Abstract

The prime concern of the research relates to the probe into two fascinating arenas of Diaspora - Problem of Identity and Racism in context of Caribbean origin. Neil Bissoondath, the Indo – Caribbean - Canadian author would like to project himself simply as a Canadian author, not with any hyphenated identity. Diasporic literature includes enormous amount of literary works written by the authors outside their native country, but related to native culture and background. It tends to connect with the emotion that it is a sort of psychological attempt to regain that which being a diasporic writer has lost at the level of reality.

The premise of the present research is that the concept of migration has undergone a tremendous change. The period of 20\textsuperscript{th} century, specifically second half is believed as the time of transition, migration and mobilization. The outcome connects with the feeling that boundaries have been erased and the entire earth is classified as a global village. At present, people have different perspectives towards migration; it may be in terms of personal aspirations, inner urge to develop a new identity like our author Neil Bissoondath, etc. The problem of national belonging is reflected in the literatures of the Diaspora. Diasporic writers particularly focus on location of culture, search for identity, and quest for a home through self-realization. The contemporary diasporic writing connects the past with the present and creates new perceptions of liquefied and transnational identity. The research is an attempt to view Neil Bissoondath’s five of novels in the context of Diasporic issues – Problem of Identity and Racism through the context of Multiculturalism as perceived by our
Canadian author. The literary advancement in Canada largely depends upon its expatriate writers who hail from Caribbean, Asian and other places.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The introductory chapter reveals the fact that Neil Bissoondath is viewed carefully in this portion. The chapter also reveals the roots of the literary tradition to his uncle V. S. Naipaul – a popular Diasporic writer. In terms of earlier migration of his grandparents from India to Caribbean land, initially he thought this migration would help them remove poverty but in reality, it gave rise to the loss of identity and acquiring a hyphenated identity in a host country. In this chapter we have tried to depict various factors that compelled him to forsake Trinidad include narrowness of life on island, riots, army rebellion, freedom of Trinidad, racial, cultural and economic differences in society, pessimism, political disturbance, and corrupt and violent world of racism. Bissoondath, as a diasporic writer, has provided some descriptions of unknown island or countries, places, situation and people in majority novels he refers to his own experiences in the Caribbean. His major characters such as Raj, Boobie, Sita, Montgomery, Sue’s parents, the Prasads, etc turn into immigrants for one reason or the other and confront the problems of Diaspora willingly or unwillingly.

The second chapter is an attempt to analyze five novels of the author in context of two thrust areas of this research – The Problem of Identity and Racism. Here we have attempted to provide author’s perspective – a universally accepted notion on racism – ‘racism for one is racism for others’. The theme of Racism and the Problem of Identity form a prominent aspect of almost all of his works. In his first novel A
Casual Brutality, author has presented the conflict between Raj (Protagonist) and Madera (Antagonist) as a significant role in context of two contrasting ideology related to racial difference. Raj returned to his native island for his uprootedness and willing to be a part of homeland but in the end, he adopts an aloofness from this culture. The author has presented the cultural differences between Canada and Casaquemada quite meticulously. The second novel The Innocence of Age deals with Canadian backdrop in terms of characters, approaches and some other aspects in context of multiculturalism and how people reside collectively in a multicultural society. He presented Sita as a marginalized Caribbean immigrant in host country and generation conflict between four characters – Pasco and Daniel as father-son and Montgomery and Nutmeg as father-daughter. Author deconstructs race as a explanation of a human behaviour in case of Nutmeg. The Unyielding Clamour of Night depicts the condition of a young central character of novel Arun Bannerji, possessing high ideals, wants to create a huge difference by teaching students of southern areas – ‘two percenters community’. In his ideal pursuit he visits Omeara, an unknown land wherein he gets a reality check through characters like Mr. Jaisaram, Mrs. Jaisaram, Anjani, Kumarsingh an few other characters. The Soul of All Great Designs deals with two diverse characters – Alec and Sue or Sumintra who are leaving a pretended identity in real and reel life. Alec prefers to pretend as a Gay in order to succeed in his profession whereas Sue as perturbed Indian immigrant girl in Canada fails to perceive to follow Indian tradition or Western culture in order to lead a peaceful life. Doing the Heart Good represents characters like Alistair Mackenzie suffering from loneliness, Thrush, Mackenzie’s colleague – cum – friend,
Frank, Boobie and his brother facing issues with identity, racism and multiculturalism.

The third chapter focuses on Diaspora in theoretical terms and various aspects concerning diasporic writing. We have tried to analyze how Bissoondath has attempted to project the fact that the actual problem of identity comes to the surface when a person finds himself nowhere amid oceans of human beings, unable to detach from his/her real root and failure to assimilate with the new culture. The Problem of identity and racism should be looked at from psychological angle. If we closely peep into the ideology of Indian, Caribbean or Canadian diasporic writers, they have chosen locale, settings and characters from the native backdrop. They are barely liberated from their homeland.

The fourth chapter deals with how Diaspora connects with migration of people owing to several factors and awakening aspect of multiculturalism with the impact of Globalization. We have attempted to show that Multiculturalism does not mean goodwill but rather a materialistic concern and it is not expected to follow the theory that ‘my culture’, and ‘your culture’ should be given equal amount of respect or attention. Bissoondath is portrayed with a belief that in Canada people come across one another chiefly at festivals with multicultural mosaic tiles. Bissoondath’s book on multiculturalism entitled *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism* in Canada deals with the aspect that immigrants are expected to follow Canada’s ethics and approach of life. He is highly critical about his perception of multicultural policy in Canada.
The fifth chapter sums up the research in a beautiful way. By employing techniques of flashback and flash forward, he is able to depict the story with the idiosyncrasies of hiding the name of the island. He impels readers to presume life on Caribbean countries. In this chapter, we see Bissoondath’s portrayal of Raj as residing in Canada and his confrontation with multicultural society up to some extent reveals Bissoondath’s individual experience, which at the outset condemns multicultural policy of Canada and with the passage of time acknowledges Canada as his home.