6.1 Introduction

The researcher has focused on that topic which is very common these days especially for those writers who have left their homeland and settled on a foreign land. Or those who are second generation writers who are aborigins of different land but have been born and brought up on that land where they really are in search of their roots for something is really pinching which they can’t find therefore through the writings they try to come out of their confusions and these confusions as well as their findings has been labelled as Diaspora writing. This has become a common study these days by writers and named as ‘Diaspora’ but the researcher’s topic is something in dilemma for the researcher isn’t very clear whether the writer can be labelled as a Diaspora writer or not in fact researcher is going to prove him as a diaspora writer therefore has given the title as “A Critical Study of Diasporic Dilemma in the selected novels of Romen Basu.” The word diaspora originates from the Greek word, Diaspora meaning, a dispersion (scattering). Diaspora may be defined as dispersion of people, language, or culture that was formerly concentrated in one place. When an individual or group of people start producing literary production about people or language they may have disinherit but writing in another language, they may be defined as diasporas literature. As a result, we hear about Indian Diasporas writings in UK, USA, and Canada, South Africa, Sri Lankan or Australia and so on.

The dispersal or scattering here signifies the location of a fluid human autonomous space involving a complex set of negotiation and exchange between the nostalgia and desire for the Homeland and the making of a new home, by adapting to the power, relationships between the minority and majority, being spokes-persons for minority rights and their people back home and significantly transacting with the new “Sense of Place”; a new unknown geographical space.

Diaspora is a phrase coined by literary scholar Veva Clark in her work "Developing Diaspora Literacy and Marasa Consciousness" (Spillers: 1991, 40-60). It is the ability to
understand and/or interpret the multi-layered meanings of stories, words, and other folk sayings within any given community of the African diaspora. These meanings supersede those of "...Western or westernized signification", means that they go beyond literal or typical literary interpretation into an area of folk understanding that could only be recognized by the eye skilled in such an understanding. Readers rely solely upon knowledge and lived experience of social, historical, and cultural climates of the various cultures of the African diaspora as a foundation for interpretation.

Diasporas literature truly speaking is examined by using several key features. First, it is based on the idea of a homeland; the place from where person has been displaced for several reasons. Secondly, Diaspora literature reveals stories of harsh journeys undertaken for various reasons. Thirdly, Diaspora has a deep sense of different things like “sense of place” away from homeland. Fourthly, one relate how “homeland-made” protagonists behave in a different place of residence other than homeland either through adopting or rejecting new cultural codes of their new “adopted place”. Therefore, when reading diasporas literature, we can relate and experience why and how some people choose to migrate to another country either voluntarily or due to other reasons, and how difficult it is to live in a new environment yet they trying to get used to living perhaps, “peacefully” elsewhere, but losing home and homeland. Diaspora literature may also represent and delve with concepts such as nostalgia, memory and even lamentation of losing one’s native language, homeland and friends and so on.

The literature of the Indian Diaspora constitutes an important part of the burgeoning field of Anglophone postcolonial literature. Some of the better-known writers of this literature in the accord we can include V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Rohinton Mistry, Romen Basu, Bharati Mukherjee, Amitav Gosh, Jhumpa Lahiri, Anita Desai, M.G. Vassanji, Shyam Selvadurai, and Kiran Desai. The growing international visibility of these authors has gone hand in hand with the popularity of postcolonial criticism and theory in academe.

It was with the Diaspora writing it opened a new realm of understanding of human nature and behaviour. It has helped us to observe an individual in terms of his responses and reactions towards fellow beings, the environment and with its own self. It was with this understanding the later Diaspora writers came up with a wide angle. They are the articulations of a talented writer who tries to seek the true meaning of life on earth. Among them one is Romen Basu whom I am here to discuss, he was highly fertile and whose more than a dozen works, beginning with A house full of people (1968), Your life to live (1972), A Gift of love (1976), Candles and Roses (1978), Portrait on the Roof (1980), Sands Of Time
(1985), Outcast (1986), Hours before dawn (1988), Blackstone (1989) The Street Corner Boys(1992), My own witness (1993), Breach of faith (2003). Besides these he has also written some short stories and poems. In most of his novels he has presented the variegated picture of Indian life set in rural Bengal. Among these I have selected a few as stated below which I am to discuss here.

1) A House Full of People.(1968)
2) Your life to live. (1972)
3) A gift of love. (1976)
4) Candles and roses. (1978)
5) Hours before dawn. (1988)

As per researchers selecting the above mentioned 5 novels of Romen Basu out of his 16 novels. In which researcher would like to highlight the author **Romen Basu as a writer of Diaspora Dilemma**, this idea struck to the researcher while doing her M.Phil. As the study was based on his novel ‘**Outcast**’ (1986) which reveals about the downtrodden people and the prevailing conditions in those days in India. While the Indians had already acquired Independence, yet Romen Basu being an Indian and being aware about the Indian scenario and having passed his entire life in foreign country, working in the United States for the United Nations Organization.Therefore to bring awareness about the social life prevailing in India, but he seems to show this in the form of dilemma in his writing as to how a poor man has to suffer in his own country. This was written by him, maybe he had that feeling in his mind while he was in the United States or he has seen the Indians experiencing such things even in foreign so as to create an awareness among the Indians he has portrayed such a picture.

Romen Basu can be labeled as diaspora writer for whatever he wrote with a purpose which was translated into a discourse, a design or a structure to accommodate, desires, with realities and deeper sensibilities. Besides this he conveys messages through his protagonist but in dilemma throughout his five selected novels. He writes in this manner for he has a purpose so as to shun out the prevailing vices and try to connect the people, with modern ways of life style. As most of his protagonist have left their homes in search of new ways of life and acquire the reality of it. As he does so but we find the protagonists are most of the time are in a dilemma whether to go along with the new ways of life or not and they tend to be in a dilemma as to take up the new life style or return home with new hope. He states this as if he himself has experienced it or undergone all this in his life, or may be one can say that he was abandoned with certain things in life or he really missed them.
This research is based on the following novels which show a lot of similarities to his family as stated in G.R. Malliga’s book ‘Quest for Harmony’ that he too belonged to a joint family. The first novel ‘House full of people’ portrays Bengali joint family in exactitude consisting of nearly sixty people, this novel mostly relates to his family back in India as he reveals the story it most of the time relates something or the other to his own home, which he really missed. This becomes very clear from the manner in which he has portrayed it. This alone is clear to show the dilemma. Second novel ‘Your life to live’ tells us about a Hindu boy getting married to a Muslim girl they have settled in the West, the protagonist behaviour as shown to be very obsessive as well as suspicious shows his narrow mindedness which always leads to quarrels between the two. With this the heroine’s feeling of returning to homeland may calm him but the girl’s fear for her acceptance in Bengali family and the girl’s bonding for the family with a dilemma. Third novel ‘A Gift of Love’ here also we find the protagonist who had fled from home in search of love and freedom but soon returns home as again his love has passed away and he feels only his home can solace him. But as the society is culturally bonded with values of high and low is never ready to accept and understand his feelings of love and family solace therefore he again finds love in some remote corner which is disrespectful for the family and he had to leave the family and return from where he had come. Fourth novel ‘Candles and Roses’ which speaks about the evil customs prevailing in the society like dowry and on the cover of dowry how the boy is ready to accept any girl even if she is not good looking. Later on realization he fled from home achieving a good job to a foreign land and here he is after beauty. As he acquires beauty he even wants to get rid of his wife with whom he is married though taking a huge dowry but at the end he is made to realize the importance of married life through this beauty. Everything in life doesn’t depend on good looking and beauty alone one has to have a heart and head and also follow it thus later on realization that is given more importance and the protagonist accepts it. The last novel ‘Hours before dawn’ speaks about the real feelings that develop in the mind of the protagonist in spite of the two getting united with their own wish and will but it is the protagonist jealousy as he is not able to tolerate the heroine’s achievements which leads to jealousy and the personal and cultural dilemmas there is abandonment but later on a reunion.

Thus a need aroused for the above stated research as the researcher wanted to bring the writer at the forefront as a Diaspora writer though whatever is focused by the author Romen Basu is mostly related with the familial setup which the ongoing situations prevailing during the period of 1960’s. He had thus concentrated on the joint family system and social
problems. His style being simple but his statements are sharp and assertive, with complex themes with the social problems mostly constituting the caste, religion and class. As a person was borne and brought up in joint family thus was very well aware about merits and demerits in the system of joint family. besides with the coming up of the independence he has tried to bring an awareness and expose the shortcomings of the joint family system like exploitation by the elders over the younger’s and lack of freedom for the younger’s. There is all time dilemma even unconscious support to maintain the values are seen in his novels.

Not only said by the author but as experienced by him the Indians do have a craving for the Western culture as well as Western education, which he hasn’t opposed but tried to demotivate the Indians, by portraying its drawbacks and highlighting it as a failure for the Indian society and Indian culture in the long run. The study has taken up a close analysis for the growth of the writer at various stages which has been reflected in his novels. The cause and means is also studied under the light of universal peace. The researcher has even focused on the prevailing culture of the Bengalis, which in spite of achieving Independence after 67 years hasn’t yet vanished from the society. Though the Bengalis stood at the forefront in Education as well as the societal development, with the first people to bring reforms with great reformers being born in the West-Bengal, yet there prevail certain drawbacks in the society. These are very prominently mentioned by Romen Basu and while he is mentioning it seems as if he too is in dilemma whether to reveal such drawbacks of his own culture would be appropriate or no.

6.2 Objectives of the Study

(1) To study the Bengali background of Diasporic literature and prove him as a writer of diaspora among other writers.

(2) To study the Indian view of life with an affirmation in glorifying the essence of Indian womanhood in Diasporic literature.

(3) To analyze the dilemma of Diasporas ethos along with social behaviour in modern times this is upheld with western culture in particular.

(4) To analyze the philosophical difference between the values of the East and the West with a Diasporic behaviour.

6.3 Results and Discussions

6.3.1 To study the Bengali background of Diaspora literature and portray Romen Basu as a writer of Diaspora among other writers.
As such diaspora theory having various features has influenced the literature of every language of the world. Therefore the literature is widely known as expatriate or Diasporic literature. Thus it would be appreciative to examine the features and aspects of that literature in which Indian writing in English has not only received international recognition also admiration in few years.

There is an exclusive and notable reading about Indian Diasporic writings. The fact is that unlike other Asian diaspora, the writers of Indian Diaspora though being Indian do not share a common faith, language, culture, dress, food, etc. Due to this variedness we get literature writers of different background based on the regions they belong to and even sometimes literature depends on their caste and religion.

As we speak about religion and culture and if we take Rohinto Mistry being a diaspora writer of present generation and a Parsee by religion he lays more stress to Parsee culture and people. Same applies to Bapsi Sidhwa she is also a double migrant from Pakistan to India and then from India to Pakistan and now settled in the US nowhere we find her writing about Indian culture or Pakistani culture she is more focused on Parsee community. As the researcher is to study about Romen Basu, thus would like to show that though he lived in the west an achieved international experience but how much Indian and a Bengali was he. He has given more stress on Bengali people, culture, religion, festivities, etc. though he lived abroad he provided a deep insight of sociological and psychological problems with a diaspora behaviour. One finds peculiar narrations about their places, its richness lies in showing microscopic details of their style, dress, culture and religion. One will find these things in each and every novel of his. They have large and joint families all things handled by the head of the family. Such thing in diaspora literature in English brings uniqueness and difference. This is what Romen Basu has portrayed in his novels; this shows his typical quality of searching for what he has lost through his novels. This is also one of the qualities of diaspora writings. Along with other Indian diaspora writers particularly in the last decades of the 20th century there are sub-groups within Indian diaspora fiction in English from the State of Bengal, Bangladesh and the Diasporic Bengalis. In these sub-groups are writers like Romen Basu, Bharti Mukherjee, Amitav Gosh, Upamanyu Chatterjee, Joydeep Roy, Bhattacharya, Adib Khan, Amit Chaudhary, and others. Whereas recent ones are Amal Chaterjee, Ruchina Mukherjee, and Jhumpa Lahiri.

As we read them we find a ting of bengalines in their writings. The language the themes, moods are very specific. This includes their passion for Bengali food, their love for golf courses, politics, music, cinema, literature etc. we also read about their being proud of
their big houses run by family head and wide roads and dock yards. They have a great fondness for their belonging to the higher class or to the class of elite. In spite of Romen Basu mentioning such things, with a great vividness about the Indian society and the state of Bengal yet he didn’t find any place in the Indian Literature among the Indian English writers. He has been different from the other Indian English writers because he didn’t write for fame or prestige, on the contrary he was a different person writing about the economy of the country. As such he had gone to London for attaining higher education, meeting Mr. Krishna Menon worked for him as personal assistant and later getting opportunity on completion of his studies migrated to New York. Here he got a job with the United Nations secretariat working for a period of 30 years with the United Nations travelling to lot of countries in the world achieving different experiences then after retirement he started this career as a writer. Even after so many years he has not left out his culture and social attitude. This shows his Diaspora zeal that he did search somewhere or the other for his lost identity.

The first novel ‘House full of People’ is a clear picture of something he really missed, for in it he has portrayed the same family system which he had left behind when he left his home and travelled to London. Thus a true quality of a Diaspora writer searching for the roots. In this novel he has shown the huge family of around sixty members and the entire burden born by the eldest brother. How the other brothers take him for granted and don’t care for him until he reaches his death bed. It is only the younger generation who tries to relieve the elders from the clutches of the old systems. This is something a western style hence he has tried to mix the western culture or if not western but bring a change in the society.

The second point to be discussed about the study is to view life with an affirmation in glorifying the essence of womanhood in Diaspora literature based on the selected novels which are already mentioned in the beginning of the paper. As such these novels are completely with Indianness though the setting may be in the west, but the culture portrayed is Indian, the prevailing customs in the society are Indian. As we know life is reciprocal to achieve something, one has to give something same is related about literature and society. Literature is not only the effect of social cause; it is also the cause of social effects, while we read his novels each of them is bounded in essence of Indianness.

If we take his first novel ‘House full of People’ it describes the joint family system which is very much his own we can say which he has missed in the west therefore to forget its loss or may be relating it, or writing about it he gets relieved from his past or enjoys telling about it. Besides speaking about the womanhood here woman has played great role in supporting their families though they are not allowed to get educated but we find them
standing beside their husbands, as we speak about the eldest woman Mrs. Prathibha Sudhin
and the second generation women have a lot of similarities that is Arun the eldest son’s wife
Chitra and the second boy Ranjit his wife Sheila both belong to second generation and are
educated yet both have a similarity to the eldest woman of the house. They want that the
family lives united without making divisions in the house and both are shown to have simple
living with high thinking, though both come from different community yet they come down
to the standards of Bengali traditional ways and want to make a family and live peacefully.

The second novel ‘A Gift of Love’ speaks about class here there is upper class boy
falling in love with a lower class girl or rather to be precise she is a prostitute which a total
derogatory act. But then we find him getting married to a servant’s daughter. This was a very
bold step taken by the protagonist; as such the protagonist had lived abroad and returned
therefore he doesn’t find anything wrong in it. In spite of the girl fearing about it and saying
no to the boy but he goes against all odds and marries her. This is called Diaspora behaviour
for in the west there is nothing like high and low.

The third novel ‘Your life to Live’ we have entire setting of the novel at the beginning
in the west it speaks about mingling of different religion and cultures. We see Hindu Bengali
culture and Muslim North Indian culture totally different cultures mixed with male
chauvinism, what a combination and the girl though staying in the west is ready to accept
everything whatever is imposed on her what is this? Isn’t it Diaspora? In fact this is in true
sense diaspora for she was not bothered about the boy being from different culture or religion
but she wanted an Indian boy and to her satisfaction she gets infatuated at the very first sight
but she doesn’t shows her infatuation, but slowly and steadily clings to the boy as he is an
Indian and she was in need of a company for she was also travelling alone for the first time
on a vacation and to her good luck she comes across an Indian. But after getting married the
buts and if’s start between the two for he is a real male chauvinist who is not ready to tolerate
her mixing in the male society, as Zarine the heroine we can see the way she had come to the
west to acquire higher education was a free bird and according to her there was no harm in
mixing with the westerner, but after marriage she was in a fix. As her husband Ashoke was
against her as according to him it was not good and right for women to be so free hence we
see here pure amalgamation of the east-west encounter, ultimately like a free bird the author
has rightly shown the drawbacks of the east boys. In spite of their moving to the west they
don’t change and are never ready to change when it comes to be free for their women. On the
other hand if they want they can freely mix with the woman of the west but for theis wife’s
they are not ready to accept such things.
The fourth novel ‘Candles and Roses’ here in this novel there is total east-west encounter. We find an Indian married man falls in love with a Parisian girl when he comes abroad leaving his wife back in his hometown, just because he had got married to gain a huge dowry he even didn’t bother to see whether his wife was good looking or not and after realizing the blunder he moves to foreign land leaving her behind and goes in search of beauty. He even acquires a beautiful Parisan lady falling in love with her, but soon his relatives coming to know about his blunder send his wife to Paris. When she comes abroad she too watches everything, she doesn’t say anything it is only patience and tolerance she achieves her husband back. Here there is a total east and west encounter for the protagonist also tilted towards to things which are so much fused in his mind after all it is the culture which keeps him bided and easily leaves away the western culture though he is drifted in the beginning but later on it was for the search of his roots he comes back to his wife.

And the last novel ‘Hours before Dawn’ is also a love affair between two Bengalis but of different class and caste no doubt their thoughts are different but yet to some extent they get united as the girl wants to live a life of typical Indian bahu or wife whereas the protagonist wants to have a totally English culture and atmosphere which he finds in Kabita’s house but he isn’t aware that Kabita is against such ideal yet both get married. It is later on when by force they return to London. As Kabita a doctor by profession gets married to a journalist this is also a love marriage, but with the consent of parents they get married and as her husband is a suspicious journalist who has left her saying he got an opportunity to write about the Vietnam war and therefore travelled first to Vietnam and later on to Paris it is only here through Suzie the women who had taken him to write about Vietnam we come to know that he had left Kabita out of jealousy while we find Kabita a very helping nature women who meets a young Indian boy who complains about his mother who is sick and doesn’t want to be treated at the hospital as Indian women don’t leave home, Kabita loves to help and as his mother is sick she comes in contact with the boy and her husband feels that she is infatuated towards him, and leaves her and goes away to Vietnam at first then Paris but to her fortune she re-units with her husband on their twenty-fifth anniversary. But their hearts never unite. Here we find the Indian heart with eastern culture but clinging to western taboos wanting to call themselves westernised.

These are certain characteristics of the western society which Romen Basu has portrayed in his novels he misses certain traits in the Indian society but while mixing this sort of Western culture with the Eastern shows his dilemma of society which he really missed in reality. While we speak about his woman characters he has always given them an upper hand.
Starting with ‘House full of People’ though it is dominated by the head of the family that is male members, yet the household affairs are taken care by the female, everything happens in the house with the consent of the female members of the family, it is the female members who take care of the house hold affairs, training young children, though girl child is not sent for higher education but yet she is trained with other house hold dealings.

This was the culture of Bengali life which Romen Basu very well portrayed about women openly in his novels. Besides this he proudly speaks about the girl being married with a huge dowry this makes Romen Basu glorifying the womanhood he lives in the west but doesn’t forget his culture. In another novel ‘Your life to live’ though he speaks of male dominance or male chauvinism but at the end we find Ashoke the protagonist who bows down to his wife’s view of life in the end saying each one has his or her way of living and can live according to their wish. This shows upper hand of the female character.

In the third novel ‘Gift of love’ Sukumal the protagonist who marries the servant’s daughter is also ready to give an upper hand to this lower class girl; this is very clear from their conversation when she says “I am a maid servant, not a part of your society, I never will be, I know you have told me a hundred times that in Europe it is very common. But you are not going to live in Europe” (pg 171). This true diaspora behaviour of implementing something without bothering about class and creed and falling in love just because she was an Indian who cared for him and he loved her. This also shows the protagonist true love irrespective of class and creed. It is another quality of uplifting the woman irrespective of class.

In the fourth novel ‘Candles and Roses’ the author has tried to inculcate the Indian woman values what she has been taught that a girl is suppose to follow only duties, she doesn’t have any rights but in the end doing her duties she wins her husband’s faith and love and wins him back from the clutches of a Parisan girl name Monique. We hear from the protagonist words saying ‘she is the one who would decor his home like a show piece and cook and respect his elders’ after all this is nothing but again an upper hand to the woman of Indian sensibility and he returns to Pramila. Whatever would have been her behaviour, but ultimately she did win her lost love. So is the case with Kabita of ‘Hours before Dawn’ whose husband had left her and gone behind a Vietnam lady but ultimately had to return to her on their 25th anniversary, even though their minds don’t meet but they do unite. This is something very true about Romen Basu looking at the east and the west he doesn’t try to put down the female characters. This is his true diaspora characteristics.
6.3.2. To analyze the dilemma of diaspora ethos along with social behaviour in modern times. This is upheld with western culture in particular.

Trying to portray the diaspora behaviour of the researcher’s writer as he has nowhere been stated as a writer of diaspora as he wasn’t a person of literary fervent. It was his zeal for writing which made him a literary man and he put down a dozen of novels in Indian English literature. Though his novels didn’t find much of fame in the Indian universities but they are quite well known in the west. He has been a writer of economic development as he worked for the United Nations Organization and was running a publishing house for it. It was Christine Weston author of Indigo who inspired him and asked him to sit and write. He was indeed influenced by various Russian and Japanese authors as he did their printing work of their translated books at his publishing house named Facets books International to promote Indian authors and kept him abreast with Indian social and political situations. This is what inspired him to become a literary person and with this inspiration he turned out to be a writer of more than a dozen novels, two volumes of short stories and poems as well. In his interview with G.R. Maliga he has said ‘I do submit that there is no room for parochialism or nationalism in the matter of language. Every language is universal language, any language in which an author chooses to write is his personal preference’ (pg 18 Quest for Harmony by G.R. Maliga)\textsuperscript{54} this shows the authors true Diasporic dilemma ethos.

As for his literary influence he says it was Gandhian truth and Buddha’s writing which gave him strength and later he appreciates and admires Kawabata, Tolstoy, Faulkner, Howard Fast, Hemmingsway, Saul Bellow, Neruda, Sarat Chandra, Michael and Madhusudan Dutt. This he has revealed to the scholar in his interview with him in book Quest for Harmony. The other sources were his travels and world literatures that gave him a literary fervent and made him a literary person. These are his certain revelation that makes it sure that even though he was writing literary text but was in Dilemma. He has fused social life with western life style which was not at all seen in those days and it wasn’t appreciable being a writer he has given a total new art in writing for the period of 1960’s. These things suggest diaspora behaviour, which was nowhere to be heard of or written about or even discussed at. It was not that migratory people had seen. It was only in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century the word Diaspora achieved its name and fame. Thus researcher has tried labeling Romen Basu as a Diaspora dilemma writer with ethos along with social behaviour. This is because the novels discussed in this research are full of social importance, whether they are set in the east or west the author has tried to portray the ethos in each and every discussed novel here very minutely. Even if the protagonist are living in the west as ashoke and Zarine of \textit{Your life to live} their
ethos is such that before any thing takes place they start discussing about it and Ashoke is so much deep in his ethos he goes upto such an extent that he even doesn’t bother if any fight between the two takes place ultimately it is the heroine who lets goes talks and finds a solution to overcome the situation. This is the dilemma prevailing among the protagonist though they might not be deeply rooted in religion yet they always want an upper hand when it comes to religion. Before the girl gets pregnant they start discussing about children and naming them as per Hindu culture and the children should also be following Hindu culture. On the basis of this they even quarreled a lot and finally to solve the problems they return to homeland, finally lose everything and a situation comes that they also have to get separated but finally it is resolved this shows the dilemma that they can’t come out of the ethos they have developed within themselves. The ethos is mainly seen in the male characters of the author.

6.3.3. To analyze the differences between the values of the East and West

Speaking about differences between the values of east and the west in particular no doubt they are totally different, it is difficult to compare as east is east and west is west, while we talk about the eastern values they can never be taken for granted for people in the east are too much deeply rooted into it that they can’t be shaken from it. Values such as to speak about culture they will not budge, no one can shake them, no one can try to leave out any little deed when it comes to culture, as for simple things when they have to give dowry even if a person doesn’t have money he will go bankrupt but not leave away a single ritual. As in House full of People we see though they don’t have money yet Sudhin the head of the family takes loans and tries to maintain the family prestige and gives away silver vessels in his nieces marriage as per the custom of Roy family. This isn’t enough he even sees that each and every person of the boy’s sides receives as promised these are certain things which Basu misses in the west and therefore he has written showing his diaspora behaviour. While on the other hand we have Kabita and Mrinal in Hours before Dawn whose marriage takes place in London here the bride wants to get married as per Indian style but her counterpart Mrinal wants all things to happen in the British style, but it was Kabita’s good luck that she could get married as per her wish and will. After getting married they come to meet their in-laws, that is Mrinal’s family here Kabita is ready to accept all things that come her way according to the eastern style but we have Mrinal who doesn’t want to accept it and prefers things to happen in western style. Here the author has shown the protagonist of Hours before Dawn with double standards while they come to meet his parents after getting married he behaves in a typical Bengali manner while with his family but as soon as he goes to meet his in-laws that is
Kabita’s parents his manners change immediately he behaves as a westernised in his manner. Here the writer has shown such thing it seems as Kabita’s father had passed his life with Britishers and he preferred to live in that manner hence to show of even Mrinal is behaving like a westerner. This shows that east is east and west is west, the writer Romen Basu also draws the readers attention that how man changes as soon as he comes in contact with different people. This was immediately noticed even by the heroine of the novel that is Kabita his wife, she had also asked him what brought change in his manner, to which he too replied one should try to live the way the society accepts them. We have east and west encounter in Candles and Roses here Samir is a married man who falls in love with the Parisan girl Monique, when she comes to know about Samir being a married man she is shocked but she wins him by her love. Ultimately his wife comes and she too wins his heart through patience and finally he has to tell Monique, what Pramila can do it can’t be done by her and he leaves her. Thus this is the Indian mentality difference between the East and the West. There are certain situation between Ashoke and Zarine in Your Life to Live while they get married in the west, Zarine also believed in getting dressed up in a traditional manner for her marriage but as going against her parents’ wishes and getting married in a different caste has to shun her tradition and accept whatever was present for her. But as soon as she returns to her in laws and as she was told by her husband that she would have to wear a saree she accepts it. While they stayed in the west she never ever cared or bothered about the tradition. What does this show by the writer isn’t this diaspora behaviour.

While they stay in the west Ashoke is shown to be so much concerned and caring about Zarine he cannot live without her for a little moment, even if she spoke to any of her friends for a longer period or spent much time with them he would become over protective and at times would even get angry with her. But the time they had landed in India he was least worried about her. With this sort of behaviour one can say that the writer was at home and at ease when he use to write about the eastern society, where as he seems to show diaspora attitude while portraying about the western society.

The Diasporic cultural space occupied by the immigrants is perpetual as assimilation is a process which keeps on going and it would never be complete, as it is a continuous dispute which is constantly going on between the donor culture and the recipient culture. Due to this there arises a conflict between the two the donor and the recipient and there is racial discrimination in the dark side of diaspora. Before diaspora fiction started many Indian writers lived abroad and wrote novels with the theme of confrontation between the East and the West, to name a few Raja Rao’s Serpent and the Rope, G.V.Desani’s All about Hatter,
Manohar Malgonkar’s The Combat of Shadows, Ruth Pawar Jhabwala’s Esmond in India and Heat and Dust, Bharti Mukherjee’s The Tiger’s Daughter, and so on all these depict the cultural and social conflict between the east and the west and the reaction of an Indian on coming back home after a brief stay in England. Such things are all familiar in Romen Basu’s novels.

There are certain other alienated attitudes which are very prominently seen in first generation settlers, they have migration traumas of being dispersed and exiled from their native land and being discriminated in the host land. Further they try to participate in the host land where their participation is limited and even if they try to mingle there is external constraint of prejudice also their being imbibed in cultural values and norms. Though this is differing in the present generation due to their being grown in such a way as they have acquired from the host land, or rather say that they are not too much with their motherland. This is because for them where they have grown up is their own country; this is for the younger generation of Indian diaspora. No doubt they have assimilated with the host culture but at times they do drift for their culture as their parents are deeply rooted in their Indian culture. Romen Basu has again and again tried to show the cultural clinging in almost all his novels either through some marriage celebration or presenting some festival celebration.

6.3.4. Diaspora and the self

Most of his characters we see like Ashoke, Zarine, Kabita, Mrinal, Samir, Pramila,…etc all have a quest for self in the alien land in order to have stable life. The eastern idea emphasis on family and community as against the western idea of individual freedom posits dilemma in the construction of the self for Indian immigrants living in the west. They are certainly torn between the two countries, the country of their birth and the country where their roots belong to. They have a desire to live in the west considering it as a place of their dream. They have a fragmented self which is neither here nor there. We have Kabita, Zarina who try to accept certain values of the west and mingle it with the values of the east so as to maintain balance in their life and have stability to some extent. But here again their society is not ready to accept the considering them as hypocrites. As for Zarine her husband Ashoke is the first person who drifts away from her, and then we have Mrinal who leaves Kabita and settles in Germany giving a vague reason for his behaviour. There are such certain reasons which even prove racial discrimination. There are other numerous instances which highlight pain of rejection, discrimination, and maladjustment etc…which is the stark reality of the Indian diaspora despite the post-colonial celebration of hybridity, nomadism, border land culture, syncrecity and transculturation.
Further if we come to his another novel *Hours before dawn* which when begins we see it in a British culture for the two people mentioned the hero and the heroine have come to study and make a future in a foreign land, no doubt they do make their future on this land by acquiring good education the boy Mrinal becomes a journalist and the girl Kabita also becomes a full fledged doctor. After completion of their studies Mrinal wants to stay back and start working for some newspaper as he thinks that he has a secure future here. In between he meets Kabita and develops an attachment for her but with this there is always a dilemma between the two as Kabita wants to return on completion of her studies. She has always had a liking to get married into a very culturally oriented family having Bengali feelings and to be called a typical Bengali daughter-in-law. This all becomes a dilemma for her, for she when meets Mrinal he agrees to her but with his father-in-laws consent he gets a backing and they return to London. On their return and getting a good opportunity in U.S.A Mrinal explains to Kabita that she would also get a greater opportunity there and both try to move to the U.S but Kabita is as usual in a dilemma. She does get work in the hospital and she has to help an elderly lady who has never left her home again bounded in constraints of culture and dilemma how can a women move out of her house. Such dilemmas go on prevailing as a preservance of socio-cultural identity.

6.3.5 Diaspora and the Race

There are so many racial discrimination that the society is unable to come out from those dilemmas. They are also under work pressures in spite of having good jobs as their counterparts the Americans are always under competence with them. It even happens that they are far much better in their work than the natives yet they always have a fear of being removed from their work. And if not removed they are treated in such a manner that the person may himself leave the job and move away in search of another job to save one’s own prestige. This is very true with Mrinal he was a very good journalist with good reputation yet he suffers under the hands of his younger colleagues, this is all because they wanted to remove him from his job and he too comes under the prejudice that his wife has drifted from him and fallen in love with another Indian leaves her in dilemma and goes away to Vietnam first with a Vietnamese lady to write a book on Vietnam war and its people, he is not able to settle there and finally being in dilemma he travels to Spain and settles there and on completion of his book returns to America. To his surprise Kabita readily accepts him and are ready to celebrate their twenty-fifth anniversary. This all happens again in dilemma for Mrinal behaves in suspicious manner thinking Kabita to be having an affair with a young Indian boy whom she had helped in acquiring a good administrative job in her hospital whose
mother was sick. Looking at the very first novel we have Arun and Sheila, Ranjit and Chitra, Ashoke and Zarine, in the second novel, Sukumal and Kajali, in the third novel later in the fourth novel Samir and Pramila and the last one Mrinal and Kabita all of these characters are somewhere or the other under the prejudice of racial discrimination each one has some race prejudice as the female characters are mostly from different class and caste there is a problem of their being accepted by the so called high class society the Bengali society. Even if they are accepted but it so happens that each one had to sacrifice something or the other in the male dominated society. If we take from the beginning Arun and Sheila, she had to miss her first child as it was conceived before marriage and after pleading a lot too Arun she was accepted by him that was also because she was truly in love with him whereas Arun was just flirting with her and she had taken him in true sense solely hers. No doubt she gets married and comes to the house but the class discrimination prevails in such a state that is unbreareable and out of imagination. Arun who loved such a lot is least concerned about her she had to live in the house on the mercy of his cousins later on. The next one to suffer on the basis of class discrimination was Chitra who also hails from Christian family is not accepted by Ranjit’s family it is only by giving birth to a child she has been reliev ed and accepted by the boys family no doubt this is all diaspora and race.

Coming to the next novel again there is class discrimination here in this novel it was but natural for we have the boy from Hindu Bengali family and the girl belonging to highly educated Muslim family, and to a good part for the family was not at all orthodox. Yet she had to suffer and it so happens that ultimately the treatment given to her drags her back to her parents place. It was her good luck that she is accepted by her parents in spite of her going against her parents. But in the end even the boy in spite of his not taking care of the girl is accepted by the Zarine’s family. Hence there is class discrimination one can say in Bengali families very openly

Next we see class discrimination in the third novel here again it is also natural for the girl belongs to lower strata of society as she is maid servant’s daughter. How could she be accepted by the upper class of society? In spite of the boy refining her educating her and changing her from a stone to a diamond yet she is not acceptable by the family members. It was only the girl’s love for the boy who had been love hungry from very childhood as he had lost his mother at a very tender age and through his life he had always gone in search of love which he found in the homes of poor people and this leads him to Kajali the maid servant’s daughter. This is not acceptable by the family ultimately he leaves the house and returns to a foreign land.
The other two novels we have the girls no doubt belonging to the same Bengali culture as well as from the same class yet the diaspora class discrimination prevails this is because one is not very good at looks and due to her looks she had solely confined herself towards religion and become very religious minded. It was difficult for Pramila to adjust in the beginning with Samir but later she was accepted by him also. Where as the last novel the class discrimination in diaspora takes place due to the protagonist prejudice of his being less educated then the girl. She being a doctor is not at all shown to be proud about it, but the protagonist himself is prejudiced and suspicious about it and puts an allegation on her as to having an extra marital affair with a very young boy who is her patient’s son. This is how the race discrimination takes place in all his five novels of diaspora.

With such things at hand the researcher feels that Indians wherever they go how much ever they achieve yet their mentality never changes. They always want women to be under their feet, they can never listen praises for their women, and this is what makes them reveal to be grounded with typical mentality. No doubt it would be very common even in the west that a man would never accept a woman being a boss or their own wife’s holding a greater position than them. This is a typical male chauvinism trait how can a woman move ahead of man or how can she boss us in a work place, though she is the boss of the house without her no house is perfect. And as the proverb goes after every man there is a woman yet when it comes to uphold the status isn’t acceptable in public. This isn’t a diaspora trait but a general public idea which is very badly again and again prevalent in Hours before Dawn.

6.3.6. Diaspora and Homogeneity

Another very common trait they lack is homogeneity. Most serious situation of diaspora community of the Indo-American status is that they lack homogeneity. Where ever they would go and settle but they will not leave their typical state identity as for they are divided state wise like Keralites, Bengalis, Gujaratis, Tamilians, and Punjabis and so on. This also arises a dilemma among them as Romen Basu while portraying the Bengali boy getting married to a north Indian girl he purposely stresses the identity so as to show his own dilemma, for he himself is in dilemma and not ready to accept another community boy or girl very openly. This is very prominent in all his novels, no doubt each of his novels has some or the other character mentioned from a different state or community which gives a very clear picture of his dilemma status.

These things are again and again mentioned by the author may be to create awareness among its people and also not to move away from ones socio-cultural traits. As of Romen Basu might have seen his people coming to the west and drifting away from their culture and
trying to forget their religious traits. May be after getting an inspiration from other region books which he had published, he did get a chance that made him write about such topics in his novels so as to remember and remind the people that wherever one moves but should preserve one’s identity. While saying all such things he was in a great dilemma. This the researcher feels free to mention, as the researcher is suppose to prove him a diaspora writer in dilemma.

As mentioning above different traits of Romen Basu he can be very well considered a diaspora writer for he has highlighted different protagonist residing in different countries with a different set of mind. Which shows their dilemma is the writer’s dilemma, for no doubt most of them have left their homes with different purpose and different intention. Ultimately they intend to stay back and make it their homeland and they do but there are certain situations which make their mind drift to and fro whether to settle or not in the foreign land and this drifting also take place as they themselves are not very stable in mind as they are lacking in their own socio-cultural traits which prevent them from making them firm in their decisions.

Speaking about socio-cultural traits these have such a lot of affects on the writer’s protagonist as not being very well versed in their own social set-up they get influenced by the foreign culture which brings an imbalance in their own lives. This is all because living in a foreign land they want to mingle with the foreign setup and boast about it calling themselves people of that country. Besides they even don’t want to be away from their homeland and not forget their own culture. This all arises for these Indian basically are not grounded into their roots, they aren’t very well versed with their own culture but coming to a foreign land and seeing the culture of the host-land makes them aware about their own culture and try to become profound in their own culture.

Portraying such things the writer himself makes sure that he is warning the coming generation not to leave away our cultural values, but on the contrary he wants to be sure that one should be ready to accept what comes to their way. As he has given various examples in his different novels based on culture. In *Your Life to Live* we have Zarine and Ashoke who are so adamant in the beginning as to follow their own religion and fight for naming their children, ultimately both give and we find them in dilemma each one saying to the other it is your life live as you want. Further we have Candles and Roses where we have east and west encounter between Monique and Samir, who is drifted towards Monique in spite of being a married man but ultimately it is the culture which brings him back to his wife Pramila.
Again in another novel *Hours before Dawn* we are shown Mrinal and Kabita who are so much bounded in cultural values that though they go apart from each other but ultimately Mrinal returns to Kabita, it is different that their hearts don’t bind them but it is only the prevailing culture which brings them closer to each other. In *A gift of Love* it is same situation here the boys go against the wishes of their parents and get married to girls outside their caste, yet in the end it is culture which binds them. Thus it is truly said where ever you are only culture will keep you bided. Though the younger generation is trying to be free from their own cultural values so as to show that are free from it and they belong to the host land. But this is not true for the writer is always trying to keep them in dilemma showing them the reality for where they belong to and one cannot move away from it, and the characters are also in dilemma throughout the novel.

What is true dilemma how far does it go along in his novels? The truth is that had he been alive, Romen Basu would have been regarded as a diaspora writer secondly he would have been considered as an Indian English writer in India. In spite of his writing more than a dozen novels to his collection and two short stories as well as poems, yet he is nowhere found a place in Indian English literature. On the contrary he is regarded a writer in the west his novels are given more importance in American universities rather than in Indian universities. Isn’t this dilemma enough to prove him as a diaspora writer with dilemma?

Hence the researcher has tried to show at every step as to how much the author Romen Basu has had a craving to protect his society and keep it bided into socio-cultural traits, just not this he further keeps his characters alive throughout his novels. Even if one drifts the other pulls them and keeps them bided. The writer has certain traits which always tries to focus on the society, culture and though being an economics writer never has mingled his economic traits in literature. On the contrary he has proved himself as a literary person by remembering his family, which is very clear in his first novel *House Full of People*, then he is clear about others lives as living in a foreign land therefore he shows freedom to his characters in his second novel *Your Life to Live* this is the writers belief that every person has freedom to live his life according to his wish and will.

No doubt there is dilemma while writing his novels and portraying his characters but with freedom and perfection he comes true making it real and lively. But as such whatever he portrays there is always a ting of dilemma in his speech through his characters for they are always shown in swaying moods. Whatever they do or say they are always moving to and fro. This may sometimes even create a panic situation for the readers always give the reader a sort
of suspense and make him move ahead slowly and steadily keeping him bided till the end of
the novel.

As such all his novels cannot be labeled as diaspora novels only a few of them
selected by the researcher are put under the title of diaspora, this was due to his early
influence of writing in the late sixties when he started writing. It was R.K.Narayan, Raja Rao,
Bankim Chandra and many more under whose influence he turned out to be a literary person
as he says very openly in his interview with P.K.Somnath in his book Romen Basu his Vision
and his Art. Whereas the later novels he wrote has a different outlook which he has focused,
it speaks about the different aspect of Indian culture, the down trodden people, the difficulties
that prevailed in India during the rule of Britishers and the zamindari system and so on. But
whatever the author has tried to convey he has always had the first thing was the society in
his mind. This was all done for the upliftment of society and to show the drawbacks in Indian
culture. As the writer had travelled a lot in foreign countries as well as in India hence he was
very much aware about the facts of society. This has made him a great writer and accepted in
the west. Thus the researcher has tried to give the varied facts in his selected novels of
diaspora writing and call him a Diasporic dilemma writer.

Last but not the least I come to a conclusion that may be due to his dilemmatic nature
he has not been given as much importance as other diaspora writers in Indian English
literature. Though being a writer of diaspora era and written novels which convey a meaning
of diaspora in true sense. As well as Indianness in Indian English a pure Bengali tilt having
all aspects which a Bengali writer gives, as those given by writers before him concentrating
more on their customs, rituals, socio-cultural familiarity, Bengali words as well as relation
shown. Besides this being an Indian stayed abroad worked for United Nations, travelled to
different countries seen the prevalent conditions of Indians those who migrated and settled
specially in the U.S.A.

Such things have made him write a lot about Indian people but with a dilemma for
sure as someone forced him to start writing in novel form as he was used to write about
economics. Thus a writer of diaspora dilemma. The characters as revealed by other novelists
fictitious but while reading Romen Basu no one can say they are fictitious, on the contrary
they seem to show reality for their behaviour is also in dilemma as is the author. Hence from
these peculiar characteristics the researcher comes to a conclusion that Romen Basu is a
diaspora writer in dilemma in the five selected novels.