CHAPTER-IV

INDIAN DIASPORIC IDENTITY IN AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Indian diaspora has undoubtedly acquired a distinct global identity. What distinguish the Indian diaspora from its other counterparts are its heterogeneity, diversity and pluralism, which also reflects the Indian social conditions. The processes of globalization and economic liberalization have added new dimensions to emigration of Indians. It is true that migrancy, and increasingly transnational cultures and economies, has reduced the distance between a third world country like India and a wealthy one like the United States of America or Australia. The Information and Technology revolution has added to the intricacies and complexities involved in patterns of migration. The exodus from India comprises not only the fully trained and educated workers going abroad for employment, but also students pursuing higher education in onshore as well as offshore universities of the developed countries. Indians have achieved unprecedented success in various fields so much so that they are dubbed as a “model minority”. However, there is more to the study of Indian diaspora than just an economic analysis of their potential in terms of remittances and foreign direct investments. The following chapter will essentially look at issues of Indian identity in the host land. An analysis of Indian diasporic difficulties and problems of their victimization like racial biasness and problem of citizenship will also be dealt in this chapter.

The study of Indian diaspora and its adaptations in the host societies needs to be analyzed in terms of transnationality and globalization, processes which affect the expatriate Indians as much as they affect others in these two ‘settlement’ societies. Since, it necessitates the study of historical and spatial aspects of the diaspora in concern, a brief sketch of their migratory patterns was done in the previous chapters. The following sections will deal with the question of adaptation of the diasporic community into the host society while briefly analyzing their cultural persistence in the new home. As already discussed elsewhere, it was the European imperialist expansion in the nineteenth century which shaped the background for large emigration, through both its pull and push factors. As evident from the perusal of literatures on migration, by and large, there were two streams of Indian emigrants to the former colonies: unskilled labourers and small-scale entrepreneurs. The modern day migration of Indians consists of highly educated, skilled professionals exhibiting new patterns of adaptations in the host society. Indian immigrants from earlier times
had made a new home in the receiving country, and also created "little India" wherever they landed. They had established widespread networks with the members of their community—familial, economic, and political networks—around the globe, including the motherland, India. Diasporic Indians share among themselves and with the next generations not only the history of their dispersion but also the history of the people in general, including myths, legends, and traditions that constitute an integral part of their contemporary identity. Living in a diaspora brings one into an identity conflict because identity discourses are still understood in terms of loyalty to nations and nation-states. Among the several criteria through which Indians fortified their identity in the host societies, important are language, religion, dress, food, cuisine, cinema, and so on (Sahoo 2006: 89). Indian immigrants and their children first determine their identity within the family structure. The desire of Indians to enhance their socio-economic status is one of the primary motivations that bind immigrants across generations, region, caste, religion and language. However, they remain divided in their views regarding conservation and perpetuation of their ethnic identity.

The social and economic distinctiveness of Indians position them among the influential immigrant groups. They are the wealthiest and the most educated of all recent immigrants. They are chiefly voluntary immigrants in search of better opportunities to develop their professional careers. The rhetoric of living in "two worlds" is often associated with the immigrant experiences. This duality is manifested in lives of most of the migrant population and Indians are no exception to it. 'what immigrant groups do to make sense of their lives, to build communities, to pass along a sense of identity and community to their children is not so very different from what any other community does' (Bacon 1996: 7, 13-14).

In a true multicultural nation, the structures and processes of society should acknowledge and be responsive to the diversity of its population. People's life chances should not be affected by ethnicity, race, religion, language or place of birth. Conformity to a particular cultural stereotype should not be the price demanded in return for equal treatment or the right to fully participate in society. Furthermore, such a state should require from its citizens an appreciation of the importance of cultural diversity, and a tolerance and respect for ethnic and cultural differences (Theophanous 1995: 319). The relaxation in immigration controls since the 1960s in US and
Australia, as noted in the previous chapters, especially in connection with the decision to allow more professionals has proved to be a turning point in migration from India. Indian emigration quadrupled between 1970 and 1996, making India a leading exporter of professional migrants. Despite the class gradation among these migrants, they are among the highest-earning ethnic groups in United States (Singh and Dey 2003: 6).

India has been one of the main suppliers of two kinds of skilled persons—professionals and students to the world market of labour and education respectively, particularly in developed countries. As a sending country, it therefore experiences a brain drain of doctors, nurses, engineers, scientists, architects, surveyours, teachers, bankers etc on one hand, and the students pursuing further education in these fields on the other. It appears that 80-90 per cent of the brain drain from India has been US bound. Indians have occupied 5 to 6 per cent of space every year since 1966 amongst all immigrants for permanent residence from different countries of the world (Khadria 2001: 47, 49). Indians constitute one of the oldest non-European migrant groups in Australia. Since the early migration of people from Punjab, Indian diaspora has undergone enormous changes growing in numbers and diversity. Indians share the status of being economically successful migrant groups in Australia with its counterparts in United States. The following chapter will aim at looking both the diversity and similarities exhibited by Indians in the two settlement countries under consideration. Also a brief analysis of diasporic problems and issues related to their Indian identity will be made. The following figure will give a brief idea of overseas component in population of the respective countries.

**Figure 4.1: Proportion of overseas-born in population, 2001 & 2006, Australia.**

![Proportion of overseas-born in population, 2001 & 2006, Australia](image)

**Source:** Population flows - Immigration aspects, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, ABS, Australia, p. 19.
DIASPORIC INDIAN IDENTITY:

The co-presence of numerous cultures, religions, and, ethnicities within the same political unit is not a novel phenomenon. In contemporary liberal democracies, cultural pluralism and diversity heaves notably new and different concerns. Conceivably, the most remarkable distinction is the concern for equality and non discrimination. Democracy brings in the question of equal treatment of people who have diverse social and cultural identities. Today, the challenge before the developed and developing worlds is to ensure that cultural identities are not a source of discrimination and disadvantage in the democratic polity (Mahajan 2005: 107-108).

Ideas of home and identity are continuously negotiated and are essentially contextual which are reshaped by migration and transnationalism. All diasporic spaces are not the home of separate distinct communities but connected places where identities and homes are reworked in a complex and sometimes unpredictable ways (Connell 2004: 219). It is pointed by an ethnographer that Indians articulate a collective identity in which members perceive themselves as associated through universal legacy of mythic India and a shared discourse of race, nation, migrancy and hybridity. For instance, Australia as well as Indian diasporic collectives have opposed a change of name from “Indian” to “Australian” or the hyphenated “Indian-Australian”. This is perhaps a consequence of both Australia’s multiculturalism policy, by which one’s racially defined ethnic identity prevents membership to the nation’s self-image and diasporic subject’s hesitation to surrender their Indian-ness that connects them to homeland and each other. It is further argued that the racial unity is as much product of politics of collective differences as it is a shared history of blood, soil and language (Madan 2000: 27-28). Thus, as suggested above, Indian diaspora undergoes the problems surrounding individual identity and belonging, as well as, the processes of conceptualizing self and renegotiating a collective identity within changing social and cultural structures.

The immigrants suppress their ethnicity in the name of pragmatism and opportunism during the early stage of their migration to the host land. They actively assimilate and hide their distinctive ethnicity to be successful in the host land. This phase is followed by a Du Boisian period that repudiates to subsume political, civil and moral revolutions under sheer strategies of economic betterment, and hence,
immigrants reassert ethnicity. The third phase seeks the hyphenated integration of ethnic identity with national identity under conditions that do not privilege the "national" at the expense of "ethnic". The naturalization of Indian immigrants into the American citizenship simultaneously minoritizes her identity. She is reborn as an ethnic minority American citizen (Radhakrishnan 1996: 205).

Originally the term ethnic was used to indicate belonging to a nation. It is now used by sociologists and social and cultural anthropologists to denote membership of a distinct people possessing their own customary ways or culture. The term is thus broader than nationality and permits non-literate people to be identified as social aggregates in the same way as more advanced people and nations. The Germans, Jews, the Gypsies are all ethnic groups as also are Congo pygmies and the Trobrianders. It is observed that the characteristics identifying an ethnic group or aggregate may include a common language, common costumes and beliefs and certainly a cultural tradition, but whilst it may be a racial group, an ethnic group is not to be confused with such; a nation may consist of several ethnic groups (Mitchell 1968: 69-70). The theorization of ethnicity, multiculturalism, and the emphasis on the politics of identity/difference in the contemporary world, all have long and complex trajectories. Traditional views on ethnicity range from primordialism to instrumentalism. According to Primordialists, existing forms of ethnic expression are a reactivation of older, at times biological relations. Instrumentalists see ethnicity as a resource for different interest groups. Primordialism is essentialist, ignoring the complexity of the historical conditions under which ethnicity becomes momentous and over-states the internal homogeneity of ethnic identities. Whereas, Instrumentalism being nominalist suggests that ethnic identification is important only insofar as it is based on more material phenomena. The other dimension on ethnicity is of constructivism, emphasizing the historical and political processes by which it is formed and situating it in relation to other identities: racial, sexual, national, or gendered (Norval 2004).

The adjective "Ethnic" was first used in 1906 by a social scientist whereas the term "Ethnicity" appeared in early 1940s when anthropologist W. Loyd Warner introduced the concept as a tool to help distinguish the various cultural groups in his research. Ethnicity incorporates the feature of a shared culture and a real or putative
common ancestry. Ethnic groups are involved in a continual process of reinvention in response to changing historical circumstances and shifting realities both internal and external to the group itself. For example, at the turn of the last century, Italians in the United States were typically categorized as a race whereas today they are considered as ethnic group. The term ethnicity also used to be referred as nationalities. African-Americans were never referred to as ethnic group but today they are known as another ethnic group. Now the terms “race” is being replaced by “ethnic”. Susan Greenbaum conducted research on differences between race and ethnicity, covering a period of over century of Afro-Cuban presence in Tampa, Florida and concluded about the differences as, “Race is a uniform you wear and ethnicity is a team on which you play. We all have race and ethnicity, a color-coded phenotypic identity and membership in some historically defined natal community” (Halter 2005).

It is argued that diasporic identity becomes a luxury for those who have the language, the conceptual structures and the intellectual leisure of contemplation. Some of the diasporic population is so engrossed in the nitty-gritty of survival problems that identity for them is far from theoretical and conceptual considerations. Often survival in economic crossfire or simple issues of immigration and health insurance are sufficient to take their mind off dual citizenship, mythical reconstruction of India in Bollywood films, or various manifestations of what it means to be a part of diaspora (Deshpande 2004: 44). Nevertheless, with the lessening of pressure towards assimilation, ethnic communities began to develop their own organizations and group activities: in sport, folklore, arts, and in providing Saturday schools for their children, teaching community languages and maintain their culture. It was through such activities that immigrant communities aimed to retain their ethnic and cultural identities, and the notion of cultural pluralism began to take root.

Indian American academics and intellectuals argue in their writings for at least six different types of identities for themselves, which they highly value are (1) hybridity (multiplicity of cultural accommodation), (2) transnationalism (cosmopolitan non-nationalism, (3) Commitment to preserving a selective suite of more or less strictly traditional Indian cultural values (usually, Hindus), (4) ability to synthesize in their lives and consciousness a selection of former home” cultural values with those demanded or offered by the adopted nation’s culture, (5) assimilation with
or basic acceptance of the adopted nation’s predominant culture, with minimal recognition or mere memorializing or historicizing of past identities and associations, and (6) Trishanku-like precarious balancing during forever alternating states between culture of origin and culture of adoption (Perry 2002: 96-97). Food, jewelry, clothing, videos and music recordings, religious paraphernalia, books and newspapers etc., forms a symbolic function of signaling ethnicity, as we will later observe in the chapter. Indians have permeated many segments of the host economy and society while still retaining their Indian culture. They constitute an ethnically diverse community in the destination country. Regional differences of home land are prevalent in the host land. For instance, majority of the first generation migrants continue to speak their native languages within the family although most of them can speak English fluently. Let us examine these aspects of Indian identity in detail.

AUSTRALIA

Australian culture has absorbed and expressed the presence of migrants from around the world in various ways. Of Australia’s 19 million populations, 28 per cent were born overseas and a further 25 per cent have at least one parent born overseas. Net immigration is about 75,000 to 100,000 per annum, which will give Australia a population of about 25 million by 2051, of whom 9 per cent will be of Asian background. As described by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs, the top ten countries of origin for the overseas-born are the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Vietnam, Greece, China, Germany, the Philippines, the Netherlands and India. Two thirds of the second generation migrants are marrying outside their cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Forty per cent of Australians are of mixed cultural origins. These quite remarkable figures belie concerns about ethnic separateness down the generations. There are, however, some differences to this pattern which one should monitor; 82 per cent of second-generation British women marry outside their group; for Indian and Malaysian women, the figure is 95 per cent, for Chinese women 78 per cent, for Turkish women 36 per cent, and for Lebanese women it is only 28 per cent (Menadue 2003: 81-82).
Ethnicity and Identity formation in Australia

Multiculturalism has disputed the idea of a singular, universal culture in the multiethnic composition of the modern nation-states. As a result, minority groups have argued for bigger public recognition and representation in the public or civic sphere of their ethnic, cultural, linguistic and/or religious identities. The process of acculturation helps to establish how a change of social and cultural environment will impact one’s identity. Australian culture has engrossed and articulated the presence of migrants from around the world in various ways. The presence of cosmopolitan literature, theatre and film, various cuisines, increase in level of intercultural marriages etc reflect the diversity inherent in Australian society. With the increased cultural diversity in Australia, policies in practice are subject-matter of debate for their adequacy in representing the experience of contemporary immigrants from time to time.

For the most part, the Australian quest for a ‘multicultural nation’ has been the search for a solution to the dilemma of reconciling the immigrants’(and their descendants’) love for their homeland and its culture, on the one hand, and their desire to adapt to the over-arching Australian framework, on the other hand. It is argued that for a multi-ethnic state to survive and develop along multicultural lines, it must evolve more than the common political machinery of the state. It must also cultivate a set of shared, over-arching cultural values that extend beyond political structures and include other aspects of culture that reflect the dominant group’s core values, but which also takes account of the minority/subordinate group’s aspirations and needs by practicing both cultural and political democracy (Smolicz 1998: 6-7).

It is pertinent to mention here that two different theories of ethnicity have been central to ideas of Australian-ness. One theory is of Australia being as a white nation, covering a range of narratives focusing on Australia as an Anglo-Australian nation, Judeo-Christian nation and a democratic nation. The white Australia posits being Australian in terms of sameness. The second notion of Australians all being immigrants implies a multicultural Australia, positing Australian-ness in terms of difference and diversity. Though the multicultural story has displaced the dominance of white Australia in everyday and governmental discourse, the white Australia story still lingers in the shadows. Differences in ethnicity are represented in terms of
binaries such as white/ethnic, Anglo/Non-Anglo, Australian/NESB (non-English speaking background) or Australian/CALD (Culturally and linguistically diverse). In slang, the binary is expressed as skip/wog (Elder 2007: 116). Ghassan Hage cited in Elder (2007: 116), in his work White Nation (1998), explores the dynamics ordering the dominant conceptions of Australian-ness in terms of ethnicity. Hage argues that the field of white-ness is not homogenous: there are different kinds of whiteness. Hage suggests that Anglo-ness is the most valued type of whiteness and argues that the whiteness can be accumulated by non-Anglo-Australians, but not Anglo-ness itself. Added to this, the groups who are represented as not-white are those understood as being ‘third world looking’. Research in Australia indicates that while minority individuals are exposed within the multicultural setting to both majority and minority values, and often incorporates both into their personal systems individuals from the dominant majority are less likely to do so (Smolicz 1998: 8). However, apart from the unique ‘descent’ question in the 1986 Census, ethnicity is not measured as it has been in the United States, Canada, India or many other societies. The 1986 Census found that about one-quarter of Australians were not from the dominant Anglo-Celtic origins.

Multiculturalism is adopted as a public policy nationally and in most states because politicians have perceived a demand for it from immigrant communities, which have been increasing their electoral strength. However, in comparison to United States or Canada, ethnic minorities have not sent many representatives directly into parliamentary politics, nor have they formulated coherent demands on the public purse or the legislative process. This is partly because most ethnic communities in Australia are still in the immigrant phase, where political effectiveness is inhibited by language difficulties or by lingering interest in homeland politics irrelevant to Australia. Governments of both major parties have subscribed to the multicultural policies since the mid-1970s despite some criticism among conservatives in the mid 1980s (Jupp 1991: 102-103).

Multiculturalism as an aspect of social justice was also concerned with the opportunities open to immigrants and their children through the education system and labor market. These include a range of programs, including education for those whose mother tongue was not English, recognition of overseas qualifications and equal
employment opportunity on lines previously adopted for women in Australia and elsewhere. As the composition of immigration changed from the mid-1970s, policy became concerned with racial intolerance and good community relations. The rise of small but virulent racist groups, and the public discussion about the Asian immigration between 1984 and 1988, gave force to the idea that multiculturalism was concerned with social harmony, a concept developed in the late 1960s. The aspect of multiculturalism which was most important to ethnic and immigrant groups, but which aroused most public hostility, was cultural and linguistic maintenance. In contrast to Canada, Australia has placed little emphasis on the preservation of immigrant cultures. The national language policy of 1988 is the major initiative for sustaining ethic cultures and language (Jupp 1991: 106). However, Commonwealth and state parliaments, the upper echelons of Public Service and the senior levels of business have disproportionately few people from NESB backgrounds.

Let us proceed by stating that undoubtedly Indian diasporic community in Australia is a growing phenomenon. Indian migration to Australia has increased in scale and diversity which has important implications for the development of linkages between the two countries. Many migrants undertake multiple migrations in their lives. For some, it is argued that Australia has become stepping stone on a route eventually reaching the United States, a country which continues to be the ultimate desired destination for many Indians (Voigt-Graf 2003: 143). The migration history of Indians in Australia is heterogeneous in terms of both the region of origin and the historical period of migration. Mostly the Indian immigrants in Australia consist of labour and professional migration besides some colonial indentured and free migrations. As discussed elsewhere, the demise of White Australia policy and subsequent adoption of multiculturalism policy led to influx of Indians mostly professionals, qualifying for Australian residency on the basis of their skills. There are also large numbers of twice migrant Indian community having migrated from places like Fiji, Malaysia, Singapore and other countries.

Adaptations of Indians in Australia

The prominent categories in the adaptation processes of the new Indian immigrants and old Indian immigrants in Australia can be categorized as: the migration process, residence patterns, relations with the wider Australian society, concept of identity, social networks, political behaviour, economic processes, and the situation of the
second generation. The old immigrants were rural and uneducated who lacked needs survival skills and capital for advancement. They followed chain migration and stayed in concentrated residential patterns. They needed cultural broker, valued group approval and support and had a collective identity. They maintained separateness from wider White community and experienced discrimination. In their new abode, they wanted certain cultural traits to be preserved, primarily respect for elders, and have arranged marriages and observing religious norms. They had international and social networks, invested more in the home area, practiced a factional behaviour. On the other hand, the new immigrants were professionals possessing needed survival skills and followed independent migration process. Their residential patterns are usually dispersed and they value privacy and independence. The new immigrants had education, language, social and bureaucratic skills to do well in their adopted community. Their involvement with India was primarily helping or supporting parents and kinsmen rather than being involved with political and religious affairs like old immigrants. They did not practice factionalism and formed networks more along ethnic origins and religious affiliations (Helweg 1993: 374, 381-82).

Migration from India since 1970s was characterized by its selectivity in terms of education and skill both to Australia and United States. Their higher education level, proficiency in English language and skills put them at advantageous position relative to other Asian migrant population. Though the skilled migration of health personnel which started in the 1960s continues besides other skill groups migrating from India to Australia, the recent migrations comprise of IT professionals entering on long-term business visas. In 1999-2000, some 3,335 migrants from India entered on business visas out of which about 40 per cent were IT professionals (Connell 2004: 200). However, with breaking down of the White Australia policy in the 1960s and its eventual total abolition in the early 1970s, the tempo of Indian immigration to Australia increased so that Australia’s India-born doubled in the 1960s and increased by 47 percent in the 1970s. This pattern of rapid growth continued in the 1980s (43.5 percent) and 1990s (55 percent). However the growth has been more substantial over the 2000-2005 period when the India-born population of Australia increased by 45 percent to reach 138,662 in mid 2005 (Hugo and Dasvarma 2007: 3). The industries and the government in Australia identified India as the most important source country of Information technology and telecommunication professionals. The number of entrants of Indian nationality on 457 visas increased from 471 in 1999-97 to 3,335 in 1999-00, around 40 per cent being IT professionals. The inflow of Indian IT
professionals to Australia became such a conspicuous phenomenon that early 2000 was dubbed the "Indian Summer" in the IT community (Foreshew Cited in Xiang 2001: 74).

Table 4.1: India-Born Persons in Australia, 1861-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>India-born Population</th>
<th>Intercensal Percent Per Annum Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1861*</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901*</td>
<td>7,760</td>
<td>+2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947*</td>
<td>8,162</td>
<td>+1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>11,957</td>
<td>+5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>14,167</td>
<td>+2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>15,754</td>
<td>+2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>29,212</td>
<td>+13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>37,586</td>
<td>+5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>42,930</td>
<td>+2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>47,820</td>
<td>+2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>61,602</td>
<td>+5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>77,551</td>
<td>+4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>95,452</td>
<td>+4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>138,662</td>
<td>+8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Refers to the former British colony of India (i.e., present day India and Pakistan).

Source: Australian censuses as cited Hugo, G.J. and Dasvarma, G.L. (2007), "Recent Developments in Indian Migration to Australia with Special Reference to Academics", Paper presented on 5-6 February 2007 at an International Conference on Cultural Diversity, Governance and Policy India-Australia, Indira Gandhi National Open University, Australia-India Council and the Australian High Commission, India Habitat Centre: New Delhi, p.n:3

Voigt-Graf (2003: 143-155; 2004: 26), in an interesting study of migratory patterns of Indians to Australia, analyses different experiences of Punjabis, Kannadigas, Indo-Fijians as well as case of student migration to Australia. Drawing on his study, one sees that the Punjabis were the earliest to reach Australia. Immigration policies in Australia facilitated such migrations of people of agricultural and professional background from time to time. Mostly the professional entry was
based on skilled migration visas unlike the family chain migration routes followed by
the early rural Punjabi settler community. Migration from Karnataka, on the other
hand, is a new phenomenon which gained momentum in the 1980s. Kannadigas are
mostly of urban background and belong to the professions like Information
technology, Software specialists etc. Many descendants of nineteenth century
migrants have undertaken a second or third migration usually to industrialized
countries. This characteristic makes Indian diaspora a multi-faceted one. For some
Indians, Australian citizenship is a strategic choice which facilitates the move to their
preferred destination in look out for better opportunities in terms of technology and
job profiles. For some Indians, a marriage is used strategically to open a migration
door to a more attractive country. However, many Kannadigas plan to migrate back to
India after having an overseas work experience and considerable savings to live a
comfortable life in India. Indo-Fijians or the twice migrant have preferred Australia
after military coups in Fiji, basically under family sponsorship program of
immigration. The reason cited by the Punjabis and the Kannadigas for migrating to
Australia was to improve educational opportunities of their children as well as their
own job opportunities.

It is argued in the above mentioned study that the Indian students migrating on
temporary visas to Australia ends up staying permanently. As far as their economic
profile is concerned, migrants from India are highly qualified and are well represented
in professional occupations. Kannadigas, in this study, were found to be over-
represented in professions, as compared to Punjabis who were working as train guards
or taxi drivers. Indo-Fijians, on the other hand, were self employed running small
businesses. Migration legislation in Australia clearly favoured skilled people as
demonstrated above. The Indian diaspora community forms transnational linkages
with people in different countries. It is argued in the above study that the paths of the
three diasporic communities cross in some diasporic nodes such as Australia but their
transnational networks are not interconnected. Since, in the Indian case, the
underlying principle of transnational networks is kinship and Punjabis, Kannadigas
and Indo-Fijians are not related to each other, their respective transnational networks
exist side-by-side without merging into more comprehensive networks.
In yet another interesting study of Indian migrants to Australia with special reference to academics, Hugo and Dasvarma (2007: 23-25; 2008: 21) points that Indian migrations both permanent and temporary, has experienced an unprecedented increase in the few years as much as that the Indian community in Australia has almost doubled in size in the last decade. The immigration is a selective one of persons with high levels of skill and qualification. Moreover, they argue, it is likely that this rapid growth will continue into the foreseeable future for a number of reasons stated below:

- Australia is expanding its immigration intake in response to a perceived shortage of skilled workers.
- The Indians use the family reunion component of the immigration program more than many other birthplace groups so that increases in skilled migration will have significant multiplier effect in family migration.
- The doubling of Indian student numbers in Australia in recent years will undoubtedly result in a high proportion taking advantage of new regulations which allow (and in some cases encourage) students to apply for permanent residence without first returning to their home country.
- The high level of English ability of Indians gives them a significant advantage over many of their Asian counterparts as desirable skilled migrants for Australia. Language issues are becoming important barriers for example to Chinese migration to Australia.
- The greatly increased size of the Indian community in Australia and the linkages established between India and Australia will in themselves encourage more movement both in terms of family networks but also more Indians being in the labour force and recruiting more migrants.
- An increasing profile of Australia as a potential migration destination for India.
- Demand for migration in Australia is likely to increase but there will be more competition for migrants, as more countries experience low fertility, ageing and zero growth or decline of the working age population.
- The India-born are the second largest Asia origin group and one of the most rapidly expanding so that the professional, family and other social networks linking Australia and India are also increasing.
The fact that India is also the second largest origin for full fee-paying foreign students in Australia in a context where the Australian Government has increased the number of programs whereby foreigners with Australian experience get preference in the immigration program.

The complexity and diversity exhibited in both the migratory patterns as well as the composition of diaspora keeps increasing due to the revolution of technology and communication in a globalized era. In Australia, Indians came at different times as once, twice or thrice migrants from different places. As the population has grown over the years, they have exhibited diverse and heterogeneous cultural moorings cutting across generations, states of origin, language and religion. The proliferation of temples, gurudwaras, restaurants and stores itself testifies both the spread and heterogeneity of the population. The existence of cultural diversity as a feature of Australian society as an accomplished fact is open to various interpretations. They have transplanted the diversity of their homeland, though they may appear constituting a homogenous community to others.

Indians come to Australia not only from India but from different countries and states, have different languages, regional origins and religion. They have different educational levels, jobs and recreational pursuits. Food preferences exhibit strong Indian orientations, with most eating Indian food at home. Increasingly, ethnic entrepreneurs have opened specialized restaurants under the names such as ‘A Taste of India’, ‘Road to Goa’, ‘Mother India’, proclaiming their authentic foods (Connell 2004: 207). The caste system remains strong among Hindus but is nevertheless of declining significance, as migration is increasingly of occupational elite, thus marriage is more likely to be linked to educational status than caste and it is of trivial significance amongst Hindus from Fiji (Voigt-Graf Cited in Connell 2004: 207). Social get-togethers are done from time to time to either celebrate some festival or engage in temple activities besides many other occasions at individual or institutional levels. Bollywood, music, dances like bhangra and cricket further forge the bonding between the community members. All forms of communications like internet access, cheap phone companies and airline flights help sustain regular visits and communications. Hence, linkages with family members and their affairs are maintained from time to time.
The graph in Figure 4.2 depicts the diversity exhibited in terms of languages people speak. There are 200 foreign languages spoken with the leading five languages other than English being Italian, Greek, Cantonese, Arabic and Vietnamese. Each of these five languages is spoken by more than 100,000 people.

Indian Identity in Australia

The ambivalence, fluidity and complexity of identity of Indian diaspora are demonstrated by a remarkable mix of both cultures in the host country along with simultaneous nostalgia about Indian culture and traditions. There is both conservation and dissolution of identity; hybridity and change are tempered by family loyalties, generational shifts, employment, class structure and, ultimately, personal preferences (Connell 2004: 215). Music, food and language are vital markers of connection, ‘means of establishing closeness and a sense of belonging’ (Lakha and Stevenson 2001: 247). The second or third generation migrants particularly “youth, many of whom are well educated, have created a kind of hybrid ‘third space’ where that space ‘displaces the identity that constitutes it, and sets up new structures of authority, new
political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom' (Bhabha cited in Connell 2004: 213) that is somewhere between notions of assimilation and ethnic authenticity, even though neither such polar positions could be possible within the diaspora' (Connell 2004: 213). Driven by the prime motivation to rise in their respective professions, the new immigrants seek to melt into, the mainstream Australian society in contrast to their older counterparts.

The multiculturalism policy of Australia has helped Indian immigrants in retaining and reproducing their cultural distinctiveness. The first Hindu temple was formally inaugurated in 1985 in Sydney. In 1960s, first gurudwara was established in Wollgoolga. Similarly, there are a number of places of worship patronized by the Indian diasporic community. Also, one finds increase in the numbers of gurus, yogis, babas, swamis, spiritual mothers and tantrik advocates visiting Australia. Australia witnessed a ‘counter-cultural’ movement in terms of gurus seeking converts in 1960s and 1970s. For example, Swami Ranganathananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda mission went to Australia in 1964 and founded Vedanta society of New South Wales. The International society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) or the Hare Krishna movement came in 1969. However, some members of Indian community voiced their concern about the emphasis given to ritual practices rather than issues which were more important to be addressed like educating the Indian youth in Australia in vernacular languages, on the cultural values, and the mores and customs of traditional Indian society (Gopal 2004:326-328). There are a number of papers in Australia like Indian Link, Indian Down Under, Indian Post, and the India Times, which deal with the Indian issues. There are associations to represent Indians. However, many local associations cater to people from distinct areas and states of origin, and languages like the Gujarati, Punjabi, Kannada, Marathi associations. The special broadcasting Service of ABC radio offers weekly programs in Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Punjabi, Tamil and there are several other such programs. Indian oriented websites are used both for retaining community linkages as well as for forging matrimonial alliances. Both websites and media are strongly linked to the wish to send remittances and presents to India with regular advertising of possible means of linking Australia and India (Connell 2004: 211).
Indian immigrants in Australia form a small, heterogeneous, and a relatively dispersed community. Yet, they have displayed outstandingly high levels of educational achievements with concentration in professional, business and academics sectors. The unemployment rate is usually low but the hardships of economic recession and increase in population and skills pushes even the highly qualified persons to seek employment as tradesman, mechanists etc. The higher bracket earnings render the Indians among the more affluent groups of all immigrants who either invest in business ventures or contribute to community development programs. Migrants from India are usually highly qualified and are over represented in professional occupations. Contrary to the views held by critics of immigration policy, research and facts have shown that net immigration since World War II has been responsible for about half of Australia’s growth directly. The immigrants had higher work force participation rates than the residents imply that they have contributed even more to Australia’s work force than to population growth (Pope and Glenn 1993: 720-722). The growing mutuality of interests between India and Australia and the strengthened bilateral relations between the two countries will ensure more migrations from India to Australia. However, this needs to be examined in wake of changed circumstances which prevails in Australia and around the world. Recently, in last two to three years, there have been alleged reports of racist violence and biases against Indians in the media. An analysis without having a glimpse into the lives of Indians in wake of recent developments and other diasporic problems will not be complete. However, Australia is continuously witnessing an increasing flow of Asian migrants. India has certainly moved beyond being viewed as an exotic land of elephants and snake charmers or as poor or backward. The proliferation of Indian books, art, movies, music, dance, cuisines on a global platform has indeed manifested diverse facets of India’s diverse culture. Today, Indians are a familiar face in all global cities of the world like Sydney and New York.

Nonetheless, U.S.A. still remains preferred destination for Indians as it is considered ‘land of opportunities’, which implies better standard of life, comparatively higher salaries and better job opportunities, higher number of scholarships granted to students to pursue their dream education. Australia is considered by many Indians as a stepping stone between India and United States. Of all Indian computing professionals leaving Australia between 1997-2000, around 60
percent went onwards to the United States (and 13 percent went back to India), a higher proportion than any other national group (Birrell et al. cited in Connell 2004: 216). For Indian IT professionals, Australia seems to occupy a stepping stone onwards to the United States. The following section will trace the narrative of Indian migration to America.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

America is a country of immigrants which displays colorful mix of different races and peoples from around the world. A common metaphor used to describe America is of a melting pot, as noted earlier, where everyone blends in perfectly into a mixed coloured but a distinctive mix of diverse peoples. Indians from India, as a component of the American ethnic mosaic came to be enumerated as an ethnic group for the first time in the 1980 U.S. Census as ‘Asian Indians’ (Jain 1993: 37). Immigration is now the primary factor contributing to population growth in the country with foreign-born residents comprising 31.1 million or over 11 percent of the population (U.S. Census 2000). The repeal of Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965 triggered a major upward surge unequalled in the history of Asian Indian immigration in United States. Post 1965, engineers, scientists, college teachers, accountants and businessmen migrated. Some of them were in skilled and semi-skilled jobs. The early Indian immigrant community on the other hand, as noted previously, had agrarian orientation and was not so well qualified. The Indian migrants are very successful economically. In spheres of education, they are at an advantageous position. US Census 2000 stated that among 10 million Asians in the United States, five groups numbered one million or more: Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipino, Korean and Vietnamese. Asian Indians occupied about 16.2 per cent of total Asian population. According to the Census report, 67 per cent of Asian Indians were married, which is higher than the proportion of total population. 75 per cent of Asian Indians were foreign born had had higher proportions of non citizen people (45 per cent). Over 50 per cent of foreign born Asian Indians entered the United States between 1990 and 2000. Asian Indians had the highest percentage with a bachelor’s degree about 64 per cent. Median income for the Indians was more than $ 10,000. Asian Indians had a lower poverty rate of 9.8 per cent in comparison to total population which had a poverty rate of 12.4 per cent. 59.9 per cent of Indians were in the management and professional services; 7.0 per cent in
service industry; 21.4 in sales and office; 0.2 per cent in farming, fishing and forestry; 2.1 per cent in construction extraction and maintenance and 9.4 per cent in production, transportation and material moving (Reeves and Bennet 2004: 4-17).

Table 4.2: Total and Indian Foreign-Born Populations, 1960 to 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Foreign born</th>
<th>Rank(a)</th>
<th>Share of all foreign born</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>9,738,091</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
<td>12,296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>9,619,302</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>51,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>14,079,906</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
<td>206,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>19,797,316</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.30%</td>
<td>450,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>31,107,889</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
<td>1,022,552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>37,547,315</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.00%</td>
<td>1,519,157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a Rank refers to the position of the Indian born relative to other immigrant groups in terms of size of the population residing in the United States in a given census year.

Source: Data for 2000 from the 2000 US census; data for 2006 from the American Community Survey

The Asian Indians are highly diversified in terms in terms of region of origin, religion and language. They reflect the diversity transplanted from homeland, though they may appear homogeneous to the outsiders. It is indeed interesting to note that religious, regional, linguistic and caste factors play important roles in the lives of the Indians in U.S.A. There are differences in between generations of the Indian community with regard to issues of tradition verses child’s socialization in the environment outside the family. Asian Indians constitute the third largest group of Asian Americans (outnumbered only by Chinese and Filipinos). Indian Americans are a group that has an ambiguous racial and ethnic status in the United States (Kurien 2005: 439).

Adaptations of Indians

Indian-Americans in US reside in California, New York, New Jersey, Texas and Illinois each area having more than 1, 00,000 people. The population of Indian-Americans in the capital region has grown to 1, 01,369 from 50,425 in 1990 or 138 percent gain during the decade. Similarly, Virginia and Maryland also showed an increasing trend in population. This incredible growth of India-Americans in major
cities or states of USA clearly depicts, that despite constrictive immigration regulations, Indians have flourished in US because of their higher skills in technology and education, hard working nature, sincerity and their ability of high achievement in economic growth. Indo-Americans have advanced with a singleness of purpose and adapting to the lifestyle of their host countries. This is reflected in their success stories all over the world (Singh and Dey 2003: 36). Two newspapers India West and India Abroad, celebrates the accomplishments of the Indian community and provides extensive coverage of trends and events in India. Papers in regional languages of India are also circulated. The following tables demonstrate the choices of cities in the respective countries by Indians.

Table 4.3 (a): Settler arrivals for India-born and state or territory of intended residence in Australia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2000-01</th>
<th>2006-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>3137</td>
<td>5250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>2209</td>
<td>4826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Australia</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>1416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Australia</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasmania</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Territory</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aus. Capital Territory</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6336</td>
<td>13496</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4.3 (b) Top 10 States for Growth of the Indian-Born Population in United States of America, 2000 to 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>Change 2000 to 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>190.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>1,423</td>
<td>3,273</td>
<td>130.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>1,139</td>
<td>2,567</td>
<td>125.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>124.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>9,134</td>
<td>19,982</td>
<td>118.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>14,714</td>
<td>30,941</td>
<td>110.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>15,108</td>
<td>29,437</td>
<td>94.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Indian immigrants are highly educated and qualified professionals. Being highly educated and qualified professionals, they even earn more than the Americans, as pointed elsewhere also. Indo-Americans are very hardworking and dedicated to the profession in which they are employed. They have become a very productive segment of the US population and have contributed to the unprecedented economic boom of the 1990s. Majority of the Indo-Americans have acquired higher education in India particularly in engineering and information technology sector. Some have studied in US institutions. 73.2 per cent Indo-Americans are employed of which 43.6% occupy managerial and professional positions, 33.2% are in the technical, sales and service sectors and the remaining 23.3% are skilled laborers (HLC 2002:170). The 1990 US Census shows that Indians were the most highly educated ethnic group amongst Asian communities in the US. Since the mid-1960s, US official ideology has moved from earlier models of immigrant assimilation to a model of cultural pluralism, although the longstanding black/white racial polarization of American culture also remains as an unofficial set of folk categories.

Indian-Americans are well placed in professions like medicines, engineering and law. A large number of Indian scientists and engineers occupy key positions in government owned laboratories including nuclear laboratories. Indian scientist have found place in Boeing and NASA. People like Amar Bose established the finest acoustics systems company in the world, and Sam Pitroda, CEO of World Tel contributed to the expansion of telecommunication in India. About 3,00,000 Indian Americans work in technology firms in California’s Silicon Valley. They contribute 15% of all employment in Silicon Valley. Their average annual income is $20,000 (HLC 2002: 170). The illustrious success stories (to name a few) of Vinod Dham, Sabeer Bhatia, Vinod Khosla, Kanwal Rekhi Jhumpa Lahiri, Bharati Mukerjee, Anita Desai, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Ali Akbar Khan and Zakir Hussain, Jagdish Bhagwati, Arjun Appadurai, Ismail Merchant, Bobby Jindal, Zubin Mehta demonstrated that Indians are in true sense a 'model minority'. They have excelled in fields like

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>4,280</td>
<td>7,858</td>
<td>83.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>16,264</td>
<td>29,825</td>
<td>83.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>32,295</td>
<td>58,090</td>
<td>79.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2000 census; 2006 American Community Survey.
academics, arts, music, politics, science and technology, international finance and management, higher education, traditional business, real estate, retailing, mainstream media, journalism, films etc.

The substantial 1965 migration of Indians to the United States led to the talk of "brain drain" phenomenon. The reasons cited were desire for higher education abroad, the exasperating bureaucracy and corruption in India, the lack of employment opportunities in India for highly educated professionals, and the enormous disparity in professional incomes between India and abroad. The lure of higher educational, business and professional opportunities are cited for emigration to United States. For Indians, migration has not only been an individual but also a family decision. However, Indians could not totally accept the old 'assimilation' theories and tried to recreate their identity in the new environment while keeping ties with family back home intact (Rangaswamy 2000: 4-5).

The post 1965 Indian immigrants has been middle class and professional, as recorded earlier in the study, who seeks in America greater opportunities for self-development. Diasporan Indian professionals, white-collar workers, and factory workers in the burgeoning field of information technology have increasingly tended to congregate in specifiable localities so that they have more evident presence in the wider community. Despite their image as "ideal minority"-hard-working, well educated, clean living-they are viewed with alarm, especially by older minority groups like African-Americans who have reached a modus vivendi of sorts with the mainstream. It is argued that what is feared and arouses anger is not mainly their potential economic threat at lower levels of employment, but their perceived resistance or even refusal to adopt mainstream American ways of life. The behaviours which are most reviled include the persistence of Indian English speech patterns and even of Indian regional language use, the (usually older) women's wearing of saris and salwar-kameez, the food habits and thus shopping at mainly specialty Indian stores, their speaking of and planning for return to India and an attendant reluctance to become citizens or to focus on major U.S. political, social and indeed sporting issues. Although interpersonal restraint in expression of feelings is generally practiced among Indians, they are frequently accused of haughtiness, self-righteousness and even downright anti-social behaviour, including more or less subtly racist social
interactions that remind African Americans of intolerant public attitudes not widely accepted in mainstream America for thirty years. Various explanations are offered for these characteristics, supposedly inherent or innate (culturally determined or even racial) among Indians, relying on the crude understandings of the caste system, India’s high poverty and infant mortality rates, low levels of literacy and general education. Thus, a significant negative stereotype of Indian immigrants and even second-generation Indian Americans has recently emerged that turns the “ideal minority” image around to become an image of a highly privileged minority, isolated and self-righteous, arrogant and condescending, insufficiently grateful for the economic and educational opportunities they have so successfully mined, and unwilling to learn and adapt to mainstream American cultural patterns. The relatively high levels of freedom and affluence widely enjoyed in America have attracted and been built by optimistic immigrants denying that their social and personal identity is, nevertheless, highly restricted and externally determined to a significant degree (Perry 2002: 89). The retreat into the family home, the concerted refusal to engage with a wider notion of ‘public’, the general segregation from other communities, and the often mindless replication of ‘timeless’ Indian traditions have been among the more distressing characteristics of Indian existence abroad, particularly in the affluent West (Lall 2004: 25).

Many young middle-class Indian as well as diasporan Indian people seeks to ground their reality in the traditional cultural trappings of their fore bearers like food and clothing. Sari or Salwar-Kameez, for instance, is a striking ceremonial or even a daily dress. Religious rituals and priest-officiated temple worship is done widely to sustain Indian identity in home away from home. Efforts are also made to bring Indian musical and dance traditions to both diasporan Indian and wider American audiences. The younger generation on the other hand revels in heavily westernized popular culture of today’s India, Bollywood films and film-music especially. Intermarriages of females with non-Indians are relatively rare. Still, many successful diasporan males are married by their families back home with an appropriate bride. Even self arranged marriages between diasporan Indian couples are commonly solemnized twice, the second time in India with the two families’ sponsorship (Perry 2002: 87). Most Indians live in nuclear families although they maintain strong family ties with people back home. Marriage partner is preferred from within the subgroup of
larger community who shares same history, tradition, religion and social customs. Weddings are often elaborate affairs.

**Indian Identity in America**

Indian-Americans are called ‘model minority’ in the United States as they are law abiding, highly educated, hard working and adaptable to local conditions. Economic success, knowledge of English and experience with democracy at home have won them acceptance in the American society. Indian-Americans have formed ethnic, linguistic and regional cultural organizations such as the Kerala association, Gujarati association, Telugu associations etc. These associations hold national conventions in which thousands including Americans participants in cultural, culinary and handicraft extravaganzas. The regional associations show that they provide a setting for meeting people of same region speaking same language. These organizations on the whole maintain a separate Indian identity. There is a proliferation of temples, gurudwaras and churches which are centres of religion, cultural, educational, charitable and social activities and more are being built. Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Ramakrishan Mission, Chinmaya Mission and the Swaminarayan Sansthan have their units in America. Festivals like Holi, Deepawali, Dussehra and Gurupurav are celebrated with enthusiasm in which Americans also participate.

Asian Indians are internally segmented by class, castes, language, region and religion. Indians belonging to all regions, religions, languages and caste are now represented within the US immigrant population. The Indian population in US is far more diverse than imagined at home and all the segments of Indian immigrant population in US are not uniformly rich and privileged. The professionals, technocrats and entrepreneurs are highly visible in American society and they even earn more than US born professionals. All of Indian Americans are not Silicon Valley millionaires. The Indian at home may not believe that a sizeable number of Indians holding working class jobs in US are often poorly paid and insecure. They work as security guards, taxi drivers, factory workers, store keepers, hotel or restaurant workers. Some Indian Americans were reported to live in households with incomes below $25,999, even though Indian Americans reported the highest median household income. This reflects that not all Indians are millionaires and there is a lot of inequalities like a fifth of Indian Americans have no health insurance, a higher
percentage than the national average (Prashad 2004: 29). In this connection, it is pertinent to point out that increased number of Indians comes to the US on family reunification rather than through professional preference quota (Leonard cited in Lessinger 2003: 168). This shows that large number of lower middle class people have migrated to US than otherwise thought to be so (Lessinger 2003: 167-168).

Indians in America are seen to be aligned with host land, as harmonious contributor of food and music. They are keen protectors of their identity as ‘Indian’, which is very much evident in their grocery shops, large number of Bollywood film rentals, growing numbers of temples around the country or addition to the growing Indian community settled in US. There are, however, differences among different generation on their idea of bonding with home land. Among them those who want to belong to India want to belong to the mythical India of their memory, their own sense of what it was and has been. This forms a group of people, specifically the earlier generation in large part, who ‘adapts to new structures of feelings in host land but don’t want to loose their anchor in rapidly imaginary waters’. In other words, the second-generation Indians tend to value assimilation more than their parent’s generation. Also, one finds that in large communities, where there are sizeable numbers of variety of Indians like Bengali, Marathi etc, the idea of Indian identity tends to be quite mixed. For instance, ‘one is a Bengali before one is an Indian’, which results in the formation of small enclaves based on regional and linguistic identities. Several of the regional groups have the equivalent of the ‘Sunday’ schools in their temples, where old folktales, religious texts and rituals are kept alive for second and third generation of Indians (Deshpande 2004: 43).

Second-generation has to respond to the social and economic contradictions of (1) the nostalgia of the immigrant parents and the petrification of visions of India in the diaspora, (2) the tension between assimilationist and pluralist models of national identity in the United States, (3) the context of multiculturalist identity politics and ethnic segregation on college campuses. Indian American youth tries to make sense of state, educational and community discourses of race and ethnicity, while also participating in youth subcultures and drawing on the popular cultures to address or evade their social and material dilemmas (Maira 2002: 189). Second generation youth participate in, even help produce, performances of culture that simultaneously remix
elements of "tradition" and "modernity", "the authentic" and "the hybrid". Going to classes on multiethnic campus, wearing hip-hop gear, participating in sports, working at part-time jobs—all these are examples of activities that cannot be used to symbolize pure Indianess. Markers worn by South Asian women that have been read as signs of "tradition, "otherness", or in the case of the violent attacks by the Dotbusters, un-assimilable "dotheads" are now packaged and sold to the White women. The fashion and industries have refashioned Henna as "temporary tattoos" and sometimes as a women’s ritual that appeals to New Age feminist or body arts subcultures in the United States (Maira 2002: 195-198).

Though Indians are viewed and seen as the model group, however, politically they are yet to make much impact and represent a very minor force affecting the U.S. policies. Yet, they have marked their place in a short span of stay in the host country. The 1.7 million (census 2000) Indian-American community were actively involved in the struggle for residence and citizenship rights in the early part of the twentieth century. Dalip Saund (became a member of American Congress in 1957) and rebels like Tarak Nath Das mobilized the Indian community in California against anti-Indian violence and exclusion. The Ghadar Party was organized by Indians in San Francisco between 1913 and 1914 for struggle in India against colonialism. The 1.70 million strong Indo-Americans is a sizeable voting force but only a small fraction of this force takes interest in political activities. Indians actively contribute funds for electioneering to the political parties (mostly to Democrats) at the federal, state and local level including that for election to the President to draw attention of mainstream politicians to their concerns. The dot.com bubble burst, the information technology revolution, predominance of Indians in the software industry, Indian achievements on Wall Street, in the professions like medicine, engineering and the sciences have also helped in reaping political dividends.

Indo-US relations had witnessed a hostile atmosphere for a long time before the impact of Indian diaspora was being felt on US economy society and polity. Indians believed that Americans acted against India's interest. US-Soviet competition and Indo-Pakistan rivalry spoiled Washington bilateral relations with New Delhi. US military fact with Pakistan further worsened the bilateral relations. America was late in discovering the real potential of Indian diaspora because of her restrictive
immigration policies. Textbooks, the media and academic writings depicted India as a backward society. Americans perceived that India is full of diseases, death and illiteracy. As a result of these negative messages about India, most Americans have had misconceptions and negative feelings about India and Indians. With the changing scenario under the impact of globalization and liberalization, the bilateral relations between US and India have totally changed from hostile to the one being friendly. Indo-American community had played a decisive role in changing perceptions of decision-makers between the two countries that had limited contact and conflicting interest. It is estimated that 25 percent of the Indian elites have relatives in America. With 74,603 students studying in the United States, India is the largest source of foreign students in the country. Besides, India offers a huge consumer market. From the socio-politico and economic considerations, India now occupies a place of pride in the bilateral relations between India and US (Rubinoff 2005: 172-175).

Two national organizations, the Federation of Indian Associations in America (FIAA) and Associations of Indians in America (AIA), attempts to represent Indian’s political interests. Second generation Indian-Americans take keen interest in the American national politics. Indo-American organizations cultivate prominent congressmen and Senators. As a result of this lobbying, 118 out 435 legislators in the US congress have become members of India Caucus. This caucus plays an import role in influencing opinion in congress and defeating anti-India legislation. As a result of lobbying by India caucus and individual Indo-Americans through their associations, the Indian stand on nuclear test of 1998, Kargil war and the recent issue of agreement on civilian use of nuclear energy was better appreciated and understood by opinion makers, legislators, media and government officials in US. As result of these parleys, by InfoTech companies and others, the long standing demand of raising the quota of 65,000 H-1B visas per year was raised to 2,00,000 H-1B visa per year by the congress (HLC 2002:174).

Thus, Indian Americans have successfully elevated itself from the state of mere dispersed groups to the status of reputed and enlightened community owing to their qualities, perseverance and intellect. They have politically integrated with the mainstream American political process, however, they are not much in favour of social integration which involves the dilution of their Indian identity. Yet, the Indians
can certainly play a meaningful and worthwhile ambassadorial role. The achievement of status of ‘minority model’ in a short span of time itself mirrors the significance and achievement of Indians in the host land.

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE DIASPORIC IDENTITY

The policies of immigration followed in Australia and the United States are much more inviting than many other countries like Germany and Japan. They allow relatively large number of persons to immigrate and become permanent residents. The policies for admission in these nations allow for a variety of reasons, as noted previously in the study, criterions like family reunification, economic needs of the nation, and refugee status. Relative ease of naturalization and full participation in the country ensured through citizenship shows acceptance of immigrants in the host society. Generally, traditional countries of immigration are more open than non-immigrant countries. In the United States, for instance, any foreigner who enters the country as a permanent resident can apply for citizenship after five years. Spouses and children of residents can apply after three years. The qualifying essentials are ability to read and write ordinary English and a basic knowledge of United States history and governmental structures besides having a good moral record. In Australia, immigrants may become citizens after two years of residence and a basic knowledge of English. Thus, one observes that admission and naturalization policy in both the countries is liberal and open, where rate of naturalization is quite high. However, rate of illegal immigrants in United States is comparatively higher than Australia. Public integration effort is moderate in Australia in comparison to low effort displayed in the United States. It is to be noted that proportion of immigrants in Australia and America is higher owing to their relatively open immigration policies. It is interesting to note that the proportions of foreign born is higher in Australia than it is in the U.S., but immigrants ethos appears to figure much more prominently in the United States (Lynch and Simon 2002: 74-76).

It is also noted that in both Australia and the United States, immigrants are defined as foreign born as opposed to non-citizen which includes naturalized persons and older people as opposed to only younger ones. The state tries to control inflow of immigrants by revising immigration policies from time to time. In the US, the process for acquiring H-1B visa necessitates working through four government agencies; the
local employment service, US department of Labor, US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and the State Department. It takes four months for the INS to clear H-1B visa. Sponsors of temporary workers are obliged to shoulder a series of responsibilities for the workers. For example, A sponsor of 457 visa in Australia has to carry the liability of A$2,000 per month if the worker fails to pay his/her house rent, telephone bill, etc. (Xiang 2002: 76).

The US waves of migration in late nineteenth and twentieth centuries were largely unplanned. They had a common border with a large and populous country like Mexico. America’s problems have also been exacerbated by an historical slave class. There are issues of ghettoisation in United States. Australia, on the other hand, had a planned immigration policy. It rejected policy of guest workers unlike Europe which brought cheap laborers who over the generations, wanted to stay back. Australia also refused to take residents of Papua and New Guinea on its independence in 1975, who claimed long association with Australia (Menadue 2003: 82). America is a large, complicated country, with cultural admixtures that makes it less susceptible to generalizations. America is now a multicultural and multi-ethnic society. Americans are accustomed to living with people from all over the world, to working with them, going to school with them, seeing them everywhere in daily life. Immigration is itself one of what Lincoln called America’s “mystic chord of memory”, a binding force and an item of civic nationalism. But the story of immigration and America has always been attended by resistance, prejudice and violence (Morrow 2003: 93).

Part of enormous change in America in the 1960s and 1970s was brought by the revolutionary Immigration Act of 1965, which had a dramatic effect on the culture and complexion of America, bringing in immigrants from Asia, Latin America, Africa and other non-European sources. The engine of American democracy operates on, even requires, a dynamic of immigration disciplined by the constitution, with a prosperous economy paying the bills and ensuring the absorption and assimilation of all corners. Immigration is America’s continuing raison d’etre and its moral justification. Immigration is not an incidental generosity or mere gesture of noblesse oblige, but is the heart of American idea. Without immigration, there is no America, economically, culturally, morally (Morrow 2003: 102-103). Unlike Britain and United States, which recognizes the multicultural reality in its educational and media systems,
but does not proclaim cultural variety as a national objective, Australia differs (Jupp 1991: 104-105).

Official Australia has settled for a broad category of non-English speaking background residents which only extends back for two generations. This contrasts with the racial category (Black or Afro-American) used in the United States, the ‘ethnic minority’ non-European category used in Britain or the ‘visible minority’ category used in Canada. In Australia, it is based on language background, other than for Aborigines. This is not the only basis for ethnicity and language may not always be very relevant, especially for those fluent in English but not of English descent. As in the United States (where the debate has been much fiercer), many in the majority Anglo-Australian population regard emphasis on minorities as threatening or as undermining establishing society. Among those who support multiculturalism there has also been debate and sometimes confusion (Healey 1997: 34).

Thus, as evident from the discussion, Indian diaspora has indeed emerged as a ‘model minority’ in both the countries. There is a continuous increase in Indian emigration to distant lands in search of better opportunities and standard of life. Indians have politically made some progress in US owing to their economic riches and history of migration. In Australia, Indians are not seen occupying positions in the political ladder owing to their recent migration and fewer people. However, they are wooed by countries owing to their skills and high educational qualification. Indian Diaspora constitutes a unique and important force in world culture. The most profound consequence is that the culture of destination countries is altered by diverse cultures of migrants. Some scholars point that greater amount of diversity in a population act as a violence precipitator. In some countries migrants are kept in virtual second-class citizenship. It is at this point that the question of victimization of immigrants becomes pertinent particularly to the study of diasporic population. Hence, the following section deals with the problems of Indians in the two countries.

PROBLEMS OF THE DIASPORA

Victimization of immigrants takes various forms. They suffer discrimination in terms of housing, work and welfare facilities. Despite many measures taken to give immigrants their fair share in the host country, many people are still disadvantaged
due to problems like racial discrimination, inefficient governmental policies etc. Some
diasporic communities suffer from social, economic and political disabilities in the
form of acute or chronic forms of racial discrimination, injustice and systemic forms
of oppression. During early phase of migration Indians, along with other Asians,
suffered under discriminatory policies that balanced the use of cheap Asian labour
with economic development, but, always gave preferential opportunities to those of
British and European descent. A number of theories are associated with incidences of
crime against migrants like rational choice theory, routine activity theory etc. Without
getting into detailing on the theoretical expositions about crime, let us proceed with
examining the problems faced by immigrants in day to day life.

Ghassan Hage (1998: 232-233) defines as to what really constitutes White
fantasy. Whiteness, for him, operates as a symbolic field of accumulation where many
attributes such as looks, accent, cosmopolitanism or Christianity can be accumulated
and converted into Whiteness. They are clearly divided over whether they should
reign over an ethnically diverse population or not, or over how much of an ethnically
diverse population they should reign. There is an underlying undisputed belief in the
reign of White Australians over Third World-looking migrants who are constructed
within this fantasy as a constant source of governmental problems. The White nation
fantasy is a vision of a society divided into a class of White worriers and a class of
Third World looking problems.

In 1950s, the Minister for Immigration in Australia had established a
Committee to investigate conduct of migrants. The findings of the Committee
indicated attitudes of people and media in Australia. It indicated that, while crime by
migrants received undue publicity, little publicity was given to offences against
migrants. It also reported that migrants suffered disadvantages such as lack of proper
balance of the sexes, considerable psychological strain like loneliness and unfamiliar
environment, lack of knowledge of local language, and lack of support of one’s
family (Mukherjee 2002: 190). It is pointed that migrants often suffer biases in terms
employment opportunities. Some of them did not get employment of their choice and
some of them have not chosen to permanently settle in Australia. The recognition of
overseas qualification has been difficult in professional areas as well as tertiary
education. Migrants also face racial discrimination if their spoken English is accented.
If the migrant is less qualified and has poor proficiency in English, they are employed in low paid occupations and employed in industries such as manufacturing. Research literatures on the diasporic problems claims that ethnic/migrant/minority groups are often stereotyped and are used as scapegoats. Migrants alter cultures of some destination countries, while in others they are expected to assimilate or integrate. In some countries, diverse cultural groups are kept as second class citizens. Despite discrimination, Indians have been extremely successful in the professions. Nonetheless, there has always been some element of prejudice against Indians, as all migrants have experienced.

Blau (Cited in Howard et al. 2002: 43) has argued that population diversity has two dimensions: heterogeneity (the horizontal dimension, which included cultural and ethnic diversity) and inequality (the vertical dimension, largely defined as the economic structuring of the society). Blau suggested that high levels of inequality and heterogeneity would produce higher levels of conflict in society. Hence, nations with greater complexity of diversity should be characterized by more conflict and violent crime since encounters between folks with different values, beliefs and commitments are likely to be explosive. However, not all nations evidencing a high complexity of diversity are plagued by high rates of violence, and some nations that are not especially complex have more violent encounters between their people than would be expected. Complexity refers to the amount of variation in the population along certain types of indicators (that is biological, structural, cultural and dynamic) while integration refers to equity and involvement in social living as represented by these same types of indicators. Complexity refers to the presence of difference in a society and integration gets at how well these differences are absorbed into the society. It is argued, that the complexity of cultural diversity increases as the number of ethnic, religious, racial and linguistic groups increases in a nation. Furthermore, it is suggested that heterogeneity correspond to greater complexity of cultural diversity and integration indicates to the capacity for the communication of ideas, rules, and norms broadly among the members of the society. Hence, greater complexity promotes violence in society whereas integration of cultural diversity buffers it by ensuring greater understanding and empathy among the variegated population. At times, migrants also suffer formal discrimination at the hands of their host country like refusal of citizenship (Howard et al. 2002: 46-47, 53).
Immigrants coming from India directly or indirectly into America or Australia face a complex problem in finding a social space and shaping individual identity. The process of finding social space and individual identity should be mutually acceptable to both Indians and anticipated social and geographical context. Mainstream cultural environment in both the countries is basically Euro-centric. Euro-centrism affords a limited social space to persons of color including Latin Americans, Africans, Asians and Middle Easterners. They have a pre-conceived notion of Indians and think that a majority of non-peasant Indians speak a funny kind of English. They consider India to be full of destitutes. Fourthly, the myth about the new immigrant's population contributing to the supposed community melting pot or a similarly well blended multicultural salad-bowl creates another problematic situation (Perry 2002: 84). Often immigrants have been blamed for corrupting morals, stealing jobs, and raising the crime rate, and at other times they have been largely forgotten and invisible by the host country. They are accused of staying in segregated places and creating their own ethnic enclaves leading to ghettoisation in the host country.

Indians find themselves targeted for racial bias because of both their skin tone and general economic and social successes, both of which invite scorn and categorization in a society that attempts to be egalitarian but lives by old dictum of fair skin superiority. The reported successes of the Indian diaspora in the Silicon Valley or that of Indian professionals generally in the West and the flow of remittances from the gulf, as we will note in the next chapter, has changed their status from being relatively ignored to attracting attention not only from India but world over. Various hate-crimes and dispersed incidents at workplace and in everyday lives of individuals will attest to this complex brown of what it means to be brown in a rainbow of uneasy multiculturalism (Deshpande 2004: 44-45). Let us see as to how the race relations in both the countries have affected the Indian diaspora.

RACE RELATIONS:

The word “race” was introduced in English in the sixteenth century and initially was used to designate a category of persons whose similar characteristic could be attributed to common descents. In terms of modern biology, it designates a subspecies, a local form which is an adaptation to a particular environment produced by natural selection (Mitchell 1968: 153). Balibar (1991: 21) argues about ‘differentialist
racism’, which is a form of racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, incompatibility of lifestyles and traditions.

Racism continues to be practised in many parts of the world after the end of apartheid in South Africa. It has no fig leaf of political and social legitimacy. The overtly racist Ku Klux Klan in America operates under the cover of anonymous masks. As an officially sanctioned doctrine, racism has ceased to exist in the world. That it continues to be practised in many parts of the world is deplorable. But the forces of liberalism can at least claim a shambolic victory in that they have driven racism underground, made it the criminalized territory of mindless thugs and goons (Suraiya 2009: 12).

Racial discrimination was all pervading in naturalization laws of US. The civil war and the fourteenth constitutional amendment of 1868 paved the way for the 1870 Nationality Act which extended naturalization to aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent. The 1940 legislation extends naturalization to military personnel regardless of race and permits indigenous races of Western Hemisphere to naturalize. The bar to naturalization of Chinese was lifted in 1943. The naturalization process was extended to persons of Filipino birth and descent and persons of races indigenous to India in 1946. Finally the 1952 Act on Naturalization removed all racial bars to citizenship.

In the process of multiculturalism, the groups that look alike racially were lumped together and treated as though they were same. In America history, many subgroups had resisted this type of racial grouping. For example, early Japanese migrants differentiated from the Chinese migrants as they had come under the preview of exclusion Acts (Kurien 2003: 277). Many scholars argue that there are no entities or categories based on biological definitions of race. Race like ethnicity, is socially constructed, not a physical fact, but instead an ever-changing set of motions subject to shifting socio-political realities and power structures (Rohrl 1996 cited in Halter 2005). The word ‘race’ is loathed when it refers to human beings as black or white or having similar physical features. Earlier African – Americans were treated racially as black but now they are referred as ‘Ethnies’ (Halter 2005). Race relation in urban America was formed by immigration and state policies. Law and court cases decided
the supremacy of Whites over non-Whites. In such a situation, rewards and citizenship were restricted to Whites. These policies legitimized racial and ethnic conflict targeting lower-status non-whites (Omi and Winant cited in Olzak and Susan 2003). Secondly, laws and courts dismantled barriers between diverse racial and ethnic groups giving rights to minorities groups (Marx 1998; Olzak 1992; Cornell and Douglas cited in Olzak and Susan 2003). This created competition and conflict. Prior to 1870, racial identity was referred as Whites and non-Whites. The Whites were referred as persons of Anglo-Saxon or Northern European descent and non-Whites were referred as everyone else. Citizenship was strictly a white privilege (Olzak and Shanahan 2003: 482-483). Non-white and Non-Anglo Australians are more aware of Australian-ness or ‘Australian way of life’ because they are more frequently excluded or insulted by them (Elder, 2007:139).

American Indians (Natives) are the victims of violent crimes at a rate more than twice the national average, according to the first comprehensive study of crimes involving Indians. The study, released by the Justice Department, also found that Indians, unlike Whites and Blacks, were most likely to be the victims of violent crimes committed by members of a race other than their own. A full 60 percent of those who committed violent crimes against Indians in the period covered by the study were White, according to the victims, while 29 percent of the offenders were other Indians and 10 percent were described as Black, the report said. By contrast, other studies have shown that 69 percent of those committing violent crimes against Whites are White, and that 81 percent of those committing violent crimes against Blacks are Black. The study was published by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the statistical branch of the Justice Department, using data gathered from 1992 to 1996 by the National Crime Victimization Survey, which asks a sample of American households each year about crimes they have experienced. Alcohol played a major part in violent crimes against Indians, the report found, both those committed by Indians against other Indians and those committed by people of other racial groups. The study said the four states with the most Indian residents were Oklahoma, with 252,000, followed by California, Arizona and New Mexico (Butterfield 15 February 1999, New York Times).
The use of "Hindu" as a pejorative label for Indian Americans has historical antecedents in the United States and Canada and can be traced to the arrival of the first wave of Indian immigrants in Washington, and later California in the early twentieth century. Sikhs as well as Muslims were caricatured as "Hindoos" by an ignorant public and media. In Canada, they met hostility who held the "tide of turbans" responsible for depressed wages. In the United States, several restrictive immigration policies welcomed Asians like the Immigration Restriction Law in 1917 designated India one of the countries in the "Asiatic barred zone" from which immigration to the U.S. was prohibited. The self- named "Dotbusters" gang went on a rampage against "dotheads", a derogatory term for Indians alluding to the bindi, an ornamental mark worn by some women on their foreheads, pulling women's saris etc. One also finds segregation in the society, as evident by an instance cited that in a cafeteria of a college people were divided in to ethnically specific clusters of students at different tables (Maira 2002: 5-7). At work many Indian American professional feel that they encounter a 'glass ceiling' at some point in their careers, limiting further promotion in American management structure. School children and college students encounter blunt expressions of racism as classmates try to decide whether Indian students are Black or White, and then blame them for being neither. American nativism and racism have an impact on Indian immigrants which creates a sense of unease and cultural discomfort, even among those who have been most successful. This discomfort may encourage a transnational outlook that by constantly reminding that 'home' is elsewhere and should not be abandoned (Lessinger 2003: 175, 178).

Let us now move on to the recent development of alleged racial attacks on Indian students in Australia.

Australia for the past few decades has moved on from being just a migrant country to a multicultural nation. The rush of Indian students in Australia particularly in the last few years has increased. Today, Harvard and Oxford does not seem to be the only preferred choices for Indian immigrants. A growing number of mobile Indians are visible in search of education, job and better standards of life. However, it is argued that many recent Indians migrating do not have even basic skills like English language or computer knowledge unlike the IITS, IIMS trained professionals. Many come as students in private institutions for courses like cookery with an intention of getting work and permanent residency. They work late hours and go
home late when local goons target them for the colour of their skin. Majority of Indians live in the suburbs which tend to be ethnically more diverse.

The events of last few months, when many Indian students were attacked lead one to question the very notion of ‘multiculturalism’. Massive protests by Indians took place in Melbourne and Sydney following these alleged racial attacks of Indian students. It was organised by the Federation of Indian Students of Australia over the violence against Indian students, dubbed as "curry bashings". Police claimed these to be street crimes, opportunist attacks and denied them to have racial overtones. "There's no allegation, no substantial allegation that these are racially motivated. I don't believe so, and neither does the Indian government," trade and acting foreign minister, Simon Crean told local media persons in Australia (Reuters 3 June 2009).

In the backdrop of increasing attacks on Indian students in Australia, a new survey has said that 85 percent Australians feel that racial discrimination is rampant in the country with one in five of them being a victim of verbal abuse. An 11-year study by a collaboration of Australian universities has found that a considerable number of the 16,000 Australians surveyed feel that although cultural diversity is good for the country, the differences may stop everyone from getting along. Over 40 percent of those surveyed feel that cultural differences pose a threat to societal harmony, Kevin Dunn from the University of Western Sydney's school of social science said. "The Cronulla riots and the recent attacks on people of Indian descent are an example of this. The figures show that 85 percent of Australia acknowledges there is racial prejudice in the country," he said. "So if you take that alongside the 87 percent that are pro-multiculturalism, clearly you've got a third of the nation that tolerate cultural diversity but are concerned at the impact it will have on society," Dunn said. The study also said that 6.5 percent Australians are against multiculturalism. Referring to racism within different communities in Australia, the survey also found that at least one in five Australians experience verbal abuse such as offensive slang names for different cultural groups or swearing and offensive gestures, while 11 per cent feel they don't belong or are inferior, according to the survey as quoted by the 'Herald SUN' report on Wednesday (PTI 24 June 2009). Sunil Badami (2008: 9-15) recollects his growing up years in Australia being one of only three Indian kids at school, and called by many names such as "Curry-muncher, towel-head, abo, coon, boong,
darkie, nig-nog, golli-wog”. Often, *Tall Poppies* is used disparagingly to describe what is seen as a populist, levelling social attitudes. Someone is said to be a target of tall poppy syndrome when his or her assumption of a higher economic, social, or political position is criticised as being presumptuous, attention seeking, or without merit. Alternatively, it is seen as a societal phenomenon in which people of genuine merit are criticised or resented because their talents or achievements elevate them above or distinguish them from their peers.

However, against the backdrop of a series of attacks on Indian students here, Australia's first Asia-born Cabinet minister said that racism in this country was confined to "a minority of people" with extreme views. "On the whole I think Australians are tolerant," Malaysia-born Penny Wong, Federal Climate Change Minister, was quoted as saying. "It is a minority of people in Australia who hold those sorts of extreme and intolerant views," Wong said. "By and large our political leaders, our community leaders, church leaders do continue to advocate for inclusion, for respect, for tolerance, for acceptance." However, Wong had previously recounted her "pretty difficult" childhood facing racist remarks while growing up in Adelaide. India's High Commissioner to Australia Sujata Singh had also acknowledged that there had been "a racist element" to the attacks on Indian students in Melbourne (PTI 31 May 2009).

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd said that an assault against any international student was "one assault too many" and that the Australian government has taken it (the attacks on Indian students) very seriously. However, he pointed out that if the international comparative criminal data was looked into, Australia would still be the safest country in the world, safer than the UK, France, Italy, and the US. "In relative terms, Indians and international students are safer here than in most other countries," Rudd said, soon after he came out after an extended question time session in the parliament. He said that homicide rates in Australia were lower than in other countries. Describing Australia as a multicultural, multiracial country, Rudd said that the Indian community was a vital contributor to the country's culture, food and music and that the two countries shared, apart from their love for cricket and Bollywood, also a deep affection. "In any relationship, there are bound to be problems. Let's not take this out of context," he said (Srivastava 24 June 2009).
There is, however, a strong disconnect in the views expressed by older immigrants and the newer immigrants. The older immigrants feel that they had lived peacefully in this nation for years together but the sharp rise in the student population followed by the problems of attacks on them has made the community suddenly uncomfortable with its Indian identity. The older generation of Indians points out that the student community has first world expectations from this country (referring to their statements on police apathy and government inaction to these attacks) but fail to behave in accordance with how citizens of a first world country live. They find them loud and flashy and thus conspicuous and targets for such attacks. Young students say that the attacks cannot be condoned with such explanations and find it intriguing why their Indian elders here are not finding faults with the assailants but with them. In fact, the few locals here who are sympathetic to the cause point out that even body such as United India Association, an umbrella organisation of 24 Indian bodies representing various linguistic and regional identities, failed to react. Indians here feel that Indians are victims to street crimes and using the word racism has proved counterproductive. “I cannot figure out the difference between a Sri Lankan and a South Indian. How can an assailant figure that out,” questions Aparna Krishna, who moved to Melbourne three years ago. Rakesh, a local businessman in Sydney scoffed, “Illiterate Indians,” while another elderly Indian said, “The way they behave in trains is deplorable. They listen to loud music and talk loudly on the phone.” Some also grudge the easy route to Permanent Residency that these students have (Srivastava 29 June 2009).

Some suggestions can be, however, put forward to prevent victimization of immigrants. They are as follows:

- Codes of workplace conduct like those forbidding sexual harassment could prohibit racial slurs, name calling and so forth. Spelling out conduct that is not acceptable would serve to reduce excuses for racial harassment, such as: ‘I was only having a bit of fun’ and ‘if they don’t like it here they should go home’.

- Immediate cleaning of racist graffiti would remove the rewards for this kind of harassment.

- Caller-ID devices may be as helpful in controlling racially abusive calls as they have been in controlling sexually obscene calls.
Giving personal alarms to repeat victims of racial attacks may be as valuable to them as to victims of domestic violence (Clarke 2002: 107).

The recent attacks on Indian students in Australia seem to be a mix of both opportunist and racial attacks. Both are closely intertwined by the fact that Indians owing to their riches have become soft targets of violence in addition to the colour of their skin. It needs to be evaluated in a larger context of the policies of multiculturalism which proclaims to celebrate diversity. The official policy of multiculturalism in Australia will only be relevant when it can address such divisive forces in the country. Several international initiatives highlight migrant protection concerns like UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants, the global campaign promoting the 1990 UN Convention, UN General Assembly Proclamation of International Migrants Day, 2001 World Conference against Racism and Xenophobia, anti discriminatory activity by ILO, and training by IOM. International Laws also protect migrants like International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Thus, states are bound to protect its immigrant population against victimization. Also, home countries need to address the problems of its diaspora with more sensitivity and concern.

CONCLUSION

Multicultural accommodation entails something more than peaceful coexistence of different cultures and communities. In violence and strife-ridden situations, peaceful existence is no doubt important, but peace to last in a democracy what is perhaps even more important is that diverse populations learn to live as equal (Mahajan 2005: 117). Asian Americans constitute the fastest growing minority in the United States by both birth and immigration. There is a general tendency to perceive Asian Americans as a single homogeneous group obscures the reality that while Asian Americans share some similarities in culture, the various groups do exhibit differences. The image of Indian Americans as a “model minority” is contingent on the class status and educational achievements of privileged cohort of the overall immigrant group. The economic resources, class aspirations, and financial anxieties that second-generation youth inherit from their parents significantly influence their reworking of racial, ethnic and gender ideologies as they grow up (Maira 2002: 10).
Diasporic cultures indeed translate a set of differences into something new, yet those differences keep occurring within the discourses of origin and other hierarchical social orderings. Indian’s connections to each other and to the host land are often formulated in languages that span categories of both race and ethnicity as evident from the present study. The Indian diasporic community has made its presence felt in both the settler countries. The Indians can play a crucial role in the bi-lateral relations between the countries. However, their potential has not been exploited fully to further meaningful and worthwhile ties and linkages. The relative success of Australian multicultural experiment in an ethnically pluralistic setting can provide an alternative to assimilationist model. Anti-Asian racism, incidents of police brutality, and racial assaults on young men of colour provides a glimpse into lives of diasporic community who are struggling to live and create their identity in the new home. However, the culturally pluralistic nation-states should ensure that diverse communities feels secure and coexist as equal.