CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTS

I Summary:

1. Background:

In this chapter, an attempt at giving a brief summary of all the chapters is made. This is done in order to arrive at findings and conclusions, based on the data and to give suggestions for further research.

Migration is a normal phenomenon and can occur for a variety of reasons. In 2000, the number of people involved in international migration was 175 million, amounting to 2.9 percent of the world’s population. The number was more than double from 75 million in 1965 to 175 million in 2000 as the world’s population grew twofold over the same period from 3 to 6 billion people. United Nations has estimated that world population will be increased to around 9 billion by 2050 while the number of migrants will rise to 230 million or about 2.6 percent of world’s population.

India is one of the countries which have the origin of the large number of migrants for the international migration. It is estimated that 20 million people of Indian origin are migrated all over the world.

Massive migration causes social change. Among the Push and Pull factors, economic development factors are the significant factors that deeply relate to migration in the modern world. The other important factors are population trends, environmental deterioration, human right’s violations and armed conflicts.

Migrants encounter with the cultures alien to them in the host countries. Their way of life, values, beliefs norms and even material culture are affected by the clash with the cultures of the native people. This leads to change in their culture resulting into their assimilation.
2. Focus And Scope Of The Study:

This research aimed at studying the factors that were responsible for the cultural change and assimilation amongst the people of Indian origin in Thailand. While doing this research, the researcher had focused his attention and taken care of five major components of culture: Symbols; Language; Values and Beliefs; Norms; and Material Objects.

Symbol: It is anything that carries a particular meaning recognized by people who share the culture. Thai symbols comprised of three important institution, Nation, Religion and Monarchy.

Language: It is the key to the world of culture and a system of symbols that allows members of a society to communicate with one another. The Great King Ramkhamhaeng of Sukhodaya invented Thai alphabets in 1283. It is assumed that Thai alphabets were adapted from Mon and Khmer alphabets.

Values and Beliefs: They are defined as standards, by which people assess desirability, goodness, and beauty and which serve as broad guidelines for social living. The core beliefs and values of Thais centres around Buddhism. The establishment of beliefs and values results in the creation of rites, customs, and norms as well as material objects.

Norms: They are rules and expectations by which a society guides the behavior of its members. Thai norms, mostly derived from beliefs in Buddhism which are categorized as conventionality and tradition.

Material Culture: It is relevant to society’s technology, knowledge that a society applies to the task of living in a physical environment. Thai material objects are the tangible materials that demonstrate Thainess like Thai food, Clothing, Architecture and other things that are made in Thailand in Thai style, both classical and contemporary concepts.

3. Theoretical Framework:

The researcher, in this study referred to the theories related to three major concepts namely: Social Change, Migration and Assimilation.

Social Change refers to variations over time in the ecological ordering of populations and communities, in patterns of roles and social interactions, in the
structure and functioning of institutions, and in the cultures of societies. Different Social Scientists put forth different Theories of Social Change. They are as follows:

- **Theories Of Social Change:**
  
  **Evolutionary Theory:**
  
  Most scholars agreed that all societies progressed or evolved, through three stages of development: savagery, barbarism, and civilization. One of its early exponents of evolutionary theory was Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). He believed that all societies followed uniform, natural laws of evolution.

  **Cyclical Theory:**
  
  Cyclical theory believes that societies move forward and backward, up and down, in an endless series of cycles. Spengler put forth the Theory of “Majestic Cycles”. The German historian, Oswald Spengler (1880-1936) believed that Western civilization was headed downhill and would soon die out, just as the Greek and Egyptian civilizations. The theory influenced social scientists like Arnold Toynbee and Pitirim Sorokin who proposed their theories based on this view. Toynbee believed that all civilizations rise and fall. But, in his view the rise and fall do not result from some inevitable, biologically determined life cycle. Instead, they depend both on human beings and on their environments.

  **Equilibrium Theory:**
  
  Talcott Parsons developed this theory. Equilibrium theory believes that a change in one part produces compensatory changes throughout society. Both, the family and the school, for example, play an important part in socializing children, instilling in them the norms of society. If the family’s role changes, then the school’s role is also likely to change, ensuring that functions essential to society are performed. Such changes keep the various parts of the social system in balance, ensuring social order and stability.

  **Conflict Theory:**
  
  Conflict theorists believed that societies are always marked by conflict and that conflict is the key to change. According to Marx, a capitalist society includes two classes: the owners of the means of production (the bourgeoisie or capitalists) and those who must sell their labour (the proletariat or workers). These classes are in
constant conflict with each other. The capitalists are determined to keep wages low in order to maximize their profits while the workers resist this exploitation.

**Kinds of Social Change**: Social change is classified as a kind of “Structural Change” and classified into five categories of change: Change in social values; Change in institutions; Change in the distribution of possessions and rewards; Change in personnel and Change in the abilities or attitudes of personnel.

**Forces of Social Change**: War, Modernization Migration and Social Movements are among the most powerful and pervasive forces that produce social change at every level of social life.

- **Theories Of Migration**:

  **Concept Of Migration**: United Nations defines migration as “a form of spatial mobility between one geographical unit and another involving a permanent change of residence”

  **Types Of Migration**:
  - **Internal migration** refers to the movement of people within a political state, from one administrative unit to another. The movement can occur from rural to urban area, region to region or may be from urban to country side.
  - **International migration** refers to the movement of people across political states, resulting in a change in the legal status of the individual concerned. International migration also covers movements of refugees, displaced persons and other persons forced to leave their country and people going in search of Green Pastures to better their life-style. Type of international migration as given by Ronald Skeldon include: The settler’s migration system; The migrant worker’s migration system; The highly skilled peoples’ migration system; The students’ migration system; The asylum-seeker’s migration system.
  - **Various Types and Practices of Migration** classified by The World Migration Book include: Return migration; Forced migration;
Irregular migration; Orderly migration; Smuggling of migrants; Total migration/Net migration; Trafficking in persons; Re-emigration.

**Theory Of Push and Pull factors:** Push factors serve to drive off or send a stream of migrants from a particular locale. Pull Factors are socio-economic magnets and draw migrants to a given geographical area.

- **Theories Of Assimilation:**

  **Concept Of Assimilation:** The Encyclopedia has given the definition of Assimilation as “the process by which individuals or groups take on the culture of the dominant society, including language, values and beliefs and behavior patterns as well as the process by which groups are incorporated into the dominant society”.

  **Theories of Assimilation:**

  Robert E Park in his Race Relations Cycle Theory talks about the process of assimilation. It includes four stage: 1) Contact, 2) Competition, 3) Accommodation, and 4) Assimilation. The process of assimilation starts at the Contact Stage, right since the beginning of migration to a new land. In this stage a new comer learns new culture by developing contacts with the local people. The situation forces migrants to learn to talk with local people by using local language and by observing the way of life of the majority such as the way they eat, the way they behave, so that migrants have enough information to consider to change their way of life on the pattern of new culture as far as they can. After their contact with local people, Competition Stage occurs. At this stage the migrant starts thinking of adopting and adjusting to the way of life of the new society. After that, they develop more relations with the majority community and try to achieve the goal that is to live with the majority in a new society peacefully. Finally they try to refuse themselves to their own culture and try to assimilate the way of life of the new society.

  **Gordon’s Stages Of Assimilation** include: 1) Cultural or Behavioral Assimilation; 2) Structural Assimilation; 3) Marital Assimilation; 4) Identificational Assimilation; 5) Attitude Exceptional Assimilation; 6) Behaviour Receptional Assimilation; 7) Civic Assimilation.
Martin N. Marger's Theory Of Dimensions of Assimilation includes four distinct dimensions: 1) Cultural Assimilation; 2) Structural Assimilation; 3) Biological Assimilation; 4) Psychological Assimilation.

The Theory Based On The Factors Affecting Assimilation includes: 1) Manner of Entrance; 2) Time of Entrance; 3) Demographic Factors; 4) Cultural Similarity; 5) Visibility.

The Theory Based On Rate of Assimilation: According to Brewton Berry, the rate of migration is related to different factors. They include: 1) Attitudes of the Dominant or Host Group; 2) Attitudes of the Minority Group; 3) Cultural Kinship; 4) Race; 5) Other Factors such as the age and sex composition of the groups, the manner of settlement, the rate of entrance of the minority group.

4. Review Of Related Literature:

An exhaustive survey of related research on migration, social change and assimilation was conducted by the researcher. He surveyed 107 books and 43 articles from various journals. This determined the need and significance as well as the scope for the further research, due to the paucity of such research on Indian migrants in Thailand.

5 Universe And The Sample:

Thais date the founding of their nation to the 13th century. According to their history: in 1237, Thai chieftains overthrew their Khmer overlords at Sukhothai and established a Thai kingdom. After its decline, a new Thai kingdom in the south of Sukhothai rose to power in 1350. It was led by King U-Thong, the first king of Ayudhya. Some 90 years later, Sukhothai was politically incorporated with Ayudhya. The history is marked by three eras: Sukhothai (1237-1350), Ayudhya (1350-1767) and Bangkok. After a brief interlude of Thonburi period (1767-1782), the founding of Bangkok in 1782, across the Chao Phya River at the site of present-day city, marked the beginning of the Chakri Dynasty which currently rules the kingdom. Thailand was known as Siam until 1939.
Bangkok, the capital of Thailand was established in the mid 14th century. The city is situated in the central part of the country on the low flat plain of the Chao Phraya River, which is the most important river that can be compared with the main artery of the nation.

Bangkok is located on a flood plain delta of the Chao Phraya River. The location of the capital was then selected with the consideration as a natural defense from enemies and the richness of water for life earnings. Since its establishment, the city grew steadily in size and importance which covered only 4.14 square kilometers and increased nowadays to mega city that comprises of 50 districts. Up till now, Bangkok is the growth pole of the whole kingdom with total area of 1,568,737 square kilometers.

Bangkok is not only the center of tourist attraction in Southeast Asia but also the important city in the region’s industrial and financial sectors. Bangkok is also the center of transportation in Thailand with major roads and railways and air ways branching out to various parts of the country.

- **Thai Culture:**

The Thai beliefs and values are mainly based on Buddhism which has been an integral part of Thai society for a long time. It was evident that Buddhist teachings were adopted by the ruling elite as the principles of conducting the state affairs and by common people as guidelines for living peacefully with each other. The foundation of Thai beliefs thus lies in Buddhism, determining the mores of the society.

At present, technology facilitates the quick transmission of beliefs and values. Thus, modern technology affects the way the cultural identity is perceived. Hence, the present study attempted to deal with Thai traditional as well as contemporary culture and its effects on Indian migrants.

The major traits of Thai culture as pointed out by scholars include the following:

- Love for freedom
- Respect for the elders and observance of social hierarchy
- Cultivation of connection
• Belief in the law of Karma
• Superstitious beliefs
• Love for fun
• Inclination for consumption

The characteristics of Thai way of life include the following factors:
• Buddhism as the state religion
• The king as the chief of the state
• Thai language
• Thai customs based on Buddhism and other beliefs
• Etiquettes expressed in the manners of standing, sitting, walking, making obeisance to persons and paying respect to places.
• Thai mentality is consistent with Buddhist teaching of generosity and Buddhist cordiality.
• Arts that include dance, painting, sculpture, architecture, and literature.

The scope of this study encompasses 5 major components that include symbol, language, beliefs & values, norms and material objects.

• Indians in Thailand:

The Indian migration to the Southeast Asian region on which Thailand is situated started thousands of years ago. It (the migration) corresponded to the following three periods of the regional history: 1) The ancient period that extended from “Before the Birth of Christ” to A.D. 1257 marked by the foundation of Sukhodaya, the first Thai state. 2) The period extending from the foundation of Sukhodaya to the earlier Ratanakosindra era (1257-1855), 3) The period marked by the signing of the Bowring Treaty in 1855 up to the present.

The history of modern Indian communities in Thailand can be dated back to not more than 150 years ago. The ancestors of the people of Indian origin began to emigrate to Thailand in the late 19th century, notably after the signing of Bowring Treaty that required Siam reign to relinquish control of economic activities. This gave rise to free trade that produced economic boom. Another consequence of the
signing of such treaty had to do with Siam’s becoming linked to global economy and influenced by Western powers, especially Britain.

The Indians coming to Siam belonged to three major religions: Sikhism, Hinduism, and Islam. The great number of Sikhs came from Punjab. The Hindus came to Siam mainly from Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Many Indian Muslims came to Thailand from Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.

6. Research Methodology:

As regards Methodology of Research is concerned, this study aimed at inquiring into the Socio-Cultural Change and Assimilation among the People of Indian Origin residing in Bangkok, the capital of Thailand. Since, there were no authentic lists available of Indians residing in Bangkok, the population of people having Indian origin had been estimated from the lists made by organizations such as Indian Study Center, Indian Embassy in Bangkok, and Sri Guru Singh Sabha which amounted to around 60,000 persons settled in Bangkok. It was almost 60 percent of the total population of Indians settled in Thailand.

The Research Design of the present study being exploratory, no hypothesis was formed. The Methods used for this study were the Survey Method and the Interview Method. The Tools and Techniques used, for data collections were the Questionnaire, Interview and Participant Observation as well as Case Study. Primary and Secondary data were collected through the Questionnaire and Library sources. In the present study, a Structured Questionnaire consisting of open ended and closed ended questions was used. The researcher divided the questionnaire into 5 main sections; one was for seeking information regarding the socio-economic background of the respondents; the second was seeking to know about the motivational aspects i.e. Push and Pull factors of migration; the third was regarding change in Indian migrants’ life style in Thailand: mainly related to i) their interaction pattern ii) food habits, clothing pattern, use of ornaments and perfumes etc. iii) change related to marriage iv) religious beliefs v) practices and attitude towards polity and vi) mastery over Thai language and literature. The section four covered questions about Indian migrants, Cultural Assimilation into Thai Society in term of five cultural variables namely: i) Symbols ii) Language iii) Values and Beliefs iv) Norms and v) Material Objects. In
the last section an attempt was made to ascertain the Indian migrants’ opinion about Thai culture.

For the purpose of analyzing the data, the researcher had used both, Qualitative and Quantitative methods of analysis. In order to draw the statistical inferences, simple percentages were worked out. Since, opinions and perceptions of Thai culture were expressed through open-ended questions, the use of qualitative approach of analyzing the data was inevitable. The researcher interpreted data with the help of a theoretical framework, based on the theories of push-pull factors, social change and assimilation. The report of the present study is divided into nine main chapters. Questionnaire and Case-study reports are included in the Appendix. Bibliography is added at the end.

II Salient Findings:

Here, the researcher has made an attempt to highlight the salient findings with regard to various aspects of the present study:

1. The Universe And Sample Under Study:
   - Bangkok, the Universe of this study is the capital of Thailand.
   - Bangkok is one of the most modern and cosmopolitan cities in Asia.
   - It is estimated that 60,000 people of Indian origin or 60 percent of Indian migrants to Thailand are settled in Bangkok.
   - ‘Pahurat’ area of Bangkok is known as ‘Little India’ in Thailand.
   - There are many residential areas where people of Indian origin in Bangkok reside. They include: Surawongse Road, Silom Road, Sukhumvit Road, Charansanitwongse Road, Ban-Kheak Intersection, Ladplao Road, and Pacha-Utit Road etc.
   - The expensive and big business areas in Bangkok are at Silom Road, Surawongse Road and Sukhumvit Road.
   - Almost all rich Indians are found to have settled in Sukhumvit, Silom and Surawongse area.
• The sample of respondents chosen for the purpose of the present study mostly came from the above mentioned areas and educational institutions like International School and University.
• The sample included the representatives of different sections such as businessmen, employers, employees, medical doctors, housewives, students and unemployed individuals.
• The sample was drawn from all the three generations of migrants, namely – 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation in almost equal proportion.

Socio-Economic Background:
• A large number of respondents belonged to the younger age group of less than 35 years of age.
• Nearly equal proportion belonged to the middle age group of 36 to 55 years.
• Majority of the respondents were males (66 percent) while a considerable proportion was of females (34 percent).
• The sample of the respondents consisted of people belonging to different religious faiths.
• A majority of the respondents believed in Sikhism (52 percent) who were in trade and business while a considerable proportion of them was of Hindus (35.67 percent).
• Amongst Hindus, predominance was of Brahmin and Kshatriya castes.
• As regards marital status, more than two-third of the respondents were married.
• Since it is a three generational study, the majority of them were born in Thailand because they were 2nd and 3rd generation migrants.
• Since majority of the respondents were born in Thailand, they became Natural Thai Citizens.
• A good number of respondents had different levels of their education in India. Even those born in Thailand, were sent to India because of the availability of quality education in India.
Almost equal number of respondents were found to be engaged in service and business.

Majority of the servicemen were found to be engaged in the private sector.

Respondents were engaged in wholesale to retail to industrial and international trade and business.

They were found to be engaged in different sectors of business and financial activities.

Only an infinitesimal proportion of the respondents (5.67 percent) belonged to poor class with less than 20,000 baht as their family income per month while another 16.67 percent were in the middle income range and the preponderant proportion belonged to higher income group (72 percent).

The study sample had nearly equal representation of 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation migrants.

Majority of the respondents stayed in Thailand for 15 years or more.

As far as language proficiency is concerned, majority of the respondents could speak both in English and Thai fluently, in addition to their mother tongue and Hindi the national language of India.

Nearly fifty percent of them could also read and write in Thai language.

Almost one-half of the respondents originally, at the time of their birth belonged to Joint Families. Now, their proportion had been reduced to 28 percent.

These families being big business concerns in order to keep their assets in their own family they seemed to maintain the jointness of the family.

Bangkok being a metropolitan city, it was but natural that the preponderant proportion of the respondents lived in nuclear families.

3. Push – Pull Factors:

Majority of the respondents developed the idea to migrate at an early stage of their life by dreaming Green Pastures.

The original migrant respondents, in majority, left their native place before they were forty years of their age. This may be because taking risk of
migration and facing uncertainty involved in migration is easier when one is young.

- Out of the numerous reasons, in the case of majority of the respondents, economic factors appeared to be highly predominant.
- Pull factors seemed to be major motivating factors of emigration.
- Better job opportunity, higher salary, easy availability of job, and congenial living and working conditions seemed to be the major pull factors.
- The contingent factors like earlier migration and presence of family members, relatives and friends in Thailand as well as availability of more comforts appeared to be additional pull factors.
- Majority of the respondents (almost two-third) had moderate, poor to very poor economic conditions and family background at home in India, which acted as major push factor of their migration.
- Potential migrants always have various choices of destination. Thus, advance and prior knowledge of the pros and cons about the place of destination shaped the respondents’ choice of their destination.
- Majority of the respondents’ first choice of their destination for migration was Thailand (Bangkok) because of its strong pull factors.
- Similarity between Thai and Indian culture and religious harmony due to the practice of Buddhism in Thailand were the natural causes of choice of Thailand, as the place of their first destination.
- Easy access to self and dependents in getting visa made the choice of the destination of majority of the respondents easier.
- In addition, easy availability of jobs and greater scope for business and industry in Thailand (Bangkok) appeared to be the major pull factors of migration.
- Assistance and efforts of family members, relations and friends in India and Thailand provided economic, social and psychological support to the respondents while migrating to Thailand.
- Professional agents, in India and Thailand appeared to be another factor that facilitated the migration of some of the respondents.
• Majority of the respondents had their family members, relatives, friends and acquaintances already settled in Bangkok, which worked and acted as an important pull factor.
• Majority of the respondents received a favourable advice from the people whom so ever they consulted.
• A preponderant majority of the respondents were either happy or very happy while leaving India and their happiness increased after emigration to Thailand (Bangkok).
• However, leaving homeland, the native place is always stressful. Hence, a good number of the respondents had mixed reactions while leaving India and some of them were unhappy too.
• Migration is considered as successful by the solutions to ones problems, by achievement of progress, and the improvement experienced in life.
  a) Majority of the respondents appeared to have solved their problems to a very great, to great, to some extent.
  b) Except for a small percentage, preponderant majority of the respondents appeared to have achieved progress and improvement in their life-style, and hence found their migration to be successful.

Socio-Cultural Change:

Change In Interaction Pattern:
• A great number of Indian migrants attempted to visit Thai friends/neighbours either always or often. Only a small proportion of the respondents failed to have interaction with Thais by visits.
• Reciprocal interaction of Thais with Indians is almost on the similar lines.
• The equal number of respondents of the present study being 2nd and 3rd generation Indian migrants in addition to 1st generation, they seemed to have made more Thai friends, yet a considerable number of them had more Indian friends too, because of their ethnic affinity.
- Indian migrants in majority were found to be enthusiastic and eager to develop friendly relations with Thai people mainly because of their business interests.
- Majority of the respondents’ self-perception revealed that they had close personal relations with Thai people.
- Nearly half of the respondents were members of their own ethnic association or organization. However, only 30 percent of them were found to be actively involved by holding such positions as President, Secretary, Executive member etc. The rest of them were just passive participants who attended functions and ceremonies.

**Change In Life-Style:**
- A significant change in the food habits of the respondents was seen as the majority started eating Thai food.
- Majority of the Indian migrants seemed to have developed a high degree of taste and liking for Thai food.
- Therefore, a majority of the Indian migrants learnt to cook Thai type of food.
- The Indian migrants seemed to be having a good knowledge of ingredients used in the preparation of varied Thai dishes.
- The respondents in majority dressed like Thai people in Western-Style.
- Only a small number of respondents and that too rarely wore tried to wear Thai traditional dress on cultural occasions.
- A good number of business people seemed to have adopted Thai fashion as a business strategy to promote their business.
- Only one-third of the respondents had knowledge about Thai classical perfume and sometimes a few amongst them experimented by using them on cultural occasions.
- Only one-third of the Indian migrants started using Thai type of ornaments and jewellery.
- Indians in Thailand are slowly adapting to Thai style of House-construction.
• However, though a majority of the respondents belonged to 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} generations of Indian migrants, yet, they were living in houses constructed by their earlier generation, (the first generation) which were not built in Thai contemporary style.

• A majority of the respondents were found to be using modern furniture and décor as Thais do.

**Change With Regard To Institution Of Marriage:**

• The respondents in majority, in spite of being 2\textsuperscript{nd} and 3\textsuperscript{rd} generation migrants whished to and wanted to marry within their own community, while only 20 percent were found to be having a liberal attitude towards exogamous marriages.

• No change is noticed in the acceptability of the respondents regarding their family member marrying a non-Indian.

• Only one-fifth of the respondents showed attitudinal change when a member of their family married to a Thai partner.

• Indians are conservative and therefore the respondents, in majority, insisted on performing their marriage rituals strictly in accordance with their own cultural customs.

**Change In Religious Beliefs And Practices:**

• A great majority of the respondents did agree that Buddhism played a major role in Thai society.

• However, a majority of the respondents strictly stuck to their own socio-cultural and religious rituals in their own lives.

**Change With Regard To Attitude Towards Polity:**

• A preponderant majority approved of Thai type of Government with notional monarchy and democratic form.

• Almost all the respondents did respect the king of Thailand and the monarchy based democratic form of Government.

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Change With Regard To Language:

- Indian migrants were found proficient in speaking Thai and English in addition to their mother tongue and Hindi - the national language of India.
- A majority of the Indian migrants learnt to read and write in Thai which is quite a different and a difficult language, having different type of script.
- Indian migrants had to make efforts to learn Thai language because majority of Thais do not know any other language than their own language/mother tongue – Thai.

Cultural Assimilation:

Thai Symbols:

- A Majority of the respondents seemed to have acquired knowledge about History, Geography and important places of Tourist interest in Thailand. Thus they fulfilled the basic requirement of assimilation into a new alien culture.
- Since, two-third of the respondents were 2nd and 3rd generation migrants, they, in preponderant proportion identified themselves with Thais.
- Naturally, they developed a strong bond with Thais and Thailand which made their assimilation into Thai society much more easier.
- Understanding Thai system of Government, its rules and regulations was very essential for migrants to exist in a new alien system. Hence, a majority of the respondents made efforts to understand them.
- A overwhelming proportion of respondent migrants found their existence and life very peaceful in Thailand.
- A majority of the respondents were always ready and willing to devote themselves for the benefit of Thai society.
- They also felt concerned about the calamities occurring in Thailand.
- Naturally, the Indian migrants to Thailand tried to render their physical, mental and moral support whole heartedly to the Thai victims of disaster.
- Thais believe in Monarchy based democratic Government. Indians, though presently practice constitutional type of democracy, they were found
approving and giving respect to Thai king and his monarchy based democratic Government. Perhaps, due to their past history.

• In a multi-religious society of Thailand, Thai king is supposed to uphold all religions with equanimity. Thais regard him as a religious up-holder and an auspicious symbol of Thailand. The respondents, overwhelmingly subscribed to this view.

• King being the chief of the nation, naturally, almost, all the migrant respondents respected him and his monarchy based Government with reverence.

• An overwhelming proportion of respondents seemed to have realized the significance of Father’s Day and Mother’s Day, -the King’s and Queen’s birthdays.

• A majority of the respondents opined that the principles of Buddhism influenced norms, values and beliefs of Thai society.

• Since it is difficult to internalize and practice all the norms, values, beliefs and principles of Buddhism in daily life, a moderate proportion of respondents seemed to have internalized them.

• Naturally, a moderate number of them appeared to have adopted Buddhist ethics as a way of their life.

**Thai Language:**

• Since a majority of Thais in Thailand rarely know any other language than Thai, the respondents were compelled to learn to speak, read and write and make use of Thai language in their daily life.

• Though, catching the entire meaning of Thai correctly was rather a difficult task, yet, a majority of the respondents being 2nd and 3rd generation migrants managed to catch the correct meaning of conversation with Thais, in Thai language.

• They in large proportion made an attempt to watch Thai T.V. programmes regularly with a view to improve their language proficiency.
Thus, the sincere efforts of Indian migrants helped them to speak in Thai with proficiency and also with clarity of accent. This led them to successfully communicate with Thais in Thai language. Some of the respondents had so internalized and got used to the Thai language, that they even spoke in Thai with their own family members too. Nearly half of the respondents claimed to be capable of reading Thai language (script). A little more than one-third of the respondents were found taking keen interest in reading Thai publications. Some of them were even found to be subscribing to Thai publications. A majority of the respondents claimed that they even knew to write in Thai script. A considerable number of respondents wrote Thai in grammatically correct manner, since they studied in Thailand. Some of the respondents even were found using Thai idioms and phrases correctly. Though it was difficult, one-forth proportion of them managed to do so. Some of the respondents even developed interest in studying Thai literature. Some of them were also found reviewing Thai literature and essays. A small number of them were found being interested even in composing poems in Thai language.

Thai Beliefs and Values:
- A good majority of the Indian migrants claimed to have understood the Thai concept of Karma Theory.
- A considerable number of respondents also seemed to have developed belief in Thai Theory of Karma.
- A preponderant number of respondents were found to be aware of the consequences of good and bad deeds.
- They also found to have got convinced that harmful deeds lead to the world of evil.
• Nearly half of the respondents were found to be believing in the principle of Rebirth/Transmigration.
• A little less than half of the respondents believed that unequal status of individuals is a result of the Karmas of the previous birth.
• A majority of the respondents seemed to have shared a common belief with Thais that sense of gratitude is a measure of a good human being.
• Taking care of old parents and elderly people which is a universal value was seen to have been believed by preponderant proportion (three-fourth) of the respondents as also the Thais do.
• A moderate proportion of the respondents claimed to have believed like Thais that good humans never suffer calamities.
• Influenced by the materialistic values of the modern world, only one-fourth proportion of the respondents felt that ‘Dana’ (donation) brings material well-being.
• Some of the respondents were ready to accept failure despite of hard work as a result of previous Karmas.
• A majority of the respondents perceived that they don’t believe in ‘Materialism’, the fondest value of Thais. They also opined that value of life could not be determined in terms of material well being as Thais do.

Thai Norms:
• A moderate proportion of respondents were found to be aware of Thai status hierarchy while interacting with Thais.
• The Indian migrants also paid respect to seniors as the Thais do.
• Since the people of Indian origin intended to get assimilated with Thais, a majority of them were found performing WAI the Thai gesture of greeting while meeting and parting with seniors.
• They did the same in front of the objects of worship as a mark of respect.
• An overwhelming majority of the respondents expressed their being familiar with the Thai concept of SWADDEE, and a majority of them were found to be practicing it in their daily life while greeting Thais and also their own people.
A majority of the respondents always or often believed in the Thai concepts of charity to poor and donation to monastery and donating on religious occasions.

However, a moderate number of migrants were found practicing charity on religious occasions.

Since an overwhelming majority of the respondents stayed in Thailand for more than 15 years, they were well aware of the important Thai cultural festivals, ceremonies and important days’ celebrations.

Though majority of the respondents gave importance to these celebrations yet fifty percent of them actually participated in them.

A majority of the respondents were found to be performing their social obligations by attending weddings, housewarming ceremonies and even the death rituals and funeral rites.

III Application Of Theory:

In this section, an attempt is made to interpret the findings of the present study in the light of different theories referred to by the researcher. This led to the emergence of the following picture:

1. Theories Of Migration:

The International Organization of Migration (IOM), in its book World Migration 2003 has made a mention about various theories and types of migration. There are several other thinkers who dealt with the typology as well as the process, the causation, the benefits and the challenges of migration.

As regards types and practices of migration (as put forth by IOM) is concerned, it is noticed that:

- In the case of Indian migrant respondents of the present study, a permanent change of residence with no interest in the return migration had taken place.

- International migration to peaceful Thailand had attracted those Indian migrants who had the capacity to access information about the host country.
- The migration of the respondents that is the people of Indian origin in Thailand could be classified as orderly migration since the migrants followed the laws and regulations of the country of exit – India, and also of the host country – Thailand.

- No other type of migration such as forced migration, irregular migration, smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons seemed to have occurred in the case of the Indian migrants of the present study.

- **Ronald Skeldon’s typology of migration** talks about five different systems of migration, such as: i) Settlers’; ii) Unskilled Workers’; iii) Highly Skilled Workers’; iv) Students’; and v) Asylum Seekers’ Migration.

  - A good number of Sikh traders and industrialists migrated to Thailand from India with a view to settle there permanently. This can be considered as settlers’ migration.

  - Since not many Indian migrants went to Thailand as labourers to send remittances to the home country, the unskilled migrant workers’ migration system’ is not applicable to the present study.

  - A reasonable number of educated Indians went to Thailand as highly skilled migrants.

  - The student migration system seems to be not applicable since some of the Indian migrants themselves sent their children to India for their quality education.

  - As regards Asylum seekers migration, in the recent past, no Indians went to Thailand as asylum seekers since the policy of USA, Canada and UK provides asylum to those people who are persecuted in their home country. For example, activist Sikhs, after the Indian Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s assassination got political asylum in these countries.

Since, there are many reasons leading people to migrate from one place to the other, some of the scholars have tried to highlight the causation of migration.
George J. Bryjak and Michael P. Soroka stated that migration is usually the result of social, political or economic conditions. They may push or pull migrants across national boundaries. In the present study, it is noticed that:

- Economic factors predominantly acted as push as well as pull factors.
- In addition, the social factors like the family decision seemed to have played a major role.
- The prior, earlier presence of Indian migrants’ family members, relatives, friends, and acquaintances from their native place, who were already well established in Bangkok acted as information channels and motivated them to migrate.

Ronald Skeldon emphasized the disparities in the development between countries in the region and beyond as the major cause of migration. This is also seen in the case of Indian migrants.

Alex Thio’s theory of Push and Pull factors, when applied to the present study of international migration, it was found that

- Economic conditions at home acted as push factors while economic opportunity structure in Thailand acted as pull factor.
- The most important pull factors that were noticed in the present study included, increased opportunity for employment and income, better living conditions, improved system of mobility and increased access to information.

Thus, it is proved in the present study that both push and pull factors stimulated international migration and the pull factors acted as socio-economic magnets.

As seen earlier, the International Organization of Migration (IOM) put forth seven theories of migration. They included: The theory of development in a dual economy; the neo-classical theory; the dependency theory; the dual labour market theory; the world system theory; the theory of the new economy of professionals’ migration; and the migration net-work theory.
Of these, only the neo-classical theory, the theory of new economy of professionals’ migration, and the migration net-work theory appeared to have been applicable in the present research study.

- **Ranis, Fei and Todaro** inspired by the neo-classical theory of economy of Lewis, developed the neo classical theory of migration which combined macroscopic and microscopic approaches. According to microscopic approach, migration is a result of structural determinants. Migrants go where jobs, wages and standard of living are better and more advantageous. In 1960 Todaro and Borjas developed macroscopic approach. Accordingly, migration flows from an individual decision. It is a voluntary decision taken in full awareness of the facts, after a comparative analysis of costs and benefits of migration. Migrants therefore choose the destination where expected benefits will be the greatest.

  - In the present study it was found that a majority of the respondents or their forefathers took an independent rational decision to migrate to Bangkok after assessing the possibility of better job opportunities, better standard of living and higher wages. Hence, it is proved that both microscopic as well as macroscopic approaches of neo-classical theory are found matching with the tendencies of the Indian migrants. Thus, their choice of destination benefited them the most.

- **The theory of the new economy of professional migration** that was further extended and developed by Stark in the 1990s, emphasized the role of migrants’ household and family in the process of migration.

  - The respondents’ conditions at home were such that they preferred migration to Bangkok in search of better living conditions. It is found that in their migration there was an interrelationship between the migration and the socio-economic context, which was not conducive to the better standard of living, which therefore, prompted them to migrate.

- The researcher also found that the migration net-work theory proved to be a prime factor in the migration of the Indian migrants to Bangkok.
- Interpersonal relations with the people that were left behind were maintained by the Indian migrants through their contacts and communication with homeland. The net-work paved the way for establishing and perpetuating migration channels which had a multiplying effect of friends, relatives and acquaintances in making choice of destination and following it up.

- In the case of Indian migrants in Thailand, their families and relatives at home, in addition to providing them with information about Thailand helped them financially too which facilitated their actual migration.

- Most of the migrants had either their family members, relatives, friends or acquaintances in Bangkok, who provided them with information, initial infrastructural requirements like accommodation financial help and also psychological support to new entrants. Especially, in the case of Sikhs it was a powerful force of migration.

Thus, on the application of various theories of migration to the present study of Indian migrants’ migration to Thailand (Bangkok), it was found that, the push – pull factor theory, the neo-classical theory, the theory of new economy of professional migration, and the migration net-work theory appeared to be more appropriately applicable.

Thus the socio-cultural and economic factors such as family background; socio-economic and psychological support provided by the net-work of family, friends, relatives and acquaintances from India and Thailand; own rational decision based on the knowledge of cultural similarity, peaceful atmosphere of Thailand due to most accommodative religion like Buddhism; economic opportunity structure rested on better opportunities for employment higher income, improved standard of living and living conditions proved to be the main forces of facilitating Indian migrants’ migration to Thailand. Theirs was an orderly, skill oriented educated professionals, and permanent settlers’ migration with no interest in the return migration.

2. Theories Of Social Change :

The founding fathers of sociology developed various ideas while trying to understand the changes in the society of their time. No one theory can adequately
explain the concept of social change. Therefore, different factors are required to be taken into consideration. According to Alex Thio there are four main views that had influence the theories of social change. They include the following theories: i) Evolutionary; ii) Cyclical; iii) Equilibrium; iv) Conflict.

In addition, many thinkers and scholars contributed towards the consideration of kinds of social change and forces of social change in society.

In this research an attempt was made to apply these theories and concepts while interpreting the facts and figures related to the social change that had occurred amongst the migrant people of Indian origin after migrating to Thailand (Bangkok).

- **Social Change measured in terms of Evolutionary Theory:**
  One of the early exponents of Evolutionary theory was Herbert Spencer. He put forth the law of the “Survival of the fittest” meaning “men who worked well would survive, those who did not would die out”.

  - In the present study, Spencer’s law of survival of the fittest is found to be applicable since Indian migrants showed exceptional courage by migrating to a country whose language, life-style, and habits were not familiar to them. Thus, the people of Indian origin in Thailand, by making hard efforts to adapt to a new alien culture, proved fit and survived.

- **Social Change measured in terms of the Principle of Immanent Change:**
  Pitirim Sorokin, the exponent of the Principle of Immanent change explained that external forces such as international conflicts or contact with another culture may force a society to change. At the same time, he also believed that the internal forces (the forces within the society) are more powerful in bringing about social change. When applied to the present study, it was found that internal forces like financial stringency, aspiration for better life style and better prospects in life were responsible for the migration of the migrants.

- **Social Change measured in terms of Equilibrium Theory:**
  Talcott Parsons who developed this theory believed that a change in one part of the social system triggers other parts of the system to make adjustments. To
Parsons, social change is not the overthrow of the old and creation of something wholly new. Instead, new elements are integrated with the aspects of the old society by establishing a “moving equilibrium”.

In this study, it was found that through assimilation of local culture, learning an alien language, on one hand and still following their own traditions, religion, and keeping up interrelationship with their family members in India. Indian migrants improved their life style by establishing an equilibrium.

- Social Change measured in terms of the Conflict Theory:

According to this theory, social change is the product of conflict due to unequal opportunity to get access to resources. Possession of the resources by a very few members of society provokes the uprising of the underprivileged. Yielding to the demand of the underprivileged by those in possession of resources produce change in the structure of power within society, and social change ensues. However, the underprivileged defeated in their clash with the privileged may choose to emigrate to the new land in search of better opportunity.

It was noticed in the present study that Indian migrants though did not get equal opportunities in India, instead of developing conflict, they took the easy way of migrating to peaceful Thailand with plenty of opportunities. There, they tried their level best to adapt to Thai norms, values and culture and thereby did not succumb to conflict.

- Social change measured in terms of Harry Johnson's views

Harry Johnson has categorized social change in terms of structural change into five categories: i) Change in Social Values; ii) in Institutions; iii) in Possession and Distribution of Rewards; iv) in Personnel and v) in Abilities or Attitudes of Personnel. Of these, in the present study change in social values and institutions is noticed more vividly.

  - Change in Social Values:

In ancient Hindu society, the values accorded to persons were in accordance with the caste to which they belonged. The social interaction was based on caste system. Though the importance of caste system has been subjected to erosion in
modern times in urban society, it is still held in high regard in rural India. As regards
the attitude of Indians in Thailand towards the caste system, if was noticed that the
Sikhs, comprising half of the population of this research, did not accept caste system.
The Hindus, accounting for one third of the population of the current study, did not
inform the researcher about their castes, may be being ignorant of or unwilling to
reveal their castes. To the researcher, failure of the Hindus to reveal their castes
reflected the loss of importance of the caste system amongst the Hindus in Thailand as
it does not affect their lives in Thailand where caste system is not into existence. In
short, the values related to the caste system of Indians in Thailand have had
undergone a great change.

- Change in Institutions:

Change in institutions is marked by Indians’ acceptance of constitutional
monarchy as a form of Government and Buddhism as national religion. In India the
president acts as the head of the state, but in Thailand, the king does the same kind of
duty as the Indian president. The research showed that Indians in Thailand accepted
Thai institutions, holding the Thai king in great esteem. Considering that India has
her president as the head of the state, the acceptance of Thai political institution,
especially the monarch, by the Indians in Thailand indicates their being assimilated
into Thai society in terms of the acceptance of the political institution of the host
country.

The values and the institutions in India and Thailand remained unchanged.
Caste system still exists in India but it is not given importance in Thailand. There
remains a difference in Indian values and institution and Thai values and institutions.
Amidst the difference in values and institutions, Indians in Thailand chose to accept
the values and institution of the host country. A change was also noticed in the form
of family from Joint to Nuclear.

- Change in terms of Causes:

Social change occurs due to many factors such as i) Cultural Factors; ii)
Conflicts; iii) Ideas; iv) Natural Environment and v) Demographic Aspects.

John J. Maconis identified three important sources of cultural change
namely i) Invention; ii) Discovery and iii) Diffusion. Diffusion creates change
because trade, commerce and mass communication spread cultural elements all over.
In the present study, it was found that a great deal of change occurred amongst the Indian migrants in Thailand as a result of diffusion. The respondents of the present study were found internalizing the Thai way and style of life, particularly with regard to food habits, clothing patterns and household décor. It is thereby proved that material things diffuse more readily than non-material cultural traits.

As regards the conflict as an element of change, as seen earlier, the migrants preferred to avoid conflicts at home arising out of unequal and insufficient job opportunities, chose a safer and peaceful path of migration, and tried to get adjusted with the new host community.

3. Theories Of Assimilation:

Social thinkers like Robert E. Park, Milton Gordon, Martin Marger, Brewton Berry attempted to develop theories of assimilation.

- **Robert Park’s Race Relation Theory**, while enlightening about the relations between ethnic groups and natives elaborated that the process of assimilation is gradual and passes through four stages, namely: i) Contact; ii) Competition; iii) Accommodation and iv) Assimilation

The respondent migrants of the present study—the people of Indian origin in Thailand, appeared to have passed through all these stages.

- They not only maintained contacts with their own ethnic groups in Bangkok (Thailand) but also developed, established, and maintained contacts with the local Thais. This may be because, most of them were businessmen.
- Being involved in business, they also experienced competition with the local Thais.
- Being aliens in Bangkok, they had to develop accommodative nature and give and take relations in order to exist, survive and prosper.
- While passing through these stages gradually, they finally assimilated in Thai society by achieving proficiency in Thai language, by internalizing their way of life, by imitating their life-style (food habits, dressing pattern, construction and decoration of houses and so on), by accepting
their values and beliefs that are complementary to Hinduism, by having conformity with their norms, respecting their symbols and so on.

Thus, one may conclude that Indian migrants in Bangkok seemed to have gradually passed through all the stages of Robert Park’s Race Relation Theory and got assimilated into the main stream of Thai culture.

- Milton Gordon in his ‘Theory of Stages of Assimilation’ further elaborated Park’s theory. He talked about 7 stages of assimilation, namely, stage of: i) Cultural or Behavioural Assimilation (Acculturation); ii) Structural Assimilation; iii) Marital Assimilation (Amalgamation); iv) Identificational Assimilation; v) Attitude Receptional Assimilation; vi) Behaviour Receptional Assimilation and vii) Civic Assimilation.

According to this theory, complete assimilation implies that there are no cultural differences and outsiders can no longer be distinguished from anyone else.

- The stage of cultural assimilation/acculturation is characterized by the changes in religious beliefs, values and observances such as Law of Karma, Rebirth, effects of virtuous and malicious deeds, sense of gratitude, respect towards elders, making merit through Dana and so no. These aspects of culture being not alien to Hindus and Sikhs they were found to have imbibed them to a great extent. In addition, Thai norms related to hierarchy of status, and greeting pattern; Thai concept of merit; celebration of socio-cultural festivals; performance of different rituals were also found assimilated by the Indian migrants to a high degree. Language, being quite different was moderately assimilated by migrants because Thais are not proficient in any other language except Thai.

- As regards the stage of structural assimilation, development of a large scale primary relationship with Thais was noticed. It is evident through the interaction pattern of the respondent migrants with local Thais. The frequency of their visits, the closeness of their relationship, and their eagerness to make friendship with Thais as well as the proportion of their Thai friends, their participation in Thai festivals and celebration provide sufficient proof of such assimilation. Secondly, Indian migrants’
large scale adoption of Thai citizenship and their approval of Monarchy based Democratic Government also confirmed their structural assimilation into Thai society.

- **Another stage of assimilation** as per Milton Gordon’s classification refers to ‘Marital Assimilation’ or ‘Amalgamation’. According to Gordon, in this stage there are a ‘large-scale of inter-marriages’. (Gordon : 1964 : 71)

According to **William Kornblum**, “Interrace marriage between distinct racial and ethnic groups is an important indicator of assimilation, the pattern of inter group relations in which a minority group is forced or encouraged or voluntarily seek to blend into the majority population and eventually disappears as distinct people within the larger society”. (1988 : 195)

- In the present study such a situation never arose. In fact in the present study this kind of assimilation was found acceptable to only some of the respondent migrants and that too at an ideational (attitudinal) level and not at the practical level. Since, Indians do not consider individuality of each person as utmost important, they, unlike westerners and westernized Orientals, are comfortable with their families’ meddling in their personal affairs. They tend to allow their families to arrange marriages for them. Half of the respondents admitted that their spouses were selected by their family. Indians’ inclination to marry their compatriots retarded structural assimilation. Thus, the marital assimilation among the people of Indian origin in Thailand is yet to take place since inter-marriages rarely occurred.

- At the regards **the stage of Identification Assimilation**, it was found that Indian migrants in Thailand succeeded in developing sense of peoplehood with the host society by their acceptance of the core values of the host society through the symbols like nation, state, monarchy, and respect for the king of Thailand and so on.

- As regards the other two stage of ‘Attitude Receptinal’ and ‘Behaviour Receptional’ Assimilation, it was noticed that, Thais being a liberal society, the migrants did not encounter any prejudice, hostility,
discrimination at attitudinal or behavioural levels by Thais. Indian migrants too reciprocated the same sentiments, even though a majority of them were businessmen.

However, the researcher did not conduct any survey about the interaction pattern and attitudes of Thais towards the Indian migrants. Otherwise, the extent of structural assimilation in this study would have illustrated more vivid picture.

- As regards the stage of Civil Assimilation, since Indians were never interested in power politics, the question of power conflicts never arose.

- **Martin Marger** further extended Gordon’s Theory by pronouncing four interrelated dimensions of assimilation such as i) Cultural; ii) Structural; iii) Biological; and v) Psychological.

- As regards Cultural Assimilation, it was seen that Indian migrants assimilated Thai language, food, life style as well as religious beliefs and values of Buddhism (without getting converted to Buddhism) because of their similarity with Hinduism and Sikhism, the offshoot of Hinduism. They also assimilated Thai symbols as mentioned earlier.

- Indian migrants augmented native Thai culture with its selected elements. However, they also maintained their own cultural identity.

- As regards Structural Assimilation, Indians, being dispersed all over Bangkok, though there were some pockets of their concentrations, still they maintained interactions with the majority group of Thais mainly at primary and secondary levels of interaction. At primary level they developed long standing friendship since majority of them were second and third generation migrants. They also developed secondary relations with large number of impersonal groups like schools, place of work, polity, and so on, because, these satisfied their personal, practical and social needs.

- As regards Biological Assimilation, India, being conservative, the researcher did not find any unusual inter-ethnic, biological assimilation, since there are rare instances of intermarriages.
As regards Psychological Assimilation, it was seen that the second and third generation of Indian migrants in Thailand felt that psychologically they were akin to Thais. But, it is not known, whether the Thais accept this premise. Thais may still identify the respondent Indian migrants as Indians and not Thais.

- **Merger's factors affecting assimilation** include: i) Manner of Entrance; ii) Times of Entrance; iii) Demographic Factors; iv) Cultural Similarity; and v) Visibility.

All these were found favourable in the case of the respondents of the present study—the Indian migrants in Thailand.

- As regards **Manner of Entrance**, Martin Marger states that “Those that enter voluntarily always make less conflict ridden adjustment than those that enter involuntarily or those that are conquered by more powerful invaders. Involuntary immigrants or conquered groups remain in a condition of segregation to one degree or another”. (Martin Marger: 1991 : 127)

  - Indian’s migration to Thailand was purely voluntary and for a greater majority, it was their first choice.
  - The urge to improve the standard of living was the main purpose of Indian migrants’ migration to Thailand. It was found achieved by the majority.
  - Since their migration was voluntary, the Indian migrants had no conflicts with the native people of Thailand. This contributed to a moderate to high degree of their assimilation.

- As regards **Time of Entrance**, it was found that:

  - Thais wanted to develop and modernize their country at a rapid speed. They were in need of technically qualified and enterprising man power. They found Indians suitable for the purpose. Hence, they adopted an open arm policy of entry to their country—Thailand.
  - It was found that most enterprising businessmen like Sikhs and other skilled man power by migrating to Thailand entered into the country in the recent past, at an appropriate time.
As regards **Demographic Factors** of assimilation, according to Martin Marger, “size and concentration of migrants or minority ethnic group affects the degree of their assimilation. The entrance and assimilation of groups relatively small in number will be resisted less forcefully than those that represent a competitive threat”. (Martin Marger : 1991 : 127-128)

In the present study, it was noticed that:

- It is estimated that around 100,000 people of Indian origin are settled in Thailand, which amounts to just 0.15 percent of Thai population. Out of which around 60,000 of them or around 0.6 percent of the Indian migrants are settled in Bangkok. Therefore, this infinistimally small proportion of Indian migrants was no threat to Thais and they were accepted by Thais more easily.

- Since, the migrant Indians were also dependent on the Thai majority, they were found interacting more frequently and intimately with Thais, thereby, their assimilation into Thai society became easier and smoother. Thus, demographically, Indian migrants were not perceived as a threat to Thais.

As regards, **Cultural Similarity**, Berry and Tischler state that, “No matter, how or when the groups enter the host society or what its demographic patterns are, assimilation is favoured if the group is culturally similar to the dominant group”

The researcher in the present study, found a high level of cultural assimilation of Indian migrants in terms of Thai symbols, beliefs, values and norms. Here, the similarities between Thai and Indian culture are elucidated by referring to: Buddhism and language.

- Buddhism is the main religion of Thais. It was originated in India, as an offshoot of Hinduism and was spread in Thailand around 1,000 years ago, and still is practiced vigorously. Since Thai beliefs and norms based on the Buddhist concepts such as Meritorious and Sinful action, the Law of Karma, Transmigration of Soul, Nirvana (enlightenment) or Moksha are similar to those of Hinduism to which the majority of the
Indians subscribed to. Hence, a similarity of culture contributed to a high level of cultural assimilation amongst the Indian migrants in Thailand.

- Language: All the religious scriptures of Buddhism are written in Pali which borrowed the vocabulary from Sanskrit. Likewise, some of the Thai alphabets are derived from Indian Devenagari Script. A large number of personal names are also derived from Hindu names, including their kings known as Rama. However, the modern Thai and its pronunciations are quite different from any other Indian language. Since Thais are not proficient in any other language, except Thai, Indian migrants adopted Thai to a great extent in conversation and interaction. This led to Indian migrants’ assimilation into Thai culture.

- Visibility is the crucial factor of assimilation. Especially in the structural stage this factor is found to be the most importance. Martin N. Marger (1991: 128) explained that “Physical differences delay the process of assimilation more than other factors: Names can be changed, religious conversions can take place and flawless adoption of the dominant culture can be made; but physical appearance, particularly skin color, can not be so easily altered. Thus, the more visible the group, the longer and more difficult its structural assimilation into the dominant society”.

Indians’ physical appearance is distinct from those of Thais, considering colour of skin, cheekbones, noses, and eyes.

Visibility is crucial to structural assimilation in terms of inter-marriage as people tend to get married to those sharing not only the same culture but also the same physical appearance.

Generally, it took so much time for the people with different physical appearances to feel comfortable with each other enough to become involved in marital relationship. The Indians making their settlement in Southern Thailand around 1000 years ago were married to native people and became fully assimilated into Thai culture. It is evident that quite a lot of people in southern Thailand bear some physical appearance characteristics of Indians – prominent nose, large eyes, and dark skin. On the contrary, intermarriage between Indians and native people in modern
Thailand, especially in Bangkok area, has rarely occurred in the past 150 years, due to
differences in physical appearance. Hence, structural assimilation did not take place at
a fast rate. The researcher himself hardly found cases of inter-marriage. Thus,
visibility factor acted against structural assimilation through inter-marriages between
Indians and Thais.

IV Verification Of Objective :

The researcher had made an attempt for the verification of objectives
enumerated at the beginning of the present study. The account is presented below:

• To Study The Way Of Life Of The People Of Indian Origin
in Thailand (Bangkok)

The study proved that the Indian migrants had improved their economic
status after migration to Thailand. It is evidenced through the fact that the majority of
the respondents were from higher income groups in Bangkok, while, they were poor
and middle class at home. Higher income, naturally improved their life-style by
possessing own house, having higher education for children, and conspicuous
consumption of material objects.

• To Find Out The Push And Pull Factors Of Migration

It was observed that almost all the original Indian migrants chose Thailand
as their first destination. The favourable ‘open arm policy’ of migration, plenty of
opportunities for economic development through the easy availability of job,
employment and business opportunities and attractive remuneration; religious
freedom; similarity of culture; secular attitude of monarchy based democratic
government; equal rights to citizens were the main pull factors of the migration of
Indians to Thailand.

Push factors, which prompted the migration of Indians to Thailand included:
stringent financial family background; lack of opportunities to improve the standard
of living; fragmentation of land; family disputes; wander-lust; and religious
institutionalized inequality by caste system in India.
To Observe Socio-Cultural Change Amongst The People Of Indian Origin In Thailand (Bangkok)

In the present study, structural and cultural changes were noticed amongst the Indian migrants to Thailand.

Indians being peace loving and accommodative, accepted monarchy based democratic government of Thailand which was historically not very alien to them in India.

Almost two-third of the migrants being second and third generation migrants, they succeeded in developing close interactions with Thais through reciprocal visits to Thais. In fact, a good number of them had more Thai than Indian friends.

Even though Indian migrants were not Buddhists, they still accepted the vital role played by the Buddhism in Thai society.

Since Thais in majority are not conversant with any other language, except Thai, the Indian migrants voluntarily learnt Thai language for communication with Thais, to the extent of developing abilities not only to read and write but also to study and appreciate Thai literature to an extent of viewing Thai programmes on T.V. This showed a significant change even though they could pursue their occupation without these things. In addition, a profound change was noticed in their conversing in Thai with their own family members too.

Migrants originally coming from India in majority belonged to Joint Families at home. Now, after migration, their family pattern changed to Nuclear Family to a great extent. This may be due to urbanization and following the Thai family pattern.

As regards cultural change, Indian migrants started consuming Thai type of food, making Thai dishes at home, with full knowledge of cooking style and ingredients used. This was an indicator of cultural change.

They adopted Thai dressing pattern that was similar to western style.

Indian migrants’ adoption of Thai house construction pattern with similar inner accommodation and interior décor was another proof of change in their material life style.
In addition, it was found that Indian migrants tried to internalize the Thai beliefs and values so much so that one may conclude that normative culture of Thais was accepted and even practiced by Indian migrants at a high degree.

**To Assess The Magnitude Of Cultural Assimilation Amongst The Indian Migrants**

As regard, the magnitude of cultural assimilation is concerned, a high degree of assimilation was observed amongst Indian migrants in relation to Thai symbols, beliefs, values and norms. Whereas, with regard to Thai language and material objects a moderate degree of assimilation was noticed.

Indian migrants, though accepted the prescribed values and norms of Buddhism, and perceived them positively, yet some of the migrants found it difficult to follow and put them into practice totally. Even though, some of them are very similar to their own religion (Hinduism and Sikhism—the offshoot of Hinduism) a total assimilation could not be achieved by the Indian migrants since they did not get converted to Buddhism.

Though Indian migrants exhibited a high level of proficiency in conversing through Thai, yet, they showed moderate proficiency as regards reading and writing skills. Critical appreciation of literature, writing articles and composing poetry were impossible to fully achieve for any migrant in an alien language, because of their different linguistic background and a capacity to internalize the new alien language. Indian migrants in Thailand were no exception to this.

Indians, because of their religious/spiritual orientation were unable to accept materialism as a way of life. However, they assimilated Thai type of materialistic life-style by eating Thai type of food, adopting their western style of dresses, and interior decoration of houses to a moderate extent. Since, Indian migrants were keen on maintaining their own individual (Indian) identity, a moderate degree of assimilation was achieved by Indian migrants in this regard.

Those Indians, who migrated to Thailand around thousand years ago, as propagators of Buddhism and traders, were small in number. Therefore, they, during the course of time got fully assimilated with the Thai culture in southern Thailand, so much so that they had lost their complete identity by total assimilation.
However, the recent migrants (150 years) though tried to assimilate Thai culture, as much as possible, did not achieve complete assimilation and loose their (Indian) identity fully.

- **To Understand The Extent To Which The Thai Practices, Beliefs, Values, Norms And Behaviour Patterns Are Acceptable Or Unacceptable To The Indian Ethical And Moral Standards**

  The data in this context was obtained through the responses of open-ended questions from the questionnaires, case studies and interviews conducted by the researcher.

  **Acceptable Features Of Thai Culture:**

  Indian migrants could easily assimilate into Thai culture due to the similarity in Indian and Thai ethical and moral standards. Since Thai Buddhism is an offshoot of Hinduism and Brahmanism, Thai norms, values and beliefs are almost synchronous to Indian ethical and moral standards.

  Showing respect to elders, Thai way of polite greetings by performing WAI and uttering “Swaddee” being similar to Indian way of greeting by saying “Namaste”, was adopted by Indian migrants because of its acceptability.

  Principles of Buddhism being almost identical to Hinduism and Sikhism, they were accepted by Indian migrants more easily.

  Indians celebrate many festivals and perform rituals. Thai festivals like Songkarn festival and teachers’ day celebrations which are comparable to Indian Holi can Guru Purnima respectively. Hence, they were easily accepted and assimilated by Indian migrants.

  For Indians, burying dead bodies was an anthem. So, the Thai custom of burning dead bodies was acceptable to Indians as they do the same in India.

  Donations in charity to poor is supposed to be giving merit according to Thais, which is similar to obtaining ‘Punya’ according to Indian, and therefore, was appreciated by Indians.

  Thais pay attention to the performance of religious rituals and ceremonies, most of which are Buddhist, while a small proportion of them adore Indian pantheon
of Gods like, Brahma, Vishnu, Ganesh and Rishis and Spirit house, which are akin to Hinduism. So, Indian migrants felt happy in appreciating them.

In India, all the government offices have the photos of the Indian Prime Minister and President of India etc. In Thailand in the same way Thais have the photos of their Kings and Queens. This being a similar practice was highly appreciated and therefore accepted as a mark of respect by Indians.

- Unacceptable Features Of Thai Culture:

  Indian migrants even though got adjusted to and assimilated many features of Thai culture, still were unable to accept some of the features arising out of liberal behaviour of Thais.

  In spite of Ahimsa, non-violence, being one of the important principles of Buddhism, the practice of frequently eating beef or other non-vegetarian food by Thais is not appreciated by Indians and therefore was not acceptable to them.

  Regarding some other Thai practices, like polygamy, child prostitution, consumption of alcohol, habit of gambling and living together before marriage Westernized style of dressing that sometimes appears improper in terms of place and occasion especially found among teenagers, which was not acceptable to Indians culture. Hence, Indian showed some reservations in this regard.

  Since, patriarchy is practiced in India, women go to their husbands’ houses to live after marriage. Indians follow a patrilocal family pattern. In India, dowry is paid to the bridegroom. Which is exactly apposite of Thai pattern of matrilocal residence that is shifting the residence of the males to the houses of their wives and payment of bride price are not palatable to Indian psyche hence they are not acceptable.

  Keeping the dead body even for some hours is not hygienic since it is likely to get decomposed. Therefore it is not acceptable to Indian culture. It also prolongs the mourning period unnecessarily. Hence, Thai practice of keeping dead body for a period of time ranging from three days to hundred days or more is naturally unacceptable to Indians.
V Conclusions:

- Bangkok was chosen as the ‘Universe’ of the present study since a majority of the Indian migrants to Thailand were found settled there.
- Since the specific lists of Indian migrants were not available, the respondents of the study were chosen by using snowball sample from the areas where Indian migrants were found concentrated in majority.
- The respondents from the first, second, and third generation of Indian migrants, belonging to different strata which included businessmen, employers, employees, professionals, unemployed individuals and students and housewives were chosen in order to get a holistic picture of migrants.
- In this study, all age groups were represented with two-third/one-third representation of both the sexes.
- The first migrants to Thailand were Sikhs. Since Sikhs had a long and old history of migration to Thailand, they encouraged the people from their community to migrate to Thailand because of the availability of ample trade and business opportunities in Thailand. Therefore, greater numbers of Sikhs were found amongst the Indian migrants in Thailand. They are mainly engaged in trade and commerce.
- Since Indians migrated to Thailand mainly for economic prosperity, they were found pursuing all sorts of economic activities – financial as well as business activities.
- In this three generation study, it was found that preponderant proportion of respondents stayed in Thailand for more than 15 years. It was obvious that majority of the 2nd and 3rd generation migrants were natural born Thai citizens. The other Indian migrants opted for seeking Thai citizenship since it was advantageous in procuring business licenses and employment.
- Indian migrants sent their children to India to get better quality education and technical and higher qualifications. The remaining studied in Thailand.
- The respondents were intelligent to understand the importance of knowing the international language, hence a majority of them knew English. But, since
most of the Thais are not conversant with English or any of the Indian languages, almost all the respondents had to obtain at least working knowledge of Thai, besides English.

- Due to international trend of Urbanization, the respondents of the present study were found to have preferred nuclear family pattern. However a small proportion of them, having their own family business concerns, maintained jointness of the family.

- On the whole, the Indian migrants seemed to have achieved economic prosperity by migrating to Thailand. They succeeded in improving their economic as well as social status which they aimed at.

- The Indian migrants in majority dreamt of migration in search of Greener Pastures.

- Adjustment with an alien environment at a later stage of life is rather difficult. Therefore, majority of the respondents of this study left India at an early stage, before they crossed their middle age.

- India has a history of migration around the world, in search of better job, employment, business, and trading opportunities. Since Thailand had offered them with an open-arms-welcome policy, it naturally facilitated and encouraged the migration mainly of those Indians, involved in business and professions.

- The contingent factors like earlier migration and presence of family members, relatives and friends in Thailand as well as availability of more comforts appeared to be additional pull factors.

- A majority of the respondents' moderate, to poor to very poor economic conditions and family background at home in India acted as a major push factor.

- Pull factors seemed to be the major motivating factors of emigration to Thailand (Bangkok). It was because Thailand provided the Indian migrants with better job opportunities, better salary, easy availability of jobs and opportunities for entrepreneurship and congenial working conditions.
• Potential migrants always weigh the pros and cons of migration before actually embarking on their migration. The Indian migrants chose Thailand as their most preferred destination because of better opportunity structure in Thailand and also due to the cultural similarity, freedom of religious worship offered in Thailand.

• Thus, pull factors for the choice of Thailand as the favoured destination were the predominant factors, while push factors like poverty, lack of job and employment opportunities in India, family problems and urge for improved life-style and status contributed to the migration of Indian migrants to Thailand.

• Normally, migrants around the world try to keep ethnic relations with their own community as they are familiar with the norms values, social etiquettes and religious rituals and observances. In the case of Indian migrants in Thailand, a considerable change was noticed in their interaction pattern, which is evidenced through their having more Thai friends and their participation in various Thai festivals ceremonies and rituals.

• The high degree of close relations of Indian migrants with Thais can be attributed to the respondents’ business interests and to their being, the 2nd and 3rd generation migrants and also to the proximity of their residences in Thai neighbourhood.

• A very high degree of change was noticed with regard to the food habits of the Indian migrants. Thai food is distinctively different from Indian cuisine. In the case of Indian migrants it was noticed that they developed not only taste and liking for Thai food, but also learnt to the extent of preparing it themselves at home with full knowledge of the recipes and ingredients.

• Indians in India opted for western style of dress patterns. Obviously, it was not surprising to find that Indian migrants in Thailand adopted Thai type of dresses which were very similar to western style. But, they started using Thai dresses made of Thai textile material mainly because they were reasonably priced and were fashionable.
• The respondents in majority, being in textile business and industry, with a business point of view, for increasing the sale of garments, adopted Thai fashion of western dresses with a view to popularize the same. Even the office goers adopted Thai western pattern of dresses because of ease and comfort provided by them. Others also fell in line because Thai dresses were reasonably priced and also helped them to get merged with the local community.

• Perfumes are a personal choice of individuals. Most of the people, now a days prefer western branded perfumes. This led to the majority of our respondents to use western perfumes like Thais. However, a small proportion of the respondents experimented with the exquisite, exotic Thai perfumes by using them occasionally on cultural occasions only.

• Ornaments and Jewellery used by the respondents was seldom Thai type, because they still are in the habit of wearing Indian Jewellery which has an intrinsic monetary and sentimental value for them.

• Indians in Thailand lived in traditional houses but change was noticed in the context of interior accommodation and decoration on the lines of Thai pattern.

• Indians are conservative and prefer to live within caste, state and religious boundaries in respect of marriage. Marriage, for Indians is an endogamous institution. If, any member married a non-Indian, the family had reluctantly accepted it on rare occasions. Observances of marriage rituals were also very strictly adhered to by Indians as per their own cultural customs.

• Indians, being familiar with both Monarchy of pre-independence era and Constitutional Democracy with National President in post-independence period, found similarity with Monarchy based Democracy of Thailand and thus accepted Thai system of Government and Polity in to-to.

• Indians are multi lingual people. They are used to three language formula of English, the international language; Hindi the national language; and an additional regional language. Hence, they learnt Thai, the national language of Thailand for day to day interaction with Thais, without which it would have been very difficult for them to survive in Thailand.
• Thus, Indian migrants after settling in Thailand made sincere efforts to change their attitude and behaviour with regard to their interaction pattern, life-style, political ideology, and learning local Thai language. However a small dent is made with regard to the choice of partner in marriage and marital rituals, use of ornaments, perfumes and religious beliefs and practices.

• At the level of ‘nation’ as a symbol, a high degree of assimilation amongst the Indian migrants was noticed. Since ‘knowledge is power’ the respondents made sincere efforts to gain knowledge about the History, Geography as well as the places of Tourist interest in Thailand. It was an attempt to get assimilated with alien Thai culture as much as possible, in order to be acceptable in Thai society.

• The degree with which the Indian migrants perceived themselves to be like Thais, was high and their feeling of oneness with the natives showed that their alienation was reduced to a considerable extent.

• To live peacefully and safely in any country, migrants need to be acquainted with rules, regulations and the legal frame work of that country, so that they do not make any mistakes and are not punished for their transgressions. In this study, the Indian migrants showed a remarkable degree of acquaintance with such rules, regulations and legal frame work of Thai nation.

• The India migrants showed a high degree of readiness and willingness to devote their time, money and energy for the well-being of Thai society and nation in general and in times of natural calamities and disaster for the victims in particular. This is a sure sign of their getting assimilated with Thai people, society and their nation.

• Monarchy and Democracy exist side by side in Thailand like U.K. Indian migrants being familiar with such a rule, partly before independence and partly after independence, found it easy to accept and assimilate with it to a great extent.

• In fact, Indian migrants had accepted Monarchy of Thailand in the similar manner as Thais do. They respected the king with reverence, accepted him as a religious head and treated the King and the Queen as father and mother. It
was traditionally accepted in India too at the time of principalities. Therefore, Indian immigrants found it easy to internalize and assimilate.

- Buddhism, an offshoot of Hinduism, having its origin in India, is not alien to Indians. Hence, the Indian migrants accepted Buddhist norms and values in principle. They found to be willing and ready to some extent for practicing Buddhist principles related to non-violence, truthfulness, and non aggressiveness or politeness.

- Thus, the three main symbols of Thai culture namely Nation, Monarchy and Religion were found internalized and assimilated by the respondents of this study, the Indians migrants in Thailand.

- As regards language – the most important component of culture, it was noticed that almost all the respondents had working knowledge of Thai, without which it was difficult to survive in Thailand. A majority of the respondents being 2nd and 3rd generation they migrants learnt to speak Thai fluently, with clarity of accents. They spoke in Thai not only with Thais but also with their own family members. They were also capable of reading and writing Thai in the grammatically correct manner. Some had even developed interest in studying Thai literature so much so that they analyzed Thai essays and also composed poetry in Thai language. This reflects a high degree of assimilation of respondents with Thai language.

- Thais believe in Law of Karma, Principle of Transmigration, Rebirth, effects of Virtuous and Malicious deeds, relation between present Status and earlier Karmas. They also believe in sense of gratitude, obligation of taking care of old parents, making merit through Dana, accepting failure as a result of earlier Karma, significance of material possessions-the fond contemporary value of Thais.

- Theory of Karma is found even in Hinduism. But, there is a subtle difference in these theories. However, majority of the respondents did not find any difficulty in understanding and believing in the Thai Theory of Karma which is based on principles of Buddhism.
• Since, the concept of Karma is universal, the Indian migrants, in majority were aware of the consequences of good and bad deeds and were afraid of the harmful effects of harmful deeds.

• As regards concept of re-birth; acceptance of individuals’ unequal status as a result of previous deeds; and taking care of elderly parents as an obligation; and sense of gratitude – the pre-requisite of becoming a good human being, it was noticed that a majority of the respondents were found to be believing and accepting these Thai concepts and beliefs.

• Nearly half of the respondents had some reservation regarding the Thai belief that “Good human beings never suffer any calamities” and “Dana brings about material well-being”, since they did not find any direct and logical correlation between Dana and getting material well-being. Due to the effect of modern outlook, the respondents were unable to accept “the failure in spite of hard work” as a result of previous Karma.

• Even though, majority of Thais are Buddhists, they, in modern times are turning more and more towards materialism. In fact, materialism has become their fond value. But, the respondents of this study did not totally subscribe to the concept and also did not totally accept that ones life is defined only by the possession of material wealth.

• The respondents did not recognize that Thais’ relations with them are defined by their material possessions alone. They also did not accept that in Thai society, the status is determined by material possessions. This attitude of the respondents seemed to be normatively oriented rather than found in actuality or reality.

• Every society has status hierarchies. Thais believe in Senior-Junior hierarchy. Migrants in order to assimilate with Thais wanted to interact in a proper fashion with the natives. Therefore they showed respect to seniors, as Thais do, this is an Indian normative pattern too.

• WAI is a typical Thai type of bending gesture of respect while meeting and parting with elders, The term ‘Swaddee’ is uttered while greeting. These are similar to touching the feet of elders and saying Namaste in India. Since this
gesture of greeting corresponds with Indian pattern, acceptance and assimilation with the Thai greeting pattern was easy for Indian migrants to follow. Therefore, the Indian migrants in a very great majority accepted and followed it.

- Like Thais, Indians also believe in charity to poor and Dana to monastery/temple, on religious occasions. Therefore, the Indian migrants also believed in it in great number. However, only a moderate number was found practicing it on Thai religious occasions. They may be following the Indian custom by visiting their own temples on their religious occasions.

- Most of the people, when reside at a place for a longer duration of time are normally aware of local cultural festivals, ceremonies and important day celebrations, since they mostly get holidays on such occasions, and also due to the pomp and show with which such occasions are celebrated. Awareness of Indian migrants in this respect was very high. However, a moderate number was found participating in these activities, may be they were interested in observing their own festivals.

- Being present at the social occasions like weddings, housewarming, funerals etc. are considered as obligations by Indians in India. Hence the Indian migrants in majority attended and were present on such occasion in Thailand too.

Finally, it is concluded that Indian migrants settled in the multi-cultural society of Thailand experienced no conflict with Thais, it was due to the Thai King’s secular attitude towards every body, including Indians leading to harmony. It was also due to Thais open arm policy towards migrants which ultimately resulted into higher level of assimilation of Thai culture by Indian migrants. Indian migrants thus got happily adjusted and led a peaceful life in Thailand. It was because of the most benign attitude of Thais towards migrants.

Indian migrants achieved their goal of migration by seeking materialistic prosperity. The similarity between Thai and Indian culture, due to former being deeply influenced by the later, contributed to the high level of cultural assimilation
among the Indians in Thailand. Since many aspects of Thai culture were acceptable to Indians, they were thus on good terms with the native Thai people.

Indian entrepreneurs played a significant role in Thailand in connection with jewellery, real estate and important import and export businesses. They also played crucial role in setting up and developing garment, textile, and hotel industries in Thailand. They did also set up institutions to promote their culture and enrich the Thai society by their contribution as migrants.

Thus, the people of Indian origin in Thailand showed a remarkable level of assimilation into Thai society. The summation index presented below shows a high degree of assimilation of Indians into Thai society.

### The Summation Of The Cultural Assimilation Of Thai Culture Amongst The People Of Indian Origin In Thailand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components Of Culture</th>
<th>Average score</th>
<th>Level of assimilation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Symbols</td>
<td>4.32</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values and Beliefs</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material Objects</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Average Score</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.74</strong></td>
<td><strong>High</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VI Suggestions For Further Research:

The researcher presents below a few specific suggestions for further research in this area of investigation:

1. A comparative study of Indian, Chinese and Malaysian migrants of 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation and the magnitude of their assimilation.
2. A study of Indian migrants to the rural areas of Thailand.
3. A comparative study of gender-based analysis of change and assimilation amongst the women migrants.

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