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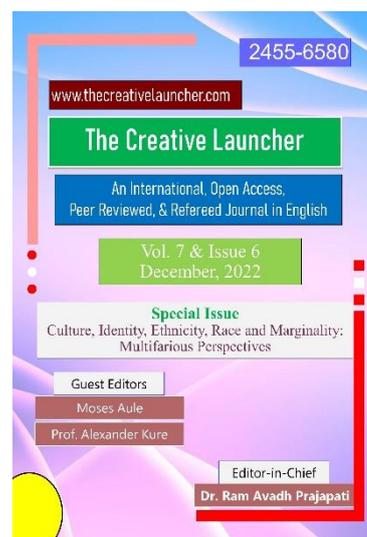
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Research Article



A Conceptual Framework of Indian Diaspora

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Abstract

The term Indian diaspora refers to the overseas Indians officially known as Non- Resident Indians (NRIs) or the Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) or the people of India by birth or descendants from Indian subcontinents, living outside of Indian Republic. Overseas Indians are concerned as the people of India or the ethnic groups of people associated with Indian sensibility, ethnicity, nationality, citizenship or having other co-relation of Indian life style

abroad overseas. The conceptual analyses on migration have explained the social criteria of Indian diasporic sensibility just as assimilation and integration, the organized associations, cultural crisis, emergence of identity crisis, ethnicity and the globalization etc.

Keywords: Migration, Assimilation, Integration, Cultural crisis or emergence, Identity crisis, ethnicity, Globalization

In the historical growth of Diaspora, India is known as one of the largest Diasporic population conserving countries in all over the world. According to the report of United Nations, India is the largest country which originates for expatriates and immigrant communities. It is recorded as the country of 17.5 million diaspora across the world while the latest survey of Ministry of External Affairs of India makes its observers clear that there are 32 million NRI's and PIO's recorded as Indian Diaspora living out of India for the sake of their better growth willingly or unwillingly. According to a survey of News 18 on 19th September 2021, nearly 2.5 million Indian people migrate from India every year and it's enough to narrate the latest report of Indian Diaspora. Describing the terms differently, NRIs are defined as the people who are recognized among the tax payers, under the section 6 of the Income Tax Act, 1961, has not resided in India for a considerable period of the Income Tax Act for their fulfilling records. The act explains that any Indian who is not recognized as the 'resident of India' but is known for his common ancestral identity as non-resident of India. Such people are treated as NRIs in the consideration of the government of India for paying income tax. Another term, PIOs means for the citizen of India, living abroad after the nation of China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Iran, Sri Lanka or Nepal, who were holding an Indian passport for their Indian Identity, in the relation of their ancestors who were living permanently as the resident of India and fulfilling the criteria of Indian citizenship as it is defined in the Act 1935 of Indian Constitution. In the same way the other territories that became part of India or the spouse of a citizen of India, all of such people are known as PIOs. Further, the OCI or Overseas Citizenship of India convinces a scheme of pseudo-citizenship of India which does not allow for full time dual citizenship. It is defined as a long-term visa or card providing scheme of the government with the certain rights for their votes in Election and seeking job opportunities.

The historical development of Indian diaspora has a long record of migration into the different countries of the world, particularly to the Central Asia, United States of America and Russia. Such history of migration in India is being told to be begun from the very beginning of the reign of Emperor Kanishka around the first century AD. At that time, they were known as 'gypsies' and most of them settled from what today is called Rajasthan (the place of King) in India. They emigrated to the north and the west of Europe and settled there in the hope of betterment. Another movement of people is recorded in the reign of Cholas which started in around 500 AD to the Southeast Asia which is known today as Indonesia and Malaysia. The influence of such migration can strongly be seen in the Southeast Asia among

the Brahmin Kings of Thailand, Kingdoms of Cambodia, Indonesia, Central Sumatra and Bali. Nevertheless, all of these migrants can't be labeled as Indian Diaspora in the real perspective because most of them intermingled into the local country and culture, leaving all traces of Indian identity yet they could be called Old Diaspora of ancient India.

The historical emigration of Indian diaspora can also be traced back to the time of Emperor Ashoka also who attacked Kalinga and followed the progressive steps of Samudragupta towards Southeast Asia for the development of his Indian kingdom in which mission a large number of Brahmins migrated to the Southeast Asia for their willing purposes of the cultural growth. They were called as Cholas, known for their naval power. The historical approaches of these Cholas Kings and subjects tells us that they won Sumatra and Malay Peninsula and established themselves with an identity of culture in the Brahman families, known presently as Rakru of Thailand in the Southeast Asia. Another example of Ancient Diaspora is recorded as 'Indian Shendu' which is looking verifying with the annex of Yunan by the Han Dynasty in the very first century by the Chinese authority. No more knowledge about the dispersion of such diaspora is recorded under our little knowledge but the modern spirit of Indian diaspora is recorded in the history of 'Indian Merchant Diaspora' emerging in the mid 16th century in the Central Asia and Arabian countries, working well for over four hundred years as the Astrakhan people establishing their colony in the 1610s at the mouth of Volga in the Tsardom of Russia, having the entitle of the first Indian merchant colony. It has not been the report of Indian perception but Russian literate society also reported that the presence of Hindu traders in Moscow and St. Petersburg since the 18th century has been an historical identity in the various places of Russia. Further it is also reported that the Indians, Hindus or Muslims from the different part of India were found working as bankers and merchants and living with Jews and Armenians in Safavid Persia which is also mentioned by a number of scholars in their manuscripts and chronicles. The murder of a number of Hindus in Hamadan by Ottomans due to Ottoman and Afghan wars in Iran during 1722-27, is also reported under the Hindu Diaspora in Iran. In 1815, Elphinstones reported that 350 stores of great buildings, owned by the Hindu merchants, especially of Sikhs in Kandahar were found as the evidence of Hindu Diaspora. After this, there starts a survey to have knowledge about the Hindu Diaspora in Kandahar and it was found that there were a number of houses dealing with textiles and other precious metals historically recognized for the assignments of Sikhs community in India. The present survey reports that the historical records of such community living in Kabul during 1800 to 1886 could be read clearly. They were found using Sindhi and Punjabi language to converse their thoughts and their business was recognized as Usury while they were also found having local citizenship of Afghanistan. Many of the usurers and merchants of Hindu backgrounds were targeted and killed by the gangs of Kashgaris while the remaining of them took shelter under the British Consul General who made them assure to protect from any such gangs or rioters. Furthermore, the study of Hindu Diaspora is found with a piece of evidence of two killings of Hindus at the hands of Uighurs in the Shamba Bazar and many hindus killings were found in Khotan at the hands of Bughra Amirs. The brutal incident of Posgam evidenced on March 25,

1933 can't be forgotten easily from the memory of the scholars, in which many British Indian Hindus were crushed out and were looted by the Muslims in Karghalik. In this connection Raj Sahib, Dip Chand, the old and the wise member of community or Caucasus in the Central Asia was spoiled brutally. Such brutality of human beings in Khotan came to be called as Karghalik Outrage. Accordingly, the great loss of humanity in Khotan was going by the Islamic Turkic rebel declaring Sharia against many more. In this way a great community of Hindu Diaspora was reported to be spoiled and looted by the enemy of humanity in Afghanistan.

All the above examples are the exploration of exploitation of ancient Indian diaspora but the present Indian diaspora is considered as Modern Indian Diaspora which is recorded for over the past two centuries. It varies to such an extent that it can be explored under the three sub-categories: The Old, The New and The Gulf Diasporas. Old Indian Diaspora is consisted in the movement of people from the early 19th century to the Independent period of India. Abolishing the slavery system of India in 1833, English people established the new system of "Indentured Labour Migration", adjoining people from Indian subcontinent due to the lack of manpower for their unknowingly yet precious power of work in the sugar and rubber plantation. In 1834, Britain exported a large number of bonded Indians as the labourers to the Dutch and Mauritius. Further, the French also followed the system, exporting Indian workers to their colonies in the competition of black Africans to the Southern United States. The absolute poverty of Indian people makes them compel to sell themselves on the bonded labourers sources and in a decade, the small scale of migration converted into the mass movement of people to provide cheap labour class to these colonies but their journeys were too much risky. Their mortality was seen high on the boats of British, Dutch and France from the sub continents to these colonies. In this way, most of the bonded labourers for the plantations in the countries like Mauritius, Trinidad, Suriname and Fiji are explored to have a connection with the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, presently. Some other countries like Guyana and East Africa are indebted to the bonded labourers of Punjab and Gujarat while Tamil Nadu is the state of India to provide much more labourers to the French colonies in the form of Indian Diaspora. The majority of this bonded labour was from male society which not only developed these colonies with their hard works but also weakens India on the economic backgrounds. This brutal system of "Indentured Labour Migration" was going on till the end of World War I. When in 1916, the British Colonies were criticized severely on international level, they abolished the indentured labour system and by that time, more than 1.5 million Indian people were sailed on the colonies of Caribbean, Africa and Asia. The misfortune of Indentured Labour Migration was over with the new start of contract base labour of Tamil people to the British masters of coffee, tea and rubber plantations in Burma, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Near about five million poor Tamil or Southern Indian people migrated to these only three countries of the world. Such new designed labour migration came to an end with the conflicted era of World War II. Around that time not only Tamil but the merchants and traders from Gujarat and Sindh migrated to the Middle East, South and East African colonies ruled by the Britishers.

It is reported that by the time of World War II, approximately 6.0 million Indian migrants were living outside India and interestingly only six thousand Indians were reported to be in the United States at that time. The current study explains that the Old Indian Diaspora constitutes a phenomenon of Pre- World War II. In this connection 60% of Indian Diaspora constitutes under the Old Indian Diaspora which is numbered 18 million Indian PIOs. The New Indian Diaspora consists of a large population of PIOs from the mid 1960s onwards, in which a number of Indian people migrated to the developed countries like UK, US, Canada, Australia and other Western European countries. In UK Indians were known as the unskilled workers and they worked for a very low wages while in US, many more Sikhs were found working as the agricultural people in California. To prevent the migration of people into US, it has passed many acts and also has to particularize the number of not only Indian migration but of others too. When the US Department of State was asked for its explanation, it reported that the aim of this act was ‘to preserve the American homogeneity’. Canada also very cleverly checked immigrants by the new law which intended to calculate the Canadian immigrants, has made an uninterrupted journey from their countries to the present responsibility of these Indian immigrants which stopped many Indians to be survived in their countries in the place of migration to its local area.

During the time from 1947 to 1962, Indians were unrestricted Commonwealth people to enter, live, work, vote and hold public offices in the United Kingdoms under the postcolonial ties. Consequently, many of them settled in the industrial cities like Leicester and Birmingham for their personal as well as industrial growth. After the independence of India in 1947, many people like Multanis, Shikarpuris and Baniyas known as ‘Indian Merchant Diaspora’ from the various states of India emigrated to the many parts of the world especially to England and other European countries for the sake of their higher education or learning the industrial criteria of interest. They did not wish to stay there but if they stayed for a considerable time they have maintained their relation with the local contacts of their originated area of India and its people as the case with South Europeans and North African countries are evidenced. But in 1962 and also 1968, British Commonwealth Immigration Acts comminuted Indians to enjoy the previous ties. It could not have a considerable time because after twenty years, British Commonwealth needed highly skilled labourers so they reversed the law and many more Indians started to migrate for the British Colonies or Commonwealth Countries. After the growth of 1990s software and uprising economy of the US, UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and many other countries attracted many more Indians to be migrated from India and settled into these countries for the growth of their social, economic and educational status. The US Immigration Act of 1990 and H-IB visas policy gave many chances for Indians to experience US immigration very closely. The US Census Bureau estimates 75% of all ethnic Indians working there with at least a bachelor degree and among these near about 69% of this population is working in management and professional occupations. The census data of 2010 in the US, UK and Canada presents an estimation of near about 3 million Indians in US, 1.5 millions in the United Kingdom and

more than one million Indians in Canada. Today, Indians are recognized as the 4th largest group of immigrants in the United States of America after Chinese, Mexicans and Filipinos.

After the 1970s, one can see the latest kind of Indian Diaspora which was categorized as the form of Gulf Diaspora. It started when Oil industry boom in the Middle East and came to an end with the prompting significant number of Indian migration to the Persian Gulfs. Under this booming exploration, a number of skilled, unskilled and semi-skilled labourers from the Southern States of India have migrated to these countries on the terms and conditions of temporary schemes for serving in oil industries or in some other related services of construction for the sake of their enhancing economy. These countries have practiced common norms of refusing these non- Arabian people from the concept of naturalization, even if they were born in those Gulf Countries. Their traumas can't be explained easily yet one can perceive around five million Gulf Diasporas, suffering from the segment of humanity.

Though, the above-mentioned groups of the Indian Diaspora differ in many ways, yet all of these migrants have to suffer with the same plight and sensibility of dispersion. In the context of the present migration, one can read about the more recent skilled and highly-skilled Indian labourers who are reported to be migrated to the developed countries and formulated the concept of new Diaspora in the context of Indian origins. The other historical incident of Indian migration is reported to be occurred during mid-19th century until the World War 1st when a number of Girmitiyas emigrated to the different parts of the world. These Girmitiya workers are mostly related to the language of Awadhi and Bhojpuri, the common languages of U. P. and Bihar, respectively or the other British colony under the system of indentured labourers. These Girmitiyas emigrated to the countries like Guyana, Mauritius, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and many other Caribbean parts like Jamaica, Barbados, Grenada, Belize, Fiji Reunion, Seychelles Malaysia, Singapore, some parts of East Africa e. g. Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda and many parts of South Africa. These workers or traders are reported to be settled in Oman, Aden, Arabian Peninsula, Dubai, Bahrain, South Africa and some other eastern countries of Africa. Most of these workers or traders were ruled over by the British imperialism. Even Indian currency was evidenced legal tender in some of these countries of Arabian Peninsula in those days. Also many Punjabis, Rajasthanis, Sindis, Baloches, and Kashmiris were found visiting and engaging themselves in the Camel Service of Australia. So, over all the experiences of such exploration came to be viewed as the number of 30 million Indians is surviving in the dispersed immigration of Diaspora in all over the world. They are well settled in more than 75 countries all over the world. Near about 44.6 million Indians are found in the United States of America while more than 31.0 million Indians are surviving in United Arab Emirates as the immigrant Indians. Malaysia has more than 29.8 million Indians and Saudi Arabia has more than 28.1 million Indian origin people working under the authority of the local administration. More than 8.9 million of Indian diaspora are living in Mauritius while more than 5.56 million Indian diaspora can be found in Trinidad and Tobago as the present study surveys. The same list has given us clue that many more Indian diasporas are living in the other countries of the world

like more than 18.25 million in the United Kingdom, 16.14 million in Sri Lanka, 15.60 million in Africa, 9.2 million in Kuwait, 6.9 million in Qatar, 6.8 million in Oman, 6.5 million in Singapore, 6.0 million in Nepal, 4.96 million in Australia, 3.16 million in Bahrain, 3.15 million in Fiji, 2.97 million in Guyana, 2.80 million in Reunion, 2.35 million in Netherlands. 2.0 million in New Zealand, 1.97 million in Italy, 1.95 million Thailand, 1.54 million in Suriname, 1.46 million in Germany, 1.20 million in Philippines, 1.09 million in France and 1.07 million in Indonesia. All these records are given under the study of Population of Overseas Indians recorded by the Ministry of External Affairs of India in December 2018. It has also been indicated that the number of Indian diaspora would be increased in the coming days of the next years.

Through all of these explorations, Indian Diaspora has been studied with various backgrounds of its frameworks. The present research work has tried to view in short the description of Indian diasporic sensibilities suffered in many parts of the world but no doubt there are many more countries to be studied in the context of Diaspora. The conceptual framework of Indian Diaspora made the way limelight for the diasporic sensibilities used by these migrant communities in their literal as well as social works with the backgrounds of their origins into the various countries because every literature mirrors the society and society is known with the upgraded feelings of people, living in the particular area. In such relations of exploration it is found that all the diasporans would have the different context of plight for the expression of their social as well as literal sensibilities. These diasporas have not only suffered but also gave way to the various sects of Indian ancestry by contributing their huge responsibilities in the growth of their residential countries. It can be exemplified with full ethnic Indian heads of the countries and the governments like Basdeo Panday (a Trinidadian and Tobagonian lawyer and politician, served as the fifth Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago), Kamla Persad-Bissessar (Trinidadian and Tobagonian lawyer and Politician and the Political leader of the Opposition Congress Party) Noor Hassanali (a retired High court Judge of Trinidad and Tobago), Cheddi Jaggan (first elected Chief minister of Guyana in 1953 and later Premier of British Guyana from 1961 to 1964), Donald Ramotar (President of Guyana from 2011 to 2015), Bharat Jagdeo (Vice President of Guyana since 2020), Moses Nagamootoo (Prime Minister of Guyana from 2015 to 2020), Irfan Ali (present President of Guyana since 2020), Chan Santokhi (9th President of Suriname since 2020), Mahendra Chaudhury (first Indo Fiji Prime Minister of Fiji), Pravind Jugnauth (Prime Minister of Mauritius since 2017), and the most concerned personality currently, Rishi Sunak of U. K. Some other mixed heritage can be quoted herewith such as Antonio Costa of Portugal, Leo Vradkar of Ireland and Wavel Ramkalawan of Seychelles.

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