same tap and refusal to accept the 'Langar' (sanctified food) organised by Ravidasia community. These practices amount to practice of 'Untouchability' which is still practised in many parts of the India. Kumar (2004) further argues that, in these circumstances dalits migrating from various regions of India and belonging to different sub-caste groups came together and created their own organisations to develop solidarity with different dalit communities. Some of the important organisations are Buddha Vihars, Buddhist Council, Federation of Ambedkarite and Buddhist Organisation (FABO), Voice of Dalit International (VODI), Backward and Minorities Employees' Federation (BAMCEF). These organisations have helped in networking, organising, sharing of the experiences and sensitising the dalit diaspora in U.K. and across the world. They are also active on the issues concerning the dalits in homelands and have raised their voices at various international forums. They have made use of the modern means of communication like magazines, journals, internet for sharing of information about themselves. This sharing has helped in sensitising the dalits across the world.

Thus, we can see how caste identities play an important role in preserving the individuality of the group and its members. It points out towards the diversity which exists among the Indians themselves. It helps in maintaining distinction among various castes at one hand and with other ethnic and cultural communities at the other hand.

Family, Marriage and Kinship

Individuals are born in a family and socialised to become member of the particular kinship. Family and kin group provides the initial identity to its members and helps in

creation of social interaction pattern with other groups. In sociology the role of family as an institution is maintenance of cohesiveness of the society. It functions as the seat of socialisation where the younger generations are weaned into mores, practices and values of the group. Kinship forms the larger network of family consisting of relatives from both consanguine and affinal sides. Marriage as an institution is not only a means to provide for the social union of male and female for the purpose of reproduction of the human specie, but is also a form of social interaction which helps in widening of the social network. Thus, both family and kinship provides for the primordial identity of the individual and the group as a whole. The individuals have as sense of belongingness to the group and the group has a sense of unity through its members.

The marriage rules adopted by the Indian Diaspora in their strategies for marriage alliances are based on specific marriage rules practised in India. There is a sharp difference between the marriage rules followed by Hindu and Sikh migrants, all of whom practice rules of *gotra* exogamy. Muslims follow the practice of preference marriages among close kinship networks. Ballard (2003) argues that the practice of *gotra* (clan) exogamy among Hindus and Sikhs has two major consequences. First, families have no prior obligations with respect to either making or accepting offers of *riste* (marriage) once their offspring reach marriageable age; on the contrary, they can make their choices relatively freely within the limits of the endogamous *jati* (clan). Second, the fact that all marriages are arranged in this way not only means that agnates and affines form two quite separate and non-overlapping social categories. Each family and indeed each individual within each family has links with a wide range of *ristedar* (affines) who are spatially scattered across a number of neighbouring villages. In contrast, where frequent close-kin marriage is just not permitted, but is the actively preferred option, that distinction is almost entirely eliminated. As a result, kinship networks are not only much more tightly in-turned but also very much less spatially extensive, for example among the Muslims.

Ballard (2003) further argues that, most migrants continue to make *ristes* for their children on exactly the same basis and with same kind of status inspired objective in mind as they would have deployed back in India. The vast majority of early settlers' children's marriages were arranged and celebrated not in the Diaspora but in the immediate vicinity of migrant's ancestral villages. Gardner (1995) points

out that, this enabled them to cash in their global achievements for local prestige but also facilitated the entry of ever grateful sons and daughter-in-law into the U.K... In the long run however the potential contradictions inherent in matches arranged in this way tend to become steadily more salient. The unsophisticated rural spouse was usually at the receiving end, as were not able to keep up with their metropolitan spouse. In such cases, the matches frequently ran into troubles and particularly the women were hit hard as they had not many options left for them.

Ballard (2003) argues that, whilst parents were often angered and perplexed by these developments, their offspring were only too well aware of the underlying contradictions. Hence, they began to mount pressing campaigns to persuade their elders to change their marriage strategies. Rather, they urged their parents to make much more active attempts to seek out *ristes* within the ethnic colonies which were growing up overseas, rather than automatically putting out feelers back home. Where the choice of riste is relatively open – as it is in the case of gotra exogamy is the norm – it is very easy for parents to redirect their search towards a diasporic arena.

Indian Diaspora and Economic Status

After discussing the family, kinship and marriage issues among the Indian Diaspora now we will look at the economic status of the Diaspora in U.K. The class is an important category of social stratification which places individuals and groups in a particular hierarchy with concomitant prestige, privileges, status, esteem accorded to particular groups. Although, early Indians came to fulfil labour needs of industries, gradually they have found many other economic opportunities in the economy. Only a small minority of migrants arrived in Britain with technical and professional qualifications to compete in the employment market. Ballard (2003) argues that the vast majority of migrants who were of rural origin shared the strengths of a broadly peasant outlook. The precise levels of prosperity which settlers enjoyed immediately prior to their arrival had a far reaching impact on the trajectories of adaptation which they subsequently followed. Hence, migrants drawn from areas with a long standing history of agricultural prosperity, as in case of the Jullundur Doab in Punjab and Saurashtra region of Gujarat, also found they had richer resources of human capital – particularly in terms of educational experience and technical skills – than those arrived from much less agriculturally prosperous areas.

It is estimated that a significant percentage of hospital doctors, general practitioners and consultants are from the Indian community. The National Health Service is greatly dependent on the services of doctors from India. The presence of Indians doctors in Britain's National Health Service is the major domain of Indian professionals. South Asians constitute almost twenty percent of all hospital doctors and sixteen percent of all General Practitioners (Tatla, 2003). Tatla (2003) argues that, these high figures do not tell the whole story, as very few among them are employed in prestigious teaching hospitals and their promotion to Consultant is less than proportionate. Similarly, Indian presence in higher echelons in civil services, banks, financial institutions and large companies is negligible, though registering a sharp rise in recent years. The bar has 4 percent practising members from South Asia; two percent in teaching profession as teachers and one percent as head teachers and university teaching staff.

In business sector, they have monopolised the wholesale trade shops and retail trade owning upto one quarter and one third respectively. According to Tatla (2003), the Indian community accounts for 40% of the retail sector. Many are engaged as grocers, confectioners, tobacco and newsagent, off-licensee, pharmacists, sub-postmasters, and forecourt operators. Indians own almost 70% of the corner shops. They are also moving into big business especially Gujaratis are acquiring industrial firms and have made notable contribution to merchant banking and insurance. Among the Britain's 18,000 millionaires, there are estimated 200 Indian names. The wealthiest Indians are worth more than Five billion Pounds sterling. According to Singhvi Report (2002), there are approximately 300 important NRI businessmen today and approximately 150 prominent and rich Indians (NRIs and PIOs) in the U.K... They have a significant business presence across diverse sectors of manufacturing and services, both as owner-entrepreneurs and as professionals. Lakshmi Mittal world's best known metal magnate is among the richest half a dozen persons in the U.K. He heads a continuously growing list of what is jokingly called the 'coolie millionaires'. It includes Shrichand and Gopichand Hinduja (oil, banking and telecom interests), Lord Swaraj Paul (Caparo Group), hotelier Jasminder Singh, brewer and sugar king Manubhai Madhavani and electronics giant Gulu Lalvani to name just a few (Singhvi Report, 2002).

Tatla (2003) argues that, among the second generation the preferred career are in computer industry, applied sciences, medicine, business management, industrial research and scientific research. The key to Indians' success partly lies with their characteristic family values which ensure a sharing of capital among kin relations. Indians invest heavily in their offspring and put high value on their family tradition. Their social life is mainly confined within kinship network and related families. Thus we find that very few get attracted towards street crime and even the divorce rates are very low. Robinson (2003) argues that, apart from economic mobility and participation of Indian immigrants in the British economy, there is another aspect of economic status of Indian immigrant and that is their economic support to the kins both in the host country and parent country. Ballard (2003) argues that, be they peasant migrants or software engineers, they don't leave their past behind them. Quite contrary, they remain tied to their family and kinsfolk back home through those very same networks of reciprocity out of which the escalator itself is constructed. No matter, how long they stay abroad, most retain strong feelings of obligation and loyalty to their kinsfolk back home. He further points out that, migrants remit substantial proportion of their earnings during their initial period of overseas residence.

These remittances are utilised to improve the living standards and social standing of their family back home. In doing so the typical initial investment is the construction of new improved and prestigious family residence, followed by investment in such things as additional agricultural land and machinery, providing substantial dowry for their unmarried sister and sponsoring public rituals and shrines. The elaborately constructed palaces were a very public statement that they still cared a great deal about their status and reputation back home, no matter how extended their absence may have been. The remittance inflows frequently have a far reaching impact on the character and structure of local economy. Thus we can see that the economic prosperity earned by the Indian Diaspora helps them in maintaining a respectable status both within U.K. and India. The economic prosperity exuded them with confidence to venture into new avenues and provides substantial clout to assert their identity. This has helped them to venture into political arena of the host society where they can assert their identities and demand for the rights and privileges of equality.

Political Institutions and Role of Indian Diaspora

The political organisations provide the platform to Indian Diaspora to voice their concerns and demands and assert their identity. Tatla (2003) argues that the political associations among British Indians are based on regional basis reflecting the political reality of the Indian subcontinent. There are very few over-arching South Asian or even Indian associations. Instead there are associations of Sikhs, Gujaratis, and Kashmiris and so on. Indeed Kashmir divides the South Asian population more than any other factor. Tatla (2003) further argues that, for the first generation migrants the primary concern was to protect oneself from local hostility and racial discrimination. In recent years, there is a discernible trend towards participating in mainstream political parties, especially in city politics and their governing institutions. As a result, many Indians have been elected on local bodies as Councillors in various city councils. Initially, Indians formed community based associations which did social work and some of them acted as pressure groups. And few individuals have joined political groups allying with some political organisation in India. Such associations can be divided into two kinds: those formed locally and their focus remains the host society and the local needs; and those formed by Indians locally, but over a period of time have grown into allies of particular parties in India. A notable character of British Indian community organisations is their links with the Indian political parties.

Tatla (2003) points out that the earliest Indian political activity can be dated back to late nineteenth century. Dalip Singh the exiled prince of Sikh kingdom of Punjab was residing in Suffolk estate among British aristocracy, when he rebelled at later stage of his life. During 1880s, he made frantic visits to European kings with proposal to invade India and re-install him as sovereign of Punjab. British authorities considered him as a potential threat and blocked his return to his native land. Later three Indians were elected to British parliament in late 19th century and early 20th century. Chandra (1998) argues that, during the national movement in India, mostly students created networks in Britain in support of Indian independence. A small group of Indian exiles also organised violent movements. Shyamji Krishnavarma, V D Savarkar, Annie Besant were among the few who propagated violent methods to achieve independence.

Tatla (2003) argues that, in 1930's when the number of Punjabi migrants had reached to thousands an Indian Worker's Association [IWA] was set up in Midlands.

Initially it acted as a socialising club, at later stages it facilitated the relation between the migrants and the employees and it also did funded and helped the nationalists. From mid 1970s, both Congress party, Punjab's Akali Dal and communist groups have all been represented by similar associations based in U.K. In the 1990s, the Bharatiya Janata Party, Bahujan Samaj Party have also established their branches and received enthusiastic support from members for various Indian causes. The Punjab communist parties had a faithful following which shifted towards more militant Sikh organisations aftermath of 1984 crisis in Punjab. Thus, the post 1947 political scene has changed vastly. In May 2002 elections to British parliament three MP's of Indian origin were elected namely Keith Vaz (Leicester East), Piara Khabra (Southall) and Paramjit Dhanda (Gloucester). They all had contested on the Labour Party ticket. Professor Desai, Bhikhu Parekh, Tarsem Kang and few others are members of the upper house of parliament as Labour peers. Singhvi Report (2002) points out that there are over 250-300 Councillors of Indian Origin scattered all over U.K. They have formed a group called 'British-Indian Councillors Association' (BICA). The Report (2002) further points out that traditionally, Indians have been supporters of the Labour Party and, till recently, over 65 % of the Indian population was estimated to be voting in favour of Labour. However, the Conservatives have also been making concerted efforts to woo the Indian voters, and the appointment of Lord Dholakia as Chairman of the Liberal Democrats may boost their ability to target the Indian vote. Apart from this there is also a British-Indian Parliamentary Association which cuts across party lines and consists of members of the British Parliamentary Association, which is known as the 'Curry Club' and meets regularly to discuss matters of topical interest and to promote India's concerns (Singhvi Report, 2002).

Generally, Indians are very concerned about their status and position in British society. They have voiced such concerns and also fought against racial discrimination by joining local bodies and organising political parties. Aurora (1974) argues that, Sikhs have been quite active politically through parties as Akali Dal, Indian Worker's Association representing the Left parties. They had to wage several campaigns for the right to wear the turban. The first such case arose in 1956 in Manchester, 1960s in Wolverhampton over right to wear turban. Gradually local authorities and other organisations have given way to Sikh customary practices. In 1990s, Sikh construction workers were exempted from wearing hard hats. According to Kumar

(2004), Indian Dalits in U.K. has also become active politically. They have organised various forums and association to voice their concerns not only against the host society but also against the discriminatory practices adopted by non-dalit Indians.

Political developments in the Indian subcontinent has seen vigorous mobilisation among British Indians. Thus, Indian independence movement in the pre-1947 period found much mobilisation in Britain. Other events, like Indo-China war in 1962, wars with Pakistan in 1971, Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi, Operation Blue Star in Amritsar in 1984, Gujarat carnage in 2003, Kashmir issues have all raised the passions and mobilised the British Indians to take a stand over the issues and raise their voices and concerns. Similarly, Gujaratis have been instrumental in funding political parties in Gujarat and investing in building infrastructure including contribution to arts and culture. The issue of 'Gujarati *Asmita*' [honour] raised by Narendra Modi Chief Minister of Gujarat during and after the Gujarat pogrom led to mobilisation of the British Indians and raised questions over secular polity of India.

Indian Diaspora: Religion and Adaptation

Religion plays a decisive role in the formation of the identity of individuals and groups. Durkheim defines religion as 'a unified system of beliefs and practices which unite its followers into one single moral community'. Tatla (2003) argues that, Indian and South Asian migrants' apparent commitment to religious life distinguished them from the white population. Most British Indians life revolves essentially around their families and religion. Almost all ceremonies, personal and social have religious overtones. The rites of passage such as birth, marriage, death are tied to their religious convictions and carried out as such. The two predominant religions of British Indians are Gujarati Hindus and Sikhs along with small proportion of Punjabi Hindus. Tatla (2003) further argues that, Hindu community has established more than 100 temples across Britain which is frequented by both Gujarati and Punjabi Hindus. The temples not only serve as religious sites of worship but also as community centres helping new migrants settle in, meditation, community gossip and also preservation of the culture. Hindus from Gujarat and Punjab differ in some of their religious orientations despite sharing common deities. They observe different denominational practices inside their respective temples. Moreover various religious movements like Arya Samaj, ISKON, Swaminarayan, and other sects have also some influence and have followers.

Tatla (2003) points out that, there is discernible tendency towards a standardisation of rituals and temple practices. From 1960s, the Hare Krishna movement became a cult attracting many white English people to its fold. Its famous devotee George Harrison of the Beatles pop group in 1973, funded ISKON to build magnificent temple, Bhaktivedanta Manor on hills of Hertfordshire and he also left a legacy of 1.5 million pounds sterling for temple and 2 million pounds sterling for Hare Krishna movement. The temple provides both symbolic and physical aspects of a cohesive Hindu ethnicity. It also serves as a centre of instruction in the language of the community. In many temples there are facilities for teaching Hindi and Gujarati and there have been efforts to bring these languages in the mainstream education system also. The Gujaratis provided substantial financial aid to the victims of Bhuj earthquake, while Sikhs provided considerable support to sufferers of 1984 events.

Tatla (2003) points out to the fact that the first Gurudwara was opened in London in 1911. Now, the Gurudwaras have been established in most of the major cities and areas with sufficient number of Sikh residents, taking their numbers to 200 during last century. Several thousand Ramgarhia Sikhs who came from East Africa have kept their strong adherence to turbans. Similarly, Ravidasi Sikhs have established Gurudwaras exclusively under their own control with their community initiative. In most Gurudwaras religious practices are quite similar with emphasis on scriptural reading of sacred book 'Guru Granth' with stories from the Sikh history. Many Gurudwaras provide lessons of Punjabi language for the children. Thus, it can be argued that Gurudwaras and temples can be seen as an attempt by the deterritorialised to reterritorialise themselves. They create a visible symbol of the Sikh and Hindu culture. In the initial decades of migration the Gurudwaras helped Sikh families in variety of ways, thus affirming its role as the centre of the community, as the "overarching cultural site for the diasporic Punjabi community" (Aurora 1974). Gurudwara was the centre of social and religious life, with greater emphasis on the social. This explains the proliferation of large number of Gurudwaras and temples across the Britain. The population involved in migration was quite diverse. In terms of religion, majority are Hindus and Sikhs. Hindus are divided into Vaishnavism and Shaktism followed in various parts of India

Indian Diaspora: Keeping Cultural Heritage Alive

Indian Diaspora has kept alive its cultural heritage although there is stark difference between the host society's culture and its own. These differences in the precise characteristics of the cultural capital on which members of immigrant communities survive further reinforced the differential impact of the differences in social capital. All Indian settlers are not just active agents in their own cause, but are making maximum use of whatever forms of social, cultural, technical, economic, educational and cultural capital to which they have access. They are making intensive use of their ancestral cultural capital as they build new lives for themselves in Britain. There is no one way to upward mobility, but as the precise character of the assets varies between various communities, they reflect different trajectories of mobility.

There is a long history of cultural exchanges between India and U.K. since the colonial rule. Many of the British administrators grappled with Sanskrit heritage of India. Different cultural traits like – spirituality, mysticism etc. fascinated the Britishers and Westerners. There was continuous give and take between the British and the Indian culture. Diffusion of material and non-material culture took place through out the length of colonial rule (Singh, 2002). Many Britishers were so much influenced that they chose to stay back when the British granted sovereignty to India. Many of the British administrators who went back carried the profound impact of the Indian culture. The Indian culture and its artefacts had already made their inroads into the British society through both the British administrators who served in India and the diasporic communities. Britain offers excellent environment for education and a measured pace for budding creative writers from the Indian subcontinent. The University of Oxford established Sanskrit chair in 19th century as part of its oriental education. Most of the universities in Britain have either Sanskrit study centre or Indology centre. For past three centuries, there had been many fusion and experiments in Indo-British cultural exchange.

Indian Diaspora has used different medium from theatre, films, TV, internet, print media etc. to keep its cultural heritage alive in Britain on the one hand and also stay in touch with the culture of mother country. Tatla (2003) points out that, at the outset there have been some experiments in the theatre like experimenting with *Tamasha* form of theatre of traditional India. The theatre Tara Arts established in 1980s has celebrated its existence over the last two decades with occasional

productions moving to West End theatres also. It has produced plays on Jallianwala Bagh, set novels of Mulk Raj Anand on the stage and some other titles. In the film industry few Indians have started marking their presence in U.K. Gurinder Chadda a second generation Sikh of East African origin who has directed films like '*Bhaji on The Beach*', '*Bend it Like Beckham*' and '*Bride and Prejudice*' has made her mark in the film industry. Balraj Khanna – a writer and an artist has displayed his works in major art galleries. Indians are keen film watchers thus there are several cinema houses catering to Bollywood film shows on a regular basis. After 1990s even the Bollywood has taken note of the enthusiasm and interest shown by the Indian Diaspora in U.K. leading to production of several films keeping in mind the Diaspora as the viewers.

Since 1970s, the Asian viewers in U.K. have a wide choice of radio and TV programmes. The local BBC and other independent radios have dedicated number of hours for the popular music from Indian subcontinent. Since the establishment of the satellite television in 1990s, the various channels like Zee TV, Star TV, Lashkara TV, and B4U TV have been catering to the British Indians. It has a major impact on the British Indian households. The subscription to these channels provides them opportunity to connect with their homelands and culture. Many have subscribed to them thinking that it might save their children from the bad influence of western media. Bhangra has made a world wide presence from its humble British Punjabi origins. Bhangra has provided a new kind of identity to the younger generation with its unique mixing and fusion of different musical traditions (Tatla 2003). Some of the mainstream companies are now keen to promote this music to the more lucrative and wider English audience.

Singhvi Report (2002) points out that, a number of persons from the Indian community occupy important positions in the mainstream British Television and print media, including organisations like the British Broadcast Corporation (BBC), The Daily Telegraph, The Financial Times, etc. Their presence in these organisations contributes to a better understanding of India and a more balanced projection of issues of concern to India. The ethnic Indian media has a strong and powerful presence throughout the country. The Indian community runs a number of ethnic TV channels, radio stations, newspapers and magazines. News from the Indian subcontinent is easily available through the medium of radio, television, newspapers, magazines and

internet. Asian times, Eastern Eye, India Weekly and Asian Age (daily) cater to them. Most of the Indian newspapers and magazines are available online these days, thus it has reduced the time gap also. Now, they can get the news in real time. Asian, Indian and Sikh websites are enormously popular with teenagers for discussion, love matches, news and informational needs. Internet has changed the news and information is decimated and received. It has become a two way process now where people are not only the consumers of the news but also the creators.

As part of general concern about cultural heritage, efforts have been made to teach community languages to the second and third generation Indian children (Tatla 2003). The range of languages spoken is also very broad ranging from Hindi, Punjabi, Gujarati, Urdu and so on. In addition there are various dialects used even among these languages. The temples and Gurudwaras serve as the nodal points from where these languages are taught. They run efficient schools of language hiring experienced teachers, though most of them work on voluntary basis or are underpaid. In some cities even local educational authorities assists them in some ways. Tatla (2003) argues that the language students at the age of 16 and 18 take formal examinations for the General Certificate of Secondary Education [GCSE] and Advanced [A] Level. Beyond school only few educational institutions cater to Asian languages. But at the university level facilities exist for research in South Asian literature or linguistic explorations. Oxford and Cambridge provide options for Asian languages. School of Oriental and African Studies [SOAS], University of London provide wide choices of courses and has excellent provisions for teaching and research in Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi and Urdu.

Tatla (2003) argues that, despite much hyped discussion of literature in English written by authors of Indian origin such as Salman Rushdie, Hanif Qureshi, FarU.K.h Dhondi and few others, the British life has found no authentic narrative. The work of these authors is too shallow and alienated from communities. The literature written in South Asian languages has hardly been noticed. The writings in Punjabi or Gujarati are yet to present a serious fictional account of British Asian experiences. One of the reasons is low esteem attached to literature produced in South Asian languages and another it has not found a channel for its discussion. Bhikhu Parekh remarks, 'Asian experiences are too raw and intense' to allow introspection at this stage. Thus we can see that the cultural heritage is not only preserved in alien environment but there have been substantial efforts by the Indian Diaspora to promote their culture and pass it on to the next generation.

Indian Diaspora: Through Organisations

The Indian Diaspora has established a range of organisations pertaining to religion, caste, community service, labour relations, political and so on. Most of these have taken considerable time to evolve and have gone through phases of expansion, contraction, division, and merger. Ballard (1986) argues that, these organisations have been instrumental in ironing out the tensions and conflicts faced by the immigrants. The various diasporic communities have evolved differently from one another and from distant kinsmen back home. Kinship networks across the world have helped Indians to establish and consolidate their existence in alien country. He further argues that, international migration is much more complex process than is often supposed to be. It does not entail simple bilateral movement from one country to another. For those who are migrating have comprehensive knowledge of the range of opportunities available in the global market, but their kinship network greatly facilitates their ability to take advantage of those opportunities. It sets in a chain of ongoing process, in which members of a multiplicity of geographically separated but socially interlinked communities use and indeed continually readjust all the resources (human, cultural and material) available to them, both to advance their interest and to circumvent any obstacles they encounter (Ballard 1986).

Robinson (1990) argues that the scale and nature of Indian settlement altered post independence with the development of mass chain migration. They migrated to fill in the jobs and opportunities available at lower levels which had been created by the economic boom and labour shortage rather than seeking qualifications and professional experience. Migrants were largely unskilled and even if skilled their skills were not recognised as such and were treated as unskilled in the labour market. They were drawn from specific areas of origin following the trails left behind by their earlier kinsmen. They were young, often single and usually migrated in search of better material gains and escape from the drudgery and hardship back home. He further argues that though the working conditions were demanding enough equalling their earlier positions but the remuneration was high enough to keep them in the job and also find opportunity for social mobility. They considered themselves as economic transients and had somewhat unfavourable opinion of British cultural and moral values (Robinson 1986). Robinson (1990) further argues that, the timing of their migration has been influenced by the varying fortunes of the British economy.

However in 1962 the British government reacted to unregulated immigration and the increasing politicisation of the race relations issue by imposing restrictions on unskilled labour migration. This altered both the nature of migration and permanency of settlement. Now migration of female dependents (spouses) and for marriages increased considerably and the settlement became permanent and family oriented. Subsequent legislations to restrict immigration have strengthened these tendencies. The youthful age structure of India and higher fertility rate ensured both steady growth in numbers and an indigenisation of the population. The exodus from the East African countries also led to the growth of the Indian population.

The internal differences between the diasporic communities are interesting. Their study must consider how the host society evaluates and behaves towards them. Rex (1970) argues that, this can be understood in relation to conditions which prevailed during two groups' first experience of sustained contact. In case of Indians and Britons their first contact was in direct conflict and the later subjugation of India politically, economically and militarily. In the resulting hierarchy, Indians were seen as inferior and conquered people. The attitude of hostility and confrontation was always present leading to stereotyping of others' characters and attitudes. The net effect was that, generations of Britons learned that 'black people are different; that we were their masters and teachers, and that they were naturally subordinate to us' (Lawrence, 1974). These views solidified during the period of mass migration because members of the indigenous British working class found that whom they have considered inferior were suddenly living next door to them, working in the same factories or even renting rooms in same house. Status insecurity led them to social distancing and further stereotyping. Some of the stereotypes about Indians were that they lived in overcrowded houses, failed to maintain the house according to British standards, houses were noisy, had dubious standards of personal hygiene, were social security scroungers, took all good jobs, ate cat and dog, and poached local white girls (Seabrook, 1971).

These and pre-existing colonial stereotypes ensured that the attitudes towards Indians in U.K. were at best grudging acceptance and at worst outright rejection (Robinson, 1987). The result of this attitudinal context was allocation of very specific roles to Indians. They were relegated to positions considered as underclass and allowed access to valued resources only as far as it enhanced their value as marginal

labour (, 1987). Robinson (1990) further argues that the access to good housing was restricted through both direct and indirect racial discrimination and excluded from a broader range of employment. In certain cases there were instances of racial attacks and harassment. A combination of exclusion from housing market and a desire to retain community encapsulation ensured levels of segregation which exceeded those for most other ethnic groups. The high level of concentration helped in the development of the community facilities such as shops, evening classes and places of worship, but they were also synonymous with the spatial marginalisation of Indian population. Areas of Asian residence including Indians had some of the poorest housing and environmental conditions in Britain (Robinson, 1990).

Robinson (1990) argues that, Britain has become a post industrial society in recent years evolving from industrial economy to service based economy i.e. from producing saleable commodities to one providing invisible services. The employment opportunities in various industries have also changed with the changing shape of the economy. Different industries have reacted differently and restructured accordingly. On the other hand the structural adjustment programmes India have led to change in the character of migrants. In response to these changing patterns of opportunities, there has been parallel redistribution of people, a process aided by the new logic of globalisation which encourages the movement of labour, capital, and services at higher rate. Therefore, Indians are establishing new organisations to meet the challenges of this changed scenario.

Indian Diaspora: Hindu-Muslim Divide

As pointed out earlier, the Indian Diaspora is not monolithic and is quite diverse in its composition. One of the major components of difference is religion. The prominent religions practised by Indians are Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Christianity and so on. The Indian diaspora in U.K. reflects this composition. The differences and the attitude of various religious communities does not wither away with migration rather crystallises in alien lands. Thus the Hindu-Muslim divide present in India has its reflections in the Indian Diaspora in U.K. Jayant Lele (2003) points out to the difference between the first and the second waves of immigrants. While first wave consisted of unskilled labourers, the second wave consists of professionals in large numbers. The major support for 'Hindutva' comes from this class belonging to second

wave. He calls this support as the phenomenon of 'long distance nationalism', which is a growth of a "particular kind of nationalist sentiment". He links this to increasing insecurity and uncertainty felt by the new global middle class, and argues that the roots of diasporic Hindu cultural nationalism must be sought in the "interests and actions of this class". Long distance nationalism for this class is expressed by asserting ethnic and religious ties with the mother country, so that Hindutva has found a niche market. The rise in 'Guru Phenomenon' and proliferation of temples are forms of this kind of assertion.

Ballard (2003) points out that the arguments that it is commitment to Islam which precipitates all manner of pathological behaviour is articulated within Britain's Hindu communities who are also actively involved in the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, which is affiliated with extreme nationalist – and hence strongly anti Muslim – political movements back in India. In other words such arguments also substantially reply an ideological position which has been largely responsible for precipitating an ever sharper degree of ethno-religious polarisation between India's Hindu majority and its Muslim minority. Hence there is a strong sense in which members of Britain's indigenous majority as well as its Hindu minority all share a common commitment to Islamophobia. Thus, the principle cause of British Muslim's much more severe condition of relative deprivation compared to their Hindu and Sikh counterparts is the outcome of their exposure to a virulently Islamophobic form of cultural racism.

Ballard (2003) argues that the anti-Islamic sentiments are even more deeply entrenched component of the British cultural tradition than they are in South Asia. There is little evidence that most members of the indigenous majority can accurately differentiate between South Asians who are Muslims and those who have other religious affiliations. In the first instance they are all popularly identified as 'Pakis'. If so it seems most unlikely that potential discriminators' preferential treatment of Hindu and Sikh South Asians as compared with their Muslim counterparts is the central source – or even a marginally significant source – of the marked differentials between the socio-economic achievements of members of these two broad population groups. Thus, it suggests that its impact is likely to be broadly similar on members of both groups, and that we therefore need to look elsewhere in order to explain the observed outcomes.

Conclusion

As Marx (1954) puts it in the opening sentences of *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: “Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past”. Indian Diaspora has experienced a high degree of ‘cultural homogenisation’, due to clustering together of once regionally distinct peoples and their residence in comparative isolation of non-Indians. The issue of identity remains important for any individual or a community as a whole. The identity can be manifested in various ways and forms. The social, economic, political, religious, ethnicity, racial, cultural are all forms of manifestations of identity. Identity is not only manifested but also contested and asserted in various milieu. It has its symbolic representations.

The identity formation takes place at various levels through interaction with different institutions – like social, economic, religious and political. The identity formation takes place within a context even in alien milieu. The social segregation of Indian migrants at initial phases of their migration led to their clustering within their own people. This helped in the preservation and propagation of the social and cultural heritage. The economic status of the Indians Diaspora has improved over the years. Beginning as the labourers now they occupy important positions at various levels of British economy. The hard earned prosperity helped Indian diaspora to form various organisations and forums to voice their concerns and play a decisive role in decision making. But the question remains that if all this has helped them to gain acceptability in the mainstream British society. Both numbers and activism on part of Indian Diaspora has brought them in the mainstream political arena. The regional, linguistic, and religious backgrounds have helped in creation of distinct identities of the Indians in U.K.

The individual inherits an identity from the family in which he/she is born and learns from kinsmen various facets of identity like caste relations, religion, marriage rules, class and status. Though in a distant land as is the case with British Indians they have to grapple with the burden of preservation of their local identity and the influence and adoption of the new identity bestowed upon them. Thus the dynamics between what they already have and what they are given gives rise to both conflict and syncretism.

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CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

Chapter **V**

Conclusion

The present study attempted to understand and analyse the process of identity formation and cultural adaptation among the Indian immigrants in U.K. We have found that the Indian Diaspora in U.K. is the oldest among all other Indian Diasporas in different countries. We have found that in general there are four well established Diasporas in the world namely – the Jewish, the Irish, the Chinese and the Indians (Jayaram, 2004). But it has been established that Indian Diaspora is perhaps the most widespread of all. This proves the most important characteristics of Indian Diaspora that is adaptability. It is this characteristic of adaptability of Indian immigrants in U.K. which has given them an edge over other Asian and African migrants.

We have also found in the study that the Indians have used their primordial institutions like caste, family, kinship, religion to adapt in the racially hostile country U.K. The immigrants have maintained strong ties with the region they have migrated from and have firmly asserted their identities. The transition of social identity of Indians from porters at dock or labourers in the industry, on analysis stands deconstructed. Rather the study has concluded that today Indians have been able to establish themselves in every walk of life if not at par with the whites but they are not less than them either.

As told earlier, the present study was divided into five chapters including Introduction and Conclusion. The first chapter which is Introduction has initiated the analysis of adaptability and identity formation among the Indian immigrants in U.K. This chapter, besides giving definition of Diaspora also probes the universality of migration. It establishes the fact that, migration is universal fact which cuts across the species – plants, animals and human beings. The chapter gives a classification of Indian migration taking help of Jain (1993). It divides Indian migrants into ‘Overseas emigration in the nineteenth century’ and ‘twentieth century migration to industrially developed countries’. The chapter emphasises that, it was because of latter type of migration Indian Diaspora has emerged. The chapter ends by giving the description of

methodology adapted in the analysis of the present study and the chapter scheme to be followed.

Following this the second chapter presents a brief socio-historical profile of Indian Diaspora in different countries. The chapter explains that the history of Indian Diaspora dates back to pre-Christian Era but 19th and early part of the 20th century has witnessed unprecedented emigration of Indians. This chapter has dealt with two streams of theoretical debates with the institution of indentured labourers during colonial period. Taking clue from Tinker (1974), the present study argues that one stream called the system of indentured labour as new form of slavery. The study though has not dealt the specific working conditions of indentured labourers but it has captured the condition from different studies. On the other hand this chapter highlights how I. M. Cumpston (1956) has praised the system of indentureship as open and liberating for exploited and excluded Indians. Following indentureship the chapter deals with two other systems of migration of Indians in that period 'Kangani' and 'Free Migration'.

Apart from this, second chapter also discusses the specific migration of Indians to European, American and West Asian countries in 20th century (see Tables in the chapter). The chapter highlights the occupational profile of the immigrant Indians in these countries and describes that the Indians are located at the different poles of job profile. Some of the Indians are still in the lowest strata jobs like porters, coolies, but at another pole there are professionals – Doctors, engineers, IT professionals. However, there is lack of data to analyse the relationship between these two types of Indian work force in Diaspora. Another fact highlighted by this work in this chapter is the expenditure incurred on training of the unskilled and semi-skilled labourers migrating to West Asian countries and foreign remittances sent to country by them. Some analysis is needed in the case of various types of professionals migrating to industrially developed countries like – U.K., USA, Australia, Canada etc.

The third chapter specifically analyses Indian Diaspora in U.K. The chapter has attempted to understand the regional and religious profile of the Indian immigrants in U.K. The pull factor of migration in the chapter has been seen in the process of rapid industrial boom during 19th century. As far as demographic profile of Indians is concerned they constitute 1.39 percent of the countries population. This chapter registers that Indian Diaspora in U.K. is blessed with its peculiarity. One it has vast diversity, and depicts almost same as Indian society. Secondly, it is also

blessed with 'double Diaspora'. That means Indians from their first settlement in the foreign land are coming to U.K. We have found in the study that in U.K. Gujarati Hindus and Punjabis dominate Indian Diaspora.

As already revealed, the Indian Diaspora is deeply anchored in its traditional culture that is why they have established number of religious, linguistic, regional and political organisations. We have found out that Indian community is very active and keep on organising number of cultural and religious programmes. It not only helps them to establish their cultural ties in the foreign land but also with India. Lots of cultural exchange programmes between India and U.K. have further sensitised the second generation Indians and British equally. Along with the cultural and professional highlights of the Indian Diaspora the chapter describes how Indians in Britain have used various institutions like economy, polity and media to establish themselves. It was astonishing to find that 2/3rd IT professionals in U.K. are of Indian origin. Further 4 elected Member of Parliament, and 11 Members of House of Lords and 250-300 Councillors of Indian origin. This has really helped the Indian Diaspora to raise their voice in political forums effectively. Secondly, other politicians can't even imagine to ignore Indian community. Moreover, this chapter has further analysed how Indian diaspora used various medium of media – whether Theatre, TV, films, Radio, Print, Internet etc. for establishing their identity and record their assertion in the host society. Hence, their achievement is satisfactory but still they have to go a long way.

The Chapter four discusses the different process of adoption and identity formation among the Indian Diaspora in U.K. The chapter opens with the conceptual explanation of identity. Then it analyses how identity in Indian Diaspora crystallises. The chapter reveals that the identity formation takes place at various levels through interactions with different institutions – like economic, social, religious and political. It also defines the context in which this identity formation takes place. The rupture between British and Indians has also been described. Further, discussing the settlement pattern of the stay reveals that migrants preferred to settle in discrete regional and linguistic groupings rather than in racially heterogeneous enclaves. The regional, religious and linguistic settlement pattern further highlighted the identities of Indian Diaspora, which manifestly helped them to adapt in the hostile environment.

The primordial Indian institutions of immigrants like – caste, family, and religion further helped them in adaptation, this chapter reveals. These institutions

gave them much needed cushion, when there were none to give them shoulder in times of crisis. The racial exclusion and exploitation could not break them emotionally as the aforesaid institutions helped them to recover. The Indian value system guided them and gave them a ready made system of existence in the alien culture. The time, which they got initially because of existing value system, helped them further to adapt in host culture. The various other formal organisations, the chapter has discussed are social and economic. These have assisted Diaspora at different levels. The religious organisations have given them outright different identity and also their relations back home. The transnational networks have given the Indian diaspora occupational security. The political organisations have helped them to press for their legitimate human and cultural rights in the hostile host country.

In the end, we can conclude that, the migration has been prominent feature of the human societies across time and space. As various accounts dating from Vedic to contemporary times shows clearly the migration of Indians to far flung areas in pursuit of trade, wealth, better quality of life and at times for safety and security. Indians went to distant lands to preach the gospels of Buddhism. There was a numerically small but continuous migration of traders, knowledge seekers, vagabonds and others before the colonial rule of British in India. Numerically it may seem insignificant compared to the later migration but has played a major role in cultural diffusion across the societies and civilizations. These instances also repudiate the assertion that Hinduism prohibits travel across the sea as it leads to losing one's caste. This assertion seems to be the fallout of strict religious practices which crept into Hinduism during the Smriti period and later Muslim rule of eight centuries. The second wave of large scale migration can be seen during the British colonial rule which consisted of the indentured labourers and other free migrants. They constitute the bulk of the migrants residing in various old colonies of the British Empire starting from Malaysia to other end of Atlantic. The third wave of migration started after the independence of India in August 1947. There has been a large scale migration of free labourers, traders, professional, students and other to mostly developed countries or other countries like Gulf providing greener pastures to the migrants.

Indian diaspora is not a monolithic lot. They have wide diversion based on language, religion and geographical regions from which they emigrated. There are differences based on the way they came to different countries – e. g. indenture

worker, free passenger, trader, businessmen or high skilled workers. In a way they are microcosm of Indian diversity. All of them have identity of being ethnic Indians and around the world they seem to sense a feeling of oneness and feel a part of grater Indian society. Other sections in the countries of their adoption treat them only as ethnic Indians neglecting their diversity. There are regional variations in the adaptations of the India Diaspora residing in various countries. But in many ways they exhibit common identity, which is not regional but global. Their adaptability has never subsumed their identity. It springs from their deep faith in their civilisation and spiritual heritage. It is demonstrated in their pride and abiding faith in Indian value system. It is expressed in their aspiration and inspiration that they get from their country of origin (Jain 2004). For settlement, they may like their children to prosper and grow in their adopted countries, but globally they would prefer them to adopt Indian family values. The global identity of Indian Diaspora is distinct because of these preferences, practices and aspirations.

The Indian community in the U.K. has a unique place in our Diaspora. The U.K. is the first country which has an Indian community truly representative of its diversity. The colonial connection between India and the U.K. had ensured intimate interaction between the two countries at all levels for almost three centuries. This has contributed to the evolution of an Indian community in Britain comprising of all sections of the people. With the humble beginning as migrant labourers to millionaires, it has been an uphill task for the Indians to make a mark in an alien society which inspite of its liberal ideals credos practised institutionalised racial and ethnic exclusion. The Indian have made their mark not only in the economic and professional spheres but also in the intellectual and academic fields. Politically they have been noticed and have created space to voice their concerns. Though, British Indians are prosperous and confident of their identity they suffer from their status of being minority. They face subtle or obvious hostility of lesser developed majority community. These problems compounded when the affluent minority also happens to be an immigrant community and not successfully integrated with the indigenous groups.

Indian communities have also been able to not only preserve but promote and propagate their cultural traditions in the younger generations. The cultural interaction between the British and India has led to unique blending like Bhangra mix. Indian

culinary tastes have mixed with the British from mango chutney to *tandooris*. There are curry Clubs, Masala and Spice Magic and various other clubs specialising in Indian culinary to organic food from India. Media and communication has played an important role in both keeping the cultures alive and transmitting them to the British Indians. Kavita Sharma (2003) emphasises that education has played a major role in maintaining the Indian identity of Diasporas. She emphasises on strong educational links that India and Britain has. And this has resulted in large scale migration of highly skilled Indians. There is a need to expose the second generation to the culture and ethos of India because they are born and brought up in local culture.

As far as identity of Indian Diaspora is concerned the issue of identity remains important for any individual or a community as a whole. The identity can be manifested in various ways and forms. The social, economic, political, religious, ethnicity, racial, cultural are all forms of manifestations of identity. Identity is not only manifested but also contested and asserted in various milieux. It has its symbolic representations. The individual inherits an identity from the family in which he/she is born and learns from kinsmen various facets of identity like caste relations, religion, marriage rules, class and status. Though in a distant land as is the case with British Indians they have to grapple with the burden of preservation of their local identity and the influence and adoption of the new identity bestowed upon them. Thus the dynamics between what they already have and what they are given gives rise to both conflict and syncretism.

The spoke and wheel relationship of Diaspora with India has changed into a web relationship. The driving force from the emergence of this Diaspora has been civilisational identity and cultural linkages. This cultural urge was so far operating at local or regional level in different countries of their adoption.

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