

**Portrayal of Diaspora in English and Vernacular Fiction:
A Study of *The Namesake* and Hashiye**

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by

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CERTIFICATE

I declare that the dissertation entitled “Portrayal of Diaspora in English and Vernacular Fiction: A Study of *The Namesake* and *Hashiye*,” has been prepared by me under the guidance of Prof. Paramjit Singh Ramana, and Dr. Amandeep Singh, Assistant Professor, Centre for Comparative Literature, School of Languages, Literature and Culture, Central University of Punjab. No part of this dissertation has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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CERTIFICATE

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ABSTRACT

Portrayal of Diaspora in English and Vernacular Fiction: A Study of *The Namesake* and *Hashiye*

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Diaspora is a complex phenomenon which has important economic, political, social, and religious dimensions. It can be voluntary or forcible movement of people from their native land into new regions. Diasporic discourses deal with themes like cultural dualism, racial discrimination, identity crisis, alienation, struggle for survival, nostalgia, hybridity, transnational migration, globalization and second-generation cultural gaps etc. The approach of this study is to undertake individual studies of Jhumpa Lahiri and Darshan Singh Dhir and examine the diasporic issues in their chosen works, *The Namesake* and *Hashiye* respectively. The prime object of this research is to bring into focus the major issues of the different classes of migrants by undertaking a comparative study of two novels: one published in English and the other in Punjabi; one written by a woman and the other by a man. Both Lahiri and Dhir portray the well known as well as normally concealed world of migrants in their fictional narratives. Lahiri portrays the individual and familial matters from a broadly female perspective while Dhir reveals political, cultural and familial issues. These writings encapsulate many experiences of the Indian American and Indian Britain families from changing family relationships and issues of culture to the overall challenge of navigating a new set of identity-related complications and racial abuses. The works of Dhir and Lahiri bring into focus issues related to diasporic communities and highlight some of the problems they face in host societies due to their ethnicity, race and culture.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Diasporic Literature

The issues concerning diaspora are among the most crucial concerns of the contemporary world, because it is perhaps for the first time in human history that so many individuals, peoples, nations and communities have been maltreated, unshackled, colonized/decolonized and forced into migrations across continents and within countries. Salman Rushdie in his *Step Across This Line* also emphasizes the importance of trans-located man, "... the migrant, the man without frontiers is the archetypal figure of our age" (415). The historic expansion in transnational and international migrations has affected people worldwide at both the macro and micro levels. Edward Said in his *Culture and Imperialism* observes that it, "is one of the unhappiest characteristics of the age to have produced more refugees, migrants, displaced persons, and exiles than ever before in history, most of them as an accompaniment to and, ironically enough, as afterthoughts of great post-colonial and imperial conflicts" (332). He further explicates that their condition, "articulates the tensions, irresolutions, and contradictions in the overlapping territories shown on the cultural map of imperialism" (332). Edward Said distinguishes between the "optimistic mobility, the intellectual liveliness" and "the massive dislocations, waste, misery and horrors endured during our century's migrations and mutilated lives" (332). In the present-day globalised world, a large part of population from the third world wants to migrate to the first world irrespective of the numerous difficulties in the path of successful migration. Diasporic communities are facing many problems in host societies due to their ethnicity, race and culture.

Diaspora is a complex phenomenon that has important economic, political, social, and religious dimensions. The word "diaspora" has been derived from the Greek 'dia' ('through') and 'speirein' ('to scatter'), etymologically meaning 'dispersal'. Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur give details about the early history of the diaspora in "Nation, Migration, Globalization: Points of Contention in Diasporic Studies":

First used in the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures explicitly intended for the Hellenic Jewish communities in

Alexandria (Circa 3rd century BCE) to describe the Jews living in exile from the homeland of Palestine... The term 'diaspora,' then has religious significance and pervades medieval rabbinical writings on the Jewish diaspora, to describe the plight of Jews living outside of Palestine... Another early historical reference is the Black diaspora, beginning in the sixteenth century with the slave trade, forcibly exporting West African out of their Native lands and dispersing them into the 'New World'-parts of North America, South America, the Carribean and elsewhere... (1)

Diaspora, a term that was once used only for Jewish, Greek and Armenian dispersions now shares meaning with historical and present day migrations of people worldwide like African and Asian natives. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin in *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* opine:

Diasporas, the voluntary or forcible movement of people from their homelands into new regions, is a central historical fact of colonization. Colonialism itself was a radically diasporic movement, involving the temporary or permanent dispersion and settlement of millions of Europeans over the entire world. The widespread effects of these migrations (such as that which has been termed ecological imperialism) continue on a global scale. (68-69)

These intellectuals relate diaspora to colonialism because European people migrate from their native lands to different colonies to acquire them. In the broader context, diasporas constitute people who are residing outside their land of origin and it is the migration of people from their homeland to far-off areas, but these migrants maintain their ethno-national identities and sentimental connections with their mother country while residing in the host societies. There may be different economic, political, religious, social reasons behind these exoduses.

The chief objective of the postcolonial theory and literature is to examine the lingering effects of colonialism on cultures and creating space for marginal communities. Academicians consider modern diaspora as the result of colonialism and hence, "Postcolonial theory considers vexed cultural-political questions of national and ethnic identity, 'otherness', race, imperialism, and language, during and after colonial periods" (Baldick 265). Padmini Mongia believes that the term

postcolonial is progressively more used to describe, "... marginal constituencies in the First World, critics charge postcolonial theory with absorbing specific, local struggles so that all oppositional discourses, whether they are African-American or Chicana, for instance, are now subsumed under the postcolonial mantle" (6). Ania Loomba writes, "Postcolonial studies have been preoccupied with issues of hybridity, creolisation, mestizaje, in-betweeners" (173) which are the predominant issues of diasporic discourse. The different experiences of migrants have animated the contemporary postcolonial literature, criticism and theory (McLeod 207). Diasporic discourse has established itself as a vital part of colonial and postcolonial discourse.

However, some critics these days differentiate diaspora from the postcolonial theory; when one intensely explores it then many questions arise which require attention outside the inherent binary divisions of postcolonialism. One is forced to re-examine the relations between diasporic studies and post-colonialism. Jasbir Jain argues:

Diasporic writing is not necessarily a literature of resistance. Its concern becomes one of representation: how the self is represented, seen and remembered against the backdrop of the past." (9)

And this concern of representation can be easily seen in the fiction of prominent Indian diasporic writers like V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Jhumpa Lahiri etc.

The works produced by diasporic writers, such as Buchi Emecheta, Amitav Ghosh, Hanif Kureishi, Bharati Mukherjee, Caryl Phillips and Ben Zephaniah are very significant and acclaimed in Western literary criticism. Similarly, the new situations and tribulations experienced by migrants in adopted lands are depicted in the works of intellectuals such as Homi K. Bhabha, Avtar Brah, Rey Chow, Carole Boyce Davies, Paul Gilroy and Stuart Hall. Their discourse on diaspora includes, "creating new ways of thinking about individual and communal identities, critiquing established schools of critical thought, and rethinking the relationships between literature, history and politics" (McLeod 208).

Russell King, John Connell and Paul White argue that migration is not only an interval, "between fixed points of departure and arrival, but a mode of being in the world—"migracy" (xv). Migration has a long lasting effect on the life of immigrants because it not only shapes their life form but their progeny is also

affected in a number of ways. The experiences of first generation of migrants are different from their descendents because the home country for the first generation, “is not “real” in its own terms and yet it is real enough to impede Americanization,” that is westernization and, “the “present home” is materially real and yet not real enough to be authentic” (Radhakrishnan 123). However, for their successors, “Mongrelization and heterogeneity seems to define the contemporary condition especially of the succeeding generations of the immigrants' parents. It is the in-betweeners” (Vinodha 20). Diasporic discourse is primarily a realistic portrayal of different experiences and conditions of immigrants and discusses issues like cultural dualism, identity crisis, racial abuses, fear of exile, a sense of alienation, memory, displacement, hybridity, struggle for survival, nostalgia, generational gap, and empowerment in the host cultural politics etc.

In diaspora and cultural studies, ‘identity’ appears to hold a significant place. The physical movement of people from their homeland to a new region results in identity problems because identity is not constant but it varies according to situations i.e. cultural and geographical locations. Stuart Hall argues in his essay “Cultural Identity and Diaspora” that we should not think identity as an, “already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent” (222), we should consider, “identity as a ‘production’ which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation” (222). Stuart Hall states that there are two prime ways of thinking about cultural identity. The traditional model regards identity:

in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective ‘one true self’, inside the many other, more superficial or artificially imposed ‘selves’, which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common . . . This ‘oneness’, underlying all the other, more superficial differences, is the truth, the essence of ‘Caribbeanness’, of the black experience. It is this identity which a Caribbean or black diaspora must discover, excavate, bring to light and express ... (223)

Hall observes that the, “rediscovery of this identity is often the object of what Frantz Fanon once called a ‘passionate research’” (223) and that such a, “conception of cultural identity played a crucial role in all postcolonial struggles” (223). The second model of cultural identity (which Hall supports) is the, “critical

points of deep and significant *difference* which constitute 'what we really are'; or rather--since history has intervened--'what we have become'" (225). From this point of view, "cultural identity is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories" (225).

Stuart Hall's concept of diasporic identity is based upon difference and hybridity. It rejects old "imperialising and hegemonising forms of ethnicity" (235). He describes that his notion does not confine identity solely, "in relation to some sacred homeland to which they must at all costs return" (235). It is, "defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity . . . *hybridity*" (235). Hall claims to offer a, "different way of thinking about cultural identity" by conceiving identity "as constituted, not outside but within representation" (236).

Stuart Hall's essay "New Ethnicities," also deals with the emerging issues of diasporas. He describes that these new ethnicities are fluid, dependent, numerous and variable which can be compared to Homi Bhabha's notion of 'border lives' where the concepts of overlapping, hybridity, routed identity, and shifting subjectivity are, "seen as crucial and vital efforts to answer the "possibility and necessity of creating a new culture": *so that you live*" (McLeod 223).

Avtar Brah discusses this significant issue of identity in his *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* through her concept of 'diaspora space':

Diaspora space is the intersectionality of diaspora, border, and dis/location as a point of confluence of economic, political, cultural and psychic processes. It addresses the global condition of culture, politics as a site of 'migrancy' and 'travel' which seriously problematises the subject position of the 'native.' (178)

A diaspora space is an intersection of borders where all subjects and identities become, "juxtaposed, contested, proclaimed, or disavowed; where the permitted and the prohibited perpetually interrogate, and where the accepted and the transgressive imperceptibly mingle even while these syncretic forms may be disclaimed in the name of purity and tradition" (Brah 208). She asserts that in new spaces all kind of identities are not given equal respect because discourses of

power, which seek to overpower other identities and marginalise other, try to create hurdles in the emergence of new forms of identity. Avtar Brah also believes:

The identity of the diasporic imagined community is far from fixed or pre-given. It is constituted within the crucible of the materiality of everyday life, in the everyday stories we tell ourselves individually and collectively. (180)

Brah's concept of 'diaspora space' attempts to throw light on the dominant discourses of race, nation, ethnicity, class and gender which affect the lives of migrants in host societies.

Homi K. Bhabha, another intellectual, who himself is a migrant from Mumbai to England but currently living in America, discusses significant issues of diasporas in his prominent work *The Location of Culture*. Bhabha emphasizes on legitimization of the transnational subjectivity of diasporas in present-day cultural production. Bhabha believes that older static models of identity can no longer be validated in our multi-ethnic epoch. There should be new and vibrant ways of thinking about identity. He suggests a "radical revision in the concept of human community itself" (6) because there are some complex and significant issues which diasporic discourse does not cover. Homi K. Bhabha says:

The borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between space that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The 'past and present' becomes a part of necessity not of nostalgia, of living. (7)

He observes that the cultural subjectivities of diasporas are formed in-between their past and present cultures. It means that their cultural subjectivities are formed in an interstitial cultural space called the space of "beyond," (6) where their past and present conjoin in a different way. It keeps them away from being fixed to any one place rather they should have connections between their past and present. In the procedure of this fitting act of two (or more) nation-states, they become the "cultural hybridity." It is the stuck between position of diasporas that carries the

burden and meaning of two cultures. John McLeod says that, “the space of beyond is often described in terms which emphasize this transitory, in-between sense: such as ‘liminal’, ‘interstitial’ or ‘hybrid’” (217).

The dominant discourses of diasporic identities such as race, gender, nation, ethnicity, class in the west, “can militate against the possibility of embracing and exploring hybrid forms of identity” by differentiating between diasporas and natives, “that recalls to an extent the stereotypical representation of colonized peoples into discourses such as Orientalism” (McLeod 227). Edward Said observes that all cultural identities are different from each other:

Each age and society recreates its ‘Others’. Far from a static thing then, identity of self or of ‘other’ is a much worked-over historical, social, intellectual, and political process that takes place as a contest involving individuals and institutions in all societies...the construction of identity is bound up with the disposition of power and powerlessness in each society, ... human identity is not only natural and stable, but constructed, and occasionally even invented outright. (qtd in. Azevedo 14)

Cultural identities are rooted in their own historical, cultural, social and political environment. However, the governing authorities dominate the marginalized cultural identities for their own interests.

Racial discrimination is one of the predominant issues that affect the life of migrants in foreign lands. Masoud Kamali asserts, “Racial discrimination refers to negative treatment of racialised individuals and groups categorized as the ‘Others’” (5). He classifies the term into three categories that are individual, structural and institutional. Individual discrimination includes action of individuals of ethnic group/gender group against another ethnic or gender group, “that intentionally have ‘Otherizing’ and destructive effects on the members of another ethnic or gender group” (Kamali 5).

Structural discrimination is related to the institutional order, agreements and associations of a society that circuitously and unintentionally discriminate against individuals and groups with ethnic milieu different to those of the majority society. Masoud Kamali asserts, “Structural discrimination legitimizes and normalizes

indirect forms of negative treatment of the 'Others' and makes it a part of everyday normal life of a society" (6).

Institutional discrimination occurs due to established institutional policies, norms, rules, regulations and functions as well as the individuals who with power and influence control various institutions and it can be intentional or unintentional but it is based on, "institutional policy and praxis that intentionally have differentiating and negative effects on inferiorized groups" (Kamali 6).

Men and women not only racialised from another racialised group but the male from a subordinated group may be differentiated through the usage of 'feminine qualities' or the female of the dominant race may be presented as personifying male qualities (Brah 154). Thus, migrants and their progeny are suffering racial assaults in various forms. They may deem themselves as a part of their present land yet these dominant communities make them realize that they are not a part of that nation. The dominant race tries to exploit them at every level of their life. The governing discourses of race, class, ethnicity and culture overpower their lives in adopted lands and not only this they also face atrocities of dominant communities because of their gender.

The contemporary diasporic discourse also throws light on the predicament of women in diasporic spaces. Avtar Brah asserts racism, "constructs the female gender differently from the male Gender" (154). She justifies her argument by illustrating the plight of black women slaves, who were exploited by white women through the attribution of masculine qualities, which spaced out them from "the gentility of white womanhood" (154). Ama Ata Aidoo also states, "Ours has been the double quarrel. Not only as Africans, but also as women. Colonized by the colonizer, then by our men, with their new power..." (qtd. in Iyer 123). Women novelists such as Buchi Emecheta in her *Second Class Citizen, Double Yoke* presents the example of African women whose condition become more dreadful due to colonialism, forms of displacement are also found in Toni Morrison's novel, *Beloved*. The women diasporic writers of Indian origin, "use gender and sexuality as sites of diasporic negotiation in interrogating racist, nationalist and traditional discourses enclosing them" (Vinoda 24). Bharati Mukherjee, Suniti Namjoshi, Leena Dhingra, Indira Ganesan, Chitra Divakaruni, Meena Alexander, Jhumpa Lahiri, Amulya, Bapsi Sidhwa present new forms of suppression and struggle of

woman in their creations. Women not only face racial discrimination but also are culturally dislocated and isolated in adopted lands like Jhumpa Lahiri's female characters such as Ashima, Mrs Sen etc.

V.S Naipaul, descendent of Indian origin family, in his memoir 'Prologue to an Autobiography' writes that the meaning of migration depends on migrants thinking about home and host countries. He regards home as a mythic place of desire or no place of return that means it is present only in mind and migrants cannot physically return to it but it is possible to visit that native land however that is only vision as the place of origin (Cudjoe 217). Naipaul regards India as an illusory place from which he is broken in both time and space, but which has an emotional influence over his life. His ideas about home and host societies reflect the result of migration on the life of immigrants and their progeny.

Salman Rushdie also talks about the feelings of uncertainty in diasporic conditions. In *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism*, he writes that home for migrants, become an idea of mind, which is made up of the incomplete odds and past memories, which is present in a broken and split manner ("Imaginary Homelands," 11). This becomes a cause of problem of assimilation of migrants because nostalgic feeling always remains in their mind. They desire for their past lost imagined land and this is a dominant reason of their psychological trauma. Somdatta Mandal rightly affirms:

As Rushdie has put it in *Imaginary Homeland* the position of 'the exile or immigrant' is one of 'profound uncertainties; The diasporic person is at home neither in the west nor in India and is thus 'unhomed' in the most essential sense of the term. Thus the concept and interpretation of 'home' becomes vital in all kinds of diasporic writings. (42)

The first generation of migrants always remains attached to their past native land's culture and tradition. They are leading a chaotic life in-between two worlds, of which one is their land of origin and another is their adopted land. They are leading dreadful lives in foreign lands. The first generation wants its descendents to pursue the norms and customs of their land of origin. This gives rise to generational differences, which become a cause of conflict, between them and their children. Their descendents want to assimilate into their present culture and

traditions while their parents want to preserve their cultural identity and heritage. However, the migrants share both similarities and dissimilarities with their offspring. Hanif Kureishi explains in his essay, "The Rainbow Sign" that migrants and their children are always in unrest and in-between position, because they are feeling that they belong to nowhere and always swinging like a pendulum between two spaces (Thomas 185).

Mimicry is also among the dominant areas of concern in diasporic studies. In the context of diaspora, mimicry is perceived as a conduct of a person where one imitates the language, dress, politics or cultural attitude of person in power or of dominant class in the hope of accessing similar power oneself. However, while imitating the master, one has to suppress one's own cultural identity deliberately. Homi Bhabha also discusses the concept of mimicry in "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." Bhabha articulates, "... colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*" (86). Bhabha further explains mimicry in term of ambivalence, "the *ambivalence* of mimicry (almost same, *but not quite*) does not merely 'rupture' the discourse, but becomes transformed into uncertainty which perceive fixes the colonial subject as a 'partial' presence" (86) and partial means both, "incomplete" and "virtual" (86). It means that the colonial subject is dependent for its representation upon, "some strategic limitation or prohibition *within* the authoritative discourse itself" (86). The cultural and behavioral imitation of the colonizer by the colonized includes both mockery and a definite 'menace', "so mimicry at once resemblance and menace" (86). The instances of mimicry can be traced in Rudyard Kipling, George Orwell and V.S Naipaul's work and is the effect of, "a flawed colonial mimesis in which to be Anglicized is emphatically not to be English" (Bhabha 87).

The recent issues of diasporic studies also include multiculturalism. It promotes the coming together of different cultures; it exterminates the discrimination against different races and people from different backgrounds. It is produced by developing forces which supports liberal values and seem to fight practices of exclusion and stigmatization that prevent the members of the minority groups from fully enjoying their liberal rights. Caleb Rosado asserts that it believes in respect to people of different races, culture and nations and every individual is

equal disregard to his or her identity and respect (2). The plays of Margaret Hollingsworth, Uma Parameswaren, D' Janet Sears depict the interrogating identities in the Canadian multiculturalism. Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and Bharati Mukerjee's *Jasmine* challenge the concept of multiculturalism in U.S and Britain societies because the dominant society used the "other" for their personal benefits in the name of multiculturalism.

Robin Cohen articulates that the concept of diaspora broadens its scope because the modern diasporas try to "bridge the gap between the individual and society, between the local and the global, between the cosmopolitan and the particular" (174). Cohen believes that the present day diasporas have doubtful political relations with both countries due to their in-between situation; by not completely incorporating to their adopted lands and maintaining strong sociopolitical relations with their homelands, they remain unable to work actively for any nation (164). He argues that the contemporary diasporas influence and re-map international and transnational landscape.

Robin Cohen gives a list of nine common characteristics of diaspora attached with a typology that differentiates diasporas according to their primary identity: victim (Jews, African, Armenians, and Palestinians), labour (Indians), trade (Chinese), cultural (the Caribbean), and imperial (British, French, Spanish, and Portuguese).

Based on William Safran's main characteristics of diasporas and his own views, Robin Cohen gives a list of common features of diasporas which are used as a tool to aid in the delineation of a diaspora. Cohen scrutinizes that the diasporas are always moving between two cultures. He sees diaspora as the dispersion of migrants from their native land, to two or more far-off regions in search of work, trade or colonial ambitions (6). Migrants have a collective memory and myth about the native land that comprises its location, past history, sufferings and achievements and imagined inherited home and a collective promise to its maintenance, restoration, protection and opulence, even to its creation (6). Another aspect is a strong ethnic consciousness among ethnic groups due to their distinctiveness and common historical, cultural, religious aspects and a belief in common fate. The ethnic communities have distressed relationship with host

societies because of the lack of acceptance or the possibility that another mishap might befall the ethnic group.

The significant viewpoints of these intellectuals such as Edward Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Avtar Brah, Stuart Hall, Robin Cohen, Hanif Kureishi, Salman Rushdie, and V.S Naipaul help in examining this multifaceted concept of diaspora. Present-day discourse on diaspora or diasporic studies articulates from the necessity that is stimulated by the unprecedented political and economic developments of the twentieth century. The social scientists and literary scholars have regarded diaspora as an important element of the postmodern society and they are interested in its research. Gurupdesh Singh affirms, “The discourse of oppression, prejudice and difference at the same time of self-assertion and connection has come to occupy the centre stage” (vi). The universal presence of migration reflects that diasporic experiences are close to human life and diasporic discourse becomes a voice of these exiled and migrated communities. Iris Murdoch states, “Art pierces the veil and gives sense to the notion of a reality, which lies beyond appearances; it exhibits virtue in its true guise in the context of death and chance” (qtd. in Dahiya 10).

In literary context, diasporic writings can originate from a hovering or settled diaspora or from those who are physically rooted but are mentally away from home (Singh, “Epico-Mythical Terms” ix). Ania Loomba proclaims that the predominant intention of diasporic studies is to allow the voices of once colonized natives and their progeny to be heard (2). Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin states:

The diasporic production of cultural meanings occurs in many areas, such as contemporary music, film, theatre and dance, but writing is one of the most interesting and strategic ways in which diaspora might disrupt the binary of local and global and problematize national, racial and ethnic formulations of identity. (*The Empire Writes Back* 218)

In the present era, Indian diasporic fiction is arresting global attention. The Indian diaspora has been fashioned by a dispersion of inhabitants since ancient period and not, in the Jewish sense, an exodus of population at a particular point in time. This erratic migration traces a sound pattern from the laborers of the past

to the IT technocrats of the present day (Saha 191). Arthur W. Helweg divides Indian diaspora into three phases - ancient, colonial, and modern (103). He asserts that during the ancient period people migrated to promote trade, conquer other lands and spread the teachings of Buddha. The colonial period consisted of migrations of cheap labour from India for the development of Britain's holdings. The modern period begins after Second World War when India acquired freedom and migrations begin to advance from service to participation in the modern commercial and industrial world.

Tamara Ayesha Bhalla describes that from the last ten years academic and popular media critics in the U.S. relentlessly use the language of advancement to describe trajectory of South Asian diasporic literature, and he articulates,

According to these critics, young, popular writers of South Asian descent publishing mainly in the West herald "a new era" and "season of discovery" for Indian literature in English regardless of their established popular and critical presence. (Bhalla 181)

Parmjit Singh Ramana believes that there are at least two types of migrant novels, "in terms of social class of the immigrants, the nature of experience portrayed and language employed" (1). The novels written in vernacular languages are published in native lands, which mainly deal with physical and material aspects of man that include indispensable requirements like financial security, food and shelter. The other type of novels which are composed in colonial language, published by a globally recognized publisher, centers on the individual, familial, psychological and socio-cultural issues.

Indian English fiction consists of numerous diasporic writers like Raja Rao, G. V. Desani, Santha Rama Rau, Balachandra Rajan, Nirad Chaudhuri, and Ved Mehta belong to the older generation of diasporic Indian writers. Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy, Rohinton Mistry, V.S. Naipaul, Jhumpa Lahiri, M.G. Vassanji, Shani Mootoo, Bharati Mukherjee, David Dabydeen, Rohinton Mistry, Hanif Kureishi etc. are a part of new generation of diasporic writers. Makarand Paranjape observes:

... instead of worshipping the leftovers and relics of a now inaccessible homeland as the old diaspora of indentured labourers did, the new diaspora of international Indian English writers live close

to their market, in the comforts of the suburbia of advanced capital but draw their raw material from the inexhaustible imaginative resources of that messy and disorderly subcontinent that is India. (252)

The modern diasporic writers present their Indian experiences in a melancholic tone rather than with reminiscence. These writers try to present the theme of displacement while dealing with the theme of self-fashioning. Different facets of diaspora are reflected in their writings such as V. S. Naipaul's fiction reflects his perpetual quest for his Indian roots; Indian history is mythologized in Salman Rushdie's creations; reflection of childhood memories are found in Bharati Mukherjee's works; Rohinton Mistry seems to indulge in the memories of his childhood and youth in Bombay in order to recollect his native land memories. Salman Rushdie rightly states:

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into pillars of salt. But if we do look back we must do so in the knowledge – which gives rise to profound uncertainties – that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely that thing that was lost, that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind. (“Imaginary Homelands” 10)

Their literary creations not only muse on a geographical dislocation, “For the expatriate writers, home is an uncertain territory they must discover for themselves somewhere in-between two geographical locales, somewhere within Trishanku's space” (Jaidka 45), but also present socio-cultural sense of displacement. Due to the transcendental nature of diasporic experiences, diasporic writings are not confined to some particular areas but they are varying with the changing situations. Earlier more emphasis was laid on economic, political and religious issues but the contemporary studies deal more with the psychological and metaphysical advances of mind than the physical.

Some of diasporic writers belong to the second generation of immigrants like Jhumpa Lahiri. The second generation is born and brought up in the western world but due to their parent's influence, they are associated with India. They have had a vision of their country only from the outside as an alien place of their origin. They found themselves rootless, "A longing for roots is not only present in the first generation but also the second generation of expatriates generation because of their confused states" (Vinoda, T., Somdatta Mandal, and Christopher Rollason 307-308). Scrutinizing their parent's perspectives and their personal experiences, they reflect diasporic dilemma in their creations. These writers mainly belong to educated middle class or upper class. Dealing with the themes, like individual problem of assimilation, nostalgia, food problem, identity problem, cultural dualism, and alienation, their fiction even emphasizes on the problems of the second-generation of immigrants. The writings of these writers come under the category of what Leela Gandhi calls postcolonial migrant novel which, "...finds its provenance in the small pleasures of subjectivity; its content almost entirely shaped by personal journeys, attachments, memories and the losses" (164) and she finds it "more than a little curious that these iterative and skilful portraits of artists as young -- and not so young men should be authorised to represent the public voice of the postcolonial world." (164).

It is because these writers primarily focused on individual or familial matters and they do not deal with other serious issues such as economic, political and religious issues. The third world writers who are cultural others within the host societies are not only natives but also representatives of ethnic minorities serving as contributors of information about their nations and traditions. Their works reflect that either they are generations away from their parents' land yet their inheritance gives them consciousness of their past. However, their cultural gaps and dual personalities sometimes relate them more to the western world than their parents' native land.

In the contemporary period, Indian writers are progressively recognizing themselves with the migrant writers of the world. Salman Rushdie proclaims, "Swift, Conrad, Marx [and even Melville, Hemingway, Bellow] are as much our literary forebears as Tagore or Ram Mohan Roy" (20). Appreciating Indian diasporic writers, Annie John and T. N. Kolekar state that they are enriching the

English literature, “They have been aiming at re-inventing India through the rhythms of ancient legends, the cadences of mythology, the complexities of another civilization, cultural assimilation and nostalgia.”

Different from English diasporic fiction, Vernacular diasporic fiction depicts issues like quandary of assimilation into western culture, ill-treatment, job displacement, and identity crisis etc. Paramjit Singh Ramana articulates that vernacular fiction throws light on, “the lives, experiences and issues concerning illiterate/semi-literate farm/industrial workers... involved in the physical labour in quite difficult circumstances” (1). In Punjabi diasporic fiction, we have writers like Harjit Atwal, Darshan Singh Dhir, Ajmar Rhode, Shivecharan Jaggi Kussa, Jasbir Singh Sekha, Rupinder Singh Dhillon etc. Primarily belonging to the first generation of immigrants, these writers are familiar with the problems of early settlers in migrated lands.

Harjit Atwal’s fiction reflects the emerging trends in the western society like multi-ethnic Ghetto culture of England; Darshan Singh Dhir focuses on the lives of working class in adopted lands; reflecting on the money mindedness, socio-cultural alienation Jasbir Singh Sekha records the predicament of Punjabi immigrants in Canada. These writers have strong ties with their native lands and some even have a wish to return to their country of origin. This is the predominant reason that their area of interest is in some ways different from Indian English diasporic writers. Their works are used as a means to project the plight of marginalized voices. The concept of space and identity becomes one of the recurring themes of present day diasporic writers. Punjabi diasporic literature portrays the sin, grief and destiny of the dissemination of Punjabi community.

Diaspora is one of the global issues as contemporary world is distressed with the crisis of immigrants, refugees, and other kinds of exile. There is an imperative need to research on this significant issue to have a comprehensive knowledge about it so that we can counter the troubles that are emerging from this diasporic dilemma. Through diasporic studies, diasporic communities find voice to express their mental and physical condition.

Diasporic discourse also draws our attention to a significant notion of the post-modern condition in which responsibilities of citizens go across national borders. The borders here signify that geography, culture and ethnicity are being

reinstated by configurations of power, community, space and time. In the contemporary period, new spaces, identities, and relationships are emerging which allow people to move across margins and engage them in difference and otherness as part of a discourse of justice, social engagement and democratic struggle (Dahiya 8).

The approach of this study is to undertake individual studies of Jhumpa Lahiri and Darshan Singh Dhir and examine the diasporic issues in their chosen works, *The Namesake* and *Hashiye* respectively. Since the writers are from different social backgrounds, placing them within their specific literary and cultural traditions will offer new insights. The prime object of this research is to have a wide-ranging portrait of the major issues of the immigrants by comparative study of English and Punjabi Fiction. The research would examine different aspects of problems of assimilation of Indian diasporas. It tries to examine the alienated conditions of the second generation of immigrants of America and England.

Lahiri represents India, Indianness and Indo-American culture in her fiction because of her background, "At this point I cannot imagine not writing about India....Somehow, something about India has to be in the background" (qtd. in Chetty 22). Her personal experience facilitates her to portray candidly the plight of immigrants in her works and in this way, she becomes a voice of her generation, "the generation that is the offspring of Indian immigrants to the United States" (Chetty 20). Being a member of an ethnic minority in England, Dhir has a personal experience of atrocities faced by migrants in an adopted homeland so he exhibits predicament of immigrants and autobiographical elements in his works. His fiction primarily deals with the problems faced by Punjabi immigrants in England. He expresses the issues of the working class in many of his works because he is a member of this group.

The experience of a multicultural (diasporic) situation has made both novelists aware of the common, yet noteworthy problems of immigrants. Cultural duality becomes a source of inspiration for them. Lahiri and Dhir, "are engaged in negotiating passages between cultures and histories, defining their own identities in fiction which are themselves rites of passage, and which deal with both grand visions and everyday life" (Vijayasree 53). They closely observe different problems of immigrants with firsthand knowledge of their adopted homelands. They search

human relationship from the responses of their characters through cross-cultural interface. By depicting the clash of cultures, racial discrimination, the clash of tradition, they give voice to those who have not been heard. *The Namesake* (2003) and *Hashiye* (2008) are their recent works, which deal with the contemporary social, political, cultural and familial aspects of diasporas.

The Namesake (2003), Lahiri's first novel is a diasporic tale of educated middle class Bengali immigrants, Ashoke Ganguli and Ashima Ganguli in U.S.A. It centers on the diasporic themes like identity crisis, lack of assimilation of Diasporas, problems of cultural gaps, dual identities and contemplates on the snags of the second generation immigrants. A movie named *The Namesake* was adapted from the novel in 2007 and acquired worldly fame. The movie is a superb representation of the novel in which director Mira Nair captures diasporic themes deftly.

Numerous critics have scrutinized Jhumpa Lahiri's debut novel *The Namesake* from the postcolonial and diasporic perspective in the form of articles, reviews and few dissertations and thesis. Himadri Lahiri's article, "Individual-Family Interface in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*," centers on the concept of space in the life of an immigrant. He describes that Lahiri reveals the generational gaps through juxtapositions of the two social spaces and Ganguli family attempts to present Indian cultural ethos in the new space. He states that Lahiri's *The Namesake* uses two graveyards to suggest and create the implication of belonging of (or lack of) the social space and the familial space.

Ebru Donmez in his thesis, "The Chaotic Identities and Otherness in Jhumpa Lahiri's Novel *The Namesake*," evaluates *The Namesake* within the context of Postcolonial theory. Lahiri's characters, while struggling to retain their dual identities, mull over the effects of colonialism and Postcolonialism. He states that the concept of other, cultural gaps and identity crisis are depicted through the characters of Ashima and Gogol. Sujata Rana in her article, "Diasporic Crisis of Dual Identity in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*" chiefly contemplates on the problem of name "Gogol" as a matter of identity crisis, in-between condition of immigrants. Deepalis Chaudhary's article, "The Aftermath of Naming in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*," illustrates the aftermath condition of the protagonist because of his problem of name in an adopted land.

Tamara Ayesha Bhalla in his dissertation, "Between History and Identity: Reading the Authentic in South Asian Diasporic Literature and Community," writes a chapter named, "Identification, Readerly Desire, and Feminist Recuperation in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*." In this chapter, he mainly focuses on the viewpoints of readers i.e. Indian immigrants, how they interpret the novel and relate it with their lives. He states that the novel depicts the ethnic son's problems and the novel is a determinative representation of three female characters, Ashima, Maxine and Moushumi. Lahiri exhibits these female characters as an obstacle to Gogol's development. Tamara Ayesha Bhalla reflects that the act of reading also presents weak features of *The Namesake*.

Mandira Sen in her review, "Names and Nicknames," articulates that *The Namesake* illustrates the life of educated Bengali middle class, caste does not play an important role, and even Lahiri puts aside her characters from severe racial discrimination. Mandira Sen proclaims that the prime object of Lahiri is to portray the problem of name through the character of Gogol and his life.

Sireesha Telugu in the article, "Misnaming" and "Renaming": The Power of Names of Markers of Identity in *The Namesake*," comments on the dilemma of name in the novel and how it changes Gogol's life due to Bengali culture and American culture. Sireesha Telugu articulates that Lahiri hoists issues of, "naming," "misnaming" and "renaming" not only within the characters of her novel but within the community as well" (Telugu 41). Thus, the article reflects how name becomes a mark of identity for Gogol.

Asuthosh Singh in his article, "Redefining Marriage in *The Namesake*: A Study in Diasporic Consciousness," primarily focuses on the change of cultural values due to physical movement of people from one land to another. He depicts that marriage as a social institution loses its meaning in America. Ashima and Ashoke respect it and consider it a sacred bond. Gogol and Moushumi do not take it seriously, show disrespect, and have different viewpoints in contrast to their parents' viewpoint regarding marriage.

We have numerous other reviews and articles on *The Namesake* like Peaco's review "*The Namesake*," Ramlal Agarwal's review, "Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*," Min Hyung Song's article, "The Children of 1965: Allegory, Postmodernism, and Jhumpa Lahiri's "*The Namesake*," Suchita Joshi's article,

“The Namesake Account of a Name, Looking for its Bearer” and Sushil Rathor’s article, “Travails of An Immigrant: A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*.” Arun Aguiar’s interview with Jhumpa Lahiri, “Interview with Jhumpa Lahiri,” Fitz E. Barringer, “Book Review: Jhumpa Lahiri’s “The Namesake” etc. Thus, a lot of research has been conducted on *The Namesake* that brings forth several diasporic issues like nostalgia, cultural gaps, thrashing of ethical values, food as a mark of identity, marriage, trouncing of customs and traditions of the native land, and enigma of second generation of immigrants.

On the other hand, in vernacular fiction, *Hashiye* (2008) is a Punjabi diasporic novel that falls under the category of searching for the real space in an adopted homeland. It presents the predicament of second and third generation of immigrants who consider themselves as a part of the western world but in reality the western world always regards them as ‘the other’. Hirdaypal is the protagonist of the work who suffers racial assaults.

Hashiye is a recent novel of Punjabi diasporic fiction and not much critical work has been done on this novel. Gurpal Singh Sandhu’s article “Darshan Dhir’s Fiction” centers on the fiction of Darshan Dhir and he states that *Hashiye* deals with the contemporary issues of the second generation immigrants of Punjabi families. Balkar Singh in his critical work, “*Hashiye Novel da Katha Sandharbh ate Sarokar*,” writes that *Hashiye* mainly focuses on the quandary of second and third generation of immigrants and portrays racial discrimination of the west through the character of Hirdaypal Singh, a second generation immigrant. Jagbir Singh in his book named *Darshan Singh Dhir di Naval Chetna* and Kiranjeet Kaur and Gurmeet Kaur Sandhu in *Darshan Singh Dhir da Galp Parbandh* have vividly discussed the characteristics of Dhir’s fiction and reflect that he has intensely presented the plight of Punjabi diasporic masses. Gurjit Singh Sandhu in his *Darshan Singh Dhir da Navali Birthant* has depicted the narrative style of Dhir in his different novels.

The present research work is an attempt to conduct a comparative study of Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake* and Darshan Dhir’s *Hashiye* in the light of significant viewpoints of eminent scholars like Edward Said, Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin, Stuart Hall, Raymond Williams, Salman Rushdie, V.S Naipaul, Avtar Brah, Homi Bhabha etc. This will put into perspective the miserable condition of Indian Immigrants and their problem of assimilation, and other racial

problems of diasporas.

In the subsequent chapters, there is a portrayal of various diasporic issues employed by Jhumpa Lahiri and Darshan Singh Dhir in their novels. The second chapter presents a detailed analysis of Jhumpa Lahiri's Indian English diasporic novel, *The Namesake*. It scrutinizes various diasporic themes used by Lahiri to depict the plight or experiences of first and second generation educated middle class Bengali immigrants in America. The third chapter deals with the detailed exploration of Darshan Singh Dhir's Punjabi diasporic novel, *Hashiye*. It foregrounds different diasporic themes of the novel that highlight the new concerns of working class of second and third generation of immigrants in England. The fourth chapter sums up the arguments of earlier chapters. It also portrays a comparative study of English (*The Namesake*) and Punjabi Fiction (*Hashiye*) which represents the similarities and diversities between these Punjabi and Indian English diasporic novels.

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CHAPTER 2

The Namesake: Exploring the Domestic Diasporic Spaces

For being a foreigner, Ashima is beginning to realize, is a sort of lifelong pregnancy- a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts. (*The Namesake* 49)

Nilanjana Sudeshna Lahiri (Jhumpa Lahiri) candidly presents the predicament of an immigrant, in her works, whose life is a kind of lifetime pregnancy with permanent web of pain and torment in an adopted homeland. In the contemporary globalized world, millions of people from the Third world are migrating to the First world; these migrants present a different picture of diasporas from that of the preceding ones. Therefore, questions of identity, culture, race, hybridity, mimicry become the dominant concerns of the writers of the twenty first century. Lahiri is also conscious about the cultural diversity and other problems of immigrants and presents a realistic portrayal of contemporary American Indian diaspora. *The Namesake* focuses on the domestic issues of first and second generation of immigrants by depicting their cultural contrasts and identity crisis.

Jhumpa Lahiri, a second-generation immigrant writer, Pulitzer Prize winner for her collection of short stories *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1999), is an accomplished Indo-American diasporic writer of English fiction. She is best known for her debut novel *The Namesake* (2003). She has one more collection of short stories to her credit, *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) which reveals cultural clashes between American and Indian culture. Apart from these two collections and one novel, she has written four short stories named *Nobody's Business* (2001), *Once in a Lifetime* (2006), *Hell-Heaven* (2004), *Year's End* (2007). She was born in 1967 in London to Bengali Indian immigrant parents and after three years of her birth, her family moved to U.S.A. and settled in Kingston, Rhode Island. She got three masters' degrees, in English, Comparative Literature and Creative Writing and a Ph.D. in Renaissance studies, all from Boston University. She is married to Alberto Vourvoulias-Bush, a journalist. Presently she is working as a member of President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities in U.S.A.

Writers like Vladimir Nabokov, James Joyce, Mavis Gallant and William Trevor influence her more than any Indian writer does. She states, "What I love about these writers is their connection to place, or at least their obsession with

place, even if they don't feel connected” (qtd. in Rothstein). These writers also have an experience of expatriation either directly or indirectly.

Nurtured by a librarian father and a teacher mother, Lahiri spent her childhood in an adopted homeland with an Indian environment at home. She is a novelist of domestic and private domain. Her fiction primarily deals with individuals and their personal psychological quandaries. Paramjit Singh Ramana says, “Jhumpa Lahiri limiting herself to domestic and the private, particularly love, sex and marriage, portrays the inevitability and naturalness of individual assimilations into the imperial culture” (18).

Her parents associated themselves more to India than America, “For my parents, home was not our house in Rhode Island but Calcutta, where they were raised” (Lahiri, “My Two Lives” 43). Lahiri’s mother wanted her children to be acquainted with Bengali heritage and she often visited Calcutta with her children. The influence of her mother and frequent Indian visits shaped her literary works. In one of her interviews to Arun Auigar, she says:

It’s easy to set a story anywhere if you get a good guidebook and get some basic street names, and some descriptions, but, for me, yes, I am indebted to my travels to India for several of the stories. (17)

Lahiri pursued Indian customs and norms at her American home but she did not like her parent’s culture and concealed it from her American friends:

At home I followed the customs of my parents, speaking Bengali and eating rice and dal with my fingers. These ordinary facts seemed part of a secret, utterly alien way of life, and I took pains to hide them from my American friends. (Lahiri, “My Two Lives” 43)

Lahiri always finds herself caught in the web of two nations and two cultures, “I have never felt a very strong affiliation with any nation or ethnic group. I always felt between the cracks of two cultures” (“My Two Lives” 43). This is a dilemma of most of the second-generation immigrants. Lahiri relates herself more to America by proclaiming, “I wasn’t born here but I might as well have been” (“Jhumpa Lahiri”). She feels that she is American because she is raised in that country but she regards herself Indian because, “I feel Indian not because of the time I've spent in India or because of my genetic composition but rather because of my parents' steadfast presence in my life” (“My Two Lives” 43).

Jhumpa Lahiri is an excellent merge of Indian and American sensibilities. A

vivid reflection of this unique blend finds spontaneous appearance in her literary creations. Tamara Ayesha Bhalla appreciates her works:

Lahiri has been championed in the international critical arena as the quintessential “new cosmopolitan,” purveyor of an “ethno-global vision,” interpreter of “immigrant angst,” and creator of a “different type of expatriate writing” whose work goes beyond labels such as ‘ethnic’ or ‘diasporic.’ (181)

Lahiri’s simple language characterizes her works and her characters are mainly Indian immigrants to America who must plot a route between the cultural values of their native land and their new home. Lahiri locates her novels and other stories in different parts of America like *The Namesake* in Massachusetts, *Interpreter of Maladies* in Hartford and Boston, and *Unaccustomed Earth* located in Seattle and Boston. She projects the issues that are faced by Indians in the promising ground of opportunities (America). Lahiri adds autobiographical elements in her fiction and frequently draws upon her own experiences as well as those of her parents, friends, relatives, and others who are part of Bengali communities.

Most of Lahiri’s characters are displaced and uncomfortable immigrants and very few are comfortably located in the west. Many of Lahiri’s characters are members of, “ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin—their homelands” (Sheffer 3). They are immigrants who try to adjust in new environment of United States. Lahiri’s female immigrant characters are primarily associated with their past cultural home and food. In her works, she represents struggles of immigrants’ own question of belongings and identity.

But, many important social issues like racialism, equality, employment etc. do not get enough space in her fiction. Some analysts criticize her bias attitude towards other major racial problems of immigrants, “the fact that they all inhabit the most elite rungs of North American society and this is her insurmountable weakness” (Sawhney). Even Mandira Sen affirms that Lahiri’s characters are always saved from racial discrimination.

Identity is one of the striking issues in the contemporary study of literature (culture) that is interrelated with ethnicity, gender, sexuality, race and cultures. Stuart Hall defines identity in terms of one shared culture along with common

history and feeling of oneness among a group of people:

...our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provides, as one people, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history. (223)

Stuart Hall's notion of identity believes in the collective consciousness among people due to shared culture and history. Sireesha Telugu articulates that Identity is imperative to humans because it reveals our existence and tells us who we really are, provides us direction, and gives us understanding to our position in the world (35). Identity is related with desire for recognition, protection, association over time and space. The physical movement of people from their homeland to new regions results in identity problems. The life of immigrants begins after their migration. Martin Heidegger rightly affirms:

A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing. (qtd. in Bhabha 1)

Immigrant authors point to the issue of a conflicted identity as a major, reliable theme of both biographical and fictional works within the genre (Meyer 8). *The Namesake* specifies the immigrant identity crisis as a major concern for diasporic writers. Rohinton Mistry's *Tales from Firozsha Baag* also elucidates the incidents and details of characters' efforts to discover their identities in the postcolonial 'new' India as well as in Canada (Burns and Hunter). Salman Rushdie in his "Satanic Verses" presents the idea of personal and national identity through the character of Chamcha and Farishta who struggle with their own identities and Indian identities (Cundy 128). Stuart Hall relates diasporic experience with identity as, "... by a conception of 'identity', which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*" (235).

In *The Namesake* Lahiri presents the identity crisis of immigrants through her characters Ashima, a first generation immigrant and Gogol, a second-generation immigrant. The problem of identity crisis in the novel arises not because of racial or political concerns but due to cultural clashes between two worlds and psychological issues of individuals:

...all the problems of identity result, to a significant extent, from the contradiction between the expectations of the parents and relatives and traditional behavioural role models imbibed from their ethno-religious and geo-cultural background on the one hand, and different but cherished value systems, securities, opportunities and exceptional personal freedom provided for that class by the socio-economic environment of the land of their translocation, on the other. (Ramana 3)

The identity enigma of first and second generation of immigrants is different, the latter focus on the past native land identity while the former identifies themselves with the present homeland.

The novel not only deals with the personal but cultural life of an individual as well. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin believes, "...the special post-colonial crisis of identity comes into being; the concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place" (8). When individual's cultural identity is distorted in an adopted homeland, it badly affects his personal identity, which is strongly related with his name that is also most likely to be affected.

The focal point of the novel is the problem of name i.e. Gogol which becomes a ground of identity crisis in the novel. Lahiri, in an interview asserts:

The original spark of the book was the fact that a friend of my cousin in India had a pet name Gogol. I wanted to write about a pet name/ good name distinction for a long time. It is almost too perfect a metaphor for the experience of growing up as the child of immigrants, having a divided identity, divided loyalties etc. (qtd. in Rath, Sharifulla, and Raghuram 17)

The title of the novel *The Namesake* not only echoes meaningful denotations but also symbolic significance that a name conveys. The name Gogol becomes an emblem of identity for Gogol. Lahiri does not focus on Gogol's roots or descent as the cause of his troublesome life but focuses on his name that is not Indian nor American but Russian. Ebru Donmez states that Lahiri tries to reflect multiculturalism by choosing a Russian name for Bengali immigrant's son and a name that designates the concept of other in dominant culture (50). It denotes that

ethnic minorities from either Russia or India are never accepted in the dominant American culture.

Raymond Williams believes that culture changes with the period of time and it is, “a whole way of life, material, intellectual and spiritual” (xiv). Culture plays a great role in formation of one’s identity. Identities are constructed rather than represented by anyone because, “Identities are perceived within the domain of cultural circumstances and are not things which exist; they have no essential or universal qualities” (Paudyal 14). The difference between the process of naming the child in Indian and American culture is responsible for Gogol’s chaotic identity. In the second chapter of novel, when a baby boy is born to Ashima in American hospital, she is desperately waiting for her grandmother’s letter with a name. In Bengal, there is a tradition that the grandmother would name her son, “As for a name, they have decided to let Ashima’s grandmother, who is past eighty now, who has named each of her other six great-grandchildren in the world, do the honors” (25).

Unfortunately, her letter could not reach them and the hospital norms force them to select a name for their son to put some name on his birth certificate before they discharge the new born from the hospital. Ashoke suggests a temporary *bhalanam*, “the perfect pet name for his son occurs to Ashoke” (28) that is Gogol, the name of his favourite Russian author of *Overcoat*, Nikolai Vasilievich Gogol. The first generation believes in the customs of their past native land that is the reason Ashoke suggests only pet name not good name. Thus, past native land culture defines and makes one’s identity.

A name becomes a question of identity for immigrants in adopted homelands. At the time of Gogol’s admission to a school, his parents want to change his name but he refuses to change and is happy with his name. His teacher writes his name Gogol because Gogol wants that name. Lahiri also exposes the weak position of Indian parents who are not able to name their son according to their wishes because of the superiority of English teacher who prefers the name that is liked by three years old child rather than his Indian parents. Telugu asserts that this decision of Gogol, “...on the first day of Kindergarten, causes him years of distress, though it was also his first attempt to ‘reject a dual identity’” (33). Lahiri also shares a similar experience in her childhood, when she joined kindergarten in Kingston, Rhode Island, her teacher decided to call her by

her pet name Jhumpa, because it was easier to pronounce than her Indian name Nilanjana Sudeshna Lahiri.

As a young boy, Gogol does not bother about his name. Peculiarity of his name becomes apparent to Gogol when he is eleven years old; he visits a graveyard on a field trip with schoolmates where he becomes aware of strange names of early settlers to America. He likes those odd names and writes their names but one of the chaperones remarks that these are, “sort of like yours” (70) and which are not seen these days. Gogol feels sad to listen about it, “By now, he had come to hate any question pertaining to his name and hated having constantly to explain. He thought his name was both absurd and obscure ...” (Chaudary 289). Lahiri compares Gogol’s name with the names of the founding fathers because they are also immigrants and reflects the oddity of their names. This oddity is due to the difference between different cultures in which names are placed.

The notion of “othering” is also reflected in the novel. Gogol in his adolescent period sometimes feels that he is ‘other’ in American mainstream. Ebru Donmez states:

Edward Said in his *Orientalism* underlines the interaction between the West and the East. Because of the interaction between the colonizer and the colonized, Western man constructed Eastern identity by himself. In the eyes of the West, the East was labeled as inferior, civilized, barbaric, and irrational. (ix)

Edward Said in his introduction to *Orientalism* states that his personal experiences enforced him to write this book, “The life of an Arab Palestinian in the West, particularly in America, is disheartening” (9). Life of ethnic minorities is miserable in America because the dominant class of Americans always regards them as “other”. One day Gogol finds that some American children have shortened his surname ‘Ganguli’ to ‘Gang’ which is pasted on one side of his mailbox but when he tells his father about this incident he remains unaffected and says, “It’s only boys having fun” (68). However, Gogol feels insulted and remembers how shopkeepers and other cashiers mock at his parent’s accent and they prefer to converse with Gogol because he knows American English. The western people thus deride at the accent of Indian people. This becomes a cause of mental deprivation of ethnic minorities:

A valid and active sense of self may have been eroded by *dislocation*, resulting from migration, the experience of enslavement, transportation, or 'voluntary' removal for indentured labour. Or it may have been destroyed by *cultural denigration*, the conscious and unconscious oppression of the indigenous personality and culture by a supposedly superior racial or cultural model. (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 9)

At the crossroads Gogol is in dilemma who is baffled to answer the question of his real homeland. He is confused whether he is an Indian or American. Gogol the name itself denotes the otherness because the name is neither Indian nor American but Russian. The name Gogol is used as a tool by Lahiri to indicate identity crisis of his life. Influenced by American culture during his puberty, Gogol tries to adjust himself in American culture and distance himself from his Indian identity because he regards himself as an American but he is never accepted as an American because of his Indian background. American children jeer at his name. For him Gogol is not only a name but also a discomfort or a struggle to fit into American culture, and he has no girlfriend, this too bitterly tortures his spirit. Ania Loomba rightly asserts, "Colonial identities-on both sides of the divide-are unstable, agonized, and in constant flux" (149). This becomes a reason of his dual identity crisis because he fails to merge his ethnic background with present American mores.

The description of his namesake tortures Gogol's fortitude and he starts loathing his name. When in his high school Gogol's teacher teaches Nikolai Gogol's story *The Overcoat* he feels ashamed to listen about his namesake. Nikolai Gogol is a Russian writer but he is mentally not stable, "He was reputed to be a hypochondriac and a deeply paranoid, frustrated man...morbidly melancholic, given fits of severe depression" (91) and famished himself to death that is why Gogol hates his name that:

...is both absurd and obscure, that it has nothing to do with who he is, that it is neither Indian nor American but of all things Russian. He hates having to live with it, with a pet name turned good name, day after day, second after second. (76)

However, when Gogol identifies his place as an individual, he rejects his parental identity, he hastily wants to budge from "Gogol identity" to "Nikhil identity" because

Kim, an American girl with whom he has been on a date for the first time appreciates his name when he says, "I am Nikhil," for the first time in his life. Lahiri depicts the chaotic condition of Gogol who rejects his "Gogol identity" but again selects an Indian name Nikhil because somewhere in his sub-conscious he has Indian traits which he cannot let go off. He is unable to remain aloof from his Indian identity. Stuart Hall also believes that identity "is a matter of becoming and being... But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation" (Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" 225). Identity is not something stable or constant but changing keeps on varying with the situations. Similarly, Gogol also adopts American identity by discarding his Indian identity.

In an attempt to adapt American identity Gogol changes his name to Nikhil, and feels relaxed after changing his name and wants to tell to everyone that he is Nikhil. The world is new and happy for Nikhil, he adapts American culture, and loses his virginity at an early age, and it is as Nikhil that he maintains relationships with other white Americans, "Nikhil engages in a freedom that is more encompassing than he ever found Gogol to be" (Telugu 35). It is only when his father tells him the story of his train wreck he feels sorry for his rude behaviour and change of his name. He realizes the real meaning of his name after the death of his father and admits his Indian identity. The name has a strong hold over Gogol throughout the novel because he always remains Gogol for his family even after changing his name to Nikhil.

Lahiri depicts that the life of the second-generation immigrant revolves between two cultures and he leads a life of duality. It is only after accepting his Indian identity he breaks up his relation with Maxine and performs his father's last rites based on Bengali rituals, "The core of one's self is to remain Indian. The American persona is appropriate for school, but the "Indian" self, the "true" self, should govern one's behavior at home and in the community" (Bacon 146). He quarrels with Maxine regarding his emotional complications associated with his father's death.

The second generation tries to remain aloof from the customs or rituals of their parent's native land but in their sub-conscious they have regards and feelings for their parents, which lead them to follow their parents culture either, they desire or not. Gogol's devotion towards his mother is also responsible for the breakup of his love affair with Maxine. He agrees to marry Moushumi for his mother's

happiness and marries her in accordance with Bengali rituals which Gogol and Moushumi do not like, “It’s not the type of wedding either of them really wants” (219). Gogol accepts his Indian identity because he is emotionally attached to his family but because of his nourishment in America he is akin to American way of life:

Members of the second generation are, like their parents, truly Indian, but are able to be adaptably "American" when the situation requires. This adaptability includes all manner of traits—persona, clothing, food, language, even religion—associated with ethnic identity. (Bacon 146)

There is an affirmative change in Gogol at the end of the novel who respects and understands his father’s emotions because Gogol opens the book, *The Short Stories of Nikolai Gogol* that is presented to him by his father on his fourteenth birthday. Ashoke has written on the front page of the book, “The man who gave you his name, from the man who gave you your name” (288). He now feels free from the chains of his family and American society. He even realizes the pain of his parents:

Nothing to signify the years his family has lived here, no evidence of the effort, the achievement it had been. It’s hard to believe that his mother is really going, that for months she will be so far. He wonders how his parents had done it, leaving their respective families behind, seeing them so seldom, dwelling unconnected, in a perpetual state of expectation, of longing. All those trips to Calcutta he’d once resented- how could they have been enough? (281)

The novel traces how Indians are caught in the web of duality and lead a solitary life because of the western attitude of “other” and their personal thought of inferiority. Gogol tries to adopt American culture completely in his life but he cannot overlook the memories of his past – his name, his parents, and his Indian inheritance. However at the end of the novel, he no longer feels mortification regarding his name and Indian identity, he mingles both identities because he accepts American society and at the same time retains his parents’ identity. Bapsi Sidhwa in *An American Brat* also reflects the amalgamation between tradition and modernity in her protagonist Feroza who struggles with cultural differences and

achieves a synthesis between both cultures at the end of the novel (Ghanshyam, G. A. 67). Dilemma of assimilation in an adopted land also results in identity crisis.

The Namesake also focuses on the problem of assimilation of immigrants in a foreign land. Ashoke and Ashima, a Bengali couple migrate to America in 1967 to make a new life. Jhumpa Lahiri proclaims, "I think that for immigrants, the challenges of exile, the loneliness, the constant sense of alienation, the knowledge of and longing for a lost world, are more explicit and distressing than for their children" (qtd. in Rana 179). Lahiri illuminates that the condition of first-generation of immigrants is worse than the second-generation because their life is like a pendulum swinging around two worlds.

Ashoke struggles hard to afford a better life for his new son by earning a doctorate degree from an esteemed American university. Ashima, another central character of the novel also suffers identity crisis more than her husband Ashoke Ganguli and her children Gogol and Sonia because of her lack of assimilation in the dominant culture. Isolation and displacement can produce says Edward Said, "the kind of narcissistic masochism that resists all efforts at amelioration, acculturation, community" (qtd. in Ashcroft 47). Ashima's past identity becomes a hurdle in her way to accept a new identity and new cultural norms. Ashima from the beginning until the end struggles to assimilate into American culture. Both characters want to lead a good life in America but their past milieu play a governing role in shaping their present with the memories and iron grip of past life in India.

Ashima does not want to part herself from Bengali culture and for this reason; she keeps herself aloof from American people and practices. Amartya Sen writes, "A strong – and exclusive – sense of belonging to one group can in many cases carry with it the perception of distance and divergence from other groups" (1-2). Even she does not want to nurture her son in America because she feels scared to raise her son in a country where she has no family members and relatives and for her life here is uncertain and spare. One day she says to Ashoke, "I'm saying I don't want to raise Gogol alone in this country. It's not right. I want to go back." When she puts Gogol to sleep, "...she sings Bengali songs her mother had sung to her" (35), in a way she wants to preserve her culture in each and every moment of her life.

Lahiri illuminates that different ways of existing is also one of the causes that lead to the problem of assimilation of immigrants in foreign lands. Ashima does not like her neighbour's way of living when they leave her to look after their children in their absence:

Ashima remembers their apartment with abiding horror- just beyond the ceiling yet so different from her own, piles everywhere, piles of books and papers, piles of dirty plates on the kitchen counter, ashtrays the size of serving platters heaped with crushed-out cigarettes. (32)

This environment is like a hell for Ashima who hates to see their habits and way of living and this offends her. Ashima wears Indian saris and eats Indian food, and for many years, she lives without American friends. She does not even want her children to adopt western culture. She sends her children to learn Bengali language. She dislikes Gogol's American girlfriends and Sonia's adaptation of American culture. Ashima forbids Gogol to marry Maxine because she is a foreigner for her. She insists Gogol to marry Moushumi, a girl of Bengali origin.

Ashima's attitude towards sex and marriage, "is another indicator of the assimilation of cultural minority into the multicultural cosmopolitan way of life accompanied by a corresponding rejection of ethnic affiliations and identities" (Ramana 5). However, after some time she tries to adapt American customs for her children's happiness, starts celebrating American festivals and cooks American food:

...a casual observer, the Gangulis, apart from the name on the mailbox... appear no different from the neighbours.... For the sake of Gogol and Sonia they celebrate, with progressively increasing fanfare, the birth of Christ, an event the children look forward to far more than the worship of Durga and Saraswati. (64)

The subjectivities and modes of thinking of the first generation also change due to the effect of dominant culture. Ashima and Ashoke accept Maxine in Gogol's life and Ashima gives consent for Sonia's marriage to Ben, a half Jewish and half-Chinese boy, this indicates change in their perspectives. Even attitude of Gogol and Sonia also change after the death of their father (Agarwal 35).

Ashima is feeble and fragile, as she cannot do anything on her own but at the end she becomes a confident woman, and decides to spend six months in

America and six in India, “Ashima is destined to travel back and forth between her two homes of choice, between the previous and the new one, the former holding new discoveries as well as processes of re-assimilation and reintegration in store for her” (Nagpal 38). Despite her dual identity, lack of stable space to call her home, she becomes capable of creating personal journey of arriving at home. Thus, Ashima reflects journey of immigrant woman who despite of her challenges of immigration adjusts herself in two worlds and has a deep regards for both her places of existence. The novel skillfully portrays her problem of assimilation into the western culture. Thus, we can say that Jhumpa Lahiri mainly depicts the problem of adaptation and identity crisis in an adopted land through the characters of Ashima and Gogol who represent the stipulation of first and second generations respectively.

The first generation faces painful and marginalizing circumstances because they yearn for their past homeland and desires for imaginary homeland (Rushdie, “Imaginary Lands” 9-10). They face cultural dilemma when western people scoff at their cultural values and this is a threat to their ethnic and cultural identity. However, the predicament of the second generation is different because they struggle less than the first generation and enjoy better standard of living but the past migrant history of their parents affects their sense of identity (McLeod 207). This becomes a cause for their dual identity crisis because they are leading an in-between life between two worlds and two cultures. Thus, both generations suffer the pangs of identity crisis because of their diverse situations.

The Namesake also elucidates the positive effect of immigration in the life of immigrants. For Ashoke, life in America is not so bad like his wife Ashima. A persistent limp in his right leg is a vivid aide memoire that the past is a burden that he carries with him every day (Barringer). Ashoke is nearly killed in a tragic train wreck, which leaves him emotionally and physically shattered. The reminiscences of that dreadful night persuade him to leave India and ultimately lead him to choose an unusual name for his son. He feels proud to be well known as a professor in American university, “He looks to the West for inspiration or self-liberation, believing that the West is a more fortunate place” (Paudyal 51). He “stops wearing jackets and ties to the University,” because he does not want to appear different from his American colleagues (65). His purchase of a house for his family in the New English neighborhood “appear[s] no different from their

neighbors,” except for “the name on the mailbox, and apart from the issues of *Indian Abroad* and *Sangbad Bichitra* that are delivered there” (64). Ashoke is contented with his life in America; he never faces any kind of racial or identity problems. Ashoke represents the personality of satisfied first generation immigrants who move to foreign lands for their personal gratification and if their aims are fulfilled in those lands then they are contented with their situation. Their condition is better than their counter parts. Sometimes they face problem of assimilation or mild instances of racial discrimination but they do not bother about those instances just as when Gogol tells Ashoke about the change of their nameplate by white children then he takes it lightly and does not bother about it.

Sonia, daughter of Ashoke Ganguli does not have any issues of problematic identity. She is happy with American ways of life and blissfully married to Chinese Jewish boy named Ben. This too is one of the critical issues of the novel that Lahiri does not concentrate on the character of Sonia who is a female while she gives priorities to Gogol by making him the protagonist of the work. Lahiri here tries to present that all immigrants are not leading dreadful lives because some are contented with their western life style.

Feeling of alienation in a foreign land creates a strong bond among the first-generation immigrants who start considering other immigrants as their family members who can gratify each other’s cultural needs. Physical mobility often intensifies the spiritual or psychological sense of alienation from the places one continually moves between (Saha 187). The diasporic community preserves their separate identity by following their traditional norms. Safran rightly asserts that it is one of the chief traits of diasporic community that:

...they continue to relate, personally or vicariously to the homeland in one way or other and their ethno communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such relationship. (qtd. in Jayaram 31)

Lahiri in her story *Hema and Kaushik* that is from her collection of stories *Unaccustomed Earth* presents a strong bond between Hema and Kaushik as their families have close relations because of their shared culture in America. Even when they meet after two decades before entering into different phases of their lives, they find a strong communion between themselves. It is only due to their sturdy cultural iron grip, which they can not overlook with their efforts.

In America, seclusion pierces Ashima's heart and she is eager to have a glimpse of her people and this becomes a reason of her association with different Bengali families in different parts of America, "Visits to Atlanta, Toronto, or Chicago were made solely to visit other Bengalis" (Sen, Mandira 9). Similar instances are found in the stories like *The Blessed House* and *Heaven and Hell* from Lahiri's story collections *Interpreter of Maladies* and *Unaccustomed Earth* respectively. Sanjeev in the story *This Blessed House* has a good circle of Bengali friends. Sanjeev abhors having Biblical paraphernalia as decoration pieces in his home and anxious about what his Bengali friends will say when they find Christian decoration pieces throughout the house. In *Heaven and Hell* we find familial communion between two strangers Pranab and Aparna because of their shared past culture. Ashima loves to have close relations with other immigrants who for her become an excuse to stay away from the customs of American life. This group fulfils cultural needs of migrants because they perform Indian customs, speak Bengali language, eat Bengali food and in a way they make a substitute for their Indian families.

The novel projects the nostalgic feeling of the first generation immigrants through the plight of Ashima. Nostalgia generally means longing for the past and the past plays an important role in the present life of people with melancholy in life. Dubey rightly asserts:

The immigrant experience is complicated as a sensitive immigrant finds himself or herself perpetually at a transit station fraught with memories of the original home which are struggling with the realities of the new world" (22).

Ashima Ganguli, the pregnant wife, struggles with nostalgic feelings to share the experience of childbirth with her family, "It's not so much the pain, which she knows, somehow, she will survive. It's the consequence: motherhood in a foreign land" (6). It expounds that the pain of alienation in an adopted land is more dreadful for the first-generation immigrant than the labour pain, which signifies that she can somehow, tolerate physical pain but it is difficult to counter the psychological pain that always remains in the fate of an immigrant. Ashima is a woman and a mother or in Gayatri Spivak's words, she is a subaltern character (Donmez 77). Ashima is more an expatriate than a well settled immigrant. She considers herself as a prisoner in a jail that is chosen by her.

Ashima always remains in her past and her ways of living in America that is her Bengali rituals, Bengali ceremonies, Bengali food and Bengali dresses are the result of her nostalgia. In the beginning of novel, pregnant Ashima longs for Bengali snacks (1).

Ashima's condition is akin to Mrs. Sen who is a Bengali immigrant of the story *Mrs. Sen* from Lahiri's collection of stories titled *Interpreter of Maladies*. Mrs. Sen, wife of a university professor, is a caretaker of an eleven-year-old boy Eliot. Mrs. Sen is also like Ashima, who loves to cook Bengali food and wears Bengali Saris. Mrs. Sen shares her past life experiences of Bengal with Eliot who is an eleven-year-old boy.

During Ashima's pregnancy when she is in hospital, she yearns for her Indian family. Her heart aches because she is alone in the hospital, miles away from her family and it is her first experience to give birth to a child without any kind of assistance from her family. In India, people perform many ceremonies especially at the time of birth of a boy child. However, Ashima here only longs for those sweet moments of her life and feels very sad that her son is deprived of the love of his grandparents:

Without a single grandparent or parent or uncle or aunt at her side, the baby's birth, like most everything else in America, feels somehow haphazard, only half true. As she strokes and suckles and studies her son, she can't help but pity him. She has never known of a person entering the world so alone, so deprived. (25)

She has a tattered copy of *Desh* magazine, which she reads thousand times in her loneliness, "the printed pages of Bengali type, slightly rough to the touch, are a perpetual comfort to her" (6). Salman Rushdie also states, "The broken pots of antiquity, from which the past sometimes but always provisionally, be reconstructed, are exciting to discover, even if they are pieces of the most quotidian objects" ("Imaginary Homelands" 12). For Ashima being a foreigner "is a sort of lifelong pregnancy- a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts" (49).

Ashima leads a very solitary life after the death of Ashoke and memorizes her past life with Ashoke. It is only after his bereavement that Ashima does not desire to escape to Calcutta, "She refuses to be so far from the place where her

husband made his life, the country in which he died” (183). Ashoke also recollects her past but that is a bitter incident of train wreck:

He remembers the sound of people half-dead around him, moaning and tapping on the walls of the train, whispering hoarsely for help, words that only those who were also trapped and injured could possibly hear. (18)

This reveals that even in America those past feelings haunt him. Still, Ashoke embraces India and frequently visits India. The life in America is monotonous for Ashima and Ashoke, as they cannot share their happiness and grief with their loved ones because they are miles away from them:

In some senses, Ashoke and Ashima live the lives of the extremely aged, those for whom everyone they once knew and loved is lost, and those who survive and are consoled by memory alone. Even those family members who continue to live seem dead somehow, always indivisible, impossible to touch. (63)

Generational gaps are illustrated through juxtaposition of two generations, Ashima and Ashoke, representatives of the first generation and Gogol, Sonia and Moushumi, representatives of the second generation. Lahiri presents how culture becomes the foremost ground for this generational gap. Amit Shankar Saha believes that displacement in any way either it is forced or self imposed is a calamity (186). The cultural displacement results in the loss of language, family ties, customs and traditions of the native land of immigrants. Salman Rushdie in his *Imaginary Homelands* states:

A full migrant suffers, traditionally, a triple disruption. He loses his place, he enters into alien language, and he finds surrounded by beings whose social behaviour and codes are unlike and sometimes even offensive to his own. And this is what makes a migrant such a pathetic figure, because roots, language and social norms have been three of the most important parts of the definition of what it is to be human being. (“Gunter Grass” 277-278)

The first generation wants to lead their life according to their past culture. Agarwal states that Edward Said in his work *Culture and Imperialism* elucidates the journey of the exile from his ‘homeland’ to globe. The exile first becomes ‘tender,’ then strong and finally perfect. Edward Said says:

The person who finds his homeland sweet is still tender beginner, he to whom every soil is as his native one is already strong, but he is perfect to whom the entire world is foreign place. (407)

Gangulis' in the novel are in their 'tender' stage because they prefer to eat Bengali food, even wear Indian dresses. Moreover, they adopt all the cultural norms and traditions of their native land like naming ceremonies of their children, marriage ceremonies and speak Bengali language.

On the other hand, their progeny adopt western culture and follow the sparkles of American culture. The first generation wants to preserve his culture by transferring it to their descendants. Every Saturday Ashoke and Ashima send their children to learn Bengali language, which is taught in the home of one of their Bengali friends but Gogol and Sonia, consider it as a kind of burden in their life. Though they do face some conflict with their children in this endeavour but the older generation makes certain compromises to maintain inter-generational relation.

Gogol and Sonia dress as if Americans and they favour English for their communication. It is a matter of distress for their parents, "that their children sound just like Americans...in accents they are accustomed not to trust" (64). As language, food and dresses are culturally constructed so first generation regard it a great loss when they children adopt the habits, dresses and language of that adopted land which they never thought as their own because they believe if their culture is lost then everything is lost. When they visit India, their parents love to stay there but they are always eager to come back to America:

Ashima, now Monu, weeps with relief, and Ashoke, now mithu, kisses his brothers on both cheeks, holds their heads in his hands. Gogol and Sonia know these people, but they do not feel close to them as their parents do. Within minutes, before their eyes Ashoke and Ashima slip into bolder, less complicated versions of themselves, their voices louder, their smiles wider revealing a confidence Gogol and Sonia never see on Pemberton Road. (82)

Ashima and Ashoke feel relaxed after seeing their relatives in India while Sonia and Gogol consider themselves disconsolate in Indian environment.

The first generation accommodates and adjusts to create space and identity in a foreign country (Agarwal 32). Ashoke and Ashima learnt to celebrate some of

the main festivals of the dominant culture like Christmas and even they follow the foods habits for their children sake. The lived experience of the children of the first generation migrants to which Jhumpa Lahiri belongs is characterized by their participation in the American mainstream culture available in the larger social space, outside the limited, 'sanctified' family space (Lahiri, Himardri).

Moushumi, a Bengal origin Indo-American, daughter of Ashima's friend and Gogol's wife, is a lucid example of complete adoption of American culture by the second-generation immigrants. She is an anglophile. Himadiri Lahiri proclaims, "She was drugged with a sense of 'emancipation' from all constrictive forces but in the process she also acted, self-consciously, in a way that almost verged on prostitution." She represents a disintegration of a personality and complete failure of Indian culture because,

With no hesitation, she had allowed men to seduce her in cafes, in parks, while she gazed at paintings in museums. She gave herself openly, completely, not caring about the consequences... She allowed the men to buy her drinks, dinners, later to take her in taxis to their apartments, in neighbourhoods she had not yet discovered on her own... There were days she slept with one man after lunch, another after dinner. (215)

If we compare her with Gogol then he seems to be more balanced than Moushumi because at the end she remains the same and leaves Gogol for another man named Dmitri who is from Paris. Deepalis Chaudhary states that for the first time in the life of Gogol another man's name upsets him more than his own name because it tortures his spirit, he retains his Indian identity and feels insulted for the betrayal of his wife. An unconstructive impact on the institution of family as a unit also results from these cultural gaps.

These gaps become a first and foremost cause for the breakage of Ganguli family because Ganguli family attempts to present the Indian cultural ethos in a new space. Gogol leaves his parents' apartment because their views do not go with Gogol's American way of living so Gogol stays away from them to enjoy his independent life. Gogol tries to become an entirely different person during his affair with Maxine, he adopts her light hearted life style and drinks wine with her parents. Gogol compares his parents with Maxine's parents, "There is none of the exasperation he feels with his own parents. No sense of obligation. "Unlike his

parents they pressure her to do nothing, and yet she lives faithfully, happily, at her side” (133). Gogol comprehends the differences between these two different families, their traditions and their diverse approaches towards life. It is on his birthday party when Pamela makes fun of Indian people at that time he feels bad and tries to conceal his identity. Tejinder Kaur rightly affirms that his affair with Maxine fails when he experiences, “the feeling of being considered the “other” among her group of family friends” (240). Even after his father’s death his mother asks him to marry Maxine but he refuses her because he accepts his Indian identity and marries Moushumi, daughter of his mother’s friend.

Gogol’s family life also breaks up when his arranged marriage collapses because Moushumi does not want to tie herself in the chains of Indian family life. Likewise, Jarnail Singh’s *Parchhaaven*, Veena Verma’s *Kachil* and *Chhoti Sardarni*, and Parvej Kaur Sandhu’s *Sirf Ik Vaar* show disintegration in families of Indian diasporas due to extra-marital affairs (Kaur “Disintegrating Family Units of Indian Diaspora” 239). Moushumi leaves Gogol for Dmitri, because after some time of her marriage she regrets her decision of marrying to Gogol. Her American upbringing paves her ways towards Dmitri who becomes a better match for her than her Indian husband does. This suggests that this cultural gap becomes a cause for the fragmentation of individual’s personality, which results in the crumbling of family units.

Marriage in the context of diasporic studies is one of the leading themes of *The Namesake*. Lahiri also utilizes this theme in her works, *Interpreter of Maladies* and *Unaccustomed Earth*. Sanjeev in the story *This Blessed House* represents a typical first generation Hindu man in Hartford married to second-generation girl named Twinkle. Mrs. Das in the story *Interpreter of Maladies* conceals from her husband that she has an illicit relation with someone and her son Bobby is from that adultery. *A Temporary Matter* is also about the relationship of married couple Shoba and Shukumar.

Lahiri elucidates the concept of marriage through the portrayal of two generations; the first generation Ashima and Ashoke consider it, as a sacred bond and they believe in an arranged marriage. When Ashoke comes to see Ashima for the first time, “He did not look up when she appeared...He cleared his throat as if to speak but then said nothing” (8). There is a lot of gap between a girl and a boy before marriage. Even after her marriage she never calls her husband by his name

because, “It’s not the type of thing Bengali wives do” (2). She never expresses her love to Ashoke, “I love you, sweetheart” (3) are the words Ashima neither has heard nor expects to hear from her own husband. Ashima loved her husband when he was alive and even his death has not diminished it a bit, she feels incomplete without him. This is only due to the different culture in which she is brought up but “the way she feels about her husband can’t be expected from her children,” (Singh, “Redefining Marriage in *The Namesake*” 73) because of deep-rooted Indian culture in which a husband is like a God for Indian wife.

Second generation is quite different from the first generation because they do not believe in marriage. Gogol and Moushumi have indulged in different relationships before their marriage. Gogol’s first affair is with Ruth, then Maxine, an Anglo-Saxon American. He starts living with her family and remains aloof from his own at that period. When he tells Maxine about his parents arranged marriage she is also surprised that his parents never show their love to each other. Even when he takes her to his home, he forbids her to kiss or touch his hands before his parents. Although Maxine and Gogol love each other, they ultimately break up after his father’s death. Even after his marriage with Moushumi he has an illicit relation with other woman, similarly Moushumi have many affairs, before and after marriage. This reflects the predominant issue of marriage that can be difficult to bridge up between these two generations. Lahiri demonstrates how Indian marriage loses its meaning in America.

An Italian proverb, “Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you who you are” (Luraschi 1). Food preferences are predominantly imperative in migrant’s life because:

Eating is not only a basic necessity, but, especially for migrants, it becomes a way to express who they are, where they come from, how and if they merge their different cultural backgrounds with their daily living in a foreign country. (Luraschi 1)

Food becomes an important symbol of ethnic identity in the works of diasporic writers. Spices and flavours move like themes in these works. Food is a kind of object that reassures immigrants a bit of the homeland to cling. M.S.A. Rao writes, ...if a shift in residence occurs across the cultural regions, then the question whether the migrants retain the same food habits or change

in favor of the dietary style of the locals in the new place of residence, becomes a significant one. (qtd. in Gibbs)

Lahiri utilizes food and dining as a vehicle to exhibit the decline of familial bonds, community, and culture through the transition from Indian to American ways of life. Food is used as a metaphor in Jhumpa's works like *Interpreter of Maladies* and *The Namesake* that, "frequently constructs and reflects relationships to racialized subjectivity and also addresses issues of authenticity, assimilation, and desire" (Williams 70). In Lahiri's story *A Temporary Matter* food plays a great role in the relation of Shoba and Shukumar. The absence of food depicts the lack of love in their married life.

Paramjit Singh Ramana writes that in *The Namesake*, "Food (along with eating and cooking habits) is being a central motif of cultural identity in the novel" (5). In the very first chapter, pregnant Ashima longs for Bengali snacks in American kitchen, "She adds salt, lemon juice, thin slices of green chili pepper, wishing there were mustard oil to pour into the mix" (1). Laura Anh William asserts, "The commonplace spicy snack that Ashima concocts evokes both home and displacement, abundance and lack, well-stocked American cupboards as well as a certain hunger" (70). Food is employed as a dominant symbol of identity in the story *Mrs. Sen* also because Mrs. Sen has a special fascination for fish that reminds her of Bengal. Cooking lot of Bengali food is less stressful as compared to American food because for Ashima, it is a method to connect with her roots.

Indian food is an ethnic representative, "Lahiri's stories are good insofar as they are what Indian food is for Orientalist Americans: a delicacy, a talisman, a wafting aroma" (Chetty 31). In *The Namesake* when Bengali families meet at different places, they prefer Bengali food. In the story, *This Blessed House* Twinkle also cooks Indian food to amuse Sanjeev but he is disappointed because she cannot cook authentic Indian food. His attitude towards food mirrors his attitude towards her. Sau-ling Cynthia Wong has argued that in Asian American literature the first generation is, "often preoccupied with food as necessity-associated with nourishment, staples, and survival-while the second views food as extravagance-excess, treats, and desire" (qtd. in Williams, Laura Anh 70).

However, Gogol and Sonia adore western food. This becomes a matter of clash between them and their parent's food patterns. Ashima and Ashoke relished and preferred Bengali food. For their children sake, Ashima starts cooking

American food once a week. Moushumi also dislikes Bengali food and hates to become a typical Bengali wife who cooks Samosas for her family. Food habits of Maxine's family are different from Gogol's; they even drink together on the dining table. Food habits have a great impact on the life of immigrants that sometimes it becomes a kind of burden for the first generation when other family members do not accept their food habits and migrant women utilize food ways to construct their ethnic identity.

India is always present in this work. The multiplicity of images of India are found in form of food, trips to Calcutta, Ashima's nostalgia, her past memories and cultural practices which depicts India and its different culture. The novel offers glimpses about India by portraying a Bengali family and vividly depicts its culture, customs, language, cultural beliefs and social set up. Lahiri presents picture of middle class household when she tells about Ashima's life before marriage. Like Salman Rushdie, Lahiri also presents the dark side of India i.e. poverty, disease etc. Lahiri being a member of second generation presents her ideas through Gogol and Sonia when they visit India, they dislike Indian way of living.

The Namesake focuses on the psychological, socio-cultural aspects and ethical issues of diasporas. Lahiri does not focus on other heartrending issues, like racial, political and religious. The domain of her fiction is domestic so she reveals the lives of individuals by using the symbols of name, food, traditional values, language, dress etc. and through them superbly exhibits various diasporic themes like identity crisis, cultural gaps, problem of assimilation of immigrants in an alien land, nostalgia, failure of marriage, generational gaps, loss of cultural values etc.

Jhumpa Lahiri, by confining herself to domestic sphere exhibits the concealed world of immigrants. She tries to focus the problems of cultural assimilation of ethnic minorities in adopted lands. Individual identity crisis of immigrants who lead in-between life between two worlds and two cultures are reflected with the portrayal of educated middle class. Lahiri tries to highlight the life of educated middle class families in host societies where their life is not completely marginalised but they undergo certain problems due to the contact of new cultures and new geographical locations.

Thus, one can assume that Lahiri portrays the familial issues in which she primarily deals with the problems of adjustments and readjustments in the life of immigrants.

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CHAPTER 3

Darshan Singh Dhir's *Hashiye*: Marginalized Migrants

Darshan Singh Dhir is one of the prominent Punjabi diasporic writers who brings to fore the notable aspects of diaspora in his work. His fiction mirrors transnational and intranational migrations of Punjabi community and explicitly throws light on the contemporary concerns of Punjabi masses in adopted lands, particularly England. Sarbjot Singh articulates that Punjabi British writers have portrayed important issues of society keeping in view their experiences of contemporary economic, political, cultural and geographical situations (117).

Dhir was born and brought up in a village named Chak Number Char, of district Ganganagar (Rajasthan). It is a Hindi language area and his earlier education was in Hindi language but Dhir belonged to a Punjabi family that practiced Punjabi language, culture and traditions at his home. His family background influenced him and his works. Later on, he became a teacher and moved to England on work voucher in 1965. Dhir has a firsthand knowledge of critical situations of migrants and he successfully portrays the plight of migrants in his fictional narratives.

The autobiographical instances provide authenticity to the fictional narratives. It is generally said that a writer cannot overlook his age, political scenario of his period, personal incidents and circumstances, which implies that directly or indirectly, one finds instances from writer's life in his works. Similarly diasporic experience of a migrant writer:

... is a sort of exploring "the other" – "the other" being the psyche of the immigrant whose acceptance or negation of homeland, search for routes and identity, nostalgia and memory, hyphenated identity, sense of dislocation and loss and so on find expression in the fiction of the diasporic community over the past two decades. (Usha 35)

Irving Howe also affirms, "Politics and ideologies, like smell in a rose, implicitly and unavoidably run through all works of literature whether the author wants it or not" (qtd. in Ramana 84). Dhir himself has said in an interview to Kiranjeet Kaur and Gurmeet Kaur Sandhu that his works are related to his life and he has tried to portray the realistic picture of lives of immigrants in his works (94).

Dhir vividly reflects different aspects of diaspora in his eleven novels,

namely, *Apne Apne Raah* (1980), *Lakeeran te Manukh* (1991), *Sangharsh* (1994), *Dhundla Sooraj* (1994), *Ih Lok* (1996), *Ghar te Kamre* (1998), *Pairhan de Aar Par* (2001), *Ajnabi Chehre* (2003), *Ran-Bhoomi* (2005), *Hashiye* (2008) and *Vehan* (2011) and six collections of short stories, *Lunni-Mehak* (1972), *Marda Sach* (1976), and *Dishadian ton Paar* (1988), *Daria Manukh* (1994), *Sheshe de Tukdey* (1998) and *Daurh* (2002). Even a collection of his short stories has been translated and published in Hindi entitled *Rishton ke Rang* (2000). Balkar Singh states that the circumstances, need of immigration, racial discrimination in alien lands, roots and iron grip of native land, dual identity of progeny and their enigmatic situations are the dominant issues of Dhir's diasporic fiction (1). Realistic picture of Punjabi diaspora by delineating the social, political, economic and psychological aspects of diaspora have been revealed in his works.

Darshan Singh Dhir's fiction clearly echoes the process of migration at the national as well as international level and the quandary related to these migrations. *Lakeeran te Manukh* and *Ih Lok* have foregrounded transnational migrations of Punjabi migrants from Punjab to Rajasthan and narrated that people are not secure even within their national boundaries because everywhere minority has to face the similar crisis at the hands of the dominant class. His later works like *Dhundla Sooraj*, *Ih Lok*, *Pairhan de Aar Par* and *Hashiye* are reflections on international migration. He typifies the pain, misery, and "tried to depict the multifaceted episodes of displacement, dispossession and diffraction of the Punjabi masses" (Sandhu, Gural Singh 2). Dhir writes in Punjabi language as it is his mother tongue. Generally, the first-generation of immigrants prefer to write in their native languages because of their familiarity with their mother tongue. He employs the use of loan words from English; this change in the language is due to the influence of his surroundings because he is residing in the western society.

Elucidating intra-national and transnational migrations of Punjabi masses, Dhir's fiction vividly reflects the situations responsible for these migrations. Generally, people of Punjab migrate for economic prosperity but there are some religious and political reasons behind these exoduses. Gural Singh Sandhu asserts that the migration of people from Punjab has two main streams, which are due to political and historical reasons. The intra-national migration has occurred due to partition of India. It was a kind of forced migration, in which some people migrated from Punjab to Pakistan, but:

This process extended its boundaries by the willful migration to other parts of independent “the new India” (by detachment from their habitation) in search of prosperity and better livelihood on the national level. (Sandhu, Gurpal Singh 4)

The second stream refers to international migration from Punjab to different nations mostly Canada, England and America etc. and it is a kind of willful migration for better standard of living and economic well-being. Darshan Singh Dhir's fiction primarily deals with this international migration.

Darshan Singh Dhir's characters are predominantly working class, e.g. Rajpaul in *Sangharsh*, Mangal in *Dhundla Sooraj* and Hirdaypal in *Hashiye*. Dhir throws light on the psychology of his characters, “Darshan Singh Dhir is one of the most popular fiction writers of Punjabi literature who narrated an impressive account of the psychology of homelessness and of ‘the other’” (Sandhu, Gurpal Singh 2). In *Pairhan de Aar Par* and *Hashiye*, Dhir contemplates on the psychological aspects of his characters, Navjot and Hirdaypal, who are frequently lost in their deep thoughts.

Dhir does not confine his work to a particular age, aspect or theme, his fiction transforms with the changing scenario of Punjabi masses in adopted homelands. His works are a reflection of the contemporary condition of immigrants and this is the reason he portrays not only first-generation but also second and third generation of immigrants. Gurpal Singh Sandhu affirms that Dhir presents a three-dimensional picture of the Punjabi diaspora, “the longing for Home, location of the personal space in western society and searching 'the real space' on the alien land” (6). Dhir's former works, like *Dhundla Sooraj* and *Sangharsh*, elucidate the plight of first generation of immigrants while in his later works like *Hashiye* and *Pairhan de Aar Par*, he narrates the changing patterns of migrations and portrays second and third generation of immigrants.

Hashiye, a Punjabi diasporic novel by Darshan Singh Dhir, focuses on that generation of Punjabi migrants, who is born and brought up in England. For this generation England is their country in which they have to live their life and their connection with Punjab is only through their parents. This generation wants to have equal rights in every sphere, but immigrant tag of their parents becomes a big obstacle in this pursuit. In the majority English speaking white community, other races, cultures, languages become marginalized. Dhir through the character

of Hirdaypal portrays the struggle of a minority student to get his just place in the English society.

The word *Hashiye* in Punjabi, means margins. The novel reflects crestfallen condition of the immigrants who live on the margins of the western society. *Hashiye* is also close to Dhir's life because he has seen his near and dear ones facing racial discrimination. This narrative is different from Darshan Singh Dhir's previous works because the novel primarily focuses on the second and third generation of Punjabi immigrants.

The political scenario of Western and Eastern society remains one of the dominant concerns of the diasporic writers. Salman Rushdie asserts, "Writers and Politicians are natural rivals. Both groups try to make the world in their own images; they fight for the same territory. And the novel is one way of denying the officials, politicians' version of truth" (14). *Hashiye* is a political novel:

Novels of political estrangement engage not with political processes and institutions but instead with those who are subjected to, but have little or no say in the decisions made by authoritative agencies on their behalf and too often at their expense. (Scheingold 1)

Likewise, *Hashiye* portrays the predicament of a second generation immigrant who remains helpless before the dominant authority until the end of the novel. The novel engulfs the governing diasporic issues, racial discrimination, identity crisis, concept of "other," struggle for power, role of law and media, in which politics plays a dominant role. Although it is a fictional narrative, yet the leading diasporic issues provide affluence and authenticity to this work.

The concept of "othering" is explicated in *Hashiye* through the depiction of characters of white race like David Foster, Frank Foster and Edward Rives who regard themselves superior and misbehave with other races. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin proclaim that othering is a, "...dialectical process because the colonizing *Other* is established at the same time as its colonized *others* are produced as subjects" (172). The west always has an attitude of dominance over the east. Edward Said has said, "The relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony" (5). It signifies that the eastern people are constructed and presented as other, weak and inferior by the western people.

David Foster, the antagonist of the novel, is a member of high-class society of Oxford, “ਔਕਸਫੋਰਡ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਦੀ ਅਤਿ ਅਮੀਰ ਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਘਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੀ ਬਸਤੀ, ਬੀਅਰਵੁੱਡ, ਵਿਚ ਡੇਵਿਡ ਫੋਸਟਰ ਦੇ ਬਾਪ ਫਰੈਂਕ ਫੋਸਟਰ ਦਾ ਬੜਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਨਦਾਰ ਘਰ ਸੀ।” (“David Foster’s father Frank Foster had a very big and wonderful house in Oxford city’s richest and big houses colony, Beerwood.”; 25). Dhir uses the symbol of double spectacles which David Foster wears that implies that he has two different visions, one for Indian community and the other for his community. He feels proud that Asian and Africans are working as labourers at his home, “ਇਕ ਏਸ਼ੀਅਨ ਤੇ ਦੋ ਐਫਰੋ-ਕੈਰੀਬੀਅਨ ਕਾਮੇ ਗਾਰਡਨ ‘ਚ ਕੰਮ ਕਰ ਰਹੇ ਸਨ।” (“One Asian and two Afro-Caribbean laborers were working in the garden.”; 25). This arrogance reflects his colonial attitude towards the eastern people.

Frank Foster tells his son that they are members of ruling class and they have four cars, not for the sake of gratification but to tell people that we are related to ruling class (26). Being a typical character showing white supremacy, he also trains his son to rule and to control other people with power. The colonial mind-set is in his blood.

On the other hand, previously colonized people are still being marginalized. Hirdaypal, a Punjabi boy and a second generation immigrant suffers because of his marginality. He is repetitively affronted by negligence and racial discrimination in England because of the western racial politics against ethnic minorities. Commenting on the wide spread racism in English society, Abu Chakraborty and Kwame Mckenzie write “Racism is a form of discrimination that stems from the belief that groups should be treated differently according to phenotypic difference. It is widespread in UK” (475). Bholu Singh in Dhir’s first novel *Apne Apne Raah* also endures racial assaults of white race when he resides with Britishers in a posh area (Kiranjit Kaur, and Gurmit Kaur Sandhu 14). Dhir states that his generation had revolted against exploitation of immigrants in England and there are some positive results of that struggle but even then racial discrimination cannot be completely removed from England and these days it’s not direct like earlier (Kaur, *Darshan Singh Dhir da Galp* 108). *Hashiye* presents the situation of institutional discrimination in which the authoritative individuals of different institutions exploit Hirdaypal, “An institutional racism is often indirect. An institution

may not set out to discriminate but through its rules... have this very effect” (Chakraborty and Mckenzie 476).

The roots of racial discrimination flourish in the beginning of the novel when Hirdaypal’s teachers advise him to adopt the profession of a solicitor instead of barrister because there is racial discrimination in the bar clubs. Sarbot Singh believes that even the scientific thinking and system of liberal education could not free the white race of the grievous act of racial discrimination (115). Hirdaypal drops the idea of barrister because racial discrimination can become a hurdle in his career. After his excellent result in the exams, he applies for the post of Public Prosecutor in the department of Crown Prosecution Services (Midland division). Mr. David Foster, the branch manager of Midland division, appoints him for Stock-on-Trent but he aspires to work in the head office. A question of racial discrimination arises in Hirdaypal’s mind when he comes to know that David Foster appoints two of his less capable English class fellows for the head office. Gurpal Singh Sandhu rightly affirms:

The liberty and equality of the so called multicultural west came under the question-mark by interrogating the racial and discriminating attitudes of the white-people towards the Indians and blacks. (8)

Thus, the root of racial discrimination in the novel begins from this incident. After joining Stock-on-Trent as a crown prosecutor, Hirdaypal’s wisdom and good nature makes him favorite of all his juniors. Edward also appreciates his dedication towards work but after sometime jealousy arouses in his mind, “ਇਹ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਇਕ ਪਰੋਸੀਕਿਊਟਰ ਏ ਤੇ ਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਬ੍ਰਾਂਚ ਦਾ ਇਨਚਾਰਜ ਹਾਂ।” (“He is only a prosecutor and I am in charge of a branch”; 87). Edward wants to make him spineless and curses Hirdaypal and all Indian community just because he is an employee and Edward is his boss. In order to make Hirdaypal’s position weak, Edward gives him complex cases but Hirdaypal takes them as a challenge. This particular thing again upsets Edward because his tactics against Hirdaypal are not functioning properly.

Edward plans with David Foster and Andrew to throw out Hirdaypal from his office. Immigrants are usually considered to be hungry about money. So placing Hirdaypal in the same league, Edward offers him over time in a satirical manner but he refuses and feels himself expelled from the ordinary inhabitants of England

and he dejectedly feels that this happened only because, “ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਮੂਲ ਦੇ ਪੇਰੈਂਟਸ ਦਾ ਮੁੰਡਾ ਹਾਂ?” (“Because I am the son of Indian origin parents?”; 91).

John McLeod also states that the dominant discourses of race, ethnicity and gender may work to exclude migrants from being a part of the main stream of that nation:

Migrants may well live in new places, but they can be deemed not to belong there and disqualified from thinking of the new land as their home. Instead, their home is seen to exist elsewhere, back across the border. (212)

The dominant western society tries to suppress the progeny of Immigrants by not accepting them as citizens of their land of origin. Avtar Brah also asserts that in Britain, “...racialised discourses of the ‘nation’ continue to construct people of African descent and Asian descent, as well as certain other groups, as being outside the nation” (3).

This racialised discourse slows down the professional growth of immigrants, because this is not a onetime phenomenon. Marginalized people are continuously forced to live on the margins. When Hirdaypal applies for the post of the senior crown prosecutor then also Edward plays a shrewd game and says, “ਜਦ ਤਕ ਮੈਂ ਇਸ ਬ੍ਰਾਂਚ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਧਰਤਾ ਹਾਂ ਤੇ ਮਿਸਟਰ ਫੋਸਟਰ ਮਿਡਲੈਂਡ ਡਿਵੀਜ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਇਨਚਾਰਜ ਏ ਤਦ ਤਕ ਇਹ ਬਲੈਕੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹਾਲਤ ’ਚ ਵੀ ਉੱਚੀ ਪਦਵੀ ਤਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਸਕਦਾ।” (“As long as I am the sole owner of this branch and Mr. Foster is in charge of Midland division till then this black will not at any cost reach at the highest position”; 95). Edward spoils his confidential report just because of his jealousy and hate for Indian community.

Racial discrimination mentally tortures immigrants’ spirits, “Different rates of mental illness have been reported in ethnic groups in the UK ... It is easier to measure discriminatory acts such as racist attacks, but some believe that everyday minor incidents or slights (micro-aggressions)... may have a greater impact on individual’s health” (Chakraborty and Mckenzie 475).

The skin colour played a great role in the lives of immigrants in foreign lands; Hirdaypal feels that in spite of having high capability, sometimes his brown colour becomes a hurdle in his way to destination (93). Avtar Brah also suffers in Britain because of her looks, she states:

Yet I know now and knew then that 'looks' mattered a great deal within the colonial regimes of power. Looks mattered because of the history of the racialisation of 'looks'; they mattered because discourses about the body were crucial to the constitution of racisms. And racialised power operated in and through bodies. (3)

Frantz Fanon states that the psychic trauma occurs when the colonized man apprehend that he can never attain the whiteness he has been taught to desire, or discard the blackness he has learnt to devalue (qtd. in Loomba 146). This becomes a reason for mental disturbance of the colonial identities and in a similar manner; Hirdaypal suffers this unrest and agony.

Some immigrants try to protest against the injustices that are tormenting them in their adopted lands but the dominant powers try to suppress their protest with their bogus hopes. Hirdaypal also wants to file a case of discrimination against Edward in Employment court to fight against this unfairness. However, Foster promises Hirdaypal that he will make him senior prosecutor in the head office but there again, he is subjected to racial assaults.

There are some organizations and commissions, which work for and with the people who suffer racial discrimination like Commission for Racial Equality. Hirdaypal also presents his case before the commission, but judge of the commission is bribed and Hirdaypal loses the case. Hirdaypal is defeated in that case but he still has hope and prepares himself for future battle against racial discrimination. Balkar Singh also affirms that the defeat of Hirdaypal is only due to bribery, offers of high posts to officers and misuse of power (3).

So, reading of the novel suggests that although British establishment preaches equality to all, but many times, it does not practice it in reality, "Indians and other migrants groups suffered discrimination, in spite of the Race Relations Acts and other regulations trying to enforce equal opportunities. British governments have seemed to lack a strong political will to eradicate racism..." (Hussain 193). Members of minority communities like immigrants usually face this kind of discrimination and inequalities. Although Establishment wins in most of the situations due to its power and magnitude, but it fails to weaken their fighting spirits. Even after exploiting Hirdaypal at every level, it is defeated in the real struggle of racial discrimination, because it cannot demolish his courage and

determination. Thus, the novel deftly deals with the serious issue of racial discrimination in British institutions.

The situation of individual discrimination is also represented in the novel, “Racism in British society operated at the individual, institutional, and structural levels” (Hussain 192). Harmeet, another second-generation immigrant is the victim of racial discrimination. She is influenced by the western life style and rejects the institution of marriage. She has a boy friend, named Andrew Marvell and lives with him without marriage knots. Later on, Andrew leaves her because of his hate for Indian community that is hidden in his sub-conscious mind. Balkar Singh also believes that the hatred of Andrew for Indian community is more responsible than his personal grudges against Harmeet (1). Andrew curses Indian community, although Harmeet believes in the western culture yet she does not tolerate abusive words for her community. She replies back Andrew with the same sword. Ania Loomba rightly asserts:

The underlying premise was, of course, that Indians can mimic but never exactly reproduce English values, and that their recognition of the perpetual gap between themselves and the ‘real thing’ will ensure their subjection. (146)

Andrew realizes before his daughter Anita that his sub-conscious hatred for Indians is responsible for breakage of his relation with Harmeet. He says, “ਸ਼ਾਇਦ ਮੇਰੇ ਅਵਚੇਤਨ 'ਚ ਏਸ਼ੀਅਨ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਕਿਤੇ ਨਾ ਕਿਤੇ ਮਾੜੀ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਪਈ ਹੋਈ ਏ। ਪਰ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਗੱਲ ਬਾਰੇ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ।” (“May be some part of my unconscious has bad feelings for Asian people. But I was unaware about this thing”; 137). Thus, one can observe that hatred against other ethnic communities is in the blood of the colonial people, they cannot overcome this hatred because it is in their unconscious mind and they adopt it from their culture.

Dhir vividly exposes how western society always regards Indian progeny as strangers and with cunningness; they use other people of migrated community against their own ethnic groups. When Hirdaypal files a case of discrimination against his department, Foster asks Edward to give the job of senior prosecutor to Akhtar Kasimi so that they can use him as a tool against Hirdaypal. At that moment Edward says in a satirical manner, “ਦੂਜੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ 'ਚ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਰੰਗ ਦੇ ਬੇਸ 'ਤੇ ਡਿਸਕਰੀਮੀਨੇਸ਼ਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਏ।” (“In other words he has been discriminated on the

basis of colour."; 273). The promotion of other black man will thrust aside his statement because they want to use Kasimi as a means against Hirdaypal. They use members of ethnic groups as a means against each other.

In the contemporary world struggle for power exists in every field of life. Dhir reveals the game of power through his different characters, which represent that everybody in this material world tries to acquire power. Frank Foster directs David that only that person is successful who is powerful and who knows how to utilize time properly. He should be conscious about the weaknesses of people so that he can control them. Christ also notifies Hirdaypal that every establishment of the world wants that a person should not have self-respect and they want to make them spineless. Dhir deftly presents that in the race of power people become and prefer 'yes man' and 'spineless'. The wrong power system is responsible for the death of Tom, a press reporter who helps Hirdaypal. The novel gives a picture of the power system in which one is shattered if one is not a 'yes man' or 'spineless'.

The novel breaks the equality myth of the west. Generally, it is said that West is a land of opportunities for the Eastern people but "the experience of the miserable working conditions meant it did not live up to the myth" (McLeod 209). In the beginning of the novel Hirdaypal attends a seminar on "Ethnic Minority and Discrimination in Britain" which is organized by Midland division's Crown Prosecution Services department. Hirdaypal attends that seminar because he believes in equality myth of the west, "ਪਰ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਇਸਟੈਬਲਿਸ਼ਮੈਂਟ ਤੇ ਲੁਹੜੇ ਦਾ ਭਰੋਸਾ ਸੀ। ਵਿਸ਼ਵਾਸ ਹੀ ਨਹੀਂ, ਉਹ ਉਹਨੂੰ ਦੁਧ-ਧੋਤੀ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਸੀ।" ("But he had full faith in British establishment. Not only faith, he regarded it as flawless."; 9).

David Foster, the branch manager of Midland division delivers a speech in the seminar and invites proficient students of ethnic minorities to join his department; however, there is a snobbish smile on David Foster's face that reflects his hidden discriminated attitude towards other nations' students.

The novel represents snobbish attitude of the western people who do not practice what they preach. Dhir tries to articulate that English people deem themselves liberal but they are not liberal in reality because they have colonial feeling in their sub-conscious mind. The myth of equality is shattered when Hirdaypal is defeated in his case. This signifies that the second-generation immigrants regard them as a part of that nation in which they are nourished but

they are unacquainted with the real attitude of the western people who always consider them as 'other' and never accept them as citizens of their countries.

Reflecting the weak role of media through the plight of Tom Stevens, a news channel reporter, Dhir highlights the helplessness of media before the dominant political authorities. Hirdaypal tells his story to Tom and he telecasts his story in his news channel named Channel Four, but now establishment behaves rudely with those people who favour Hirdaypal. Tom is suspended from his department and mentally tortured. Ultimately he dies an isolated and dreadful death. This incident vividly presents that politics and power play a great role in degrading the role of media in society. Even the role of labour unions has been shown to be very weak in this text.

The western people have very appalling views about Indian community. They use very abusive language for Indians like "Paki" and "Blacks". Paki is a word, which is used for Eastern people by Western people in an insulting manner, "emphasizing the slang derogatory name the English used against Pakistanis..." (McLeod 214). Avtar Brah also states:

The discourse of 'Paki' echoed colonial encounters. But it was not a narrative about the 'natives out there', as it had been during the British Raj, but rather it signified the inferiorised Other right here at the core of the fountain head of 'Britishness'. (9)

Andrew calls Hirdaypal "Paki" when he quarrels with him. When Andrew quarrels with Harmeet then also he uses insulting language for Indian community. Foster tells Edward, "ਇੰਡੀਅਨਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਸੇ ਤੇ ਤੀਵੀਂ ਦੀ ਬੜੀ ਭੁੱਖ ਏ." ("Indians are hungry for money and woman." 90). Edward discards his views, "ਪਹਿਲੀ ਜੈਨਰੇਸ਼ਨ ਦੇ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਗੱਲ ਬਿਲਕੁਲ ਦਰੁਸਤ ਏ। ਪਰ ਮੇਰੇ ਖਿਆਲ 'ਚ ਦੂਜੀ ਪੀੜ੍ਹੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਅਪਲਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ?" ("Your opinion about the first generation is right. But according to me this will not apply to the second generation."; 90). Foster answers that in any generation, their lust for women or greed for money forever remains in their blood. It signifies that White community will never alter their viewpoint regarding Indian community.

Dhir through the character of Tom, Ron Frazer and Sharen demonstrates that there are some people in the west who favor Indian community and are against this racial discrimination. Ron Frazer is a member of White race who

advises Hirdaypal to leave this department and work in private firm and it is useless to exchange blows with Foster because, “ਉਹ ਇਕ ਬੰਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਬਰਤਾਵਨੀ ਇਸਟੈਬਲਿਸ਼ਮੈਂਟ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਏ, ਮਿਸਟਰ ਡਿਲਨ।” (“Foster is not a man but he is a symbol of British establishment, Mr. Dhillon.”; 254). He suggests to him that he should go to Commission for Racial Equality. Sharen becomes witness of Hirdaypal in his case against racism. Tom also helps Hirdaypal. There are also some favorable views regarding labour government which respects equality of people in every field of life.

The issue of half-caste, which is prevailing in the contemporary world, also affects the progeny of immigrants. When a boy/girl from one caste or race marries to the person of another caste or race then this situation arises because their children are addressed by half-caste and society never accepts them because it is considered against the norms of culture. Dhir presents in between situation of half-caste children who are not accepted by any society because of their half-caste. Anita, a third-generation immigrant also suffers racial oppression because of her half-caste as her mother Harmeet belongs to Punjabi community while her father Andrew Smith is an English man.

During Anita's school period, white students misbehave with her. They enquire from her the reason of her black and curly hair, Anita without any hesitation replies, “ਬਿਕੋਜ਼ ਮਾਈ ਮਦਰ ਇਜ਼ ਐਨ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਐਂਡ ਮਾਈ ਫਾਦਰ ਇਜ਼ ਏ ਵਾਇਟਮੈਨ। ਚੈਟ'ਸ ਵਾਈ ਆਈ ਲੁਕ ਲਾਈਕ ਨਾਇਦਰ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼ ਨੋਰ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ।” (“Because my mother is an Indian and my father is a Whiteman. That is why I look like neither English nor Indian.” Elizabeth Moore, her classmate mocks at Anita, “ਉਹ! ਸ਼ੀ ਇਜ਼ ਏ ਹਾਫ-ਕਾਸਟ।” (“Oh! She is a half-caste”; 118). Anita feels isolated, due to her half-caste she suffers at the hands of not only the western but Indian community also.

When Anita goes to Jagpreet's house, his mother Maninder and father Devinder behave badly with her because they do not want that their son should marry a half-caste girl; it is against their society's customs. This incident disappoints Anita, “ਡੈਡ! ਤੂੰ ਠੀਕ ਹੀ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਕੀ ਸੱਦਦਾ ਏ” (229)! (“Dad! You rightly call these people paki!” 229). Casteism becomes a cause of breakage of her love affair with Jagpreet. The orthodox Indian thinking disheartens Anita; that is the reason she chooses her English father rather her Indian mother. Thus, Dhir

candidly represents the enigmatic condition of half-caste children because dominant society rejects them.

Generation gaps are also one of the governing concerns of diasporic writers. The first generation migrants are always attached to their past native lands, “Migrants tend to arrive in new places with baggage; both in the physical sense of possessions or belongings, but also the less tangible matter of beliefs, traditions, customs, behaviours and values” (McLeod 211). C. Vijayasree also believes:

The enormous cultural differences of the homeland and ‘hostland’ (Sheffer) segregate the immigrants from the natives. Climate, social convention and even the manner of dressing create barriers that threaten the newcomers’ psychological well-being. (55)

This can be also a reason that migrants may not feel at home in a new land and a sense of displacement always remains which attaches them with their past homelands and they follow the customs and traditions of their past lands. These diasporas live in what Homi Bhabha calls “in-between” situation and home becomes a “mythic place of desire in diasporic imagination” (Brah 192). Salman Rushdie says, “migrants...straddle two cultures... fall between two stools” (5) and suffer triple disruption” (279) that is of their roots, language and social dislocation. The gap between first and second generations arises when one follows tradition and culture of their past lands that is different from their present land of existence so a cultural contrast occurs between the first and second generation.

Dhir presents generational gaps with the portrayal of three generations i.e. the parents of Harmeet, Hirdaypal and Jagjit as the first-generation, Hirdaypal, Harmeet, Gurpratap and Jagjit as the second-generation and Anita as the third-generation. Harmeet’s father is conscious about his children’s future in an adopted homeland:

As the second generation began to enter their teens, parents were suddenly confronted with a whole host of issues with which they themselves had no experience—dating, school, dances, clothing and hairstyles, wide ranging educational choices and extracurricular activities. (Bacon 158)

To keep aloof from the dominant culture, Harmeet’s father does not grant permission to his children, Harmeet and her brother, Gurpratap to play outside

their home. He does not want his children to adopt the western norms and believes in customs, rules and regulations of Punjabi society in which girls are not allowed to move freely when they are in their adolescent age. Surjan Singh in Harjit Atwal's *One Way* also desires that his daughters Baljinder, Surinder and Gurinder should not forget his Punjabi tradition and culture. However, Harmeet and her brother Gurpratap Singh dislike Punjabi traditions; they love to enjoy Western life.

The second generation rejects their parent's identity and culture under the influence of western culture, and lives their life according to their own principles. They want to go ahead in life with their beliefs without any bondage of rules and regulations. Harmeet completely adopts the western culture and joins Manchester University for her boyfriend, Andrew Smith. When Andrew makes a new girl friend named Ruth Walker, she wants to insult Andrew but the impact of the western culture on the life of Harmeet forbids her to fight with Andrew and consoles her that she should not bother about him.

After Andrew, Hirdaypal becomes her boy friend but after some time she leaves him. Hirdaypal feels very bad but then consoles himself by saying that Harmeet was Andrew's girl friend so he should forget her. She starts living with Andrew Smith without marriage knots that is why her parents break relation with her because it hurts their ego and it is a black mark on their pride:

For the first generation accusations of "ego problems" are a commentary on the nature of one's Indianness. The second generation thinks about ego problems quite differently. People with ego problems do not, as in the first generation, threaten the integrity of the community, nor are they "bad Indians." For the second generation, ego problems are simply individual matters and remain unconnected to a collective sense of ethnic identity. (Bacon 158)

Harmeet does not bother about her parent's sense of ethnic identity because she regards that her live-in relationships are based on her principles and she has her own identity. Later on, her relations break up with Andrew and again she stays with Hirdaypal. Dhir pictures the flickering nature of progeny of immigrants who feel that it is a trend to have a girl friend and boy friend, and change it if they are not compatible with each other.

Jagjit, another second-generation immigrant also finds himself caught in the web of two worlds that is his parents and his love. Ania Loomba says, "Colonial identities-on both sides of the divide-are unstable, agonized, and in constant flux" (149). Jagjit has a Punjabi environment at his home because his parents are Punjabi immigrants. They preach and practice Punjabi culture and values at their home. However, he rejects his parent's orthodox thinking by choosing Anita, a half-caste girl. Dhir represents a cultural disparity between two generations the first follows its past native land culture and the latter wants to fully assimilate into their present land culture.

The disintegration of the family units of first and second generation is also one of the leading issues of Indian diaspora that results from generational differences, cultural and gender conflicts, emergence of new patterns of life with cross-cultural interaction. The first generation thinks that they are moving away from their culture, which is a great threat to their ethnic identity (Kaur, "Disintegrating Family Units of Indian Diaspora" 233). Under the influence of the western culture, Indian children want to enjoy freedom and hate their parent's indulgence in their personal matters but Indian parents do not permit them to enjoy that freedom which becomes a cause of breakage of their family relations.

Hirdaypal and Harmeet are the firm believers of the western culture and its norms. Balkar Singh states that they adopt western culture because it provides individual freedom to individual without any kind of restrictions that are predominant in Punjabi culture and society (1). This is the main reason for their bad relations with their families and they consider themselves as British citizens. Harmeet's parents disown her because of her live-in relation with Hirdaypal. Likewise most of the Indian parents, Avtar Singh advises Hirdaypal to become a doctor, "ਉਹ ਹਿਰਦੇਪਾਲ ਨੂੰ ਡਾਕਟਰ ਬਣਾਉਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਸੀ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਕਮਾਈ ਤੇ ਇਜ਼ਤ-ਮਾਣ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਨਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖਤਾ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਵੀ ਕਰ ਸਕੇ।" ("He wants to make him a doctor so that with income and respect he could serve the humanity."; 13) but Hirdaypal chooses the profession of a solicitor. Later on, a conflict arises between Hirdaypal and his family because he stays with Harmeet without marriage. However, there is a silence of Harmeet and Hirdaypal's family in the later part of the novel because Dhir himself asserts that he primarily concentrates on the progeny of immigrants.

The second-generation immigrants regard themselves as British citizens, yet their sub-conscious mind does not change. John McLeod rightly asserts that their identity is related with their parents past native land and history:

Children born to migrant people in Britain may automatically qualify for a British passport, but their sense of identity borne from living in a diaspora community will be influenced by the 'past migration history' of their parents or grandparents. (206)

Even after the neglect of their parent's culture, still they are in some way attached to their community and identity or are forced to be attached to their ethnic community. Harmeet inspires Hirdaypal to defeat Andrew, her ex-boyfriend and English man, “ਹਨੀ! ਤੈਨੂੰ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ 'ਚੋ ਫਸਟ ਆਉਣਾ ਪੈਣਾ! ...ਉਹਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਤੇਰਾ ਕੈਰੀਅਰ ਤਾਂ ਵਧੀਆ ਬਣੇਗਾ, ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਕਮਿਊਨਿਟੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਵੀ ਰੋਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ?” (“Honey! You must stand first in the University ...It will not only boost your career but will also hoist the name of Indian community.”; 118). She wants that Hirdaypal should demolish their superciliousness and ego by defeating Andrew in games and exams. She further condemns white community for considering themselves intelligent and superior, and brown community as inferior and ill mannered. When Andrew abuses Hirdaypal by calling him a “paki” and Indians as insects of dirt, it hurts Harmeet and she thinks, “ਮੈਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਇੰਨੀ ਘਟੀਆ ਗੱਲ ਕਿੱਦਾਂ ਸੁਣ-ਸਹਿ ਸਕਦੀ ਸੀ।” (“How could I listen and tolerate such despicable views about my people.”; 65). Both of them bitterly curse each other. After this Andrew leaves her house and they never meet again. The insult of Indian community is intolerable for Harmeet because she has Indian blood in her veins and unconsciously she has Indian ethics so she could not tolerate such awful comments about her community.

Similarly, when Andrew quarrels with Hirdaypal and calls him 'Paki' and 'Blacki', he also decides that he will fight boldly for himself and his Asian community. Even after his defeat in the case, he has a hope to win in the future. Dhir shows that either the second-generation believes in the western principles still they have some regards for their parents country and community. The descendents try to remain aloof from their parent's roots but their sub-conscious mind does not change and they are unable to detach themselves from their roots.

Dhir reflects the theme of marriage within the context of two cultures and deftly describes how the meaning of marriage changes due to cultural contrasts.

Harmeet, a second-generation immigrant believes in the western life style and rejects the institution of marriage. Harmeet is a feminist, likewise other feminists, thinks, "The structure and social-historical context of marriage-like relationships seems in fundamental conflict with the goal of autonomous self-development" (Weinzweig 139). Although she believes in individual freedom, yet she does not stay alone, earlier Andrew and later on Hirdaypal remains her partner. Weinzweig rightly asserts, "The development of individuality also seems to be better fostered by living with a significant other in a committed relationship than by living alone..." (139). Gurjit Singh Sandhu describes that the second generation of immigrants deem that marriage discards the equality of man and woman, and man rules from beginning till the end in this institution so they reject it (124). Marriage is a kind of restriction for Harmeet so she regards partnership better than marriage. Dhir presents a similar character named Navjot in *Pairhan de Aar Par* who also leaves her family for her belief in live-in relationship. For Navjot, institution of marriage is that shackle of Western and Feudalistic society which signifies slavery of man under the set norms of society (Sandhu, Gurjeet Singh 119). Her family disowns her; she is not permitted to join her father's last rites.

Punjabi society is totally against live-in relationship that is like a great threat to their honour. Harmeet's family also disowns her because of her relationship with Andrew and Hirdaypal until the end of the novel. Unlike traditional Indian woman, she as a second-generation immigrant wants to lead her life happily with Hirdaypal without any marriage knots. The western culture affects, it means she gives priorities to her life than to any kind of custom. Anita also feels shocked when her English friend tells her that her Indian neighbours has disowned his daughter because she lives with a white man without marriage. Staying with a man without marriage is a normal thing for the western society but Harmeet tells her that it is a question of death and life (pride) for Indians. The feudal system prevalent in Indian society does not give personal freedom to individual. Anita's friends who belong to second and third generations do not want to marry boys from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh because they think that they have feudal mindset and they treat their wives as slaves. Dhir clearly elucidates cultural contrast regarding marriage between Punjabi society that is a part of Feudal system and Western society, which is a part of Capitalist society.

The negative impact of a live-in relationship is also depicted in the work, that is, even after spending so many years with each other Andrew and Harmeet are at a loss to have a good relation between each other. She even does not care for her daughter when she lives with Hirdaypal at her house. However, a doubt is always there in her mind if Hirdaypal will remain loyal to her and her daughter throughout his life. Similar uncertainty is seen in Hirdaypal's mind who wants to marry Harmeet. Talwinder in Dhir's *Pairhan de Aar Par* also insists upon Navjot for marriage but she refuses. Hirdaypal says, “ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਤਾਂ ਤੂੰ ਵੀ ਜਾਣਦੀ ਆਂ ਕਿ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਇਕ ਸਮਾਜਕ ਜੀਵ ਏ...ਸੁਖਾਵੇਂ ਜੀਵਨ ਲਈ ਬੰਦੇ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਏ...ਮੇਰਾ ਮਤਲਬ ਏ ਕਿ ਆਪਾਂ ਮੈਰਿਜ ਕਰ ਲਈਏ?” (“You also know that man is a social animal...to lead a happy life man needs society...I mean to say that we should marry?”; 102)? Harmeet replies him that society only accepts those people who follow its rules but one never gets acceptance or respect easily but it is gained by securing principles. Although she rejects his proposal, yet Harmeet is mentally upset because of her distorted family relations but somehow she is contented by following her life principles.

Sometimes Hirdaypal forgets that he is like a father to Anita because he thinks that Harmeet is not married to him and Anita is not his daughter so he gets attracted towards her and wants to rape her. Later on Hirdaypal does not feel the same love for Harmeet and desires to live alone rather than with Harmeet. Thus, doubt and uncertainty arise in live-in relationships because there is no sanctity in their relations due to lack of any cultural norms. The enigmatic conditions of the second generation of immigrants, who try to reject institution of marriage, mentally suffer due to its rejection, are deftly portrayed in this novel.

Every society has certain norms and traditions' regarding marriage. Dhir presents orthodox viewpoints and casteism of Punjabi society about marriage. T. Vinodha emphasizes:

The aggressive and ostentatious practice of the Indian rituals of birth, marriage, festival, etc. to the point of self exultation –could at once be a manifestation of their sense of insecurity and an expression of ethnic minority's attempt to a close-knit community life seeking strength and solidarity from desi compatriots in alien environments.

(21)

The first generation of immigrants believes in Indian tradition of marriage while the second generation discards orthodox viewpoints of their parents. In Dhir's *Ran Bhoomi* although Karamjit, a first generation migrant, wants to marry a Hindu girl yet he does not permit his daughter to marry a Hindu boy because of the feudal mindset which believes in certain shackles of society. When Anita tells Jagpreet that her mother's caste is Jat sikh and her sub-caste is Sanghera, Jagpreet says that it is his sub-caste and his parents will not allow marrying in their sub-caste because, “ਕਾਰਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਰ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਸੋਸਾਇਟੀ 'ਚ ਕੁੜੀ ਦੀ ਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਤੇ ਮੁੰਡੇ ਦੀ ਇਕ ਸਬਕਾਸਟ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਪਸ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਆਹ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਰਿਵਾਜ ਨਹੀਂ।” (“I do not know about the reason but Indian society does not have a tradition of marriage when girl's mother and boy are of the same sub caste.”; 209). Punjabi society does not like that their daughter-in-law should come to their house before marriage. His mother tells him that Punjabi people perform many traditions and after these customs their daughter-in-laws enter in their houses. Anita regards it only a misconception or false notion.

Jagpreet's parents reject Anita because she is half caste, similarly Jaspal Bains's mother in Dhir's *Ghar te Kamre* refused to accept his white girl friend July Bates because of her different community. The first generation always follows the customs and norms of their past native lands and this becomes a reason of conflict between them and their children. Ania Loomba also states:

The experience of diaspora is also marked by class and gender divides. Finally it is important to recall that large numbers of people in the third world have not physically moved, and have to speak from where they are', which is also often an equally ideologically or politically or emotionally fractured space. (151)

Jagpreet is totally against the caste system when his parents reject Anita, he shows no hazels in accepting Anita:

The second generation, in contrast, explicitly rejects, *in the public realm*, the divisions of religion, caste, region and language which form the basis of first generation federated unity...Instead, members of this generation are instead quick to fault their parents' generation for being so divided. (Bacon 152)

Thus Punjabi society, which is a microcosm of larger Indian society, believes in caste system and it has some norms and customs regarding marriage, after fulfilling these traditions they accept someone as their new family member. The first-generation is totally against live-in relationship and believes in arranged marriage with traditions and cultural norms. This is the reason Harmeet's family disowns her and Jagpreet's family rejects Anita because they do not like inter-caste marriages. On the other hand, the second generation believes in love marriages and live-in relationships.

Dhir projects the interest of the progeny of immigrants in searching their roots and forming their collective identity. They create different organizations or groups to have their collective identity in the host societies, because such organizations "facilitate the group interactions that ground the construction of collective ethnic identity" (Bacon 147). Anita also starts thinking about her roots:

ਮੇਰੀਆਂ ਜੜ੍ਹਾਂ ਕਿਥੇ ਨੇ? ਇੰਗਲੈਂਡ 'ਚ ਹਨ ਜਾਂ ਇੰਡੀਆ 'ਚ? ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਂ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਏ ਤੇ ਬਾਪ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼। ਉਂਜ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਮਾਂ ਵੀ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਨਹੀਂ। ਉਹ ਇੰਡੀਅਨ ਮੂਲ ਦੇ ਮਾਪਿਆ ਦੀ ਧੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰ ਏ। ਉਂਜ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਇੰਗਲਿਸ਼, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਦੇਸ਼ 'ਚ ਹੀ ਜੰਮੀ, ਪਲੀ, ਪੜ੍ਹੀ ਤੇ ਪਰਵਾਨ ਚੜ੍ਹੀ ਏ। ਇਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹੀ ਉਹਦਾ ਦੇਸ਼ ਏ।

Where are my roots? in England or India? My mother is Indian and father is English. If I consider, then, even mother is not Indian. She is a daughter of Indian origin parents. But she is English, since she is born, grown up, educated and reared up in this country. That is why this is her country. (141)

Anita tries to identify her roots by reading various translated Indian religious texts like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shri Guru Granth Sahib ji in order to find out her roots. She wants to be acquainted with Indian culture, traditions and myths. Literary works are helpful to these descendents for searching their roots.

Portraying the influence of capitalism on the offspring of immigrants Dhir reinforces that capitalism is one of the recurring themes in works by diasporic writers. Self-centeredness is one of the characteristics of capitalism. Hirdaypal is struggling against racism but he is more concerned with his individual progress. When Edward offers Hirdaypal a job of the senior prosecutor in Bristol, and compensation of five thousand pounds Hirdaypal demands Andrew's job. Again when Foster offers him twenty thousand pounds to take back his case, Hirdaypal

demands thirty thousand pounds and a job of senior prosecutor. Foster agrees to give him twenty thousand pounds and job of senior prosecutor in a far off place but Hirdaypal demands thirty thousand pound and a job of senior prosecutor in the head office. These instances expose the self-interest of Hirdaypal that is more than his battle against racial discrimination.

Illegal immigration is an unremitting problem of different nations of the world. India is not exempted from this crisis in which people aspire to settle in countries that are economically stronger than their native lands through illegal ways. Illegal immigrants try to hide in those nations but caught by police and enduring dreadful lives in jails. Dhir's earlier work *Dhundla Suraj* is totally based on the problems of illegal immigrant, in which Mangal Singh tries to enter England by using illegal means and faces many hurdles during this illegal immigration (Singh, "*Darshan Dhir da Dhundla Soora*" 40). However in this novel, he incites small description of this issue just to remind about the gravity of this striking issue from which Punjabi masses are not completely liberated. The inhabitants of Paris misbehave with Harmeet and Hirdaypal; they do not allow them to stay in their fields with their tourist kits and sleeping bags because many illegal immigrants are caught in their fields by the police officers. The police misbehave with the landowners. Now-a-days, illegal immigration is a big problem of Punjabi society and Dhir reflects this problem in the novel.

Dhir deftly portrays various diasporic themes in the novel. Finding *Hashiye* as his best creation Nami Chander Jain, a contemporary critic of Hindi literature appreciates thematic as well as formal structure of this novel (qtd. in Kiranjit Kaur, and Gurmeet Kaur 102). Dhir primarily takes those issues, which are faced by Punjabi community in England. The work is socially pertinent, Dhir himself states:

My novel 'Hashiye' has won rave reviews for its potent theme of social relevance. It depicts issues confronting people who follow new paths and mixed community relations and how society reacts to it.
(qtd. in Sharma)

The work deals with the imperative issue of racial discrimination that Indian and other eastern immigrants are enduring from years. Now the progeny is also facing similar vices of that western society which always misbehaves with ethnic communities. They regard them as a hindrance in their progress and never let Eastern people grow in any fields. The feeling of "other" is in their blood, they will

never alter it. Laws are created for the prevalence of peace and equality but all laws are only in papers. There are many holes in these laws because British establishment does not practice what it preaches. Government that assures equality, curbs it in reality. Dhir elucidates the game of power which demolishes that person or organization that voices against injustice and who is not 'yes man' or 'spineless'. Dhir not only projects the negative aspects of the western society but also sheds light on the orthodox thinking of Indian society that is still under the chains of casteism, superstitions and rituals. Different issues regarding institution of marriage such as live-in relationships, arranged marriages and love marriages, are candidly reflected in the novel. *Hashiye* throws light on the political, cultural and social aspects of diaspora.

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CHAPTER 4

Comparative Analysis and Conclusion

As argued throughout this study, the term 'diaspora' refers to a complex phenomenon that covers economic, political, social, and religious aspects of different communities and cannot be confined to limited spaces or histories. Comparative analysis of Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* and Darshan Singh Dhir's *Hashiye* reflects different shades of the diaspora in English and Punjabi literature. Both Lahiri and Dhir portray the unrecognized, unknown world of Indian immigrants to USA and UK in their fictional creations. A close examination of the narratives of Jhumpa Lahiri and Darshan Singh Dhir reveals a significant resemblance between the two authors although they diverge on certain points because of their cultural backgrounds, ideological and different geographical locations.

The domain of Jhumpa Lahiri's fiction is predominantly domestic. Narrating the experiences of Bengali middle class families, Lahiri focuses on individual, psychological, emotional and familial issues. Lahiri's works articulate the feelings of immigrants and their progeny, their hopes, fears and disappointments. Primarily her fiction portrays the lives of immigrants to the United States of America.

Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake* deals with the tale of an educated middle class Bengali family living in U.S.A. from 1968 to 2000. She covers the changing situations of immigrants within the context of two generations. Ethnic, ethical and cultural matters are the recurring themes of this fictional narrative. It further probes the questions of identity, nostalgia for 'home', cultural conflicts and alienation, crises of ethical values, food habits, marriage as an institution, the problems involving adopting the customs and traditions of the host country, and enigma of the second generation of immigrants. *The Namesake* portrays the difficult conditions of Gogol, a second-generation immigrant, and a small portion of the novel deals with Ashima, Gogol's mother. The narrative spins around Gogol's dual identity and other tribulations faced by him as a second-generation immigrant. Ashima's inclination towards India results in her suffering of the same twinges of identity crisis.

Darshan Singh Dhir's fictional sphere is socio-political. His novels deal with the problems of Punjabi immigrants living in England. His fiction foregrounds

political, economic and psychological aspects of diasporas. Illustrating trans-national and intra-national migrations in his fictional narratives, Dhir inclusively depicts the condition of Punjabi immigrants residing in England.

Hashiye is a socio-political novel that covers issues like Western attitude of “Other”, marginality, racial discrimination, concept of power and discards the equality myth of the West. Generational gaps, interest of progeny of immigrants in their parents’ roots and culture, and marriage are also dominant themes of this work. Dealing with first, second and third generation of immigrants, Dhir highlights the contemporary concerns of immigrants like live-in relationship and the issue of half- caste etc. The plight of Hirdaypal, a second-generation immigrant is vividly represented through the depiction of various socio-political issues concerning the diasporic communities. Although Dhir portrays the educated second and third generation of expatriates yet the issues of the working class are reflected in the present work.

The Namesake shares a close affinity with *Hashiye*. Although the locale and individual portrayal of characters in each novel is different from the other, yet the migrants share a similar kind of experience. Lahiri and Dhir reveal the potencies and weaknesses of both the native and host cultures by exposing the positive and negative aspects of these cultures. The creative dramatization of real situation of immigrants becomes the essence of these two diasporic works.

The prime concern of both the novelists is to portray the cultural contrasts between first and second generation of immigrants. The first generation of immigrants’ remains sentimentally attached to their past and the native land and is mostly sure about their cultural identity. There may be tensions in their lives in adopted lands but they do not primarily suffer from identity crisis; for example despite their anxieties, Ashoke and parents of Hirdaypal, Harmeet and Jagpreet are sure about their Indian identities. They expect from their descendents that they should follow their cultural norms. On the other hand problem of identity arises for the progeny of immigrants because the western mores completely affect their subjectivities and modes of thinking. This becomes a cause of their identity crisis in a foreign land.

In both the novels, the cultural contrasts arise at two levels - individual and social. The second generation of immigrants individually lead their lives in a contented way but the conflict arises among them when they get involved in

society, for example, Gogol and Maxine happily live with each other but when Maxine meets Gogol's family, a cultural conflict arises which becomes a cause of breakup of their relationship. Similarly in *Hashiye*, Harmeet and Hirdaypal enjoy each other's company but society makes them realize that they are doing wrong by not following their cultural norms.

The immigrants and their progeny swing in two worlds like a pendulum: that is the present host country and the land of origin and culture back there. Indian parents want that their children should value and pursue the set customs and traditions of their ethnic identity and culture. Ashima and Harmeet's father are perplexed by their children's adoption of Western culture. Harmeet and her brother Gurpratap Singh, on the other hand, loathe the Punjabi traditions cherished by their parents. Gogol and Sonia too adore Western life. However, this second generation is conscious of its Indian identity and even tries to retain it. It is because of this identity consciousness only that Gogol leaves Maxine after his father's death and Harmeet breaks off with Andrew for his bad attitude towards Indian community.

The novels studied here throw light on the changing nature of marriage as an institution for the second generation of Indian immigrants. Harmeet can be compared with Gogol and anglophile Moushumi who regard relationships outside marriage better than any bondage of marriage. Significantly, Gogol and Moushumi have extra-marital affairs and sexual relationships even after marriage. The other side of marriage is presented by the first generation in both the novels who believe in arranged marriage with Indian values and traditions. They want their descendents to marry in their own caste and race so that they can retain their native cultural identity and preserve their heritage in the adopted lands. Very different cultural and social conceptions of marriage as institution in the Indian and Western culture, which can be difficult to bridge, are candidly reflected in these works.

Feeling of isolation in adopted lands creates a strong bond among immigrants to satisfy their emotional, cultural, social and political requirements. In *The Namesake*, Bengali immigrants associate with each other to fulfill their cultural needs while Punjabi masses are more interested in the politics of India and England. Dhir depicts political gatherings at Hirdaypal's house who is interested in being involved with the Indian people. He happily attends to his Indian guests and

helps his mother in serving his guests; Gogol, on the other hand, dislikes Bengali gatherings and does not want to have any American Born Confused Desi's (ABCD) as friends, a term used, in the novel in a panel discussion about Indian novels in English, for American born Indians.

Autobiographical instances are found in *The Namesake* because of Lahiri's personal acquaintances with American society as a second generation immigrant. Disliking her Indian name Nilanjana Sudeshna Lahiri, Lahiri loves to be called as Jhumpa which becomes a source of inspiration for her to write this novel on the predicament of name. She mirrors the character of her mother through the portrayal of Ashima. Hirdaypal is a reflection of Dhir's near ones who suffer racial assaults in England. The personal familiarity represents realistic portrayal of different experiences and situations of immigrants in England and America.

Both writers use simple language that can easily be comprehended by the readers. Written in colloquial and present day dialect their writings derive inspiration from their firsthand knowledge of immigration. Lahiri and Dhir use transliteration of Bengali words and English words respectively in these texts because of the influence of their surroundings. The titles of the novels have symbolic significance. *The Namesake* depicts the enigmatic personality of Gogol Ganguli who is like his namesake Nikolai Gogol, a Russian writer. Lahiri in a way presents the significance of name as an important facet of our identity which is culturally constructed. *Hashiye* means margins; Hirdaypal resides on the margins of the Western society enduring pain and suffering due to racial discrimination.

The main difference between *The Namesake* and *Hashiye* is that *Hashiye* deals mostly with political issues while *The Namesake* primarily reflects familial issues. In *The Namesake*, Gogol and Ashoke contentedly enjoy their professional lives with peace and without any hindrance of racial discrimination in their profession while in *Hashiye* dreadful predicament of Hirdaypal is only due to racial discrimination and power system. Realistic representation of racial discrimination in the work uncovers the mask of democracy and equality in the western world. To curtail their freedom and progress in adopted lands, laws, which are symbols of equality, are used against ethnic minorities. Frank Foster also advises David Foster that they are born to rule and they should control other people with tricks. Dhir exposes the real face of Western society by discarding the equality myth of

the west. Little instances of racial discrimination are also found in *The Namesake* when some boys deface the nameplate of Ganguli house.

Both the novelists have written these novels in realistic mode but they make use of different narrative and fictional techniques. *The Namesake* is located in different parts of America and Bengal. The characters and events are located in a specific socio-cultural and historical context. The novel has a close ending with an attainment of new and stable identity of the protagonist who earlier swings like a pendulum between two worlds; of which one is American, the life style that he aspires for and the other is his parents' native land that is Bengal. The location of *Hashiye* is in different parts of England. The characters and events are located in a specific socio-political context. The novel concludes with a hope of success in future against the vital battle against racism. They employ the medium of flash back technique to demonstrate the condition of immigrants in a realistic manner. Lahiri and Dhir write in first person through the eyes of a narrator who comprehends the emotions, desires and deep thoughts of their characters opening the way for readers to understand and immerse in the characters' lives.

The protagonists of both the chosen novels, *The Namesake* and *The Hashiye* show how immigrants suffer identity crisis in adopted lands, America or England. In *The Namesake*, Gogol suffers identity crisis because of his personal feeling of inferiority because he is unable to come to terms with his individual self while in *Hashiye*, the problem is of the system which does not give enough space to Hirdaypal so he faces and fights against racial discrimination. The protagonists of both the works go through a process of introspection, self-analysis and self-realization. Although Gogol and Hirdaypal are the second-generation immigrants, yet their attitude towards life is different because of cultural, ideological and geographical differences of both of the novelists. As Dhir belongs to the working class, so his protagonist faces working class problems, on the other hand Lahiri is educated middle class second generation immigrant so her protagonist only endures psychological problems that are more individual than social or political.

The Namesake and *Hashiye* are written and located keeping in view the interest and location of specific readers. Dhir creates his works for a particular area that is for the people of Punjab and Punjabis settled abroad who know Punjabi language. Lahiri's works are internationally located as they are written in English language, the language that is globally accepted and used.

There is a representation of ethnic-centric withdrawal in both the novels. There are two worlds in the life of immigrants that are ethnic world of home and the outside world of business. Small ethnic communities live in these two worlds within the host countries. The first generation tries to remain in their ethnic world of home which reminds and relates them with their past native land. The second generation struggles to break free from their ethnic world of home. They do not seek shelter like the first generation and attempts to adapt the culture of their present land likewise Gogol, Moushumi, Sonia, Hirdaypal and Harmeet. *Hashiye* primarily revolves around outside world of business where immigrants endure racial assaults while the migrants of *The Namesake* are satisfied with their professional worlds.

Both these writings encapsulate many experiences of the Indian American and Indian Britain families from changing family relationships and issues of culture to the overall challenge of navigating a new set of identity-related complications and racial abuses. The works of Dhir and Lahiri with diasporic themes show that, despite the disparities between different languages, different regions and cultures, the Indian immigrants are facing problems in host societies due to their ethnicity. By depicting the clash of cultures, racial discrimination, the clash of traditions, they give voice to those who have not been heard. These novels are the portrayals of lives endured by immigrants and their progeny in England and America. Lahiri portrays the individual and familial matters while Dhir reveals political, cultural and familial issues.

In the contemporary era when different diasporas and issues concerning them have become globally very significant, the study of diasporic literature has come to occupy a place in literary and academic circles. There are different types of migrations like voluntary and non-voluntary migration, trans-national and international migrations with numerous reasons for these exoduses like social, political, economic and religious. All these aspects need to be focused upon. This study of only two representative novels is an attempt to trace voluntary international migrations and the social and political issues raised by such fiction.

Diasporic writing can be studied from different theoretical positions because of its diversity and richness. Along with the studies from the cultural and racial/ethnic perspective, the texts can be studied from the feminist as well as post-colonial perspectives, to name only two dominant literary critical approaches.

The target audience as well as the language plays an important role in construction of these literary texts and the appeal and ideological impact they create. Due to the limited scope of this study, many of these concerns could not be taken up and can be pursued in a more detailed study.

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