

# A STUDY ON THE DIASPORA IN INDIAN ENGLISH LITERATURE

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## ABSTRACT

A study of the "Diaspora Space" shows how an individual's identity is formed, where inequality arises, and how physical, mental, and social attitudes affect and build identity. . Not only personal identities but also relationships with one's homeland have changed dramatically in recent decades. It has lost its stability and immigrants are becoming global citizens. According to an analysis of comparative novels, all characters are doing their best to be firmly rooted in foreign lands, but not all are successful. Everyone in the Diaspora tries to open up their niche in the host country, but everyone does it their way. An analysis of diaspora space and other diaspora-related identity issues can help us understand how and where identities are formed, and how and where differences are made and reconstructed.

**Keywords:**Diaspora Literature, Indian Diaspora, Enlightenment of Diaspora

## I. INTRODUCTION

The human species has been moving from one area to another in pursuit of food, shelter, and other essentials of existence since the start of civilisation. People in ancient times were known as wanderers or food gatherers because they did not stay in one spot for long periods of time. As time went, the standard of living increased, social structures arose, and the concept of states/borders emerged, and individuals were confined to one location and became citizens of that land. Crossing national borders and living in another country led in the formation of different migrations known as Diasporas. The words 'diaspora' and 'speirein' comes from the Greek roots 'dia' and 'speirein,' respectively. 'Speirein' means to disperse and 'dia' implies through. The movement or migration of people from one place to another, or from one country to another is known as diaspora. National and transnational migration is both possible. The term diaspora has taken on several meanings over time; it has been associated with Jewish migration, slavery, and the migration of entrepreneurs and other young professionals. For various reasons, people migrate from all over the world and from all

states. Some wealthy countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia, receive more migrants than any other country on the planet. Some developing countries, such as India, Pakistan, China, and other Asian countries, are the main destinations for large-scale migration. Although the issue of migration has been depicted in ancient and mediaeval literature, the term diaspora is often employed in contemporary discourse.

"The voluntarily or forcible movement of people[s] from their homelands into new regions," Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin define "diaspora" as "the voluntary or compulsory movement of people[s] from their homelands into new regions..." (68).

The term diaspora, according to this quotation, simply refers to a group of individuals who are exiled or migrate from their native nation to another country. However, simply relocating from one's historical homeland to a new one does not automatically make one a diaspora; there must be certain characteristics, as [7] points out, for migrants to be classified as diasporas, such as a desire and yearning for one's ancestral homeland after migrating to another country.

Scholars have engaged in a long debate on diasporic concerns in practically all academic domains, both interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary. It has been discussed in literature in every language and genre, from classic to contemporary. When it comes to English literature, the diasporic themes and characters are powerfully depicted in poetry, prose, novels, theatre, and other narratives.

There are numerous reasons for migration, including political, economic, social, religious, and other factors. There can be political reasons, such as exile to another country, economic reasons, such as a lack of possibilities in one's own country, and hope and availability of opportunities in the host country. Diaspora can be both intentional and unintentional. Migrations after the twentieth century were mostly for economic reasons, as opposed to migrations caused by political instability throughout the twentieth century. Diasporic people can travel to their homeland easily and in fewer time thanks to technological advancements such as the internet, mobile phones, and air transportation, and they can talk on the phone, chat on social media, and even do video chat with relatives in their homeland/source country, which lessens the pain of diaspora. As a result, the grief and anguish of the diaspora have decreased significantly and have not been the same as it was a decade or so ago. The meaning of the term diaspora has shifted over time; it has not been bound to one meaning for a long

period. Previously, the term diaspora was only applied to Jews who were "forcefully exiled from their homeland, Jerusalem, to Babylon from 587-86 BC" (Rosa), but it is now applied to a larger range of individuals.

The influx of migrants from many cultures, ethnicities, and nationalities has transformed recipient countries into multicultural societies. The Indian diaspora, like other diaspora communities, has altered the demographic composition of host countries. Diaspora is one of the most pressing worldwide challenges in today's globe, where the crises of immigrants, refugees, and other exiles is continually evolving. The term NRI is now widely used in India to refer to people who have moved to industrialised countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, and Canada. Ruchi and Sandhya Saxena distinguish between diaspora with 'D' upper case and diaspora with 'd' lower case in their article "Indian Diaspora: Locations, Histories, and Negotiation Strategies." The former stands for Jewish dislocation, while the latter stands for all other displacements that occurred recently. Because Jewish dislocation is very old and is no longer occurring, 'diaspora' with lowercase "d" is commonly used now.

## **II. THE DEFINITION OF DIASPORA**

Despite the fact that the term diaspora was originally coined to describe the Jewish dispersion, it is today used to describe a wide range of events and phenomena. Furthermore, the term diaspora's definition, like that of any other term in the social sciences, is debatable. Diaspora has been explained in a variety of ways by academics. Some of them have expanded on prior definitions, while others believe the term should be narrowed in order to better define the phenomenon. First and foremost, this study will present the explanations of several scholars who have already well-defined diaspora. It will next discuss their explanations from their point of view. In his concept of diaspora, Safran identifies six key features. According to him, there must be a dispersal from their homeland to two or more foreign regions for something to be called diaspora; those who are away from their homeland have a collective memory of their homeland; they believe they will always be disgraceful in their host state; they idealise their accepted ancestral home, and there is a belief that all members of that society should be committed to the maintenance or renewal of the homeland and a strong commitment to the homeland. Cohen adopts Safran's definition and adds four additional characteristics that he believes should be included: a strong link to the past or a block to integration; diasporas should be defined positively rather than negatively; people of a

diaspora share a common identity with co-ethnic members in other countries such as colonial settlers, foreign students, refugees, and economic migrants [9]. Reis divides diaspora formation into three phases: the classical period, which includes Ancient Greek, Jewish, and Armenian diasporas; the contemporary period, which includes African diaspora and economic migrants; and the late modern period, which includes a much broader range of diasporic communities and various reasons for voluntary and involuntary dispersal [10]. Clifford expresses his displeasure with Safran. He claims that the Jewish diaspora lacks his last three characteristics. Diasporas, he believes, should have boundaries. They should be defined in light of national-state norms and tribal people's indigenous claims [15]. Finally, Brubaker addresses the growth of the term diaspora as well as the dispersion of its meanings in semantic, conceptual, and disciplinary spaces [13]. There should be criteria for defining diaspora, according to him. To avoid being confused in the blooming of Diasporas, these characteristics are dispersion, homeland location, and border maintenance (Brubaker, *The 'diaspora' diaspora*, 2005).

### **INDIAN DIASPORA: DIFFERENT ERAS**

There is an idea of ancient and modern diasporas when we think of the Indian diaspora, and it is not to isolate populations. Through remigration (Fiji Indians to Vancouver or Trinidadian Indians to Toronto), the old diaspora has merged with the new, experiencing additional alteration. This classification identifies a previous, ultimate phase of migration. The old and contemporary Indian diasporas both denote a complex diasporic experience that has resulted in the emergence of lively literary voices of remarkable sophistication. The Indian diaspora is vividly shown in Samuel Selvan's *Cane is Bitter* (1957) and V.S. Naipaul's *House of Biswas* (1969) [3].

There are two types of Indian English literary writers in the Diaspora: first-generation immigrants and second-generation immigrants. First-generation immigrant writers represent immigrants who have spent a considerable amount of time in their homeland and are trying to adapt to the new environment after immigration. Second-generation immigrant writers, on the other hand, represent the descendants of first-generation immigrants. 4. Famous writers of diasporic Indian English literature include Amitav Ghosh, Salman Rushdie, Kamala Markandaya, Barati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakarni, Anita Desai, Kiran Desai, Vikram Seth, Meena Alexander, Snetra Gupta, Alabind Aditya, Vikram Chandra, Neil Muk, Harikuntz. The portrayal of Indian immigrants in fiction produced by diasporic female Indian writers is thought to be more delicate and sensitive.

Migration and immigration have been a well-known phenomenon among Indians in recent years. Furthermore, as a result of globalisation and technological advancement, many individuals are aware of cultural variety and migration. The majority of Indians today value English education, which began during the colonial period and extended during the post-colonial period in India. As a result, diasporic Indian English literature plays an important role in relaying the experiences and mentalities of the Indian diaspora to English literary readers. Indians who emigrated from India to countries like Mauritius, Surinam, and Fiji as labourers to work in sugar plantations during the colonial era and Indians who immigrated to western and middle-east countries in search of a better standard of living are depicted in diasporic Indian English literature. Furthermore, diasporic Indian English writers' organisations and conferences around the world provide numerous opportunities to debate, review, and develop their creative work. The shared experiences of the Indian diaspora, such as challenges of adjustment, prejudice, identity crisis, hybridity, nostalgia, and alienation, are reflected in diasporic Indian English literature.

After China, the Indian diaspora is the world's second-largest diaspora. The term "Indian diaspora" simply refers to persons of Indian ancestry who have emigrated to other countries. The Indian diaspora has a long and illustrious history. Some researchers trace Indian emigration back to the Buddhist era, when Buddhist missionaries travelled to new places, but history shows that trade has always been a driving force behind Indian migration. TLS Bhaskar divides the voyage of the Indian diaspora into three phases: ancient, mediaeval, and modern.

The movement of Indian labourers and craftsmen, as well as those desirous of discovering new areas and religious missionaries, is referred to as the ancient phase.

The second phase of the Indian diaspora began during the mediaeval period, primarily under British rule, when Indians began crossing borders in greater numbers as indentured labourers and emigrated to other British colonies across the world as contract labourers.

The modern age of the Indian diaspora began in the latter decade of the twentieth century, with a sharp increase in emigration, owing to the allure of other industrialised nations such as the United Kingdom, America, Australia, Canada, and several Gulf countries.

Inspired by the widespread migration, immigration, and emigration, diasporic literature rose to prominence in universal literature against the backdrop of the post-colonial era, emerging

alongside post-colonial literature. A reader might assume a diasporic writer to be an immigrant, but other critics argue that it is not necessary for the writer to be an immigrant himself or herself as long as the issues of actual experiences and mentalities of a diaspora are addressed. <sup>1</sup> The distinctive feature of diasporic writing is that it is not founded on any theory or philosophy, but rather on immigrants' personal experiences. Sharing their own physical and emotional issues, it provides an emotional shelter for its diaspora. Discrimination, cultural shock and reverse cultural shock, difficulty with adjustment and integration, orientalism, identity crisis, alienation and displacement, perplexity, depression, hybridity, and generational gap are all common themes in diasporic literature. In today's society, migration has become a global phenomenon. Immigrants, or those who move to another country to reside permanently, play an important role in this process. A diaspora is a group of people who live outside of their native country and have common experiences. The literary work produced by immigrants is referred to as diasporic literature or immigrant literature. In the last few decades, diasporic Indian English writing has gotten a lot of attention in the world of universal diasporic literature. There is a significant place for diasporic Indian English fiction in portraying mainly about Indian diaspora in a wide span.

### **III. DIASPORA IN LITERATURE**

The dispersion of a people from their homeland is referred to as "diaspora" (from the Greek term "scattering"). So, a simple definition of diaspora literature would be works authored by authors who live outside of their home country. The word refers to a work's distinctive geographical origins. However, regardless of where it was produced, diaspora literature can be identified by its substance. The story of Joseph (Gen 37-50), for example, is commonly referred to as a "diaspora story" because, while it was written in its final form in Israel, it tells how Joseph learns to survive outside of his homeland. The book of Job, too, could be considered diaspora literature because it was most likely written in the aftermath of Babylonian destruction, which raised the question of why God would punish Israel, the chosen nation, with such widespread misery.

The term diaspora comes from Deut 28:25 in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. The Septuagint was the result of a collaboration between Greek-speaking Jews in the Egyptian diaspora. The entire Septuagint could be defined as diaspora literature in the fullest sense, because it was written by Jews who lived outside of their homeland, and their translation reflects that attitude. However, certain writings within it, such as Tobit and Judith, which portray Jewish protagonists living outside of the country or under foreign dominance and

ponder how Jews would behave in such a scenario, could be classified as particularly diasporic due to their contents and concerns. Although diasporic writing is aware of the ancestral homeland, yearning for it has waned, if not vanished. Furthermore, the potential of the new place involves diasporic literature. Finally, it could have been authored by Jews who chose not to return following the Babylonian exile. Because the community retains its distinct identity and status as a minority population, diasporic existence falls short of integration.

### **Literature of the Indian Diaspora**

The book "Indian Diaspora Literature" is a comprehensive study of Indian diaspora literature and other cultural works. It is also an important addition to the field of general diaspora theory. This anthology uses the term immigrant identity to trauma, sadness / impossible sadness, spectators, identities, travel, translation and recognition. This anthology examines the work of prominent writers who currently live in Canada, Denmark, the United States and the United Kingdom. Naipole, Salman Rushdie, Barachandra Rajan, M.G. For example, Vassanji, Jhumpa Lahiri, Gautam Malkani, Shiva Naipaul, Tabish Khair, and Shauna Singh Baldwin show how the creative contributions of the diaspora Indian authors, who have radically improved English literature, are shown. ..

### **Diaspora issues in Indian English Literature**

Dislocation, unfriendliness, rootlessness, fragmentation, racial discrimination, marginalisation, the crisis of identity, cultural clash, and many other difficulties caused by the experience of migrancy and diaspora are widely portrayed in contemporary Indian writing in English. However, migration from India increased in the 17th century. V. S. Naipaul's early books *The Mystic Masseur* and *The Mimic Men* depict the yearning and desires of such people returning to their homelands after being uprooted as a result of forced labour. During the 18th and 19th centuries, many people were uprooted to serve the British Empire in many regions of the world. These displaced people's longings for their homelands suggested that they wanted political independence. Many Hindus, Muslims, and primarily Punjabi Sikhs travelled to Canada in search of work as lumberjacks in sawmills in the early twentieth century. They had to work for lower pay and faced racism and prejudice because of their ethnicity. The Indian diaspora in Canada gathered in protest against such brutality, forming the 'Gadar Party,' which became a prominent force in India's campaign for independence. In his work *Maluka-1997*, Sadhu Singh Dhami depicted this period. [12].

A new aspect of asylum life in post-independence India, where many in the 16th and 17th centuries began to move to their own developed countries to escape or study the political or financial difficulties of their homeland. It happened in the era of. Or you work as an expert that Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak calls "brain drain". Since then, migration to other countries has continued. It is important to remember that immigrants in new countries feel a sense of belonging and mobility, regardless of their motivation.

Anita Desai's *Bye Bye Blackbird* and Kamala Markandaya's *The Man from Nowhere* are two of the first novels to properly depict diasporic Indian characters. *The Man from Nowhere*. These novels show how racial prejudice against Indians in the United Kingdom in the 1960s isolates characters and increases their sense of dislocation. *Wife and Jasmine*, by Bharati Mukherjee, depicts Indians in the United States, a place of legal and illegal immigrants, before globalisation gained traction. In his work *The Satanic Verses*, Salman Rushdie uses the method of magic realism to explore the metaphor of migration. In her novel *The Mistress of Spices*, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni depicts Tilo, the protagonist, as a mystery character who reveals the migrant's pain. The novel *The Shadow Lines* by Amitav Ghosh depicts the depths of rootlessness experienced by characters who were born and raised in a foreign nation. In his novel *Afternoon Raag*, Amit Chaudhary depicts the lives of Indian students in Oxford. These authors also discussed the benefits of dislocation. There are advantages to living as a migrant, such as the ability to have a dual perspective and experience various cultural forms. It is typically because of this benefit that diasporic Indians, especially those of the second generation, are able to deal with the difficulty of dual identities. In their psychology, such ambiguity causes existential torment. [10].

#### **IV. A REVIEW OF SELECTED WORKS**

The first major female Indo Caribbean poet was Maharani, Raj Kumari Singh, a runaway young Brahmin widow. The struggles and obscurities of the Trinidad Indians are depicted in Harold SomyLadoo's "No Pain Like This Body" (1972), which Dionny Brand called a "Veda to the beginnings of Indian life in Trinidad." Vernacular and creolized English literature were also available. Raymond Pillai's play *AdhuraaSwapna* (*Shattered Dreams*) in Fiji Hindi (2001), Subramani's novel *DaukaPuraan* in Devanagiri script, a subaltern tale, a mock-heroic picaresque magic realistic and historical, and Indo-Mauritian writer Abhimanyu Anant's *Lal Pasina* (*Bloody Sweat*) 1977, a sprawling saga, social critique. Another diasporic writer, DeepchandBeharry, explores the indenture as a form of sacrifice in *That Others Might Live*

(1981). Anand (2004) by Pat Poorvalingam used plantation narratives to speak about the legacy of indenture and the battle for liberation in South Africa.

[4] is a famous writer from India's diaspora. Her art explores subjects such as immigration, displacement, identity, cultural disputes, human relations, and women's difficulties. Diasporic authors are those who reside outside of their homeland and write about diasporic people's lives and experiences.

Interpreter of Maladies (1999) and Unaccustomed Earth (2008) are two collections of short stories by Lahiri, as well as two novels, The Namesake (2003) and The Lowland (2008). (2013). The Namesake tells the narrative of Ashima and Ashoke Ganguli, their two children Gogol and Sonia, and their resettlement in America, as well as their fight to keep their Indian identity on American soil. The storey spans a thirty-year period in the lives of its characters, beginning in 1968 and finishing in 2000 [2].

The cultural conflicts the Gangulis and their American-born children faced, as well as the geographical, cultural, and emotional dislocations they endured in their attempt to establish "home" in a new place, were not a successful mission. They become diffused and dispersed, eventually becoming lost in the winds as if they never arrived in America. As a result, we watch characters in the novel battle to make space, to try to establish a location, locale, and sense of place, some in India and others in America.

[1], an Indian-born American novelist, was born in Calcutta on July 27, 1940, and is a notable writer of diasporic literature (Kolkata). Mukherjee is a novelist as well as a short-story writer, and most of her works depict Indian culture and the immigrant experience. Bharati Mukherjee's main focus in her writings is to depict the situation of Indian immigrants in North America, with a special focus on changes affecting South Asian women in a new environment. Jasmine (1989) is a storey about a young Indian woman in the United States who alters her identity multiple times while attempting to adapt to the American way of life. The novel demonstrates that, while diasporas must work to build outside space, they must also struggle to preserve domestic space, though not as much as they must struggle to preserve their diasporic space.

As the narrative demonstrates, cultural and racial stereotypes are difficult to overcome. Despite the fact that Dimple and Gwyn have been friends for a long time, they can never think similarly or accept each other's choices. Even at one point, they didn't get along and expressed doubts about each other's genuine intentions. Dimple and Gwyn are not at odds with each other; rather, the 'East' and the 'West' are at odds.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, who was born in Kolkata in 1956, went to America and rose to prominence as a female writer in diasporic Indian English literature. Her award-winning novel *The Mistress of Spices* (1997) depicts an Indian girl who works in a spice shop in Oakland, California, and uses the power of spices to assist other immigrants solve their issues. As a result, Divakaruni has infused her storey with magical realism themes. It was also made into a film with the same title [4].

*The Emperor* (1984) by India-born South African novelist Ahamed Aesop depicts South African apartheid with irony and satire, raising voice against dictatorship. The English Academy of Southern Africa awarded him the Olive Schreiner Prize for his collection *Hajji and Other Stories* (1978). A slave in Guyana, Bechu, a Bengali by birth and a fluent English speaker, gave a critical description of overbearing and prejudiced administrators. Ismith Khan, an Indo-Trinidadian writer, is another name worth mentioning. His work *The Junbi Bird* (1961) depicts the conflict among Kale Khan's little family, who despise both India and Trinidad. *A Brighter Sun* (1952), Sammuel Selvan's first and most dramatic novel, transforms vernacular into the language of awareness in the West Indies.

A post-indenture culture is depicted in Shiv Naipaul's novel *Fire Flies* (1970). *The Chip Chip Gatherers* (1973), his second novel, is a storey of plantation settlement. *The Return* (1993), a semi-autobiographical novel by K.S. Maniam, discusses the Indian diaspora in Malaysia and the prospect of reunification. In his 1996 book *Haunting the Tiger*, he talks about two types of diasporic information: the tiger's way and the chameleon's way. He supports both approaches in his essay, *The New Diaspora*. The tiger's path denotes nationalistic consciousness (replacing colonial ideology). The chameleon is a metaphor for the "new diaspora," which is multifaceted, selective, hybrid, and ultimately devoid of nationalist jingoism. V.S. Naipaul is the most powerful or influential of all these old plantation diaspora. Among Naipaul's works, *A House for Mr Biswas* is an outstanding one — a complex, vast pseudo epic; sorrowful and tragic yet brimming with brilliantly hilarious moments. It's a text that replaces India and then recreates it within the confines of the human home. He writes about the usual temporariness of diasporas - pathos blending with metaphoric function of space. V.S. Naipaul continues to be the yardstick by which the literature of the old diaspora is judged.

Anita Desai, a notable diasporic female Indian writer, was born in 1937 in Dehradun and immigrated to England and America, respectively. Her work *Bye Bye Black Bird* (1971) depicts immigrants searching for their identities in a foreign land. It also includes the

perspectives of young immigrants, discrimination, east-west cultural divides, disappointment, and loneliness that immigrants encounter in a post-colonial setting.

Sunetra Gupta's novel *Memories of Rain* (1992) features a female protagonist who immigrates to England after falling in love with a British guy, but she quickly discovers her husband's true nature. She returns to India with her children, dissatisfied with his nasty and mean actions. *A Sin of Colour* (1998), another novel by Gupta, depicts the dilemma and solitude encountered by Indian immigrants as they navigate the challenges of a new environment. Sunetra Gupta is an Indian immigrant who was born in Kolkata in 1965 and later moved to the United Kingdom.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Writers try to show how their characters struggle to establish their diasporic space in different settings.

From the outset, the domestic space, or the culture and practises associated to the interior of the house, is preserved by characters in all three novels. In these novels, the authors have repeatedly described Indian food, attire, religious practises, and other aspects of Indian culture.

Following a study of chosen texts, it can be concluded that all diasporic people struggle to carve out a unique niche in their host country, but each in their own unique way. According to the analysis of the novels used for comparison, all of the characters do their hardest to establish strong roots in the alien soil, but not everyone succeeds.

These writers' writings have a common thread of connection because they all share a shared diasporic identity as well as a multicultural background. Nobody has the same idea of home, hometown, or space as the other characters; everyone has their own take on America and India. The connection between American and Indian culture eventually creates a third unidentified 'cultural place' that fills the void as 'third space,' and this 'third space' becomes the creative, generative venue for the emerging new culture.

In summary, the Diaspora Indian English novel is an important genre that portrays the experience and spirit of Indian immigrants in the broadest sense. It creates a forum for conversations about overseas Indians and provides emotional support to the diaspora. Diaspora's Indian female writers can attract readers of Indian English literature in a compassionate, unpretentious style, while conveying a sense of the universal experience of immigrants on behalf of Indian immigrants. In addition, Diaspora's Indonesian-English fiction keeps her writer connected to India and the rest of the world.

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