Chapter 8

Conclusion

In the preceding chapters, we have presented an account, analysis and evidences related to international migration of Indian skilled professionals with special reference to relationship and impact of their networking in the home country i.e. India. Certain conclusions can be achieved based on the objectives developed in chapter 1. This will help in understanding the networking amongst educated Indian expatriates and their roles in the home country. This chapter presents main research findings, outlines limitation and contributions of the research.

8.1 Main Research Findings

It can be said that expatriate Indians not only generate knowledge but also carry out its diffusion through knowledge/professional networks. While knowledge is increasingly important in economic changes, it does not automatically translate into economic practices. This study found that network of Indian expatriates may play a catalytic role in bringing about this transfer of knowledge and can bring venture capital, managerial and technical expertise to orient and guide first generation entrepreneurs in India. As an example, we have shown that there is a difference in the kind of information, ideas, norms, opportunities and technical know-how among first generation high-skilled Indian entrepreneurs which has been facilitated by TiE, a network of expatriate Indians, to build their capabilities. The members of this network have taken active part in promotion of entrepreneurship among Indians especially high skilled professional in the home country.

Globalization has also created new conditions for expatriates as well as home country because expatriates can exploit differences in their business operating environments and regulatory frameworks and share the acquired knowledge with their counterparts in the home country. Home country may understand expatriates better and the benefits from their engagements at various levels. This study found that, at the meso-
level, there are possibilities for entrepreneurship among the high skilled professionals in India which can be supported by an expatriate association. As stated earlier in chapter 7, promotion of entrepreneurship among the high-skilled in India can provide three benefits, i) spillover effects of knowledge, ii) increase in the competition among entrepreneurs and, iii) creating job opportunities. But to have this impact on the economy, entrepreneurs should be informed with newer knowledge and skills as per the international markets. This study indicates that Indian expatriates can and have extended their support in achieving these goals. Enclaves of Indian expatriates have helped in getting ‘informal training systems’, where the new generation entrepreneurs in India are able to draw on the knowledge of expatriate Indians. The principal asset of the networking association of expatriates, TiE, for Indian high skilled “is not so much access to financial capital, but to its members’ collective capacity to use their own internal resources of social, cultural and psychological capacity to mobilise on their own behalf”. These collective capacities are primarily rooted in networks, characterized by personalized ties of trust, which are constantly renewed through short-term international mobility. Therefore, it can be said that networks help in sharing of economic practices in one space with another spaces like inferences from Silicon Valley helped in replication of IT industry in India. This leads to a conclusion that expatriates can be most appropriately understood in terms of actor-networks as network of expatriates help to mobilize and activate them while networks play a key role in passing of acquired skills, knowledge and capital to their counter-parts in the country of origin. Following are the findings as per set objectives.

Objective 1: Quantitative strength of Indian professionals and their networking in the United States

As per the first objective of the study, Indian expatriates are spread in 110 countries and they are more than 20 million in number. In the US alone, it is over 1.6 million with a phenomenal growth rate of 105.87 % between the periods of 1980 to 1990. The growth rate is increasing further. Indians are spread over in 39 US states with some pockets of concentration namely, viz., New York, New Jersey, Texas and Illinois. The concentration in these five states can be understood from the fact that these areas have high
concentration of software professionals due to the location of several IT driven business enclaves.

It can be said that majority of Indian expatriates in the USA are high skilled as reflected by their educational levels and engagement in the labor market. Indians are the third largest ethnic community having the size of 1,678,765 and the largest proportion of highly educated professionals (79.8 % Indians have tertiary level of education).

Objective 2: Types of Associations of Indian Professionals in the US

This study also found that the migration of a number of Indians to the US has had an impact on their networking and processes. Though networking phenomenon among Indian expatriates is fairly new in the US, the significant scale of networking among Indian expatriates can be estimated from the fact that there are over 400 Indian expatriate associations in the USA, originating at different periods. These associations have been formed for various purposes by the expatriates and can be classified into six categories based on their main objectives- Cultural, Students/Alumni, Women and Support, Professional, Development and Umbrella Associations.

Out of these, cultural associations of Indians have existed for several years which primarily acted as a ‘safety valve’ to deal with emotional and cultural problems. The main purpose of associations has been to preserve Indian cultural heritage among the first and the second generation Indians. Hence they actively engage with their members and their families. At present, there are more than 300 cultural/sub-national associations promoting Indian sub-national culture which acts as a meeting ground for people of similar backgrounds and engages them in promotion of cultural and ethnic values. The number of these associations may be higher if the sub-chapters of each association are taken into consideration. It is important to note that almost all cities have large number of cultural associations. The other important association is of Indian professionals, who have also started networking with each other to meet their professional needs in the US. This type of association is generally termed as knowledge/scientific/professional
association. The phenomenon of networking among educated expatriates is not very old as it accelerated in the post 1980s, leading to the emergence of various types of professional associations like American Association of Physicians of Indian origin (AAPI), Silicon Valley Indian Professional Association (SIPA), The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) etc based on their profession or expertise. The leading factor has been the need of professional bodies which can provide a platform for sharing problems and discussing the professional ideas. These types of associations are not very large in number but have a significant membership base. Due to transnational contacts, professional associations of Indian expatriates engage with the home country through various ways. TiE, AAPI and NetIP are these types of associations which have made linkages with projects related to health, new technologies etc in the home country.

Another section is of Indian students associations which are composed of both first and second generation Indian students who have been studying in various US universities. Within this, another set of associations is based on their Alma-meter i.e. Indian Institute of Technology, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, etc. Though limited to premier institutes only, in total, there are about 125 Indian student and alumni associations in the USA.

Another set of associations formed by Indian expatriates are support associations, out of which some are formed to engage with political and business purposes. These associations are aligned to the political needs of members and hence aim to protect their political and legal rights in support of the business needs of the Indian community. Due to large number of migrant Indian women, various associations have also come up to deal with the issues of violence, discrimination and psychological trauma faced by women.

Apart from the above, there are development oriented associations and umbrella networks formed by expatriates. Development associations intend to contribute towards the social development of home country. The study suggests that these types of associations actively engage social development sectors like health, education, livelihood, etc. These associations are not uniform within this category and can be divided into two
main types of associations - one, formed by a group of Indian expatriates which has membership and second those formed by individuals in the form of foundation/charity organization generally in the name of their family. Moreover, umbrella associations, by nature, act as a parent organization to all other types of expatriate associations. They have organizations as members while all other organization’s membership is based on individuals. It primarily focuses on ‘policy issues’ concerning Indian expatriates in the host and home countries. It is also referred to by some as ‘General Association’ due to its nature of activities.

Objective 3: Structures, Objectives and Activities of the Professional Indian Expatriate Associations in the US

The study states that professional Indian expatriate associations are mostly registered as non-profit entities not involved in business opportunities in the US. The basic criteria of networking among professionals or high skilled expatriates are based on the profession they belong to. Therefore, all the professional expatriate associations are ‘industry or occupation specific’. Professional associations have clear objectives, and defined goals, governance, activities and targets unlike other types of associations. The associations are primarily profession based and have limited membership which results in members having great sense of ownership in the associations. The study of TiE also illustrates this point where members engage with the association.

The main objective of Indian expatriate professional associations is largely to share knowledge and expertise with its members as well as to provide a platform to grapple with the professional problems and opportunities. Associations also engage with policy makers to create conducive business environment and hence organize various types of networking and business meetings focusing on key areas of respective industries. So far, engagement of professional associations with the home country has been limited as evidenced by analysis of their activities, except for a few. Primarily, activities of the associations are guided by their mission and objectives. For example, TiE aims to promote entrepreneurship and therefore organizes activities that could help the first
generation entrepreneurs in their work. In India, TiE has created local chapters which played critical role in promoting and fostering expatriate engagements with the home country. TiE, due to local chapters, have devised various programmes to suit the requirements of their members. Data reveals that mentorship programme of TiE is highly appreciated by most of the members. It was found out that 34 per cent members of TiE found this activity very useful in solving their professional problems while other 24 per cent mentioned that it has helped them in boosting their confidence. This type of activities suggests that professional associations consider the needs of members and formulate programs and activities accordingly. One of the members of TiE said

...TiE’s activities are generally aligned with members’ needs which is the reason you will find that some activities occur more often that others. However, effectiveness of activities is very much linked with involvement of the associate members since they are the driving force of the association and can help in identification of actual problems/needs thereby designing specific activities.’

It can also be stated that governance of the associations plays a critical role in effectiveness of professional associations as they are required to give more time and effort to make activities and objectives relevant to the organizations. Therefore the nature of the association and its networking processes become essential to accelerate the networking process. For example, TiE formed local chapters which played a key role in networking with expatriates as well as in designing of local activities.

Objective 4: Operational Dynamics and Interrelations among Networks of Highly Skilled Professionals;

The study found that engagement of members with the association is dependent on its actors. It can be said that TiE-Delhi has been able to bring together more than 200 high skilled professionals from different sectors of the economy through support of its ‘actors’ i.e. senior members and management. Since 1999, TiE-Delhi is promoting entrepreneurship among high skilled professionals where 70 per cent members were entrepreneurs whereas 30 per cent were aspiring entrepreneurs and individuals. 18 per
cent of aspiring members have become entrepreneurs in the last four years as they have been inspired by the value addition of TiE in their work. Therefore, 88 per cent members are entrepreneurs. TiE primarily engages with highly educated entrepreneurs as 72 per cent hold postgraduate degrees mainly in computer and engineering while eight percent have doctorate degrees from institutions of high learning from India as well as abroad and mainly in the US. It signifies that TiE- Delhi has been crucial in bringing educated professionals together and helping them in setting up their business.

The study signifies the role of information technology which played a key role in bringing these professionals from diverse sectors together. Our survey revealed that TiE connects with its members beyond boundaries through technology. Besides, active engagement of the key members, actors of TiE also played key role in forging links, establishing networking processes, interacting with expatriates and other members, planning activities and executing them in a profitable manner. These actors have many roles and responsibilities which reflect on their commitment to promote entrepreneurship in India. It was found that there is no financial liability on associate members and expenses of activities and programmes are shared among charter members. It shows that networking is not ‘profit-driven’ but is based on the principle of sharing.

There is limited interaction of professional associations of Indian expatriates with other associations. Most of the associations have not formed any kind of partnership in the home country which has restricted their participation there. It was found that having a partner, in the form of chapter or local body, facilitates ‘smooth and sustainable interaction’ in home country as has been in the case of TiE which has formed various chapters across India as well as in other countries where members can interact with others and learn from them. Lastly, our analysis reveals that a very few professional associations of Indian expatriates have a clear objective to help the home country.
Objective 5: Contribution of professional expatriate Indians to the development process in India through associations

It was found that professional expatriate Indians engage with the development process through associations and its activities. Expatriate Indians actively participate, irrespective of geographical space, in the programs of the TiE so that expatriate members could interact with TiE-Delhi members to share their knowledge to improve their productivity thereby impact the Indian economy. The study reveals that these professional Indians engage with India at three levels.

At the first level, expatriates have helped in formulation of suitable policy environments in the home country. Policy research reveals that expatriate Indians through TiE-Delhi engaged with the home country to create business environment so that experience of international markets could be implemented in India. They played an important role in formulation of public policies like policy on venture capital reforms and shaping of telecom reforms. Expatriate Indians also engaged with various Indian states and helped them in the projection of respective states as investment destinations.

At the second level, they have helped in improving capabilities and productivity of TiE’s members through sharing of knowledge and ideas. Besides, expatriate members through local chapters of TiE have been able to inspire a number of start-up enterprises. The study reveals 56 per cent members are increasingly appreciative of the value of TiE and its expatriate members to their enterprises. TiE, particularly, the Delhi chapter, focuses on knowledge based entrepreneurs and plays a crucial role in promotion and development of entrepreneurship in this region through networking, mentoring, knowledge sharing, venture capital etc. To improve their productivity, members have been exposed to international business trends and development opportunities by the expatriates as well as charter members to help them in their enterprises. Networking between expatriate Indians and charter members has also been very important in this endeavour. Indian expatriates have been supportive and have taken keen interest in the promotion of entrepreneurship through charter members of TiE-Delhi. Expatriate Indians
share their knowledge about the upcoming challenges and issues and offer support through programmes like mentoring, “my story” sessions etc with first generation young entrepreneurs in India.

At the third level, some evidences are found that expatriate members contribute towards development of social infrastructure in India. TiE has supported and guided grassroots and community based projects in the field of education and health in India and aims to build capacities of marginalized children. However, these efforts are limited and needs much more sustainable efforts on the part of expatriate Indians.

Objective 6: Possible contribution of professional networks to home country’s development

Our study has suggested that professional networks have assisted in flourishing of entrepreneurship in new knowledge areas primarily with the guidance of charter and expatriate members. The network of professional expatriates has helped in the replication of models of international economy like venture capital, BPO, retailing etc. However these efforts have been limited and needs to be explored in other sectors. Use of Information Technology can help in active engagement of networks with the home country as it has generated seeds of entrepreneurship among first generation high skilled professionals through TiE. Such kind of mentoring trends can also be replicated in other sectors while engaging with other type of professional association of expatriates. TiE can be an important institutional network and other professional associations can be engaged by the government for other potential areas of the economy.

Generally, professional network of expatriate Indians have not engaged in social infrastructure which is one of the main components for long term development of the country, although, various studies have indicated that the involvement of Indian expatriates through networks can positively improve the development of social infrastructure especially efficacy of the education and health system. For instance, India Sponsor Foundation has been working with various development projects supported by
the TiE -members. This association is contributing towards educational needs of the marginalized children especially those out of school and over-aged children and helping them in mainstreaming these children in the formal education. Such partnerships between professional and development associations can be built on mutually agreed areas since this brings a holistic view along with sustained interaction.

8.2 Policy Implications

It is evidenced that 20 million strong Indian diaspora spread in more than 100 countries is heterogeneous and having different needs. There are layers within layers among heterogeneous expatriates indicating that there is a need to develop country as well as sectoral specific strategies. Hence, unfamiliar forms of social capital should be acknowledged. It can be said that there has been very few attempts by the home country to engage with associations of expatriates, and so far expatriate' associations have engaged themselves with the home country without much support of home country. Therefore, the home country needs to engage with different types of expatriate associations. The strength and weakness of different types of associations should be considered while establishing institutional platforms for knowledge sharing. Along with this, the interest and motives of the associations should also be studied to align with the priorities. There is a need to acknowledge that expatriates are generally mobilized but the next level of efforts should be geared towards identifying relevant engagement for them.

There have been very little efforts by the host country towards promotion of networking of expatriates with their respective home countries. The host countries can extend their support in dealing with the issues of international migration and networking of professionals, since international migration will accelerate in future. This should become policy issues for departments\(^1\) like USAID, DFID and so on. The host country can also

\(^1\) USAID is an independent federal government agency that supports long-term and equitable economic growth around the world. It has been supporting various developing countries in the field of health, governance, resolution of conflicts, education, etc. Though very little focus on migration and development issues. Similarly, DFID supported by the U.K. government engages with developing countries and aims to promote economic and social growth addressing issues like climate change, gender equity, health, etc. It
provide assistance vis-à-vis the Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs), as that will help in the transfer of ideas and technological know-how. For this purpose, bilateral agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) can be signed between host and home countries in relation to sharing of knowledge and skills by the expatriates. If these measures are not taken up, then the benefits emanating from networking of professionals would be held up which may hinder the process of sharing of knowledge. Moreover, flexible labor laws and social security to expatriates can be beneficial as these help them in networking with one another and providing more suitable working conditions.

In the age of globalization, when distances are reducing with new technologies, expatriates are increasingly engaging with the home country. For example, they have participated in various development activities in home country by responding to the call of nation and working through select associations. However, their engagement has been limited to specific sectors due to their business motives and interests. There are very few evidences which suggest that professional expatriates' can network with other set of expatriates. It can be suggested that different types of expatriate associations may engage with each other to leverage the benefits and expand their own business opportunities. Robinson (2002) also speaks of such diaspora relationship being of three-prolong types: i) development in the diaspora; ii) development through the diaspora and iii) development by the diaspora. Besides, to increase expatriates' networking process, different occupation based expatriate associations can be formed in which other members also take part.

8.3 Limitations of the Research

Although, in the present study, proper care has been taken at every step, there are several variables in terms of which the study provides only a partial picture of professional

recently developed a white paper which acknowledges the need to maximise the benefits and minimise the risks of migration for poor people and developing countries.

Robinson refers to first type as formation of networks in the host country like ethnic business, cultural ties, and social mobilization. It seems 'development through diaspora' refers to use of diasporic communities global connections beyond the locality to facilitate economic and social well being' while third type refers to the impact of the flow of ideas, money, and political support to the migrants' home country.
expatriate associations. First of all, the study provides important findings about TiE and its members’ satisfaction level with the networking activities while the impact of networking activities on their business could not be measured statistically. Since the study is exploratory in nature therefore, qualitative analysis approach has been adopted. Further, the members could not share the data pertaining to the growth of their business in percentage terms.

Moreover, engagement of professional associations of Indian expatriates with other sectors of the economy could not be studied in a greater detail due to unavailability of appropriate information on this variable. It would have been helpful if expatriate associations’ approaches and strategies to engage with the social sector of the home country could also be examined, but this still remained a black box. Whatever insights could be gathered on TiE’s engagement with the social sector, it is limited in scope. Therefore, more in-depth analysis with larger sample is required which was not possible through this study.

The study could also not examine resource generation activities and financial management of professional associations of Indian expatriate since these associations were not forthcoming in sharing such data. The information would have helped in understanding the mechanisms and strategies of Indian expatriate associations for resource generation.

Finally, the small size of sample in the study makes it difficult if not impossible to generalize the findings. Given the small sample, case study approach was adopted which helped in understanding networking processes and activities of TiE Indian. The findings could not be generalized for all types of associations but can be extrapolated to understand networking processes and engagement of other professional expatriate associations with their home country. The dearth of primary data on Indian migration in India was also a constraint. This data would have been valuable in understanding migration scenario from the home country perspective. Therefore one had to rely mostly on the host country sources, especially the US, to understand Indian migration.
8.4 Concluding Observations:

As mentioned in the main findings, Indian expatriate associations in the U.S. are divided on cultural, religious and professional identity lines and do not have any inter-linkages with each other. The same has been observed on the agendas of the various associations which are compartmentalized. Excepting for a few, most professional associations appeared to be self-serving. The findings, however, suggests that associations like TiE have made productive linkages with India. This expatriate association promotes entrepreneurship among the educated professionals. This explains that professional expatriate associations can become a vital option for transfer of knowledge, ideas and skills to the country of origin and the role of the expatriates may continue to expand with connectivity, mobility and interdependence.

The empirical findings in this study provided a new understanding on the functioning of the professional expatriate associations. The study suggests that engagement of expatriates with the home country has so far been addressed mainly in the context of remittances and possible gains. In recent years, expatriate associations have been seen as potential partners but in a limited way. Therefore, there is a need to focus on the networking process of expatriate associations and their agendas towards the country of origin. The study suggests that most of the associations do not have any specific agenda vis-à-vis development of the home country. Even, definition of development varies among associations and their members. Most expatriate associations appeared to have a myopic understanding of development as evidenced by their activities. Moreover, the associations consider development in terms of economic gains and lack a long term holistic vision. The agendas and development approaches of the associations require a debate if they are to be considered as partners for effecting change in the home country. This is critical since the members’ vision and engagements are also shaped by the associations and their approaches. The findings also suggest that TiE has not contributed significantly in the social sector. Associations like TiE need to invest in the social sector of the home country with a long term vision. They can play a key role in reinvention of the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR) so that members’ understand the
rationale of CSR and its impact on the society. It is essential that members of expatriate associations begin to consider sectors like education and health as important investment areas for fulfilling their own long terms interests.

Also, it was seen that some countries of origin have designed policy measures aimed at attracting expatriates to participate in their economies with a clear perspective on the involvement of their associations. In this, the onus lies not only on the home countries but also on expatriate associations to design innovative programs that enable them to engage with the home country on a sustainable scale.